

Vale Les Saddler

17th November 1945
- 30th May 2026



It is with deep regret that we (*Griffith Regional Funerals*) announce the death of Les Saddler. Husband of Val and former husband of Judie. Much loved father of Lyzette, Nikki and Brooke. Adored Pop of Jessica, Jacob, Mia, Joel and Jye Poppy Les of Larni and Beau. Loved brother of Shirley (dec), Allan (dec), Gloria (dec), Brian (dec), Graham (dec), Karen, Carmel, Lana and David.

Loving friend of Danny, Therese, Sarah, James and their Families. Les passed away peacefully at The Pioneers Lodge, Griffith on Saturday 30th May 2026 at the age of 80 years. Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend a celebration of his life which is to be held at the Anglican Cathedral Church of St Alban the Martyr, Griffith on Wednesday 10th June 2026 commencing at 1:00pm followed by an interment in the lawn section of the Griffith cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations are being gratefully received for Dementia Australia.

Members of the Griffith Waratahs and the Griffith Touch Association are welcome to attend to form a guard of honour. People attending are asked to wear bright colours.



NSW Touch Football (NSWTF) is deeply saddened to learn of the passing of NSWTF Life Member, Les Saddler. A true pioneer of our sport, Les played a significant role in the growth and development of Touch Football across New South Wales, particularly throughout the South West region during the 1980s and beyond.

A passionate advocate for the game, Les was heavily involved in the administration and development of what was then known as Region 1, now recognised as the Southern Suns South West area.

He worked closely alongside NSWTF Member Rod Wise during the formative years of the sport and was instrumental in helping establish strong foundations that would support generations of participants across regional New South Wales.

Les was also one of the sport's early officials, achieving State Referee status in 1980 when he was graded as Referee Number 17 in New South Wales. This achievement reflected both his knowledge of the game and his commitment to helping develop the sport during its formative years.

Les was a long serving member of the Griffith Touch community, where his leadership, vision and commitment helped shape the Affiliate into one of the state's most respected Touch Football communities. One of Les' most enduring legacies was the junior Touch Football program he helped establish in Griffith. Decades later, that program continues to provide young people with the opportunity to participate in the sport, creating pathways and fostering a lifelong love of Touch Football for countless players and families throughout the region. His influence, however, extended far beyond Griffith.

As one of the pioneers of the NSWTF selection process, Les was heavily involved as a State Selector and was widely respected for his knowledge of the game and his ability to identify and develop talent. He played a significant role in representative pathways during the sport's early years and was always willing to assist Affiliates across the state, sharing his experience and knowledge to help others grow and strengthen their local competitions.

In recognition of his outstanding service, Les was awarded a NSWTF Blues Award in 1992 and was inducted as a NSWTF Life Member in 1997 one of the highest honours that can be bestowed upon an individual within our sport. For many within the Touch Football community, Les was far more than an administrator, selector, referee or volunteer.

He was a mentor, leader, friend and passionate advocate whose dedication helped build the foundations of Touch Football throughout regional New South Wales. His impact on the sport and the people within it will be remembered for many years to come.

On behalf of the Board, staff and wider Touch Football community, NSW Touch Football extends its sincere condolences to Les' family, friends, teammates and the entire Griffith Touch community during this difficult time. Rest in peace, Les. Your contribution to Touch Football will never be forgotten.



VALE LES SADDLER - a life dedicated to the game.

It is with deep sadness that the Griffith Touch Association shares the news of the passing of Les Saddler — a man whose name is woven into the very fabric of touch football in Griffith, across New South Wales, and throughout Australia.

Les gave everything to this sport. From his early days as a player to the countless roles, he took on to build and grow the game he loved, his contribution was nothing short of extraordinary. He was once our president, a coach, a referee, a selector, an administrator — and he showed up fully for every single one of those roles.

Perhaps one of Les's most enduring legacies is the junior touch program he assisted in founding here in Griffith. He understood that the future of the sport lay in nurturing young talent and instilling a love of the game from an early age — and thanks to his vision, generations of Griffith children have grown up doing exactly that.

His service to NSW as Blues Manager and his recognition as a Blues Life Member speak to a career that extended far beyond Griffith's fields. As an Australian selector, he helped shape the national game — identifying and elevating the players who would carry the green and gold.

But those who knew Les know that titles never defined him. He was just as comfortable helping out at a local junior carnival as he was on the national stage. He gave his time generously, his knowledge freely, and his heart completely.

The fields we play on, the competitions we run, the players we develop — all of it carries Les's fingerprints. That legacy does not fade.

Rest easy, Les. You played a great game. The Griffith Touch Association extends its heartfelt condolences to Les's family. We know that while we grieve for a pillar of our sporting community, you have lost so much more. Our thoughts are with you.

Daniel Rushworth (CEO NSWTFFA) wrote;

It is with great sadness that I write to advise of the passing of NSW Touch Football Life Members, Les Saddler. Les was NSWTF Life Member #9 and was inducted in 1997 in recognition of his outstanding contribution and service to our sport. His involvement, commitment and passion for Touch Football left a lasting mark on our community, and his legacy will continue to be remembered with great respect.

On behalf of NSW Touch Football, I extend my sincere condolences to Les' family, friends, colleagues, and all those within the Touch Football community who had the privilege of knowing him. NSW Touch Football has published a tribute to honour Les' contribution to the game.

We know that many within our Life Membership group will have shared memories of Les and the contribution he made across the sport. We join with you in acknowledging his service and celebrating his life.

Tributes

Glen Cappello wrote;

Condolences to all the families! Les was a champion bloke who gave to many causes and had a great sense of humour. Life was never dull with Shags around! Many great memories of this amazing human. RIP Les.

Ian Ippoliti wrote;

Condolences to the family. I'm sad to hear of his passing. He was a man of character. He always treated me with kindness. When we coached the regionals together way back in the day I'll never forget the respect he showed to all the players, especially ...

Craig Wheeler wrote;

A true legend of Griffith Touch and the Waratahs Rugby League Club. As a referee of Griffith Touch I had the pleasure of not only knowing Les but learning from his vast knowledge of the sport. Condolences to Nikki, Brooke and families RIP Les

Charlie Strike wrote;

Had the Privilege to work with Shags on the Murrumbidgee County Council, He was a Linesman at the time. A good, honest hard worker. My Most Sincere Condolences to all his Family.

Rick Purton wrote;

Great contribution to the sport of Touch. One of Griffith's finest. My Condolences to his family and friends and a privilege to know you. RIP Les.

Nikki Saddler wrote;

This is a beautiful post, which Dad would have been so proud to read. Thank you. ❤️

Eileen Baker

Sending condolences to you Nikki on a wonderful daughter and the beautiful tribute to your Dear Dad - Les Saddler.

Sonya Armanini wrote;

Nikki Saddler So sorry to hear of your loss Nikki and family. Thinking of you and your family during this very sad and difficult time 🙏🌻🌸.

Linda Piva wrote;

Nikki Saddler so sorry to hear this. Sending love to you all

Brooke Saddler wrote;

He lived and breathed the game and made many long-term great friends. Thank you all for your kind words. Les' family 💙

John John wrote;

Brooke Saddler deepest condolences Brooke

Peter Katsoolis wrote;

Brooke Saddler, please accept our sincere sympathy, extended to all the family.

Kayleen Cattanach wrote;

Brooke Saddler sorry for your loss sending condolences 🙏

Melissa Harrison wrote;

So sorry for your loss, Brooke, Nikki and families are thinking of you all. ❤️

Sam Porter wrote;

A good man. Thinking of you all 🥰

Beth Willmer wrote;

Dearest Val. The deep love and happiness you and Les shared were beautiful to see. May your memories sustain you as this chapter of your life is closed. With my Love. B xx ❤️

Camille Wise wrote;

Sorry to hear this. Condolences to the family.

Grant Wynne wrote;

Condolences to all family and friends R.I.P. LES

Barb Colliscale wrote;

Wonderful post! Condolences to all Les's family and friends.

Neville Hall wrote;

R.I.P uncle les a great mate mopsy up the tahs

Jim Parrett wrote;

Always a perfect gentleman and I remember serving on a couple of regional touch committees with Les a stellar human, our condolences 🌸

Mal Vearing wrote;

Great man and could tell a story.

Susan Hearn wrote;

RIP Les Saddler 🙏

Nives Clausen wrote;

I never knew him, but his name was certainly held in high esteem. My condolences!

Jenny Hogan wrote;

Great post the words are so true condolences to all his family rest in peace now.

Isabel Cooper wrote;

Condolences to the Saddler family, RIP Les 🙏🙏

Cary Thompson wrote;

Another great man has passed away but his legacy will remain forever. He organised the first ever Level 1 coaching course in Griffith in the early stages of the sports' development in the area. He was loved by everyone he came in contact with.

