

## **A Grade Premiership 1972/3**

Norths assembled an outstanding team for the 1972/73 season under the captaincy of Bill Souter who was transferred to Townsville with his employment a couple of years earlier. Bill had played district cricket in Melbourne for University and Richmond and spent some time in the Victorian State squad.

This was the first Norths premiership to be won after TCA cricket began to be played at Endeavour Park and suburban club grounds rather than at the Townsville Sports Reserve.

Bill Souter recalls, "I can remember the day the pitch was too long. It was a game against Wests. I can't remember who won the toss but we bowled. It just didn't look right from the moment I first looked at it, but you don't expect that so I just accepted it. We'd played quite a few overs and no wickets. Notty baulked at the beginning of an over and said the pitch is too long. I've forgotten who was umpiring, but an embarrassed Brian Brackley (groundsman) arrived with tape and his marking gear. It was a simple mistake - crease where the wickets should have been. Albert "Dumpty" Roberts, the Wests captain, came out and asked what I wanted to do about it. I said, lets just fix it and play on. I was surprised when he thanked me. He must have thought I'd want a restart, but we'd played quite a few overs and it was really nothing, so lets get on with it. I'm surprised it has come up - funny to look back on I suppose. It is the only time it ever occurred in games I played. Good bloke Dumpty - it might even have been the same game - Albert bowled a bouncer at me and I hooked down into the long grass for one - he wandered by and said that was a bloody good shot for one."

John Griffith recalls: "I'm pretty sure I didn't play any A Grade games that year - only got in the photo being a selector. The Club selectors were Mark Mulcahy (President), Bill Souter (A Grade captain) and myself (Reserve Grade captain). When we played at the Sports Reserve I was the perennial 12th man for the A Grade side as I was living close by at North Ward and I remember Dougie Phillips, for some reason, couldn't get there until half an hour after start of play on Sundays so if Norths were in the field I got a half hour of fielding."

Norths clinched the premiership when they scored a convincing win over Brothers in the last game of the season. As a result, they denied Suburban-Parks the chance to win a hat trick of premierships.

Two of Norths pace bowlers were recipients of the top TCA bowling awards. Bill Henry was the leading wicket taker and finished with 48 wickets at an average of 10.4 runs per wicket. Geoff Nott, who captured 37 wickets, won the bowling average trophy with an average of 8.54 runs per wicket. It was fitting that these two should share the TCA bowling honours for they played vital roles in enabling their club to win the premiership.

The names of the players in the attached photo are:-

Back standing: Geoff Nott, Bill Henry, Ken Johnson, Peter Kerr.

Middle standing: Laurie "Bluey" Raleigh (Patron), John Griffith (Selector), Brian Lacey, Max Carlyon, David Livock, Ginty Stevens, Paul Beaumont, Graham Askern, Enid Brackley (Scorer), Mark Mulcahy (President).

Seated: John Morrissey, Bernie Courtney, Doug Phillips, Bill Souter (Captain), Peter Phillipson, Bill Egan, Gary Mackrell.

Absent: Gavin Holt, Col Lyons, Geoff Matherson, Morris Parker.

Report by Ray Kohn

