

East Coast Bays

Founded: 1946 to play in Kaipara Sub Union.

Affiliated: 1954.

Colours: Emerald green and black hoops, green shorts, emerald green and black hooped socks.

By comparison with many well established clubs the birth pangs of the East Coast Bays Rugby Club are within living memory of many Browns Bay residents. The initial stirring of interest emanated in 1946 when local initiative formed the club and entered teams in the Kaipara Sub Union competition. Enjoying the fluctuating fortunes of all Rugby teams the club nevertheless flourished albeit with virtually no facilities at what was then known as the Browns Bay Domain. Two war surplus army huts served as changing rooms and the stormwater drain surrounding the park served as the ablution block. Water for cocoa and tea had to be carried from supporters' homes. Synonymous with the pre harbour bridge boom of the North Shore progress was steady and in 1952 it was decided to identify closer to Auckland. Overtures were made to the A.R.F.U. and affiliation was obtained with the Northcote, Birkenhead R.F.C. This development saw a change from white jerseys to the now familiar green and black hoops and the entry of several junior teams into the Auckland competition. In 1954 the club was granted direct affiliation with the A.R.F.U and entry into the Senior B section. First A.R.F.U. championship honours came in 1960 with the 13th grade boys, many of whom returned to the club after secondary school football to enjoy two years unbeaten in winning the Whittome Shield and Challenge Cup as 6th and 5th grade champions. 1961 saw first senior honours with our top team winning the Portola Festival trophy.

Since that time the senior team played in numerous promotion relegation games without success until 1976 when they had a brief spell in division one. 1979 saw their major success with the Pollard Cup in their possession as 2nd division champions and promotion to division one, where they have successfully remained. Over the years several junior grade teams have won championship honours and in 1982 our Senior Reserve 9th and 10th grade teams won A.R.F.U. championships giving our most successful year to date. While not yet achieving full national honours the club have in their ranks two New Zealand Colt selections, Wayne Hill 1979, 1980 and Andrew Ferguson 1980. Wayne Hill also won his Auckland blazer playing in the National Championship game against Wellington in 1982. Concurrent and comparable with players' struggles for success were the efforts put in by the enthusiastic supporters. With local body support the lease-hold of Crown land adjacent to what has now become Freyberg Park was obtained in 1954 and volunteer labour every weekend throughout the year erected a 90 x 60 training shed which became the basis of the current club complex. Stalwarts of the early years of affiliation to the Auckland Union were the six elected life members all of whom have contributed years of service to Rugby at various levels of administration. With the population explosion on the North Shore ensuring continual growth both in playing strength and supporters, ambitious plans have been drawn up to provide even better amenities for our players of the future. Over the past two years

additional changing rooms and ablution blocks have been completed while the club room has been enhanced with modern furniture. Future expansion includes an upstairs lounge with landscape windows over-looking the playing fields. Over recent years many players, having played through the grades and with sons now wearing the green and black are putting something back into the game by participating in coaching and administration. With loyalty and dedication being shown by all members, the growth of Rugby and East Coast Bays club is assured for years to come.