

Hugh Perrett

Subject:

FW: Brian Frederick Hastings -- Tribute

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To: Brian Hastings <bhast23@hotmail.com>

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Subject: Brian Frederick Hastings -- Tribute

My name is Hugh Perrett. I went to Wellington College with Brian --- in my case 1952-1956 ; in Brian's case 1953-1957 . Largely through our sporting association, we were good friends at College and had a close association later in life as members of a group of around 10 to 12 Old-Boy mates who regular went to the annual Inter-Collegiate Quadrangular Rugby Tournament involving Wellington College; Nelson College; Wanganui Collegiate and Christs College , to support the old school , but probably more particularly, to catch up again and enjoy each others company. Representing Brian's many mates from those days, as well as myself, I feel very privileged to be able to provide this tribute to Brian, covering his and "our" years at Wellington College. He was a great guy and a close friend.

I first met Brian in 1951 when we were both members of a Wellington Primary Schools Junior Rugby Rep Team. That was not really of any significance , except that we were to reconnect subsequently at Wellington College. I was totally unaware then that Brian was already highly regarded as a schoolboy cricketer.

Brian started at Wellington College in 1953 in form 3C. We always had our school athletic sports during the first term and it was then that we all realised we had an outstanding new sports and athletics star at the school. Brian was powerfully built for his age and an outstanding sprinter. He powered his way to a win in both the under 13 100yards and 75 yards sprints—both in record times . I can still see those events in my mind.. Not only that, but Brian in his first year was in the 2nd X1 cricket team – extremely unusual for a 3rd former , the best of who were usually all required to play their full first year in a special 3rd form team known as Net 8. It was specifically commented on that Brian " had the temperament to go far in the game". He played rugby in 3B rugby team , again at his age and stage, reflecting his obvious similar ability as a rugby player.

In 1954 Brian was in form 4C and was Form captain – an indication of his standing with his class-mates. Brian was always a nice-natured, naturally friendly guy with a nicely balanced level of self-assurance /confidence. Brian won the class prize for academic achievement in 4C.

Brian again excelled in the Athletics Sports. He won the under 14 75 yards scratch in record equalling time ; the under 14 75 yards handicap (running from scratch) in a 75 yards record time and the under 14 100 yards in record time. In the Wellington McEvedy Shield inter-secondary schools Athletics

Tournament Brian won the 100yards under 14 event in record time. In 1954 he was in the 1st X1 (cricket) and played for 2B in rugby – again an excellent team at his age and stage, underpinning his rugby ability.

In 1955 Brian's, 5th form year , he broke school records in the Junior 100; 220 and 440 yards events , winning trophies in the 220 and 440 yards. He also won the junior long-jump and cricket ball throw. He was again in the College's McEvedy Shield Athletics Team and, of course, again in the 1st X1 . He was in 2A rugby team , regarded for backs as a stepping stone team to the 1st XV. I well remember Burnie Paetz , a well known Wellington cricket identity and Master at school, saying to me --- " Hugh , if you want to learn how to really bat, just watch Hastings ."

In 1956 Brian was in Upper 5B and (again) won the class prize. In athletics Brian won the intermediate long jump championship and was 2nd in the 220yds and 440yds intermediate Championship events. He was again in the McEvedy team and came 2nd in the intermediate long jump and was in the winning intermediate relay team. The

McEvedey was won by Wellington College. Brian also won (with Ross Anderson) the school "fives" senior doubles title .

He was again in the 1st X1 – a key player – and was also in the 1st XV , at centre three- quarter . While Brian was obviously already an outstanding cricketer, he was also an outstanding //brilliant rugby player --- fast; elusive; great hands; great timing ; defensively strong and with a great rugby brain. Some 4 years later Bill Freeman , the well known Wellington Provincial Coach, told me Brian was destined to be New Zealand's next double All Black. Sadly injury was to intervene to prevent that happening.

In 1957, his last year at school, Brian was, not at all surprisingly , made a Prefect . The Head-prefect that year was Neville Kidd, later to fight in and then head up the NZ SAS for some years. Brian won the Geography prize for his class that year. He was the Senior long-jump champion and again in Wellington College's McEvedey Team, this time in the 4x100 yards Relay Team which broke the McEvedey record for the event. Brian was again in the 1st X1 , as Captain , and the 1st XV as Vice Captain. In 1957 Brian also played for the Wellington Brabin Cup cricket team . Brian was in the 1st X1 from 1954 to 1957 and in the 1st XV in 1956 and 1957. The 1957 1st XV was a top team and won the Annual Quadrangular Tournament that year. At the end of the season Brian was selected for the Wellington Secondary Schools Representative Team, sponsored by the Barbarians Club , to play against a Wellington 3rd 1st / under 20 Rep Team. As it happened I was in the under 20 Rep Team. Brian, at centre for the Secondary Schools, was marking Rod Heeps (formerly of Mt Albert Grammar in Auckland) who was to become New Zealand's 100/200 yards Sprint Champion and also an All Black (Wing). Like Brian, Rod was a really good guy. Brian had an outstanding game that day and I clearly remember him accelerating around Rod a couple of times --- not at all an easy thing to do. I must also confess to experiencing a strong feeling of pride in my chest when my old mate did that. Brian was a top rugby player as well as an outstanding cricketer.

What more to say about Brian. A glittering career at Wellington College . He was of course greatly admired by many of his school mates , especially the younger students. He is arguably the best sportsman to have ever gone to Wellington College. But Brian was unaffected. He had a very well balanced level of self-assurance, was confident in his abilities , competitive and had strong achievement drive , but he was a very nice-natured and friendly guy who was very well liked by all his mates and was always very good company. Not many of Brian's old schoolmates are left now, , but he was, and will always be remembered, with very fond affection by those of us who went to school with him, knew him and always enjoyed his friendship, company and his outstanding abilities.

Hugh Perrett
28 February 2022