

Guy Congdon (1978-1981)



Before 1978 I had played juniors for Frankston City and Overport and as a 16-year-old playing U20's and seniors at Mornington where I could of been playing

against Marty and Mick in their Melb. Uni days.

I arrived in Bendigo to study Graphic Design and had an acquaintance who played for Golden City and so had 1 training session with them before meeting Carl & Bibi Thayer in the College canteen as they were recruiting players for the College team. As Golden City trained in White Hills and me not having a car or license, training at Osborne St sounded much more attractive so the following day myself and 1 other person (Dave Damond I think) turned up where we waited for an hour before deciding no one else was coming and the BBQ and barrel in the Osborne Street Bullring was a better option. So I was introduced to the College philosophy that we do not take it too seriously.

My memories of the 1978 season were of a College v Colts antagonism all season which unfortunately we finished second in, although a highlight for me was attempting to lift Colts Mark James off the ground by the throat after he had clipped me from behind for the third time in as many minutes. A very understanding Referee pulled me aside, grinned, and told me to behave.

I have memories of the cup game against Glenn's drunken Echuca team and Carl Thayer perched on the roof of a mini bus filming the game and sledging the Echuca players, some of whom were inviting him to come down and continue the conversation.

Our keeper Dave Moyer, the owner of a mad Rottweiler named Michael, married that year and as it turned out hours after we had a match and he was playing. The Ref. told all the opposition players that if anyone touched him it was a straight red card.

The season ended in disappointment with our loss in the Knock Out Cup which was played at the Queen Elizabeth Oval in front of the biggest crowd I had played in front of but the best memory was the change rooms which were covered in green and gold balloons and streamers which I'm sure Siggy had arranged (courtesy the ladies).

1979 saw Kyneton rise as the team to beat and before our first match against them at Beischer I recall Siggy telling me that they had a great little winger but he only had a left foot and to play him onto his right. He was right, a brilliant player but following Siggy's advice I kept him quiet. Our away game was a frigid, wet and windy afternoon at only Kyneton or Ballarat can offer and none of us wanted to be there and we were losing badly at half time. The roasting we got was the only time I saw (and heard) Siggy angry - needless to say it worked and we came back in the second half and won the game. After the game our elation was tempered a bit because there was no hot water in the showers.

1980 saw me have my personal high and low in my time with College. The high was being selected for the Bendigo representative team and playing in the country championships in Shepparton. The low was weeks later when a sliding two footed scissor tackle from behind damaged my ACL and MCL and put me out for the rest of the season.

1981 was the standout year for club success and also club spirit and is the year I remember most fondly. The camaraderie was magical and everyone was willing to help and pitch in, be it marking the ground to lugging portable goals half way across the Edwards Rd campus to the new ground after a near drowning on the Osborne St swamp. The Sunday night sessions at Stuart & Sue's were memorable as Marty & Stuart proceeded to wind each other up. The post season celebrations at Siggy & Heather's where COLLEGE had been mown in 5 foot tall letters in the lawn.

I continued playing in the Melbourne Amateur League after finishing at Bendigo until 1986 when I damaged my knee again and decided enough was enough.

I decided in 2014 to get off the work treadmill and took early retirement, finished on the Tuesday and on Wednesday was flying to Brazil for the World Cup. I have been to Elland Road to watch Leeds play numerous times and can be found watching Melbourne Victory most weekends. Stuart found me about six months ago on a 1970's English football page on facebook.

I'm really looking forward to the reunion and the chance to reminisce on what I regard as some of the best years of my life.