

Building Hampo's legacy



Kylie Knight

When the Redcliffe Dolphins and Tweed Seagulls play on June 30, they will honour a mate and the legacy his family is continuing in his name.

The two Hostplus Cup sides will play for Hampo's Cup in round 16 of the competition at Redcliffe's Kayo Stadium.

The Cup is named after Liam Hampson, a promising rugby league player who died during an overseas holiday in October 2022.

The talented hooker, who previously played at schoolboy level for Keebra Park State High School, played 37 Hostplus Cup games - with the Seagulls from 2019-2021 and as a key member of the Dolphins' 2022 team.

The inaugural Hampo's Cup was held last year, with Redcliffe claiming a 26-24 win over Tweed Seagulls on the Gold Coast.

It's a tribute that means a great deal to Liam's family, who established Hampo's Youth Foundation in February 2023 to help young people reach their sporting, academic and personal potential.

The 24-year-old, affectionately known as Hampo, was one subject

away from completing a teaching degree when he died.

The foundation was inspired by the impact Liam had on young people in his work as a teacher aid and outside school hours care team member.

Liam's family, including mum Lorna and sister Tiarna, is grateful his legacy can continue through Hampo's Cup and Hampo's Youth Foundation.

This year's game will be preceded by a golf day on June 28 at Redcliffe Golf Course from noon, and a corporate luncheon at Redcliffe Leagues Club to raise money for the foundation.

Speakers at the luncheon, to be held before the Hampo's Cup game on June 30, will include current NRL stars and hopefully some former Origin stars as well.

Doors will open at 11am for an 11.30am start. Those attending will be able to watch the main game from the deck or the stadium. For more information and to buy luncheon tickets, visit hamposyouthfoundation.com.

The game itself will also be a chance to raise money for the foundation while honouring Liam (kick-off 2.10pm).

Footy fans can buy a corduroy

hat and game ticket package for \$40 via the website. A portion of all general admission tickets will also be donated to the foundation.

"We want to get as many people as we can to the game. It will be quite a spectacle between Redcliffe and Tweed and it's a good opportunity for the community to come down and get behind our local team, our reserve grade, to show that they support these boys," Lorna says.

She says they are hoping to raise at least \$30,000 for the foundation, which was initially created as the family sought to put funds raised, in the wake of Liam's death, to good use.

Lorna says \$70,000 was raised via a Go Fund Me page to bring Liam's body home and pay for funeral expenses, but not all of it was needed.

The organisation provides grants for students in Years 11 and 12 to fund education expenses, sport fees (including representative carnival fees and travel expenses), tutoring, sport equipment and transport expenses.

It also provides one-on-one mentoring to help young people develop life skills, build positive relationships and set goals.

There is a wellness component to manage stress, develop healthy habits, and engage youth in wellness and check-ins.

"It's basically someone who's at a disadvantage, it doesn't necessarily have to be financial, it can be emotional, it can be that they've had a lot of setbacks or injuries and things like that and need a bit of assistance," Lorna explains.

"The grant is not just about sport. It's about holistically helping them to become the

best person they can for the community. That's where the wellbeing comes into it."

Students are assigned a mentor, and they will work through the NRL wellbeing playbook to enhance their personal development.

"It covers how important sleep is, it teaches them gratitude, recognising their strengths and their characteristics and their values. First, they learn about themselves and who they are because a lot of students at that point in life don't know who they are, and then it goes into taking care of themselves," Tiarna says.

Lorna says the foundation is already making a difference to the lives of students.

"We're really proud of how far we've come in such a short timeframe. We gave our two first grant recipients this year - one from Keebra Park and one from Redcliffe High. They're wonderful young men. We're super proud to have them on board," she says.

"Our financial situation will determine how many grants we give out next year."

So, what would Liam make of all of this?

"We think about that every day. He would be so thrilled," Tiarna says.

Lorna adds: "I think he'd be sorry that he left us but proud that we haven't given up and we've chosen to live when it would be so easy to give up.

"It is very therapeutic doing this. I want to do something great with my life as well that helps other people so that I honour Liam and that his life wasn't a waste. If we can continue what he was going to do that helps with our grief."

For more information, visit hamposyouthfoundation.com

