

## **Vigoro**

*Judith Lewis*

### **1932. The Formation Of Riverstone Vigoro Club.**

The following item appeared in the *Windsor & Richmond Gazette* on 19 August, 1932:

*Riverstone Vigoro Club, which was formed only a fortnight ago, is already a flourishing institution. It has a membership of over 30, all of whom are particularly keen and enthusiastic. The office bearers are:*

*President, Mr Ben Hibbert*

*Hon. Secretary, Miss Joyce Woods*

*Hon. Treasurer, Mrs W. Wiggins.*

A week later Riverstone had played a friendly game against Windsor at Riverstone Sports' Ground. Windsor won. The return match, played on Saturday 27 August, on Windsor's ground was won by Riverstone. The paper reported:

*"Riverstone came prepared to win" one of the Red and Whites said, and it surely looked like it when the Country Life Club marched out to the field complete in red and white costumes. Riverstone Club brought other members to back it up and also barrackers from the town. Windsor played a good game, but was beaten wholly and solely by the bowling of one of the Riverstone players. Although Windsor won the match played at Riverstone, the members of the Windsor Club have not in any way let their work go down, but have practised constantly and certainly showed a marked difference in their fielding on Saturday.*

In 1932 the following teams were named in the *Gazette* but the competition appears to have been purely social: *Riverstone Country Life, Schofield's Boomerangs, Cattai Rovers, Vineyard Blue Birds, Windsor Checkers and Blacktown.*

### **1933. A District Vigoro Association is Formed.**

At a meeting at the Olympia Theatre, Riverstone, on 24 January 1933 a Vigoro Association was formed in the Hawkesbury, with competition to begin on 4 February. Five well-balanced clubs made up the competition. They were: *Riverstone Country Life, Schofield's Boomerangs, Vineyard Blue Birds, Cattai Rovers, Windsor Checkers.*

The RIVERSTONE team was comprised of: M. Conway, N. Strachan, I., E. & S. Wiggins, L. Byrnes, F. Russell, G. Stanford, B. Day, J. Rabey, J. Woods and E. Drayton.

SCHOFIELDS were represented by: R. Rabey, A. Fletcher, E. Wilson, M. Anderson, E. Overton, G. Thompson, J. McWilliam, I. Bursle, H. Pomfret, M. Roach and D. Wells.

The VINEYARD team was: G. Burden, I. Blackhall, D. McLean, B. Jarrett, A. Fletcher, V. Quinlan, E. Schofield, M. Rowan, J. Greentree, A. Burchill, C. & S. Jenkins.

At the end of the first round, on 10 March, Riverstone and Vineyard were leading the competition on 24 points apiece. New names to appear in results published in the Gazette were: D. Keegan (Riverstone), P. Becker and O. Alderton (Schofields) and D. Alcom and J. Schoffel (Vineyard).

Nancy Anderson (Strachan), a member of the Riverstone team, was interviewed by her great grand-daughter, Holly Stone, for this article. She remembers her uniform as being a maroon dress with white on it. As part of the uniform they also wore white sandshoes and white caps. They practised twice a week and their coach was Harry Davis.

Nancy also recalls that it cost a penny to play and a bingo team raised money. The Gazette recorded fund raising dances at both Riverstone and Vineyard. The Riverstone function was held in the Olympia Theatre and was in aid of the district association. The Vineyard dance "under the auspices of the Blue Birds Vigoro Club was held on Saturday evening, the funds benefiting to the extent of £4".

### **Interdistrict Competition.**

An Interdistrict Game was held over the Easter weekend between Hawkesbury and Cumberland. Two teams from the Hawkesbury played in the morning and in the afternoon Cumberland defeated Hawkesbury by an innings and 14 runs. The Hawkesbury team was: B. Rabey, A. Fletcher, F. Russell, E. Overton, G. Stanford, G. Thompson, O. Gill, E. Brown, Lorna and Lola Mitchell, Z. Douglass and E. Wilson.

A second interdistrict game between Hawkesbury and Pals (Parramatta) was played at Riverstone in June. Parramatta winning by 12 runs, scoring 47 and 61, with B. Rabey taking 5 for 10 and E. Brown 8 for 23, and Hawkesbury scoring 44 and 52 with Lola Mitchell and E. Wiggins each getting 13 runs.

### **Social Activities in Schofields.**

Social activities obviously played an important part in team morale as witnessed by this report in the Schofields News section of the *Gazette* on 19 May, 1933.

*An enjoyable evening at the residence of Mr Gordon Alderton on Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> - a surprise party by players and followers of Schofields Vigoro Club. A party numbering about 50 assembled nearby and advanced on Mr Alderton's home armed with musical instruments and an abundance of good things for the inner man. In a few minutes they took control, cleared a room for dancing and games, which were indulged in until 2 a.m. During the evening Mr Davis, on behalf of the vigoro girls, presented Mr Alderton with a handsome gift.*

At about the same time, 2 June, headlines blared:

### ***ALL OUT FOR SIX***

*One of the most sensational dismissals of a vigoro team was witnessed at McQuade Park Windsor on Saturday afternoon, when Riverstone skittled the home side for 6 runs in their first innings 17 in their second... Riverstone scored 113 and 69... Stanford and Russell, who bowled throughout, were responsible for the collapse ... Nancy Strachan scored 48 not out and 22.*

### **Vineyard Presentation.**

*In July, Miss E. Schoffel, President, presented cups won during the summer competition to Vineyards Blue Birds Vigoro Club. Mrs W. Blackhall took the batting trophy, Miss Gwen Burden won the bowling, with Miss Joyce Greentree receiving the consolation prize for bowling and Miss A. Fletcher took the most catches.*

### **Schofields Victorious.**

Apparently Schofields won the 1933 Competition and Knockout Competition, a matter which was not recorded in the Gazette and for which the paper was criticised by Mr Rabey. This promoted the *Gazette* to reply:

*We might add that the columns of the Gazette are at all times open for the publication of the results of sporting fixtures, and the sooner some organisations get reliable secretaries who will supply the necessary information regularly, the fewer the complaints will be.*

### **Transport to the Games.**

Transport to the games must have been a problem as Mr Ronald B. Walker M.L.A., on behalf of the Hawkesbury District Vigoro Association,

*made representations to the DMR relative to the conveying of competing members of the vigoro teams on goods motor vehicles to fulfil their various engagements. The Commissioner (Mr S.A. Maddocks) has promised Mr Walker that the matter will be fully investigated.*

The reply was prompt, and Mr Walker was advised by the Commissioner that

*.....passengers are precluded from travelling on goods motor vehicles unless their conveyance is expressly authorised in the licence or a permit under the State Transport (Co-Ordination) Act 1931.*

*....the department is not favourably disposed towards the use of motor lorries for passenger transport....It is recognised however, that difficulty may be experienced by lorry owners located in outlying centres some distance from District Registries in obtaining permits on each occasion it is required to convey players on their vehicles, and in order to meet their requirements, consideration will be given to the use of monthly permits on payment of 1/- each. ... .. A permit fee of 1/- should accompany each application, which should contain full information regarding the days the matches are to be played and the places between which the journeys are to be undertaken.*

Jean Cubitt (nee Wood) recalls travelling to vigoro matches in the back of Jess Goodwin's truck. She tells of driving home through Pin Town where the fruit from orchards was hanging over the fence. Some of the girls picked some fruit and they ate it. On arriving back at Riverstone and stopping at "Conway's Corner" (the intersection of Garfield Road and Riverstone Parade) they found the local constable awaiting their return. He had a complaint from a farmer about the girls "stealing" his fruit. "Be on your way, and don't let it happen again!" was the warning.

Dick Stacey provided the transport on the back of his truck also, especially when the girls were going to dances in other districts. Dick's band was usually playing for the dance. Jean remembers going across to Penrith on the back of Dick's truck for a Vigoro Ball and being billeted by the Penrith team for a night.

## **Marsden Park And Vineyard.**

On 28 July it was reported that:

*the newly-formed Marsden Park Vigoro Club had advised Blacktown Council that they had not been able to secure an area on which to play and asked for the use of the reserve at the boundary creek opposite the Cemetery. The Club offered to pay a nominal rental if necessary. A decision on the matter was deferred for a fortnight.*

In Vinyard News on 25 August it was reported that:

*Vineyard Bluebird Vigoro Club is experiencing no difficulty in securing members. Applications for membership are still coming to hand and in a match on Sunday they had defeated Marsden Park Cooees by an innings and 10 runs. Bluebirds 90 (M Rowan 36) and Cooees 55 and 25.*

## **Mr Rabey vs the Gazette cont'd:**

The *Gazette* correspondent was not going to forgive Mr Rabey of Schofield's for his earlier complaint. The following appeared on 18 August:

*Blacktown challenged Schofield's and won by 6 wickets and 9 runs. Schofield's is on the leg theory! "Where was Mr Rabey on Sunday?" inquires our correspondent. Although the Hawkesbury District Vigoro Association's second competition commenced on Saturday, no-one seemed to be aware of the fact except those associated with the movement. ...we have repeatedly assured the Association of the co-operation of the Gazette in popularising the game in the district. But apparently this is not appreciated.*

### **A Spectator Sport?**

This intriguing paragraph in Riverstone News leaves one wondering as to the identity of "Pop":

*Vigoro has become a popular pastime in Riverstone. Even "Pop" has been attracted by youth and beauty, and is now a regular attendant at the games.*

### **District Teams.**

Teams in the new competition were: *Country Life I and II, Blue Bird, Boomerang, Don't Worry Club, Old Gold, Sunshine (Pitt Town), Cheerio, Rovers (Cattai) and White Flash.* Miss Joyce Woods enthusiastic secretary of the Country Life Club drew praise from the *Gazette* for her contributions of the draw and point score. (So there Mr Rabey!)

*New players for Country Life I were Lola & L. Mitchell, M Stockwell, E. Brown, A. Knight and Z. Douglass. For Country Life II they were M. Woodlands, E. & H. McCarthy, R. & L. Wiggins, E. Freeman, B. Dench, Jean Woods, J. Symonds, P. Martin, and K. & L. Rideout. Boomerang's new players were M Cartwright, E. Bassell, B. Jean & J. Rabey. Blue Bird's new members were L. Strachan, P. Moore. I. Greentree, D. Thiele, J. Schoffeland B. Fennell.*

### **Gazette vs Mr Rabey Again.**

On 8 September poor Mr Rabey was attacked again. A correspondent writes:

*It's no credit to Schofield's Vigoro Club boasting about their great win against Blacktown on Saturday week, as the latter team was short seven players -thanks to Mr Rabey! (What did Mr Rabey do with those seven players?)*

Also in September:

*Old Golds were offered a free outing by a well-known vigoro enthusiast if they defeated Country Life I, leaders in the district competition, on Saturday. They failed badly, however, as Country Life won by an innings. Said that some of the Old Golds, who were keenly looking forward to the trip that was to be provided, were sadly disappointed. But surely they did not expect to beat Country Life I that easy.*

Country Life I was the leading team in the 1933 summer competition. They apparently held their own also against teams from outside the district. In a Sunday match at Riverstone they defeated Marrickville Strollers by 89 runs. The Strollers made 40 & 25. Country Life I replied with 14 & 140.

### **Windsor vs Riverstone.**

*The Gazette announced that the Game of the Season will be played on Saturday week in Windsor between Country Life I and Don 't Worry. Country Life I are leading the competition, but Don't Worry are improving with every match and are expected to give the leaders some anxious moments.*

Country Life won by an innings and 27 runs! At the same time Country Life II were soundly beaten by the Boomerangs by 163 runs with B. Rabey taking 5 for 3 and E. Overton 2 for 7. New members for each of the teams were O. Willis and S. Martin for Country Life II and D. Field for Blue Birds.

### **Monster Sports' Meeting.**

A Monster Sports' Meeting for the Hawkesbury District Vigoro Association was held at the Riverstone Sports' Ground on Saturday 18 November. (One expects "Pop" was an enthusiastic spectator at the grand march past of vigoro teams at 3:00 p.m.) The weather was poor and the function was not the success anticipated and the full program was not carried out owing to wet weather. The following results makes one wonder what could possibly have been omitted!

*The March Past was judged by Miss Dodge (Secretary of the N.S. W. Vigoro Association), Mrs Randell (Marrickville Strollers) and Mrs Wilson, and the winners were Boomerangs with Country Life II second.*

*Tug-of- War caused a great deal of excitement and war won by Boomerangs with Country Life II second.*

*Lovers race was won by Jean Mc William and Partner.*

*The Three-legged race was won by Evy Overton and partner.*

*75 yards Championship was won by Dot Wells, Boomerangs, with Jean Mc Williams second.*

*Relay was won by Boomerangs team: D. Wells, J. McWilliams, Elva McWilliams and Eyv Overton.*

*Throwing the vigoro ball was annexed by Lorna Mitchell, Country Life I with Belle Rabey, Boomerangs, second*

*100 yards men's handicap was very exciting and resulted in a dead-heat between Charlie Woodlands and Norman Ward, with Jeff Andrews inches away third.*

*Young Ladies (13-1 6) handicap was won by Peggy Conway, Country Life I.*

*Married ladies handicap was exciting, a dead-heat between Mrs Aub Woods and Mrs Dot Wells.*

*A number of children's races were also held, a dance was held at night in the Oddfellows' Hall and was largely attended.*

Vigoro news ceased to be reported in the *Gazette* of 1934, 35, 36 and 37 but Jean Cubitt recalls still playing in 1939.



Riverstone Country Life Vigoro Team

*Muriel Woodlands, Helen McCarthy, Eileen McCarthy, Norma Clarke (team mascot), unknown, unknown, Jean Robbins, unknown, Enid Freeman, Laly Rideout, unknown, Gwen Stanford?, Jean Wood.*