

The final saw the title holder the Sunwest Razorbacks up against the Southern Suns whom they defeated in a close round game 3-2. With high hopes and leading from the front Trevor McPhillips (Player of the series) took the Razorbacks to an early lead but it was short lived.

Mick McCall (Player of the Final) inspired his troops and the Southern Suns ran out winners 5-3 for their first forties title. Besides McPhillips the Razorbacks were well served by Kevin Feldman, Peter Somerville, Mal Bunney and Terry Ford.



Mick McCall starred in the Suns victory over the Razorbacks

Best for the Suns was Mick McCall who was assisted by strong performances from Gary Newman, John Ruzzene, Ron Wall and captain Don Barbaro.

Mens 50

This division only introduced in 2000 had only one winner on the two previous occasions and they were the South Queensland Sharks (also known as the Gold Coast Sharks or the South Queensland and Border Districts Sharks). With high expectations they expected to play again in and win this years' final. Other teams however had other ideas about the outcome.

After one preliminary round there was a cross over of pools and extra games played which gave a final competition table showing the Sydney Rebels on top followed by the South Queensland Sharks, the Sydney Mets and the Sunwest Razorbacks, all teams however being equal on competition points.

For and against percentage determined places but for the Sharks and Mets their ratio was exactly 2.18% resulting in them playing a drop off to determine their position and who would go straight into the semis and who would contest a quarter final against the Southern Suns.

A loss to the Mets saw then up against the Suns whom they disposed of 5-1 only to then run up against the Sharks again in the semi finals. In a game both sides knew was never going to be easy the Mets got the better of the Sharks in the end winning 5-4.

For the Sharks, Player of the Series Bernie Lowther played strong and was assisted with good games form Terry Hatfield, Jim Baker, Doug Robson and Ray Dunkley.



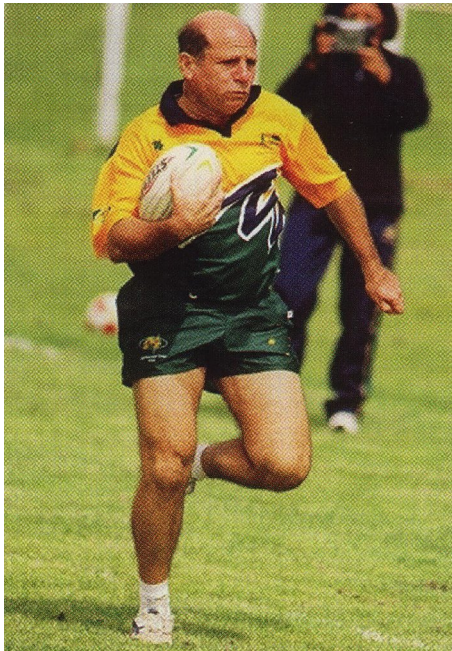
Terry Hatfield on the move for the Sharks

The other semi saw the Sydney Rebels have a tough match against the Hunter Hornets just getting home 2-0. Best for the Hornets were Kerry Campbell, Dave Knight, Graham Meally and Rod Bruce.

Final encounters in this division have been “gentle” affairs given that most of the players have been playing some sort of football for over 40 years.

The clash between the Sydney Rebels and the Sydney Mets was far from neighbourly love. It was a torrid race to get on top of your opponent and after forty minutes of touch, the Mets prevailed 5-2.

John Oakes, Ken McCulloch, Ray Bussell and Roy Wotton played strongly for the Rebels while the Mets stars were Michael Jonson (Player of the Final), Gary Brown, Dennis Day, Terry Reynolds and Laurie O’Brien.



The late, the GREAT Michael Jonson, playing for his beloved country was instrumental in ensuring the Mets secured a victory over arch rivals the Rebels

Women 30

With two titles under their belts in five years the Sunwest Razorbacks were shooting for their third championship and second in a row. After an uneven number of round games followed by the cross over of pool games the title holder saw themselves finish second on the ladder behind the Hunter Western Hornets on percentages.

Coming in third and fourth were the Southern Suns and South Queensland Sharks who had a quarter finals play off before contesting the semis against the top two. Their opponents were

the Northern Eagles and Sydney Scorpions respectively. The Eagles caused an upset by defeating the Suns 3-2 to move in to the semis while the Sharks narrowly defeated the Scorpions 3-2 to gain the last semis spot.

Despite a close semi and finishing fourth on the table the Sharks rose to the occasion and defeated top of the table winner the Hunter Hornets in a close fought duel 3-2 to advance to the finals. Best for the Hornets were Debbie Potts, Gai Yaylor, Natilee Greenwood and Kirsty Inglis.

The Northern Eagles knew they were in for a tough game against the title holders in the semi finals and despite a gutsy effort they were no match for the champions going down 2-7. Best for them were Julie Seward, Lyn Eason, Cathy Conomos and Leigh Carlton.

During the preliminaries the Razorbacks and Sharks had not met so they needed to “feel each other out” before either team tried to usurp some authority on the game.

For the full forty minutes neither had the upper hand until finally the Razorbacks put the ball over the line and with the referee agreeing it was a touchdown, they finally had the advantage and won 1-0.

Strong games from Karyn Murphy, Rhonda Grehan, Karley Banks and Margie Allen could not prevent the Sharks from going down to the champions.

For the Razorbacks Sue Ginns was Player of the Final and she was assisted through the tournament by strong performances from Teena Jennings (former Victorian Elite players), Dianne Pierce, Kerry Strasser and Jodie Luck. Player of the Series was Jody English from the Sydney Scorpions who finished sixth.

Women 35

After winning four out of the last four titles the Sydney Scorpions approached this years championships to prove they were the outstanding Women 35 team and win their fifth title and third consecutively.

After the preliminary rounds the Scorpions were on track finishing on top of the table and remaining undefeated.

In their semi final clash the Scorpions easily disposed of the South Queensland Sharks 5-0 with Anna Fuiava, Kerry Robinson, Kerry Norman and Lisa Miller all trying hard for the defeated Sharks.

Second placed Southern Suns came up against the Brisbane Cobras in the second semi final.



Carol Forlonge running hard for the Scorpions

In a tighter encounter than the first semi the scores changed constantly before the Suns got on top to win 4-3. Best for the Cobras were Deborah Jones, Angie McPhee, Leanne Hudson and Haylene Grogan.

The Scorpions versus the Suns final was another hard fought game with the Scorpions just getting home 3-1. Strong efforts from Leanne Gregurke, Allyson Fisher, Jill McGuinness and Megan Kennedy kept the Suns in the game until the final whistle.

For the Scorpions, Tracey Simpson was Player of the Final and she was supported by good performances from Megan Stanford, Kim Wiles, Carol Forlonge and Gabby Whelan. Cherie Green from the Northern Eagles (who finished fifth) was Player of the Series.

2002 NTL Final Senior Results

Men's 30

Sharks 5 Scorpions 4

Women's 30

Razorbacks 1 Sharks 0

Men's 35

Scorpions 7 Crusaders 3

Women's 35

Scorpions 3 Suns 1

Men's 40

Mets 4 Cobras 3

Men's 45

Suns 5 Razorbacks 3

Men's 50

Mets 5 Rebels 2

Sixth Youth Titles attract the champions of tomorrow to the National at Coffs Harbour

*South Queensland Sharks Boys
looking for second title to match
the Cobras and Mets*

Boys 20

In five years the Brisbane Cobras won the first two and the Sydney Mets the next two titles. The Sharks were current title holders and wanted to equal the other two clubs and set up a dynasty to continue winning the title for many more years. Their first hurdle was taking out this year's event and they stumbled in the round game against the Southern Suns going down 1-4.

Coming second to the Suns after the preliminary rounds they had to wait for their semi final opponents until the quarter final game between the Sunwest Razorbacks and Sydney Mets was decided. The Razorbacks just got home 3-2. In the other quarter final the Brisbane Cobras had a much easier run in disposing of the North Queensland Tropical Cyclones 7-3.

The semis saw the Suns dispose of the Brisbane Cobras 5-3 and the Sharks sent the Razorbacks home defeating them 5-2. Best for the Cobras were Jarrod Kendall, Brett Doyle and Tim Willett while for the Razorbacks Daniel Feldman, Seb Rey and Justin Huser stood out.



Player of the Finals for the Suns Andrew Wise

The final was expected to be a torrid affair with the Sharks chasing back to back victories. Unfortunately the star studded Suns were simply too good and ran away with the game 6-2. James Harrington, Ralph Hickman, Mark Regazzoli and Tory Hipperson played strongly for the Sharks

while Player of the Series Jamie Soward, and Player of the Final Andrew Wise together with Michael Swarko, Christian Lotter and Andrew Baggio starred for the Suns.

Suns Coach, Barry Jackson, said that his team's defence had been the key to the success. The nucleus of the Suns team was runners-up at the Australian 18 years championships a couple of years back and they showed plenty of spirit, speed and skill in the game against the highly fancied Sharks.

Womens 20

The Gold Coast Sharks Womens 20s team made it five on the trot when they won their final of the National Touch League at Coffs Harbour on Tuesday. The Sharks overwhelmed the Cyclones 4-0 in the heat of the day.

Sharks coach Frank Bondolfi, in his second year at the helm, said his young team had worked hard for the prize. It was a pretty impressive score-line and a great achievement, Bondolfi said. "Fitness, combined with their drilling and rucking patterns, had carried them to victory", he said. Bondolfi said that the team had saved their best game for last.

Cyclones coach Steve McCarron said he had been confident of his side's ability going into the final, but they had lacked experience. "It had also been difficult to get the squad to training when players were drawn from an area from Cairns to Bundaberg, with only one full training run; the job was always going to be difficult."

McCarron said that his team was happy, and there are no excuses why they lost. "We just need to keep pushing for more training. I'm very proud of the girls. We've got two 16-year-olds playing in this division, so they've got four or five years to go. At the end of the day, a loss like that is a good experience. You've got to go through games like that to be better", McCarron said.

He indicated that Kelly McGennity and Shannon Whitehouse, two Australian 18 years' representatives, were always going to be their important players, which also put pressure on the pair. Winger Kierra Davis also shone, McCarron said. South Queensland Sharks swept the awards with Lauren McDonald being awarded Player of the Final and Roxanne Winder Player of the Series.

**2002 NTL Final
Youth Results**

Men's 20

Suns 6 Sharks 2

Women's 20

Sharks 4 Cyclones 0

**2002 NATIONAL TOUCH
LEAGUE CLUB CHAMPIONS**



2002 Overall Points Table

1	Sydney Metropolitan	91
2	Gold Coast Sharks	90
3	Brisbane Cobras	82
4	Southern Suns	73
5	Sydney Scorpions	66
6	Nth Qld Cyclones	59
7	Sunwest Razorbacks	57
8	Hunter Western Hornets	49
9	Northern Eagles	41
10	Sydney Rebels	34
11	Crusaders	33
12	Barbarians	9
12	Australian Defence Forces	9
14	Touchwest	4

***Under 18's invite
New Zealand to
return***

***The return of New Zealand
School teams adds considerable
interest to the 2002
Championships***

The 2002 National 18's Touch Championships played at Coffs Harbour in September were one of the most successful ever for NSW teams, with NSW Combined High Schools again finishing second in the women's competition and for the first time ever the Sydney Mets came away with the title of best youth men's team in the country.

Boys 18's

The Sydney Mets performance was probably the most remarkable being the first time ever a non-school team has won the national championship. With state schools teams having first choice of all the junior players still in the school system, it is ever difficult for regional teams to compete on an equal level at national championships.

What may be more remarkable still is, with Brisbane Cobras also in the final, the fact both of the teams in the final were regional teams.

NSW Touch General Manager, Dean Russell, believes it is a credit to the local junior competitions that two regional teams managed to win their way through to the final.

"I feel the focus for touch is moving away from the schools and into the local competitions. Of course it is still very strong in schools and players get a very good grounding there, but there are very strong community based competitions out there now as well, so players who don't go through to year 12 can get a very solid grounding." said Russell.

"We are over the moon about the Mets winning. It was a terrific performance from them and they thoroughly deserved everything they achieved." The Sydney Mets had to get past six time winner and current title holder the Queensland State Secondary Schools in the semis and in a high

scoring game defeated them 12-9. Best for Queensland were James Roberts (MVP) Peter Mills, Gian Guerra, and Brendon Thimble.

The Cobras had an easier win in their semi against Central Queensland defeating them 9-4. Josh Essex (MVP and Player of the Series), Adrian O'Shanesy and Luke Bunt played strongly for CQ.



Despite this spectacular Touchdown by QSST they failed to defeat the Mets

In the main event, Player of the Final, Mets Daniel Brown, caused the Cobra's defence trouble all day, while excellent finishing saw Blake Green score four touchdowns for the newly crowned champions.

The Mets almost let the championship slip through their fingers when they let slip a 1 touchdown advantage late in the game to force the final into a sudden death 'drop-off'. Fortunately for the Sydney based side they regrouped and scored the winning touchdown during their first set with the ball in extra time.

Besides Brown and Green, the Mets were well served by Joseph Phillippe their MVP, Raymond Moujalli and Dean Springfield. For the Cobras Ian Lacey was their MVP and he was ably assisted by Kieran Gibbs who scored 15 touchdowns through the tournament, while Matthew Colleton and David Conlon ably assisted

Unlike in the series from 1993 to 1996 the New Zealand teams were ineligible for the finals series. They did however provide some amazing skilful touch and after their preliminary rounds were undefeated scoring 103 touchdowns for and 20 against and on the way disposing of the Mets 8-3 in the opening match of the tournament.

Shaun Ngawini was their star closely followed by Maurice Stone and Ryan Hotham.

Womens 18's

Unfortunately for NSWCHS women's team the Queensland Secondary Schools Team again beat them in the final. Part of the battle for NSW in winning the National 18's Championships is having its best schools players split between three different representative teams whilst Queensland only have the one representative team.

"We do have a bit of a problem when we face QSST," said Russell, "in that we split our best players into three teams." "I would like to think if we put all our best players into one team we would have one great game against QSST."

"There are four or five girls from the NSW Combined Catholic Colleges who would fit straight into the NSWCHS side and straightaway make it a stronger team."

"Then again, we give more girls the opportunity to go and compete at the Championships. If we only sent the one representative team we would be cutting down the number of girls representing NSW from 42 to 14, so from a perspective of giving more players a chance to have a higher level of development our system is excellent."

One of the great experiences for the players who travelled to Coffs Harbour this year was the opportunity to see the Australian teams take part in the Trans Tasman Test Series.

It is not everyday most of these young players will be given a chance to watch the best two teams on the planet face off against each other and most took their chance and supported the series, most of the time at the top of their voices, eagerly.

Australian Touch Association Assistant Chief Executive, Peter Topp, is extremely pleased with the way the tournament worked out. "It turned out really well," said Topp, "having the Trans Tasman teams there at the same time worked well. It gave the young players a chance to see touch at its best."

"It will probably be one of the only chances some of these players, especially the ones from W.A, Victoria, and the Northern Territory, will have to see this level of touch." "From the

perspective of the ATA, this years tournament was one of the best ever.”

In getting to the final Queensland had to defeat the Northern Eagles 12-2 and then face a determined North Queensland outfit who surprised them going down only 2-3 on the bell. Best for North Queensland were Amanda Cran (MVP), Kelly McGinnithy and Kirsty Le Gay Brereton.

The other finalists were perennial runners ups NSWCHS who defeated NSW CCC in a close quarter final 5-4 then South Queensland Sharks came close to knocking them over in the semis going down 2-3. Best for the Sharks were Jarah Jennings their MVP, Katherine Moore, Emma Law and Katie Shaw.

Led by the Player of the Final, and current Australian women’s shadow player, Kate Adams, QSST controlled the final from start to finish. After allowing the NSW team to score the first touchdown the reigning champions hit back quickly and continued applying pressure to take the lead.

The final was a tightly contested game with both sides stringing together impressive pieces of play at times through the match. In the end QSST drew away and went on to win 6-4. Best for CHS were their MVP Jai Curry, Kirstie Jenkins and Kirrily Bradstock while Kate Adams starred for Queensland and was ably assisted by Lauren McDonald, Roxanne Winder and Natasha Fry. Melissa McCall from NSW CCC, who finished sixth, was Player of the Series.

2002 Australian Under-18 Championship Results

Girl’s Bronze

SQBD 4 Nth Qld. 2

Girl’s Grand Final

QSST 6 NSWCHS 4

Boy’s Bronze

Central Qld. 10 QSST 5

Boy’s Grand Final

Mets 6 Cobras 5

2003 Seventh NTL sees Queensland Young Guns steal the show

The dominance by NSW teams in the Opens divisions is set to be tested from 13th to 16th March by a new breed of Touch players.

Mens Open

Current title holders the Sydney Mets were hoping to make it two in a row and chase the dominance of titles held by their neighbours the Sydney Scorpions who won the first four Mens Open crowns.

Going through undefeated in 2002 the Mets started their campaign off with three hard fought wins before coming up against the South Queensland Sharks. The game was fast and furious and the Mets came up against an opponent with playing skills rarely displayed at this level before.

Each time Gary Sonda, Steve Mayne and Terry Delana put the ball over the line for a touchdown; Shark’s Benji Marshall replied then went one better to score four touchdowns himself and almost single-handily give victory to the Queensland team 4-3.

With a draw 3-3 against the Brisbane Cobras the Mets earned a quarter final berth against the Sunwest razorbacks who they disposed of 4-2 in a tight encounter.

The Sharks and the Cobras went straight into the Semis and were joined there by the Sydney Scorpions who had a 7-2 victory over the North Queensland Tropical Cyclone in the quarters. Both semis were tough fought battles with the Sharks and the scorpions trading blow for blow in a high scoring game.



Drumayne Dayberg Muir (above) and below fellow star Benji Marshall



Four touchdowns by Glen Fitzgerald could not prevent the Sharks running out winners 8-7. Besides Fitzgerald; Jamie Stowe, Ben Webster, Mark Boland and Shane Frederiksen played strongly for the Scorpions. In the other semi the Sydney Mets got over the top of the Brisbane Cobras 6-4 despite two touchdowns each to Brent Madders and Trent McDonald. Also starring for the Cobras were Mick Rogers, Craig Madders and Shane Duell.

The Mets were now in with a chance to defend their title and in finals football anything can happen. Touchdowns by Jim Marinos and Kurt Nowotny were not enough for the four the Sharks scored (Harrington, Wastall, Bartlett and Dayberg-Muir).

Despite the score the Mets were best served by Gary Sonda, Jason Stanton and Chris Hill. For the Winners; Drumayne Dayberg Muir was Player of the Final, Benji Marshall (Player of the Series), with Turoa Needham and Clayton Wastall putting in strong performances.

Womens Open

A strong Cobras outfit turned up to defend their 2002 title. Like the Mets men they were undefeated in the previous year and were expected to be the team to beat at this event. They showed their strength by going through the preliminary rounds undefeated and eventually met the South Queensland Sharks in the semis.

Their main opponents were the Sydney Mets who lost narrowly to them in the rounds 1-3 and who came up against the Sunwest Razorbacks in the semi finals. Despite a strong game from Tanya Bovgoupe (Sewter) and Carly Bell who both scored touchdowns the Razorbacks were no match for the Mets and went down 2-5. Angela Doyle and Casey Sharpe also played strongly for the vanquished.

The Cobras semi game with the Sharks was tough going until the champions usurped their authority and ran away with the game 7-4. Best for the Sharks were Tena McIlveen, Lauren McDonald, Katie Shaw and Zara Houston who all scored and were ably assisted by Renee Murphy and Sharyn Williams.



Sharyn Martin in beloved Queensland colours was Player of the Final in Cobra's win over the Mets

The final was the Mets chance to get revenge for their third place the previous year. Despite two touchdowns from Michelel Winchester and one each from her sister Louise and Nadina Bambury and Stephanie Sorrensen the Mets could not overtake the Cobras who won narrowly 6-5.

Scorers for the Cobras were Kelly Woods (Player of the Series) 2, Ashley Candice, Daina Hobbins, Sharyn Martin (Player of the Final) and Shelley Matcham, all one each.

Mixed Open

Runner up twice, two time winners and current Champions the Sydney Rebels arrived at Coffs chasing back to back titles. A draw with the Sydney Scorpions and losses to the Brisbane Cobras, South Queensland Sharks and Sydney Mets saw them miss out on the semi finals and eventually come in sixth place.

The four teams mentioned however made up the group who would play off for the title. With no team being undefeated the semis were open for the taking. One touchdown each by Cobra's Swain Rovelli and Natalie Parker were not good enough to beat the Sharks who recorded four touchdowns by Justin Robson, Nathan Jones, Michael Frith and Karley Banks.

The Other semis were more one sided when the Sydney Scorpions ran away from the Mets to record an 8-4 victory. Scorers for the Mets were Daniel Rushworth, Renee Willmontt, Inshan Sheriff and Charbel Bainou while for the Scorpions one each to Adam Fahim, Mahuta Teika, Dean Murphy, Sally Armstrong, Drew Davies, Philip Jarrett and Rachel Byrne.

The final saw both sides throw the ball around and attack from all parts of the field. In an entertaining game that saw the lead change many times the Scorpions finally got on top of their opponents in the second half and ran out winners 7-5.

Caroline McDonald scored two for the Sharks and Justin Robson, Leonnie Smith and Karley Banks one each while Craig Slavin and Nathan Jones played strongly to keep the Sharks in the game.

For the Scorpions two each to Michelle Flewitt and Michelle Roberts while Mahuta Teika, Drew Davies and Tony Eltakchi scored the remainder of the touchdowns.

Yvette Teika from the Scorpions was named Player of the Series and Tony Eltakchi was the Player of the Final. Phil Jarrett and Adam Fahim were strong performers throughout the series with Fahim scoring eleven touchdowns for the Scorpions while Justin Robson scored ten touchdowns for the Sharks.

2003 NTL Final Results			
Men's Open			
Sharks	4	Mets	3
Women's Open			
Cobras	6	Mets	5
Mixed Open			
Scorpions	7	Sharks	5

National Touch League 2003

Overall Placing

Teams	Men	Wm	Mx	#
Gold Coast Sharks	15	9	10	34
Brisbane Cobras	10	15	8	33
Sydney Mets	12	12	7	31
Sydney Scorpions	9	2	13	24
Sydney Rebels	6	8	5	19
Sunwest Razorbacks	7	10	1	18
Southern Suns	5	6	6	17
NQ Cyclones	8	4	2	14
Barbarians	3	7	3	13
Crusaders	2	3	4	9
Hunter Hornets	4	5	0	9
Northern Eagles	1	2	0	3

Sixth Seniors NTL sees a new challenger to the title as best senior permit

The Mets, Sharks and Suns dominated in 2002 and their supremacy is about to be challenged.

Mens 30

The Scorpions who were runners up in the previous year were out to show the 30's division why they should be champions in 2003.

Their aspirations were dealt a blow when in Round three they lost 4-5 to their neighbours the Sydney Mets. John Moujalli scored three for the Mets while Darren Swain got two touchdowns for the Scorpions. They showed plenty of grit to get back up and go on to meet the Brisbane Cobras in the quarter finals disposing of them 10-1. They then met the undefeated South Queensland Sharks in the semi finals.

The Mets on the other hand went through undefeated and disposed of the Defence team 8-1 to set up a semi final showdown with the Hunter Hornets. A strong performance from Adrian Sutherland for the Hornets saw him score two touchdowns while Wayne Merritt and Geoff Stait put on one each but it was not enough to counter the six from the Mets. Scott Mcleod got two while Len Ryan, Tok Puroka, Geoff Plummer and Robert Barakat all scored one touchdown each.



Len Ryan in Australian colours played a major role in the Mets victory

The Sharks felt they had a good chance against the Scorpions in the other semi finals as they had already defeated them in the round game. Touchdowns by Adrian Harrington, Adam Hope and Patrick Grehan, from the Sharks were not enough to match the five scored by the Scorpions' Darren Swain, Christian Browne, Phillip Jarrett, Russell Cox and Barry Gibson.

The Scorpions were now in the final and determined not to be bridesmaids again. They gave no quarter and received even less from the Sydney Mets who, led by Barry Clemas, Michael Farhat and Paul Sfeir went onto win 5-4.

Scorers for the disappointed Scorpions were Anthony Dudeck 2, Mark Leonard and Tony Eltackhi one each while for the Mets John Moujalli, Len Ryan, Robert Elbahou, Milad Almaoui and Tok Puroka got one each. Tony Eltakchi from the Scorpions was named Player of the Series while Barry Clemas from the Mets was Player of the Final.

Mens 35

Sydney Scorpions and Mets, the South Queensland Sharks and the Crusaders are all winners of the Mens 35 division and this years' title was expected to go to one of the past champions. The Sydney and Gold Coast teams chances were made a lot easier when two time title holder the Crusaders did not enter teams.



Brandon McDonald scoring a touchdowns for the Scorpions

Defending their title the Scorpions made an impressive start by going through the round game undefeated disposing of the Mets 3-2 and Sharks 8-1. Their hardest game was a 5-5 draw with the Brisbane Cobras.

The semis saw the Scorpions playing the Southern Suns and the Sydney Mets up against an in form Cobras with the Sharks failing to make the cut. The Suns were no match for the champs going down 2-8 with John Mercieca and Vena Sale putting points on the board. For the Scorpions David Cheung and Brandon McDonald scored two each with Mick Cheung, John Nolan, Brett Gillard and Mark Mahoney notching up one each.

The Cobras and Mets semis was also a no contest with the Sydney side defeating the Brisbane team 6-1 setting up an all Sydney clash in the Finals. Scoring for the Cobras was Steve McIntyre while the Mets scorers were; Peter Velo (2), Sarkis Zalloua, Tony Iannella, Andrew Yiangou, and Pule Latoa.

After easy semi final wins both teams approached the final with a degree of caution each knowing the capabilities of the other team. An enthralling game saw the lead change constantly until the Mets got on top of the champions and took their crown from them 4-3.



Andy Yiangou on the move for the Mets

Steve Kolenko scored two for the Mets while Peter Velo and Andrew Yiangou finished the scoring. For the Scorpions Tim Kitchingham,

Derek Duguid and Brandon McDonald scored. Player of the Finals was Derek Duguid from the Scorpions and Player of the Series was Dave Elliott from the Southern Suns.

Mens 40

The Crusaders not entering in the 35's division meant they would be fielding an exceptionally strong Mens 40 team. Winners for the past three years the Sydney Mets welcomed the challenge of the "young guns" into the forties ranks.

A loss in the opening round 3-4 to the Crusaders was no great hiccup but a 4-4 draw with the Northern Eagles saw the Mets go to the quarter finals up against the Brisbane Cobras who were runners up the previous year. A tough game ensued with the Cobras just getting home 3-2 and keeping their title hopes alive but putting the Mets out of contention.

Sydney pride was on the line with only the Scorpions left to take up the challenge. They struggled to defeat the Hunter Hornets in the quarters 4-3 and struggled to get on top of the Sharks in the semis but failed 3-4.

Ian Clarke, Gary Simmons and Quentin Johnson scored for the Scorpions while the Sharks four came from David Fairbanks, Geoff Bunt, Terry Savage and Vinnie Garrick.

The Crusaders and Sharks had no trouble in their quarter final games defeating the Suns 6-1 and Eagles 8-4 respectively.

The semis saw the Crusaders struggle against the Cobras before getting the advantage 4-3 at the final whistle. For the Cobras Tony Lachze, Eddie Wiegman and Kevin Hickey scored while the Crusaders scorers were; Brady Cummins, Stephen Tomlin, Allan Furlong and Peter Elliot.

The other semi was just as tight and mirrored the 4-3 scoreline with the Sharks edging out the Scorpions and leaving Sydney without a team in the final. Neither the Sharks nor the Crusaders had won this division before so a new Champion was about to emerge.

A struggle ensued from the first whistle and it appeared the game would be an old fashion arm wrestle between two old foes. In the end the Crusaders pulled away and went on to record a 4-2 victory.



Steve Tomlin about to pick up the ball for the Crusaders

David Fairbanks and Barry Smith scored for the Sharks while Steve Hughes, Stephen Tomlin, Mark Edwards and Andrew Reid scored for the Crusaders. Steve Hughes from the Crusaders was named Player of the Series and Player of the Final.

Mens 45

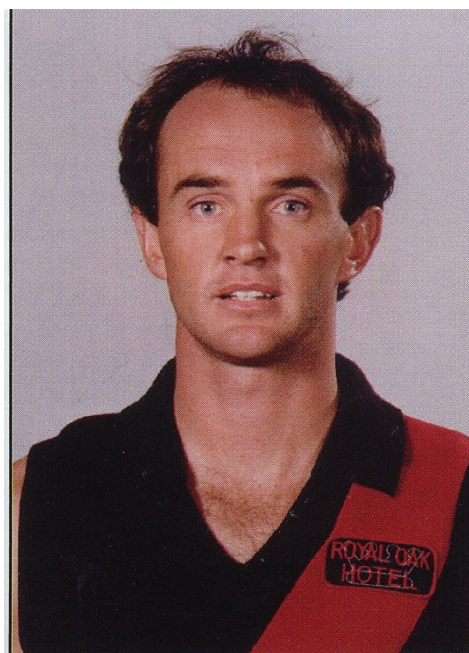
The Northern Eagles won the first two title, the Sunwest Razorbacks the next two and the Southern Suns, as defending champions, also want to make it two in row. Two drawn games in the preliminary rounds allowed the Northern Eagles to take top spot on the ladder with the Suns having to settle for second place. Both teams remained undefeated so it appeared they were destined to meet again in the final after their round draw of 4-4.

The Eagles met the Cobras and after some early tough defensive exchanges the Eagles got on top defeating the Cobras 6-3. Leon Tanson, Ross Bateson, Ross Casey scored one each for the Cobras while Michael Prowse and Peter Vincent got two each for the Eagles with Robert Kahler and John Singh adding the extras.

The other semis saw the Suns run away with the game defeating the Sydney Mets 5-0. Adrian Murray, Peter Clayton, Gary Newman, John Ruzzene and Ron Wall all scored for the Suns

Looking for their second successive title the Suns started strongly and never allowed the Eagles into the game. Half way through the game Suns player Richard Hamilton collapsed and died. The game was concluded and the Suns declared the winner with the score being 4-1 at the time.

Mike Biltoft was the Eagles lone touchdown scorer while Mick McCall, Peter Clayton, Graham Lovell and Grant Harris got one each for the Suns. Ron Wall from the Suns was Player of the Series but due to the tragedy in the final no Player of the Final award was made.



The late Richard Hamilton, a gentleman, a family man, a mate and a great sportsman

Mens 50

With the defending champions the Sydney Mets not participating in 2003 the two times winner the South Queensland Sharks fancied adding another title to their collection. A 2-2 draw against the Sunwest Razorbacks and then a 1-5 loss to the Hunter Hornets put a big dent in their aspirations.

After the preliminary rounds the Hornets were on top with the Sharks second followed by the Northern Eagles and Sunwest Razorbacks. This saw the Hornets meet the Eagles in the first semi final whom they easily disposed of 7-1. Lone score for the Eagles was Max Strong while for the Hornets Kim Miller scored two, Brian

Hanson, Barry Herbert, Graham Meally, Kerry Smith and Don McGill got one each.

South Queensland Sharks had a less easy time of disposing of the Razorbacks 4-1 with the "Pigs" lone scorer being veteran Peter Somerville. Jim Baker got two for the Sharks while Jim Donnan and Ray Moody scored one each.

The final saw the Sharks quietly confident of winning their third title despite the loss to the Hornets in the round game. Unfortunately the Hornets led by Player of the Series Graham Meally never let the Sharks into the game and ran away with a 6-3 win.

David Sheppard, Bryan Scott and Jim Donnan all scored for the Sharks but their efforts were overshadowed by the six from the Hornets scored by Col Campbell and Graham Meally (2), Phil Flowers and Barry Herbert one each. Terry Hatfield from the Sharks was named Player of the Final.

Womens 30

Three time champions the Sunwest Razorbacks wanted to make four titles when they brought a strong contingent with them to this year's championship. Their chances were enhanced when they went through the preliminaries in Pool A undefeated and disposed of the Brisbane Cobras 8-1 in the Quarter finals.

Their main threat appeared to be the Sydney Scorpions who were the other undefeated team from Pool B and who disposed of the Southern Suns 10-1 in their quarter final. However nobody told the other winning quarter finalists that the end result was a forgone conclusion.

The Northern Eagles just managed to get on top of the Sydney Mets 1-0 while the Hunter Hornets disposed of the North Queensland Tropical Cyclones 4-1.

The semis saw the Hornets cause an upset to the Razorbacks plans by defeating them 3-2 with Teena Jennings and Lisa Harriss scoring for the Razorbacks. Heidi Novosell, Gai Taylor and Alison Daskalovski were the Hornet's scorers.

Sydney Scorpions had an easier passage to the final defeating the Northern Eagles 6-3. Lisa Wilkes, Cherie Green and Lorraine McLaughlin scored for the Eagles while Monique Nolan (2),

Judy Collins, Jody English, Kim Melville and Tania Cullimore scored for the Scorpions.



Jody English Player of the Series for the Scorpions

For most of the final the contest was a close encounter until Player of the Final, Michelle Brown, inspired the Hornets who pulled away to record a 5-3 victory.

Maria Ekde (2) and Judy Collins scored for the vanquished while for the winners Michelle Brown (2), Debbie Potts, Kirsty Inglis and Judith Tynan put points on the board for the Hornets. Player of the Series was Jody English from the Sydney Scorpions.

Womens 35

After winning the first two over 35 Womens title the Sydney Scorpions had their party ruined by the Brisbane Cobras who relegated them to third place in 2000. However the Scorpions recovered and won the next two championships and felt confident the Cobras would not deny them three in a row this time round.



Judy Malcolm one of the Scorpions Stars

Whilst the Cobras struggled in the round games getting beaten twice by the Scorpions, another Queensland team the South Queensland Sharks emerged as the challengers to stop the Scorpions run. Drawing 2-2 then defeating them 2-1 the Scorpions title hung loosely around their heads.

It must have felt a lot looser when the Southern Suns emerged as the danger coming in second on the competition table ahead of both the Sharks and the Cobras.

With only a final being played the Scorpions had to call on all their resources to mentally approach the game against a foe they had beat 4-2 in the first round but had a 4-4 draw in the second round.

The final was played at a fast pace with neither side giving an inch until finally the Scorpions won their third title in a row and fifth out of six events beating the Suns 3-2 in a tight tussle.

Denise Clune's two touchdowns couldn't match the three from the Scorpions scored by Michelle Smidt, Kim Wiles and Trish Verhoeven. Tracey Simpson was named Player of the Series and Player of the Final was Megan Stanforth both from the Scorpions.

Womens 40

For the first time more than one or two teams turned up to contest the Womens 40's division. In fact six teams took part and after preliminary games the Northern Eagles topped the charts remaining undefeated. South Queensland Sharks came second with the Hunter Hornets and Sunwest Razorbacks third and fourth.

The Eagles versus Razorbacks semi did not reach too many highs with the Eagles too dominant winning 5-1. Sharon Williams scored the lone touchdown for the losers while Joan O'Neill, Michelle Carney, Lindy Roberts, Debbie Walsh and Lorrae O'Brien all scored for the winners.

The other semi produced a better contest with the Hunter Hornets just edging out the Sharks 3-2 before the final whistle. Jill Bonner and Kathy O'Brien scored for the Sharks and Janelle Frost, Anne Dunning and Alison Tudball put points on the board for the Hornets.

The final was a hotly contested event when both sides tried to dominate from the outset. In the end the Eagles got on top of the Hornets 4-3.

Anne Dunning scored two for the Hornets with Sharon Considine adding the extras, while for the Eagles Denise Hurst, Joan O'Neill, Michelle Carney and Lindy Roberts all scored one.

Denise Hurst from the Northern Eagles was named Player of the Series while Doreen Kearney from the Hornets was Player of the Final.

2003 NATIONAL TOUCH LEAGUE CLUB CHAMPIONS

2003 NTL Final Senior Results

Men's 30

Mets 6 Scorpions 4

Women's 30

Hornets 5 Scorpions 3

Men's 35

Mets 4 Scorpions 3

Women's 35

Scorpions 3 Suns 2

Men's 40

Crusaders 4 Sharks 2

Women's 40

Eagles 4 Hornets 3

Men's 45

Suns 4 Eagles 1

Men's 50

Hornets 6 Sharks 3



2003 Overall Points Table

South Qld Sharks	102
Sydney Metropolitan	90
Sydney Scorpions	76
Brisbane Cobras	76
Hunter Western Hornets	70
Southern Suns	63
Sunwest Razorbacks	54
Northern Eagles	51
Nth Qld Cyclones	47
Crusaders	44
Sydney Rebels	35
Barbarians	13
ADF	9
Touchwest	2