



## Cliff Parker

Cliff was born in Manchester, England and emigrated to Australia with his family in 1960. From 1961-1965 Cliff played Rugby League and Rugby Union (very badly!); Cliff attended South Sydney Boys' High School 1966-67, where he started playing football (soccer) for the first time.

Later in life Cliff attended the University of New England, Armidale, as a mature-age student, gaining a Bachelor of Counselling and a Bachelor of Social Science; this led him into welfare and counselling roles, which he enjoyed immensely, until he retired.

At age 14, Cliff started playing his junior football with his life-long friend (and current Walkeroo) Ken Lewis, for Maroubra United and South Sydney Croatia at age 15. Cliff was selected for the Eastern Suburbs U/16 Representative team and the Sydney Combined High Schools' Team.

In 1967 the Socceroos Coach (Dr Jozef Venglos) visited South Sydney Boys' High School and asked Cliff

and Ken to join the Prague FC Youth Squad. Unfortunately, after a few weeks of training with Prague FC, Cliff's family relocated to the outer Western Suburbs of Sydney and he had to leave the Squad. Jozef was very disappointed with Cliff's exit from the Youth Squad. That virtually ended Cliff's dream of being a first-grade footballer and perhaps gaining greater representative honours. However, playing with local clubs throughout the 1970's (with his mate Ken) and the 1980's, Cliff did manage to win around 10 premierships, which was very satisfying.

About 4 years ago Cliff entered the world of walking football and thoroughly enjoyed the spirit of the game, the sheer joy of healthy exercise the sport promotes and the camaraderie found in playing with other like minded souls. With his marketing, organising and playing skills Cliff has contributed greatly to the growth and development of walking football along the NSW central coast. He has taken charge of administering many walking football local competitions and regional tournaments and is well respected in the area for being a mentor who helps generate interest in the sport. Along with Ian Stewart and Siggy Nowak he was instrumental in creating the Australian Walking Football Seventies committee and remains a regular player representing the Australian Walkeroos 70s in international tournaments.