

Cliff Green

AFLUA Life Member

Cliff Green served umpiring for three decades as and boundary umpire, training supervisor and umpires' advisor. He was an umpires' man through and through.



Born Clifford James Green on 27 May 1932 in Clifton Hill 'Cliffy', as he was known to his umpiring colleagues, grew up in Carlton and was a Blues supporter for life.

He played football for Princess Hill under-17s from 1947-49 (premiership 1949), Ivanhoe (VAFA) in 1950, Fitzroy under-19s in 1951, and Coburg (VFA) under-21s from 1952-53.

Cliff joined the then VFL Second Eighteen Umpires Association in 1955 as a boundary umpire and was promoted to the VFL senior list for the 1961 season.

In round 1 he earned Heritage Number 314 by debuting at Brunswick Street Oval as Melbourne easily accounted for Fitzroy. Settling quickly into the VFL match routine of 3-in-1-out over the next two seasons success came fairly quickly. VCFL grand finals in the South

Gippsland and Latrobe Valley leagues in 1961 were followed by his first VFL final at the end of 1962. He was also appointed to the first of his three night grand finals.

The 1964 Second Semi-final was a crushing win for Melbourne over Collingwood and also Cliff's second VFL final. He closed the year out with finals in the Waranga-North East, Ovens and Murray and Goulburn Valley Leagues.

On the occasion of his 200th VFL match Cliff said "that without doubt the 1965 VFL Grand Final was the highlight of my career". The year was made more special by the birth of his son, Ian, who would later go on to boundary umpire the 1993 and 1995 AFL Grand Finals making Cliff and Ian the second father and son combination to achieve the feat behind Reg and Bill Treloar.

St.Kilda featured in two of Cliff's moments in that special year. They lost to Essendon in the grand final but they won their first ever match at Moorabbin. Collingwood were the visitors in a six-point thriller in front of 51 370 spectators, a

figure that would never be exceeded. In a low scoring affair, the lead see-sawed through the final term with the Saints prevailing. The atmosphere was electric.

The 1968 grand final was closer than 1965. In front of a record crowd of 116 828 Carlton hung on to defeat Essendon. Deep into time-on vital shots on goal sailed out of bounds for throw-ins. Cliff adjudicated on kicks from Keckovich and Jones (Carlton) and partner Rod Tanner on Blethyn (Essendon). The ball was moved quickly as time ran out adding to pressure to be in position.

With the introduction of the out of bounds on the full rule in 1969 football sped up markedly and scoring also increased. This in turn increased the work of boundary umpires. Cliff's last final was in 1970 and this was a game that epitomised the new style of football. The pace was tremendous and both sides kicked 17 goals.

Aged 40 in 1972 Cliff umpired his 200th match in round 20 at Arden Street and completed his last VFL match the following week at the Western Oval. If fitness was a question certainly the selectors did not think so as his final VFL appointments were in the Murray league on 23 September and in the Ovens and Murray the following day – both VCFL finals!

After 12 VFL seasons Cliff had officiated in 201 VFL (7 finals) and 30 VCFL (7 grand finals) matches. He was also boundary umpire at a number of Pentridge matches.

Retirement from the boundary only led to the next stage of Cliff's umpiring involvement.

From 1973-80 he was one of the VFL country umpires training advisors. Boundary and goal umpires advisors were first appointed in 1982 and Cliff filled the former position from its instigation until 1985. He later commented he loved the involvement of training and appointing boundary umpires.

Having achieved life membership of the VFLUA in 1971 and as a member of the Grand Final Boundary and Goal Umpires Club Cliff was always around umpiring. In 2012 he was a proud father as he stood-in to receive Ian's recognition trophy for the 1993 AFL Grand Final.

Cliff Green passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on 24 October 2013, aged 81 the result of complications of pneumonia.

You can view some of Cliff's work in the 1968 VFL Grand Final at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YiS4BTYbz8M> Check out the period from 2:45-4:05 and 11:30-13:50