

ANDREWS, Allen – Year of ‘56

Captain of the 1st XIII Rugby League Team

Item in The Leader, 4 May 2016

Cronulla High School legend immortalised with naming of Allen Andrews Playing Fields

As a teacher and rugby league coach, Allen Andrews positively influenced the lives of many teens throughout Sutherland Shire and beyond. And now former students have made sure Mr Andrews' lifelong commitment to education and sport will be immortalised through the naming of the new Cronulla sports fields in his honour.

Mr Andrews was a teacher at Cronulla High School during the 1960s and early '70s and the Grays Point resident has been involved in rugby league as a coach, manager and selector at every level - High School, Zone, Regional, Metropolitan, State and National - over a period spanning six decades.

Cronulla High School principal Tony Ibrahim said the idea of naming the sports fields after Mr Andrews was first raised by former students Bruce Howell and John Watkins.

“It was an idea backed by the school’s P&C and approved by the Department of Education because of Allen’s exemplary service to education and sport and we are so proud to name our sporting fields in his honour,” Mr Ibrahim said.

“Allen has shown a lifelong dedication to working with young people as a teacher and as a coach. He’s touched the lives of so many students from all walks of life and he’s given so much to our local community.”

Bruce Howell was guided by Mr Andrews as a maths teacher and rugby league coach at Cronulla High School.

“I can pretty much attribute the influence of Allen as a teacher to my decision to become a maths teacher myself,” Mr Howell said. “In fact, I based my teaching style on how Allen taught.”

“I saw in the Leader last year that the new fields were about to be opened and my first thought was of a young Allen Andrews training us on this same field in his crisp white playing outfit. It’s an image that has stuck in my mind to this day - it seems so appropriate to me to have these fields named in Allen’s honour.”

Former Cronulla High School student and member of Cronulla Sharks Water Polo, John Watkins, was also coached by Mr Andrews.

“Allen Andrews has always gone well beyond the role of a teacher and football coach,” Mr Watkins says. “He’s been a mentor and a very strong supporter of students in their personal and career development. When I was struggling with maths, Allen volunteered to tutor me to help me pass the HSC – and he wasn’t even my maths teacher at the time.”

Mr Andrews remembers a time when the sports fields at Cronulla High School were merely “cow paddocks” so he says to have state-of-the-art facilities named in his honour is a “shock”.

“It’s unbelievable,” he says. “Nothing like this has ever happened to me before and I could never have even dreamed this would happen.”

“I love all sport but I particularly like rugby league because I enjoy the company and I love seeing the end product when you’re teaching kids in a different way than in the classroom. It’s been the best part of my life and it still is,” Mr Andrews said.

The “Allen Andrews Playing Fields”, located on Captain Cook Drive at Woolooware, were officially opened last year and were named at a special ceremony on Wednesday.

The \$3 million playing fields and clubhouse were the first significant community facility to be designed and delivered by Capital Bluestone and the Cronulla Sharks as part of the Woolooware Bay Town Centre masterplan. It is the new home of the Cronulla Caringbah Junior Rugby League Football Club, and Cronulla High School also uses the fields.

Capital Bluestone managing director Ben Fairfax said the naming of the Allen Andrews Fields underpinned the original vision for the sporting facilities.

“We provided these community facilities to encourage young people to be more active and get involved in a wide variety of sports and it’s more than fitting that the fields take on the name of a man who lived his life by the same philosophy,” Mr Fairfax said.

Sutherland Shire Mayor, Cr Carmel Pesce says: “It is great to see such a well liked local identity being recognised through the naming of a key community sporting facility. I hope Allen feels proud that his achievements and dedication to his community are acknowledged in this way and his family shares this pride.”

Allen Andrews immortalised with Cronulla football fields Honour





NBHS 1956 1st Grade Rugby League Team



Winners of University Shield and Runners-up in the Evans Shield.

Back row: (l to r) A Hodgins, P Hardie, T Duffell, P Jonas, B Middleby

Middle row: (l to r) R Lonsdale, D MacIntyre, G Fielding, B Abrahams, W Wallace, R Orton

Front row: (l to r) K Duncan, R Hynes, A Andrews (Captain), Mr L Hunter (Coach), R Hubbuck, I Carling, C Robinson