

# 2013 CLASSIC WALLABIES STATESMEN BIOS

**1940s**



## **ERNEST HILLS**

**Position:** Winger

**Tests:** 2

**Wallaby Number:** 373

Ernest Hills was born in New Zealand and the year before his elevation to the Wallabies, was the national junior sprint champion in the Shaky Isles.

Moving to Australia, Hills played for the Melbourne Club in Victoria and his blistering pace on the wing caught the attention of selectors immediately.

He was chosen to play for Victoria and when the British & Irish Lions arrived for their 1950 Tour, he was chosen for his Test debut not long after this 20<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The Australian side, captained by Nev Cottrell, went down 19-6 in the First Test.

In the second Test, the Lions were victorious 24-3.

The match was the last for Hills in Wallaby Gold.

A shooting star in Rugby, he turned to running professionally and to concentrate on a career as an engineer.

## 1950s



### **DES CONNOR**

**Position:** Scrum Half

**Tests:** 12

**Wallaby Number:** 429

Des Connor is a unique figure in Australian Rugby. As a scrum half he played 12 Tests for the Wallabies in the 1950s – and then in the 1960s played 12 Tests for the All Blacks.

Des Connor also went on to become a Wallabies coach.

The Queenslander toured the UK, Ireland and France with the 1957-58 Wallabies, making his Test debut against Wales in Cardiff, and playing in all five internationals on the trip.

On returning to Australia he captained Australia against the New Zealand Maori and played three Tests against the All Blacks.

His final two Tests for Australia were against the touring British & Irish Lions in 1959.

A school teacher by profession, Des accepted a role at Takapuna Grammar in New Zealand and in 1961 was selected for the All Blacks.

He was back in Australia by 1964 and coached the Wallabies against New Zealand in 1968, and against the Springboks in 1969 and 1971.

## 1960s



### **JULES GUERASSIMOFF**

**Position:** Flanker

**Tests:** 12

**Wallaby Number:** 490

Jules Guerassimoff played 12 Tests for the Wallabies in the 1960s and spent a decade in the Queensland side as a rugged, no nonsense flanker.

Superbly fit, with good speed off the mark, and renowned as a damaging defender, Guerassimoff terrorised the inside backs of world Rugby in partnership with his Wallabies backrow partner Greg Davis.

Jules was the grandson of a Russian couple who left Siberia in the late 1920s using falsified documents to make their way to Japan, Canada, China, and eventually Australia.

Jules was born 10 days after the family arrived in Queensland.

A Commonwealth Scholarship winner to University of Queensland, and a State javelin champion in the late 1950's, Guerassimoff made his Queensland debut in 1962.

The following year he was in Wallaby colours, making his debut in a shock win over the Springboks in Cape Town – the first defeat for South Africa in 16 Tests.

The Wallabies also beat the Boks in Johannesburg in a series that was squared 2-all.

Guerassimoff played against the best in the world.

He lined up against the All Blacks, took on the Springboks again in 1965 and in 1966 faced the British & Irish Lions.

The Lions narrowly won the first Test 11-8 but took the second 31-0.

Guerassimoff also made the 1966-67 tour to the UK and Ireland.

## 1970s



### **STU GREGORY**

**Position:** Lock

**Tests:** 16

**Wallaby Number:** 520

Stu Gregory played 16 Tests for the Wallabies across the 1960s and 1970s and had the rare distinction of beating the British & Irish Lions.

The Lions visited Australia in 1971 en route to New Zealand, and took on NSW and Queensland.

While the Lions beat the Waratahs, Queensland fashioned a famous 15-11 victory over the most iconic team in world Rugby.

An outstanding lineout jumper, Gregory made his Test debut in 1968, and over the next five years proved his worth against second row giants of the game including Colin Meads, Frik du Preez and Willie John McBride.

A product of Brisbane Boys College, he made his debut against the All Blacks in Brisbane in a Test remembered as one that got away from the Wallabies.

The same year he took on France and toured the UK and Ireland.

When he toured South Africa in 1969, Gregory was still only 22 years of age.

In 1971 he played against the Lions for Queensland and for the Wallabies against the Springboks.

His final Tests came on the short tour to the UK in 1973 where he played against England and Wales.

## 1980s



### **TOM LAWTON**

**Position:** Hooker

**Tests:** 41

**Wallaby Number:** 639

Tom Lawton played 41 Tests for Australia from 1983 until his last appearance in the middle of the Wallabies front row against the British & Irish Lions in 1989.

Across that period of time, Lawton established himself as one of the greatest Australian hookers, and certainly to that time, the largest.

Tom is part of a famous Australian Rugby family.

His grandfather, also Tom, was known as the Loping Ghost during his time as an Australian fly-half after the First World War. Tom Senior was a member of the legendary Waratahs side that toured Europe in 1927-28 and established Australia's Running Rugby credentials.

Tom Lawton Junior was also involved in moments of significant historical magnitude.

In 1984 he was part of a dominant Wallabies pack that laid the foundation for a Grand Slam success in the UK and Ireland.

In 1986 he was again an integral part of a magnificent Wallabies triumph – this time winning the Bledisloe Cup on New Zealand soil for the first time in 37 years.

He played in the first Rugby World Cup and had the honour of taking on the Lions in 1989.

## 1990s



### **DAN CROWLEY**

**Position:** Prop

**Tests:** 38

**Wallaby Number:** 676

Dan Crowley is one of only five Australians to have played in two victorious Rugby World Cup campaigns.

Crowley was part of the 1991 and the 1999 Wallabies squads that returned from Europe with the Webb Ellis Cup – beating England at Twickenham for the first title and France at Cardiff eight years later to again be crowned the best on the planet.

A nuggety prop equally proficient on either side of the scrum, Crowley played 38 Tests for the Wallabies with a memorable debut in 1989 against the British & Irish Lions.

The Lions had not played a Test on Australian soil since 1966, and their return was marked by a punishing Wallabies performance.

The Australians dominated the tourists and ran out 30 to 12 winners in the first of three showdowns.

Unfortunately for the Wallabies, the victory at Sydney Football Stadium was their only success of the series.

The Lions won a Battle of Ballymore to square the ledger then peeled off a narrow win in the third and deciding Test.

Crowley, however, enjoyed his share of Wallaby triumphs during a career of 38 Tests, none more so than those two Rugby World Cup victories in 1991 and 1999.

## 2000s



### **JOE ROFF**

**Position:** Winger

**Tests:** 86

**Wallaby Number:** 719

Joe Roff played 86 Tests for the Wallabies – his first as a teenager at the 1995 Rugby World Cup, and his last during the domestic season of 2004.

A fullback or winger whose languid running style disguised his scintillating pace, Roff scored 31 tries during his time in the Wallabies Test jersey.

He was also a foundation member of the ACT Brumbies Super Rugby squad, along with two other long-serving Canberra-based Wallabies in George Gregan and Stephen Larkham.

Roff's durability as a Test player was beyond question.

He had the honour of playing more consecutive Tests for Australia than any other player in history – 62.

And at the age of just 24 he became the youngest Australian to reach the milestone of 50 Test appearances.

Roff made numerous overseas tours, played in three Rugby World Cups from 1995 to 2003, and was also a key contributor to the most golden period in Australian Rugby history.

Between 1998 and 2002, the Wallabies won a World Cup title, five successive Bledisloe Cup series, two Tri Nations championships and – in 2001 – they tamed the British & Irish Lions.

After losing the first Test to the Lions, the Wallabies were again under the pump heading into the second half of the second Test in Melbourne.

But a Roff intercept turned the tide, not only for that Test but for the series, with the Wallabies going on to win the final two Tests.