

Flinders University Baseball and Softball Club

1966 to 2016



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1967 Flinders University Baseball Interservice Team

Highlights and Achievements

Below is detailed some of the notable achievements by the Club including;

- The Club was formed in the intital year the University was opened and has continued every season since
- The first sporting club on campus to enter a team in Intervarsity competition
- The first sporting club on campus to win an Intervarsity championship in 1969
- 5 Division 1 Premierships in a row in SA Winter Baseball from 1973-1977
- 4 Mens A Premierships in a row in Mens A Softball from 1995-1998 (plus the Mens B Premiership in 1995 on the same night as the A Grade permiership!)
- 3 Division 1 Premierships in a row in SA Winter Baseball from 1998-2000
- Gold Medal wins in Inter varsity/Australian University Games for Baseball in 1969, 1995 and 1999- plus Silver medals in baseball in 1996 and softball in 2002
- Hosting the Australian University Championships for Baseball and Softball in 1971 and 1997
- in the late 1990's participation peaked with 6 winter baseball teams, 3 softball teams and 2 summer baseball teams involving over 130 players- the biggest University Baseball and Softball Club in the country.
- The only sporting club at Flinders University to continuously field teams each year since the foundation of the University in 1966
- establishment of a permanent baseball facility with permanent backstop in 2000 at Sturt Oval with later additions of dugouts
- Back to back premierships in Division 2 of the SA Winter Baseball season 2014 and 2015



1970 Flinders University Baseball Intervarsity Team

Flinders University Baseball and Softball Club – a short history

During the first few weeks of the University year in 1966, the very first year that Flinders University was opened, a small group of students gathered together to discuss the possibility of forming a baseball club. These students included Roger Thompson, Peter Daniel, Maurie Wetherall, Kev Gillis and Ross Hosking who formed the nucleus of the group that got the Flinders University Baseball Club started. Along with additions of Malcolm Thompson, Alex Stevenson, Garth Hunt and V Fulwood a team was put together in Minor C grade and uniforms designed and made locally. Practices were held on wednesdays and with the addition of Guilio Vida mid season, who was a pitcher, the team won some games (6 wins, 1 draw, 11 losses). Whilst it was not a highly successful season it was a solid foundation for the origins of the club.



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Interest increased in the following years with more teams being entered and in 1967 for the first time a team was sent to Intersarsity to compete against other Universities around the country. This culminated in 1969 in Flinders University winning the Intersarsity Baseball Championship, the first sporting side to do so at the campus. The other major change came with the move from the South Australian Baseball Season from winter to summer. Due to the University year following the winter more closely there was some disappointment that the club would now be focused solely on the winter season, however such was the nature of the development of baseball in South Australia and the club began its focus on Winter Baseball.

From 1970 the Flinders Uni Baseball Club regularly entered two teams (sometimes three) in the SA Winter Baseball Season and this began dominance especially in Division One with many premierships won through from 1970 to the 1990's. The Club was led very capably by David Gooley who acted as Division One coach through the majority of this era and as the Club President. Highlights included 5 Division One premierships in a row from 1973 to 1977 and finals appearances in almost every season.



Mention must also be made of Hugh Franke who coached the "B Grade" team at Flinders through much the 1980s and 1990s and then was a member of the Fossils team (also as coach). Hughs contribution not only existed with coaching but he was an active member of the committee including acting as President and Treasurer. For his outstanding contribution Hugh was named a Life Member of the Club.



In 1991 for the first time since 1975 a team was entered in the Intervarsity Championships as Matt Miles, a new student at the University, organised a team to travel to Melbourne. Whilst the team only won two games, it was the beginning of the spark of a new influx of students into the Baseball Club . At the end of 1991, David Gooley retired as coach and key club organiser and a new committee was formed with some new students including Matt Miles, Simon Robinson and Darren Medley along with former club members Hugh Franke acting as President and David Gully taking the role of Division One coach.



From this time the 1990s saw unprecedented growth for the Club which included a gradual increase in playing numbers from two winter baseball teams in 1991 to by the end of the decade the Flinders Uni baseball Club boasted; 6 winter baseball teams, teams entered each year at Intersivity (now called Australian University Games of championships)- including Gold Medals wins in Baseball in 1995 and 1999. Re-Introduction of softball in 1993 with Mens and Womens teams entered (the Mens A team winning four premierships in a row, and the Mens B also winning a premiership) and re-introduction of Summer Baseball, firstly by entering teams through Adelaide Baseball Club but later in its own right, which has continued up until this day. By the end of the 1990s the Flinders University Baseball and Softball Club (the name change reflected the new advent of Softball into the club) with a membership of well over one hundred people was arguably the biggest and strongest University Baseball Club in the country.



Winter Baseball became the clubs largest area of participation with more players joining in each year with a peak of participation of 6 teams in the mid 1990s. The Division One team also continued to be very competitive with an appearance in the Grand Final in 1994 (unfortunately losing by a run to Kaos) and then a string of three consecutive premierships from 1997 to 1999.



One of the features of the influx of so many more players and students was a large number of female players and as such an idea was hit upon to try entering softball teams in the Summer competitions. Luci Shields and Sarah Street who had both played softball in high school and were playing winter baseball and had attended the Australian University games with the baseball team in 1993 formed the core of the softball team that was entered in the Summer softball competition in the C grade at West beach. It wasn't an easy season but a fun season was had and Womens Softball teams were entered for the next ten years in competitions. Also with the is addition in Softball the idea was sparked to try Mens Softball. Wess Frances who was studying at Flinders University at the time who had represented Australian in Softball was the first contact and a team was assembled for the 1993/94 season with a collection of baseball players from the Winter Baseball Competition and some recruits from the Hills Softball competition including Martin Young (who had represented Australia in Softball at U/19 Level and his brother Peter Young and Matt Cooper. The Mens Softball had immediate effect and finished 3rd in its inaugural season. It improved to two teams in both mens A and Mens b the next season when it picked up some extra players from the Brecknock Blue Jays who had folded as a club. In this season of 1994/1995 Flinders University won both the Mens A and B Grade premierships for the SA Spftball Association all played on one night. It was an amazing feat for a club that had only bewgiun one season earlier. Flinders University continued to enter Mens teams in Softball for another 3 seasons and won the Mens A premiership another 3 times to make it 4 consecutive Mens A Premierships!.



The beginning of the new Millennium saw some turnover in the Club with many of the players of the previous decade retiring or moving on and numbers declined. However currently Flinders University Baseball and Softball fields 4 teams in the SA Winter Baseball competition and is one of the largest “winter baseball” clubs and at least one team has been entered every year in the South Australian Baseball League since 1993. There have also been teams entered at the University Games reasonably regularly over the last ten years.

Life Members

Dr Kerry Wilkinson

Eric Dennis

George Lewis

Matthew Miles

Simon Robinson

Igor Plisko

David Gully

Hugh Franke +

Steve Gara

Marty Smee

John Mitchell

David Gooley

Maurie Wetherall

+denotes deceased

Premierships

The Flinders University Baseball and Softball Club has won the following premierships or championships

SA Winter Baseball Association (SAWBA)

Division 1: 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1980, 1981, 1984, 1986, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1998, 1999, 2000

Division 2: 1978, 1987, 2014, 2015

Division 3: 1970, 2003

Division 4: 1995, 1998



SA Summer Baseball Association (SABL)

Minor E: 1969

South Australian Softball Association (SASA)

Mens A: 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998

Mens B: 1995

Australia University Games/Championships (AUS)

Baseball: Gold Medal 1969, 1995, 1999. Silver Medal 1996

Softball: Silver Medal 2002

Awards

University Blues

1969 Gulio Vida
1971 David Gooley
1974 Craig Roeger
1995 Sam Tibbits
2001 Matt Miles, Matt Dunn, Ben Dixon, Leigh Norman
2002 Lauren Hodgeman

A.E. Mitchell Award “Most Outstanding Student Administrator”

1992 Matthew Miles
2003 Kerry Wilkinson



Flinders University Sports Association Life Member

1992 David Gooley

Flinders University Sports Association Club of the Year

2004 Baseball/Softball



1999 PREMIERS
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BASEBALL WINTER LEAGUE
29th August 1999



BACK ROW L-R

Lee Ellis
Michael Ewart
Greg Norman
Leigh Norman
Simon Borlace
Craig Chandler

ABSENT:

Lee Cumberidge



FRONT ROW L-R

Jarrad Gray
Matthew Dunn
Matthew Miles
(Playing Coach)
Josh Henderson
Ben Dixon

FLINDERS UNIVERSITY BASEBALL TEAM

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PHOTOGRAPHY
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Half Blue Awards

- 1968 Peter Daniel, Guilio Vida, Maurie Wetherall
- 1969 Ross Hosking
- 1970 David Gooley
- 1971 Terry Ryan
- 1972 Greame Oliver
- 1973 Steve Gara, Craig Roeger
- 1975 Geoff Hastwell
- 1977 Marty Smee, T. Walsh, David Roxby, Ian Lovegrove
- 1980 Ian McMillan, Graham Davison
- 1981 Greame Jamieson
- 1982 P. Faulkner , L Faulkner



Club Letters

1968 Geoff Gauvin

1969 H. Johnson, Terry Ryan, Jim Raw, Russ Spier, Al Douglas, Brian Eustice, Mick Thorpe ,
Nev Kirby

1970 Ian McMillan, Igor Plisko

1971 Steve Gara

1972 Phil McCloud, Craig Roeger, Geoff Hastwell, John Lucas

1973 John Edmeades, Dave Hatchman

1974 R. Churchman

1975 Ian Ward

1976 Ian Lovegrove, Marty Smee, David Roxby, Terry Walsh

1978 G. R. Bain

1979 John Mitchell

1981 P. Faulkner, L. Faulkner

1982 Hugh Franke

1992 Matthew Miles

1993 Simon Robinson, Darren Medley



Merit Awards (formerley club letters)

1996 Kentaro Fujita, David Gully

1997 Simon Hope, Jarrad Gray, Josh Henderson , Andrew Smith, Lee Cumberlidge, Glen Sauer, Leigh Norman, Beth McKenzie

1999 Ben Dixon, Haydn Davison, Tony Emmel, Lee Ellis, Michael Ewart, Greg Norman

2004 Neil Trout, Ben Wilkinson, Akinori Izakura

2005 Zoe Fritz, Glenn Roebuck, Matt Bliss, Andy Chapman, Marty Smee

There have been many players who have achieved “Green and Gold” honours whilst representing Flinders University at the Australian University Games and Championships. These include;

2007: Calawdra Siwak (softball)

2003: Akinori Izakura (baseball)

2002: Lauren Hodgeman (softball)

2001: Matt Miles, Leigh Norman, Ben Dixon & Matt Dunn (at the International Friendship Series representing the Australian University Baseball Team)

1999: Sam Tibbits (also MVP of tournament), Lee Ellis, Leigh Norman (baseball)

1997: Jarrad Gray (baseball), Beth McKenzie (softball)

1996: Kentaro Fujita (baseball)

1995: Sam Tibbits, Stephen O’Reilly (baseball)



1992: Chris Morgan (baseball)

1991: Jumpei Nishikido (baseball)

1974: Craig Roeger (baseball)

1973: Craig Roeger, David Gooley, John Edmeades (baseball)

1972: Phil McCloud, Craig Roeger (baseball)

1971: David Gooley (baseball)

1970: David Gooley, Ian McMillan (baseball)

1969: Neville Johnson, Russel Spier, Jim Raw (baseball)

1968: Peter Daniel (baseball)



Reflections: Simon Robinson (1991 to 2004)

I distinctly remember the first time my good friend Scott Treloar and I inquired about the University Games to Melbourne, little did I know, that would be the beginning of a long and enjoyable association with the Flinders University Baseball Club. Those Melbourne University Games was the beginning of somewhat of a renaissance period for the club. We had been a great club in earlier years and inspired by the passion and leadership of Matthew Miles it was to be again. I have many fantastic memories of my time at the club which lasted from the late eighties through to the early 2000s, unfortunately due to travel and living overseas it is not possible to join for the 50th anniversary. Over this decade the club grew from one team, expanded into the Summer leagues as well as later into the Softball association at West Beach.

Most of my favorite memories would have to be the University Games, such a perfect combination of sport, alcohol, comradery and 'social activities'. I loved these events – from the organization of the team (scouting Japanese pitchers from graduate orientation days, and hard hitting girls from the local softball clubs – Luci Shields, Lisa Helier (RIP), Nicolle Rantanen - maybe not all recruited for their baseball ability), the social events and of course the opportunity to play 'ball' every day of the week. We made a lot of friends that week from a lot of different universities, and I recall our shirts included the famous Bull Durham quote.

Well, I believe in the soul, the cock, the pussy, the small of a woman's back, the hanging curve ball, high fiber, good scotch, that the novels of Susan Sontag are self-indulgent, overrated crap. I believe Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone. I believe there ought to be a constitutional amendment outlawing AstroTurf and the designated hitter. I believe in the sweet spot, soft-core pornography, opening your presents Christmas morning rather than Christmas Eve and I believe in long, slow, deep, soft, wet kisses that last three days.

Crash Davis



The WA games were equally enjoyable, I graduated to social liaison officer in that trip, a role I took very seriously ;) and I vaguely recall just making the train back from Perth after spending all night in Knightsbridge.

The second highlight of this era was the foundation of the Softball club, as we all now know the club as the Flinders Baseball and Softball Club. Not being a gifted A grade baseballer, I relished the chance to play under lights in front of a crowd on Friday nights against the arch enemies from Torrens, Cubs and Glenelg. There was the occasional white line fever, led by the passionate boys from the Hills (matt Cooper, Morgan Young, Wes Cooper) but we there was always time for a shared beer after the games. And of course there was the double Grand Final win, a real highlight for the players and the club. As captain / coach of the B team we had been struggling for form all season, but finding ourselves needing to win the last 4 games of the season and then 2 knockout finals managed to win the cup after 7 straight wins to end the season. Then to top it off the A's won as well.

Of course none of these things are possible without a good administration. All credit to Matthew Miles, under his administration and supported by old hands such as Hugh Franke (rip) the club went from strength to strength during those years. Thank you for the fantastic memories, Happy 50th anniversary, FUBSC.

FUBC Reflections: Kerry Wilkinson (1997 to present)

When I reflect back on the years I've spent playing with the Flinders University Baseball Club, it's not the outcomes of games, or even seasons, that I remember – albeit, winning a premiership remains a highlight – it's the camaraderie and lasting friendships that come to mind.

My first few seasons of Winterball comprised a strong social element: many a Saturday evening was spent at the Earl of Aberdeen, hanging out with team mates, enjoying a few drinks and dancing to cover band Backbeat; then there were the Halloween parties at Steve Choi's house, and the outrageous costumes that people dressed up in; and on one occasion, a team road trip to Berri, for an end-of-season party with a team mate who'd commuted back to Adelaide for half the season after moving to the Riverland for work. Today, I remain good friends with many of the people I met when I first started playing winter baseball for Flinders, some 15 years ago.

I was also fortunate enough to have represented Flinders University at a number of University Games tournaments – playing baseball and/or softball – in Sydney, Newcastle and Adelaide. We won a silver medal in Adelaide – but again, it's not the outcome of tournaments that I remember most, it's the camaraderie shared with team mates, and the antics, on and off the field. I'll never forget being woken at 2am, to take our only substitute player to the Newcastle emergency department for multiple stitches in her hand – which I should confess she cut surfing an ironing board down a stair case – arriving home just in time to head straight to the playing fields for our first game (with a bare 9!). Perhaps not our finest moment, but Unigames has provided many an amusing story over the years! And more importantly, a number of lifelong friendships!!

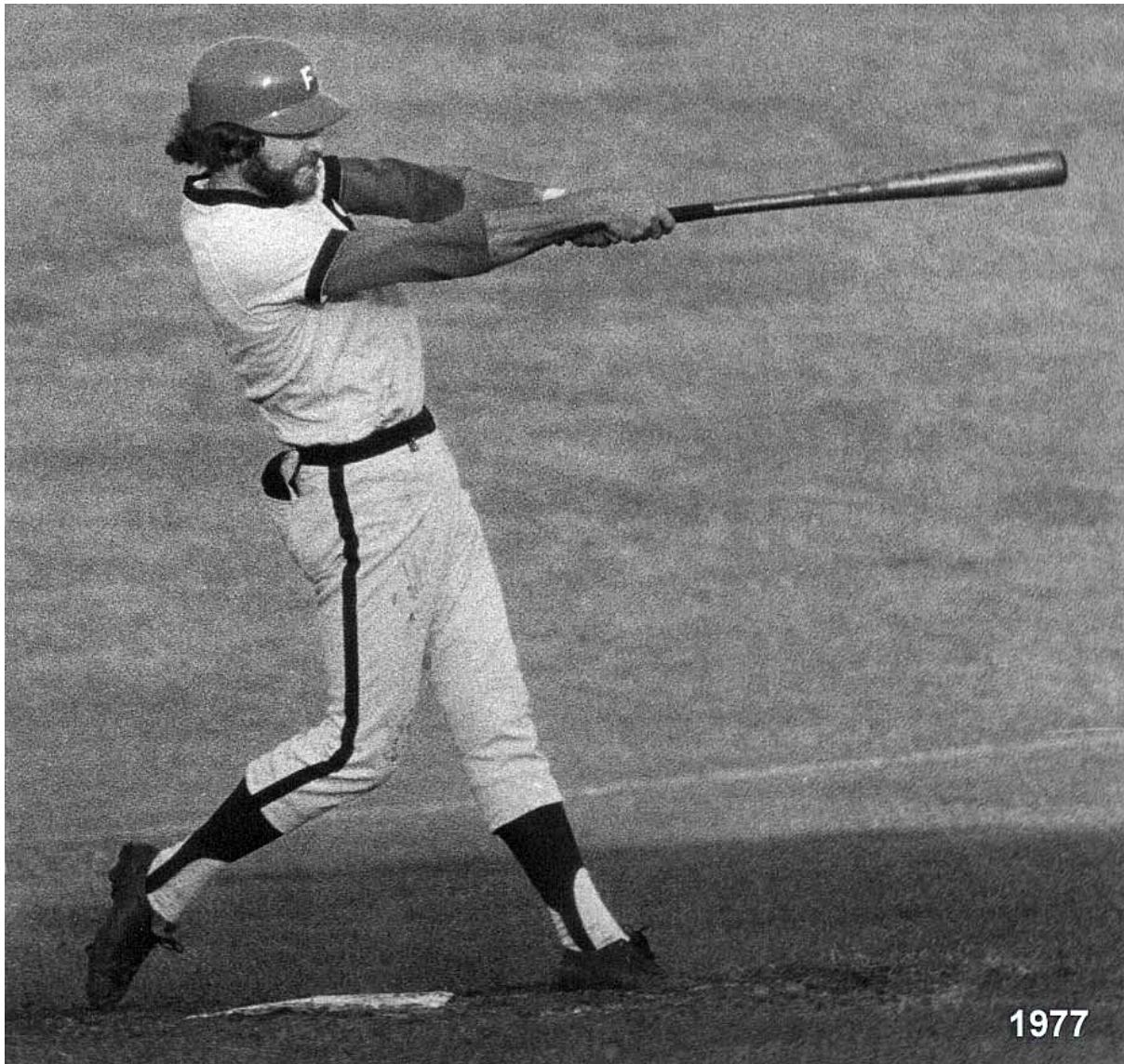
I returned to Flinders University to play Winterball in 2014 and 2015 – bringing with me a few former team mates, and a cohort of softballers from the Adelaide Hills. Yet again, it was the team rather than the games themselves, which made playing so much fun. The banter amongst my team mates, both on and off the diamond, is what I enjoy the most. I have, and will, always love playing ball, but for me, it's those I play alongside (and occasionally against) that underpin my love of the game.

Reflections: David Gooley (1970 to 1991)

I began my studies at Flinders in 1967 ... the second year of the university's operation. At the time, baseball in Adelaide was played in the winter and I had just broken into Goodwood's A-grade team. Consequently, playing for Flinders was not really an option because they had teams in Minor C and Minor E grades ... the rough equivalent of today's Divisions 5 and 7.

When Adelaide Club baseball moved to a summer competition in 1969-70, a winter competition was organised for 1970 and Flinders became one of that competition's founding members. Terry Ryan, FUBC secretary at the time, talked me into playing and I began what turned out to be a 22-year association with the Club.

The following year, 1971, was my last as a full-time student. Chris Rogers, who had coached the Club for the previous two years, was not able to continue and I was given the job. Amongst the players were Maurie Wetherall, Ian McMillan, Steve Gara, Terry Ryan, Geoff Hastwell, Graeme Oliver, and John Lucas ... all of whom would form the basis of some pretty successful teams in the following decade. John was the instigator of our post-match "play-of-the-day" awards at the Tonsley Hotel. You did not necessarily have to go 4-for-4 or pitch a no-hitter to feature in JL's summary of the game ... more likely, a spectacular error or two would get you onto the list. John also was responsible for the end-of-season social awards where the performances of each player were "critically" analysed.



In the next year or so, we were joined by Craig Roeger, Ian Lovegrove, David Roxby, and Marty Smee. That combination was the core of five successive premierships between 1973 – 77. Marty was eventually to take over from JL as the presenter of our end-of-season Social Awards ... events which became “bigger than Ben Hur”.

From the late 1970's until 1991, we continued to win premierships and ended up with a total of 12. In these years, we supplemented our playing list with several players of A-grade standard ... including Graham and Nathan Davison, Graeme Jameson, Peter Faulkner, Leon Faulkner, Rick and Greg Bain, John Gooley, Barry and Paul Harris, Flyn Chambers, Simon Gooley, Mark Brougham, Paul Haynes, David Gully, Graham Langley, and Craig Gillespie. All of these players were inducted into the Flinders culture of playing seriously but remembering that it is still just a game.

Some of the highlights of my time at Flinders were ...

- The three IV's that I went to ... as a non-drinker, I was amazed at the resilience of my teammates.

- Our two visits to Woomera in the late-1970's, organised by Geoff Hastwell, to play teams of US servicemen. This also included a return visit by the Americans. They were keen, rather than accomplished, and we managed to win all of the games.
- The contributions to the team culture by John Lucas, Marty Smee, and Geoff Hastwell. John's unforgettable social awards included a song-and-dance routine while dressed in a tutu. Marty took the social awards to another level with his presentations in the 1980's, and Geoff would always be able to summarise any situation with a Bob Dylan- inspired song.
- The "lottery" games that we played when faced with an opponent of questionable standard. All fielding and batting positions were randomly allocated and were unchanged for the duration of the game.
- The formation of a pitcher's union by Marty Smee and Graeme Jameson in an attempt to maximise their playing conditions. Marty would regularly follow this up with several quasi-legal letters trying to formalise the pitcher-coach relationship.
- The day that Marty went 3-for-3, only to find that the team had all faced the other direction to claim that they hadn't seen his triumph.
- The time when, on running onto the diamond to start the game, all of Graham Davison's teammates fell over clutching their hamstrings to remind Graham of the fragile nature of his fitness levels.
- Steve Gara, who did not miss a single game from 1971- 91 ... 21 years !!
- Hugh Franke's tireless contributions in playing, coaching and umpiring.
- Ian Ward's organisational skills as our secretary in the mid-1970's. He established an administration framework that was copied for years.
- Our participation in a couple of summer seasons of men's Friday-night softball in the early 1980's which proved to us that improvising with a pitcher can only take you so far.
- In my 22 years from 1970-91, our 12 premierships from 17 grand finals.

In my time at Flinders I was fortunate to play with players of a high standard who played the game appropriately and competitively, always in good spirits, and always keeping the experience in perspective. This is what ultimately kept me coming back for 22 years.

Reflections Marty Smee (1972 to 2004)

I had been playing baseball since primary school , starting out with Kensington when baseball was still an official winter sport. When summer became the official season, and the winter league set up , I was still at high school but played in a few teams. So when I entered uni in 1972 it was only natural to join FUBC.

Very early on I went to my one and only Intersvarsity at Sydney, staying in the Imperial Hotel in Kings Cross. The less said about that trip the better really. My first year I pitched Div2 with Neil Quintrell as Coach. I pitched every ball of every innings that year – we never lost a game by more than 2 runs and ended up 4th !



The next year I was elevated to the Division 1 side to share the pitching duties. Just about every game was highlight ! I will list a few

- Humour and sarcasm . We actually mentally ‘destroyed’ some opposition pitchers. (Eric Stacey from Inters was always targeted) We seemed to spend a lot of time laughing.
- Supreme confidence in our ability to win regardless of the score
- Premierships – 6 in a row plus more.
- Lottery games – you pulled your position and batting order out of hat. I always maintained they were rigged. I got to catch for maybe 2/3 of an innings once before being dragged.

- Road trips – Woomera, Mt Gambier, Riverland. Huge.
- The occasional brawl – generally with ‘Internationals’
- Drinking ‘stereo’ jugs at the Tonsley after game , with ‘Play of the day’ being awarded, much to the bemusement of other patrons
- Social Awards at the end of season breakup
- Writing and receiving the ‘Flinders letters’ between myself and David Gooley – almost a decade of correspondence on one theme ; ‘I wanted a contract’ ! I still have them. Which lead to formation of
- FUSPU : The Flinders university Pitching Staff Union “. I still have my warm up jacket with huge FUSPU on the front. FUSPU is another story to be told!

After the breakup of the Division 1 Team I helped to form the ‘Flinders Fossils’. I am hazy with dates but I think we played for 4 years. I took over the helm from Hughie Frank in 2003, and we won the premiership in dreadful conditions against Adelaide Uni. My one and only Premiership as coach. The next year we lost the Grand Final to a bunch of very talented kids, with that being my retirement game.

I have just got so many vivid memories of those days. What a privilege to have played in such talented teams with many great characters.

THE FINDERS LETTERS AND FUSPU

Back in April 1977 I decided that I should be on a contract as all my counterparts in the USA have contracts, and many do not even have to bat’ . I wrote a lengthy letter pleading my case and threatening him with all sorts of physical damage to his person and property (a theme that persisted throughout the letters). This started a spate of humorous and topical letters between myself and the coach which lasted probably a decade. They were always read out at the start of the next game. I must admit they were quite clever because Dave and I always managed to intertwine newsworthy local and news events into them, for example Dave offering me a family picnic with the Chamberlains at Ayres Rock.

To back up my case and the usual round of grievances I employed a number of people :

Reginald van Deferens 3rd : the faithful and very dubious lawyer

Emsmee enterprises : lots of people in the company had the name M.Smee – allowed for good petitions

Anon : anonymous threat issuer

Caligula Pigstrotter ; South American terrorist

Dr Sigfried Fraud : my psychiatrist (I was mentally scarred when I had to pitch with a pre-used match ball once), and the mental anguish of always batting #9.

Gonzalez Del Anaconda : professional sporting agent

Vlad the Inhaler : an East German drug lord.



Jammo and I appealed to the coach to have me named 'Disabled Player of the Year' after having to miss a Grand Final due to injury - the Coach duly rejected this. From this FUPSU emerged (Flinders University Pitching Staff Union) to protect the rights of pitchers (and anyone else who would drink with us). We decided pre-season to picket the first practice, and placed protest banners on the cage and pitching mound, and refused to throw batting practice (for a while). At the first match of the season we set up our own enclosure with droppers and bunting, had a visitor's book, and our own esky. Others were allowed to join if they bought Jammo and I stubbie each. We declared a sovereignty zone around the mound into which the Coach was not allowed to enter. He actually complied with this !! There were of course issues if the Coach decided that a non-member be called on to pitch. For a while Jammo and I were the only serious beer drinkers in the team, but with the inclusion John Gooley FUPSU hit new heights (or lows!).

Marty

FUPSU President for Life

Reflections Terry Ryan (1967 to 1975)

My baseball journey at Flinders (as best I can recall!)

Turning up to an O'week meeting for Baseball at Flinders in 1967 was the start of a life-long involvement in baseball. Just two years earlier, I had arrived at Sacred Heart College as a Year 11 boarder not knowing what baseball was. It was only when one of the Marist brothers who had taught my father mentioned that I must be a baseballer because my father had been, did I even know my father had played baseball.

So after 2 seasons at SHC of about 8 games each, I began my playing career at Flinders, in Minor F grade. In those days, baseball was a winter sport only, but that was soon to change a year or so later. I recall "volunteering" my mother to make the uniforms for the team, and did not really appreciate just how long it took her to cobble together a set of uniforms in time for the start of the season.

In 1967 we travelled, by train, to Melbourne to play in our first Intervarsity, hosted by Monash. We stayed at the then infamous George Hotel in St Kilda, where we played havoc with the lifts. I don't recall much if anything about our baseball results, but I do recall that we were introduced to the "infamous" Monash Shandies at the boat races. There were some sick and sorry boys the next morning as some of us went to an AFL game before heading home on the Overland, while the Minor C team had to head back to Adelaide to play a ssemi-final.



Once the change-over to Summer Baseball occurred, Flinders was not able to field any teams, but continued to play in the Winter Competition, and so began what possibly could

be called the dynasty of Flinders Baseball, led of course by the indubitable figure, Mr David Gooley.

What characterised the teams and players at Flinders in those days was how well we got on together, and how hard we trained and played. Turning up to practice at 9.30am on a Sunday morning tested the resolve of a few, but nevertheless, there was always a good turnout. As the late Alan Mitchell, Secretary of the Flinders Sports Association said in his Foreword to the booklet "...a ten year history... 1966-1975": "the real strength of the club has come from the remarkable comradeship and understanding of each other that have developed season by season".

A couple of highlights are worth mentioning:

1. The year we won the Intersports in Sydney 1969, hosted by the University of NSW, playing the final in pouring rain on the field outside Long Bay Jail, because it was the only relatively dry field available in Sydney after a big wet. This was the first time that Flinders had won an I/V in any sport, and with the Minor E team winning the local premiership, the club was awarded 10 honours at the annual Sports Association Awards.
2. The year we hosted the Intersports (1971). I basically took 3 months off from my studies (Dip Ed that year) to organise the event. "Highlights" included interstate teams taking cement parking bollards into the bathrooms at the Halls and trying to flush them down the toilets. We managed to catch a group of visitors rolling a keg away from the change-rooms where the boat races were being held.
3. Winning consecutive Winter Premierships in 1973, 1974 and 1975.

Over the ensuing years, I have often wondered what happened to those players from the first 10 years. I was lucky enough to be able to keep in touch with Jim Raw on an intermittent basis, and a couple of years back we caught up for a glass or 2 of vino. I recently managed to connect to Giulio Vida via Facebook, and he now lives in Spain. He returned to Adelaide last year for a reunion of his school mates at Adelaide Boys' High School. Others I have had contact with over the years include Igor Plisko (he even became a teacher at my old school – obviously did not do enough due diligence about his time at Flinders!) and Geoff Hastwell, who also ended up teaching at Woomera High School, where I also went to school.

My baseball career finished about 35 years after I began at Flinders. However, it was as an umpire, where I reached the lofty heights of becoming Director of Umpiring for Victoria, umpiring in the ABL and I attended Professional Umpire School in the US. It has been a wonderful journey, and I will never forget those early years at Flinders and the great guys who started on the journey with me.

Reflections Josh Henderson (1994 to 2000)

Walking into the 'Baseball Park Sports' shop in 1994 I was unaware how this decision would change my baseball destiny. That sounds a bit dramatic, but most good baseball stories are (Field of Dreams?). That day the man selling me some cleats was none other than Mr Matthew Miles. As baseballers do, we got chatting about the game, where we played and who we both knew. Little did I know that conversation would open up doors for other ways of enjoying the game and making life-long friends. I'm sure now this was Matt's fertile feeding ground for new recruits to the FUBC.

My experience in baseball at that time was very limited to club baseball in summer. Matt told me about an event I had never heard of called the 'University Games'. A week away playing baseball against every other Uni in the country. Matt asked if I was interested, and probably sensing me sitting on the fence, added the fact it was also a week of intense partying including the penultimate challenge of the boat race. I was sold.

In September of that year I headed away to Wollongong with 30 guys and gals from Flinders to play baseball every day and party every night. I ended up going on 5 uni games trips, and it's fair to say my body handled the first couple much better than the last. There were many highlights for me, in 1995 I took the coaching and organising reigns over from Matty and we won the gold medal in Darwin. It was my first taste of victory, and most importantly, victory beers in any baseball format and I was hooked. That ultimate feeling would stay with me as I went on to be a player coach in summer club ball, and something I would chase each year.



Other on field highlights included being the Baseball Director for the Uni Games hosted by Flinders University in 1997. It was a special event and the experience of successfully organising a major event with such great people has stayed with me. Being in the gold medal Uni Games Team in Melbourne in 1998, in particular seeing our cricketing recruit Tony Emmel unable to use a glove in the outfield, ditching it mid inning, and catching a smoking line drive bare handed. And also being part of the 'three in a row' division 1 winter baseball premiership sides in winter baseball from 1998 to 2000. Other highlights were some off field classics. Mike Havelberg's jug skull in under 5 seconds, a feat most likely to never be repeated. Julie Wainwright downing pints faster than Michael Ewart... time and time again. Our victories in boat races at Uni Games, in particular when we won the race and the gold medal in 1998.

What I have found to be the most important aspect of my involvement in the club has been the friendships I have formed. It gave me the opportunity to get to know players from other summer ball clubs who used to be adversaries, becoming lifelong mates through our love of the game. These friendships developed into an important extension of my involvement in the baseball community in SA, and I will cherish them forever. All thanks to that conversation I had with Matt in the baseball shop over 20 years ago.

Reflections Sam Tibbits (1994 to 2000)

I came to Adelaide in February 1994 as an 18 year old to commence a Bachelor of Economics at Flinders. Adelaide seemed pretty big for a kid that grew up in Darwin and everything was a bit overwhelming at first.

I played lots of different sport growing up but my passion was baseball - and during O-Week the first and only club I signed up for was the Flinders University Baseball and Softball club.

The beginnings of my baseball journey in Adelaide were Winter ball Saturday games on the bottom oval (before there was a car park there). No back net meant chasing foul balls down the back of the hill and the benches were literally that – portable wood benches that would struggle to fit 9 bums on them. The lack of facilities did not matter one bit. I would be up early every Saturday morning counting down the hours to game time, and we would play rain or shine.



The mates I made playing in my early days remain mates today and were a great support for a young guy that didn't have a lot of social contacts in a big, new town. We played hard and we had some success but we also had fun, sometimes to the angst of coach Matty Miles who tirelessly attempted to keep some sort of order to a bunch of hooligans and jokers.

Without doubt the two major highlights of my playing time at Flinders were our Gold Medals at the Australian University games in 1995 and 1999. In 1995 returning to Darwin to play in front of family and friends was great in itself. We had a fantastic bunch of guys who gelled perfectly and to take home a gold medal in the end was brilliant.

The 1999 University Games were the pinnacle of my time at FUBSC. Being hosted in Melbourne the playing environment was somewhat hostile at times towards the SA crew but that didn't phase us, in fact it played to our advantage. We took all comers on and off the field. We partied hard and we played harder. The team won just about every possible baseball award that week including of course, the Gold Medal. I'm sure many of the stories of that week will be recounted and shared here tonight. It was a week I'll never forget for so many reasons, and a fitting way to end my time representing FUBSC.

Other baseball commitments eventually overtook my playing time at Flinders but I will always look back on my time here with fondness. It's great to see that the Club continues to go from strength to strength not only in the Winter association but with continuing numbers and success in the Summer league. Much is owed to the volunteers who put in many hours to ensure the club continues to grow. You know who you are. Congratulations Flinders on your first 50 years and all the best for the next 50. Thanks FUBSC.

