

## Our History: 1964 & all that

Last year I was invited to assist Waikato Museum with the preparation of an exhibition on Waikato football history, which was duly displayed in conjunction with the FIFA U-20 World Cup.

Nothing controversial about that, but it did lead to some research and engaging discussions with football historian Barry Smith, about the need to clarify a few historical facts about Waikato football which have otherwise been lost along the way.

Particularly as regards, today's visitors, Wanderers Sports Club. It is important to appreciate that Wanderers Sports Club (1964) are constitutionally a quite distinct entity from the historic black and white hooped Hamilton Wanderers club which held its first meeting at the Commercial Hotel in May 1911 (having first played in the 1910 season).

That is of course fudged by the wording on Wanderers website, which says: "Hamilton Wanderers is Hamilton's oldest semi-professional association football club and continues to be proud of its foundations which began in 1913."

To address any confusion about the two distinct Wanderers clubs, here is some historical data.

Back in April 1962 a meeting was convened with the initial idea of

amalgamating three Hamilton clubs, Technical Old Boys, Claudelands Rovers and Hamilton Wanderers.

Finally, on December 2, 1963 the Waikato Football Association received an application for the formation of a new club, initially to be called "Hamilton United" but eventually constituted as Hamilton AFC, which was then referred back to clubs for consideration.

On April 6, 1964 the new Hamilton club was finally constituted from the amalgamation of Wanderers and

Technical Old Boys.

However disaffected elements of the previous Wanderers entity weren't happy and just two months later, at the WFA meeting on June 15, 1964, an application was received "from a club to be called

Hamilton Wanderers".

But this was too unpalatable for the WFA executive, given the ink was barely dry on the amalgamation they had helped steer through and approve, and that name was rejected.

However as a compromise, it was resolved the new club name would be accepted as "Wanderers AFC".

In tandem with this, the WFA June 15 minutes note a directive that secretary Ron White was "to correct a statement that Hamilton Wanderers had been reformed".

They were irritated at a suggestion

the previous Wanderers club was back in business, when it wasn't. Instead, the "new" Wanderers club was accepted into the lowest entry point of the Waikato second division.

Transfer records do show that players E Turkington, R Buckmaster, A Stranwick, D Strifler, J Barclay, B Rossand, M Johnson duly transferred from Hamilton to the new Wanderers in June 1962, but for constitutional purposes it remained a distinct club.

Meanwhile in 1992 Hamilton AFC merged with Waikato United - the single-team identity it had earlier forged in 1988 in conjunction with Claudelands Rovers. Then in 1996 Waikato United amalgamated with Melville AFC to form Melville United, something which Soccer

New Zealand had insisted upon if new national league criteria was to be met for a Hamilton-based entry.

It's not something that has ever occupied the minds of Melville officials, but Barry Smith - perhaps the leading authority on such matters - holds the view that the correct genealogical lineage from the original Wanderers actually rests with Melville United, rather than today's Wanderers Sports Club.

So next time someone asks which is Hamilton's oldest football club, you can make up your own mind.

But in terms of a continuing entity, the answer may well be Claudelands Rovers, which was formed by a few shopkeepers in 1923.

**- Bruce Holloway.**



**Hamilton AFC logo designed by Harold Robinson**

# RICOH

imagine. change.

*We are always moving forward with new ideas and new ways of improving lives. Change is driven by imaginative thinking. That is the proposition of the Ricoh brand.*

**Ricoh offers a wide range of award winning office automation products from colour MFD's and copiers to scanners.**

**Ricoh Hamilton  
Cnr Anglesea & London Streets**

**Phone 07 957-4500  
Email [hamilton@ricoh.co.nz](mailto:hamilton@ricoh.co.nz)**