

Paul Cudmore Eggers

Paul Eggers is a legend of Touch Football in Queensland, Australia and Internationally. He was a pioneering figure in the sport in Queensland, especially around the Gold Coast area of the state. In 1974 he called a meeting and with Bill Ker formed the Gold Coast Touch Association being appointed as their first Secretary / Treasurer.



Besides his leadership roles in the promotion of the sport, in November 1997 he was selected as a player / manager of the Gold Coast team that participated in the NSW State Cup which was conducted at Port Macquarie. In October the following year, Paul hosted the NSW Touch Association's second State Cup at Palm Beach and Seagulls Clubs on the Gold Coast.

He was present at the formation of the Australian Touch Association in 1978 where he was elected Director of Promotions. In 1979 he assisted in the formation of the Queensland Touch Association becoming their inaugural President, a position he held for fourteen years.

The same year Paul hosted an International Touch match between the Gold Coast and the Great Britain Touring Rugby League Team which included respected players such as Roger Millward, Steve Norton, David Ward & Coach Eric Ashton. The Gold Coast team included players of the calibre of Bob Bugden, Rob (Yogi) Thompson, Ian Piper. The result of the game was locals 3 tourist 2.

It was also the same year that Paul sat down with Phil Smith (*NSW Touch General Manager*) and Ron Carroll (*ATA Patron 1981-1982, NSW TA President 1980, Exec Director/General Manager 1980*), ahead of the first Nationals, using the Australian Rugby League Rules as a reference guideline for establishing the first Australian Touch Association Rules Book.

The following year 1980 he co-ordinated with Mr Russell Mowles and Phil Smith, the Inaugural National Touch Championships on the Gold Coast.

His panache as a futuristic thinker was never more evident when in the same year, he integrated women into Gold Coast Touch by appointing Ms Carol Coe as Vice President of the organisation.

In 1981 Paul was named as the inaugural Life Member of the Gold Coast Touch Association and the following year he boldly stated, *“The Rules of the game of Touch themselves, being strictly of a healthy non-violent nature, must be effectively applied; which will continue to attract person of the enthusiastic attitude necessary to ensue a successful future”*

Beyond the local Gold Coast area, Paul moved into broader leadership roles. He served as Vice President of the Australian Touch association from 1985 to 1989. He was instrumental with others in the formation of the International body governing the sport and in 1986 the Federation of International Touch was established with Paul being elected its inaugural President holding the role until the second World Cup in 1991.

In 1986 Paul became the inaugural Life Member of the Queensland Touch Association for his dedication and tireless work in developing the sport throughout the State.

With the first Touch World Cup being schedule for 1988 on the Gold Coast, Paul was instrumental in the pre-organisation of the event. With the American and Canadian teams participating the Australian Touch Association rules needed to be adjusted to cater for a truly international game. Paul co-opted Peter Rooney, Bob White and Cary Thompson to tweak the ATA Rules to establish an international set of guidelines for the event.



In 1999 due to his undying commitment to development of Touch, the Gold Coast City Council officially named Southport Sports Arena as “Paul Eggers International Touch Fields”.

During this period The Gold Coast Sporting Hall of Fame listed Paul as their Treasurer, having a professional background in accountancy. He was at the time Managing Director of Paul Eggers & Associates.

Paul is seen here at the fields named in his honour with his long time friend and compatriot, William Ker

In the year 2000 the Olympic came to Australia. Paul was selected to carry the Olympic Torch through Southport on the Gold Coast. His Torch number was 69. The same year he was awarded The Governor General's **Australian Sports Medal** for services to Touch Football.

In 2005 Paul was made a life member of the South Queensland and Border Districts Touch Association (known as the SQBD Sharks). The following year, and after an absence of seventeen years, Paul was invited back to the National organisation (then known as Touch Football Australia) as a Director. A position held for the following three years.

Retiring from active administration of the sport after his Directorship term expired, Paul was awarded Life Membership of Touch Football Australia in 2011. In 2013 the Gold Coast Sporting Hall of Fame, awarded Paul **The Spirit of Sport Medal** for his lasting impact on Touch Football within the region.

Also, in 2013 Bill Ker (Secretary General, Federation of International Touch) coaxed Paul out of retirement to assist the Federation with their finances. Paul stayed on as Director until his final retirement in 2015.

Paul Eggers' work helped establish the organisational structures that enabled touch football to grow from local club level to state and international representation. His leadership at both the Queensland Touch Association and Gold Coast Touch Associations provided the governance platform for competitions, park, regional state and international championships and development pathways.

Through his role with the Australian and international federations, he influenced the game beyond Queensland. The "family in sport" legacy illustrates how the sport's growth on the Gold Coast and translated into long term engagement for individuals and communities.

Paul can be considered one of the foundational figures of touch football in Queensland and the Gold Coast region. Beginning at the grassroots in '1974, he progressed to state and international leadership roles. He was recognised for his enduring contributions with Life Memberships and Hall of Fame mentions. Professionally a public accountant, his legacy in sport administration continues to be felt in the structure and growth of touch football.

The world wide Touch fraternity thank you Paul for your contribution.

