



*"There was no science about my Lacrosse. It was purely instinctive. If a bloke had the ball and I wanted it, I went and got it. If anybody stood in my road, on my side or not, then they went down. That was the way I played. It's as simple as that."*

<b>Playing Number</b>	1
<b>Age</b>	74
<b>Games Played</b>	400+

1958, 1959:	Pt Adelaide Lacrosse Premiership player
1968:	Certificate of Merit, Australian Lacrosse Council
1959:	Brady Trophy, State Carnival Most Outstanding Player
1959;	Australian Lacrosse Team v USA
1959, 1962:	National Carnival All-Australian Team
1953, 55, 58-63, 65-67:	South Australian Lacrosse Team

I started playing Lacrosse when I was at High School. My friend, Max Hundertmark, and I went to Croydon Boys Technical School and Max kept saying "what about coming out and trying this lacrosse?" At High School you were expected to play a sport. I had tried soccer and softball but was never much good at them so I went out and gave the game a go. At that stage Croydon Boys had a very good Lacrosse team and we used to play against the other secondary schools such as Goodwood High, and a couple of others.

Max and I used to ride home together with our Lacrosse sticks throwing the ball to each other as we rode along and getting off quite frequently to pick the ball out of the gutter. I couldn't say what it was about the game itself that appealed to me. Perhaps it was the dash and that fact that you could body people. I was a big bugger, even at that stage, and I could get along side of somebody and give him a hip and shoulder and roll the bastard. They would pick themselves up and look around and wonder where they were. I liked that bit.

On the way home from playing in the secondary school team, Max and I would go

past the Woodville Lacrosse ground on Oval Avenue and see people out there running around. Max lived close and he said "well come on let's go over and see if we can get a game." We both started in the U15's and then the next year we won the U16 premiership. It just sort of rolled on from there, we kept winning.

There was a chap, Doug Green, who took me under his wing and taught me to throw properly. In those days I used to be little bit faster than I am now and the team needed a defence man. So with Doug's help I just slotted into the team. I would have loved to have played in the attack but nobody bloody put me up there. I must admit that in one game I threw 5 goals from the defence line. That was really the highlight of my life up until that time. I went home and said "I threw 5 goals today".

I think the highlight of my playing career was playing against the Americans on the Melbourne Cricket Ground. The Americans used to wear a helmet and we only used to wear an old cloth cap with a brim. A cardboard brim would fold down to protect your face. That worked so well that I only played against the Americans twice because I

got my head opened up, but we beat them 3 times as a state team here in Adelaide. It came as quite a shock to me but I was named the Most Outstanding Player in that carnival. There was no science about my Lacrosse, it was purely instinctive. If a bloke had the ball and I wanted it; I went and got it. If anybody stood in my road, on my side or not, then they went down. That was the way I played; it's as simple as that. There were a few rolled Americans who were very surprised because I used my body, whereas they used their sticks to take the ball away. I knew I had played some good games but I didn't think that I had played all that well, although looking back on it, I think that I really was the outstanding player and I deserved to win that award.

The 1955 premiership team consisted mainly of seasoned players. The Woodville players that were there were Ken Forrest, Ewan Parr, Peter Vantenac, Graham Lines and a few others. That year the state team had been successful against the Victorians. We played that tournament at the Brighton Oval and playing against Brighton in 1955 we were all sort of keyed up. We had seen some of the Brighton players during the state carnival and we more or less knew what they would do, their style of play. The tactics we used were to

get the ball down the field quickly. If I got the ball I would pass it over the top of the goal and Peter Van Tenac or Lionel Coggins would come around the side of our goals and that would get their defence men into the midfield. At that stage, very few people passed the ball that far and even some of our own players were disinclined to do that, they liked to do the short passes. But I found that if I played a long ball to get it down, even if it went behind the goal, then Peter Van Tenac or Lionel Coggins knew it was coming and would get in to position to take it and come around the side of the goal.

I think there was a big celebration after that win — but I can't remember. It was the first one the club had won since 1949. I was too young to have played in that one. I had only been playing for a couple of years in the minor grades but it was quite good when we beat Brighton and that gave us a bit of a lift. After we played Brighton and won we maintained a very good relationship personally with the Brighton players. If you passed them in the street they would speak to you. Freddie Neal, in particular. They knew they had been

beaten but they never held it against you and that is what I found out about most of the players from other teams. If you saw them on the street they would speak and have a bit of a chat about when are you going to start training, how you going, have you lost any players? Lacrosse is more of a family rather than a competition and that's what I liked about it. You can still have friends off the field even if they hated your guts on the field. Lacrosse is a community.

I was fortunate to play in 3 winning premierships teams. Those teams had respect for each other, we knew each other's ability and were able to mould in and support each other. There were no individuals. We were a team, or more of a family, and I think that's what made those teams great.

At the end of the season we used to go to Wallaroo, Nuriootpa or up to Jamestown. Back then Jamestown and Pt Pirie used to be quite the lacrosse playing areas. Those towns all had lacrosse players and some players from those country areas played in the state sides. A bloke called Len McVicar, who was the father of Malcom and Ken, played in the 1932 state

side against Victoria. We always got a good reception even if some did play up a bit. Being young I was quite shy, shall we say. Those trips gave you a sense of belonging within the team. Again, more of a family than a team.

Don Woods was a fantastic player, probably the finest player that I have seen. He was just magnificent. He was athletic, he was crafty, he was cunning, and he was built like a country convenience that could run. Don would put his arm around you and say "well done" and you responded to that. Even if you made a mistake he wouldn't walk over and say "you stuffed that up", he would say "he beat you that time but what you could have done was ... this" and then go on to explain another way of play. I would go away and think about what he had said. In the next game I would try what he had said and mostly it worked out. He had seen the mistakes but believed I was going in the right direction to become a better player.

Ken Forrest was great player. He was a thinker who could put his finger on the pulse of the game and know exactly where we were going wrong.

Lyndsey Clews was another great player, an ex-servicemen whose game was in decline as I was coming up. Clews, he would hold the

back line together. He controlled the back line. A great talker, he would tell you that you should be playing closer to him or give him a little bit more room, let him come around the side so you could take it off him as he came around the side to have his shot. He was a tactician. Clews and Ken Forrest were a steadying influence on the field.

The cheekiest bastard I played with was John Inge. A player would come and have a shot and John as the goal keeper would say "Is that the best you can do?" He would stand to one side of the goal, so the bloke would have a good opportunity for a shot then we would just take it out of the air. He would have to be the best goalkeeper I have ever seen. But he was a cheeky bastard. The club used to hold committee meetings in his father's shed that had a table tennis table. John was a terrific table tennis player and would almost be able to play two people at once. His reaction and anticipation was so acute it was hard to imagine.

I gave my teammates all the support I could. I would put my body in front of them, try to keep an opposition player away from them and give them the opportunity to get out of there. I wasn't a theoretical player like a Ken Forrest, or Van Tenac, or Don Woods, I was just an instinctive player. One time I got sent off the field for the look on my face — seriously, Peter Taylor, who was a top referee at the time, ordered me from the field. After the game I asked him why and he said "for the look on your face". I laughed and I thought "how can you do that?" It must have shown the intensity that I put into my game. I wonder if that was really the reason or if he just felt sorry for the forwards, which I think umpires do feel. Umpires give small forwards a better run for their money. They must think "poor little bugger, I'll give him a free for that", whereas they don't necessarily deserve it.

Lacrosse has meant friendship, mateship, respect and a sense of pride. I can look people in the eye and say that I am Turner and that I played against you and I beat you. So, I am not just 6'4", I am 7' tall and you had better remember that.

I love the game of Lacrosse. I kept playing for as long as I did because I would pick up that lacrosse stick and think I am going out with my mates. It was terrible when I realised that I had to give up playing. I had a heart problem. Just the thought that I wouldn't be able to go out there and play felt like somebody had kicked me in the guts. That really did piss me off and for a few months I stopped going out and watching games, that is how deeply it affected me. But first thing I did of a Sunday morning was to get up and read the paper to see if they had won. After a while I thought I was being stupid. There are these chaps out there that I am friendly with, some of them with whom I had played, and they deserve my support. To go out there and be with them in their highs and lows and encourage them as best as I am able.

Even today it is great to be out there with friends even though I can't play. Just to be there and watch and be involved in the game.