



"BOB TEMPLETON (27 July 1932 - 5 December 1999)

**EULOGY:
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Obviously Bob Templeton had more mates than most and I am honoured that the Templeton family has asked me to speak on behalf of all of us here – his family, friends and admirers.

Our friendship was formed at "Churchie" and we and our families have enjoyed a close relationship ever since.

Whilst Bob resided in the City from his teenage years, he was a boy from the bush, his father owning "Huntly" a sheep and cattle property near Clermont. He never lost his affinity with the country and particularly the people who live there.

Bob was a boarder at Churchie and his personality and energy ensured he was popular with his peers and the masters. He was an above-average student, a prefect and very active in the sporting arena – Captain of Rowing and a member of the 1st XV for 2 years.

On leaving school in 1950, he started his business career with Australian Estates and continued with them until 1977. He started as an auctioneer and rose to Fat Stock Manager and a Branch Inspector – all of which kept him in close contact with his mates from the bush –albeit a fair share of this contact was in the various bars of the Gresham Hotel.

There is no doubt that Bob Templeton was one of the top auctioneers and his ability in this field was acknowledged interstate as well as in Queensland. One of his great attributes was his versatility. He could effectively and efficiently auction all types of cattle and all breeds of horses.

Bob loved to drop the names of remote Queensland towns into his auctioneering patter ;

"Bullocks with cods like MUTTABURRA Mail Bags" was one of the many Templeton originals.

What is not well-known is the amount of time he put into training young aspirants in the art of auctioneering - he wasn't just a Rugby coach!

After Australian Estates, Bob moved to the Insurance industry – it was more compatible with his Rugby activities! He learnt the business with National Mutual and then, with partners, he started Bob Templeton and Associates, which by any standards was, and still is, a successful company. Bob retired from the day to day activity a few years ago but continued to act as a Consultant.

Bob was Chairman of the Queensland TAB from 1996 to 1998 and it is widely acknowledged that he did a remarkably good job in a hot bed of political intrigue and self-interested race clubs. Bob Templeton did things without fear or favour.

For the last few years, he was also Chairman of the Queensland operations of Colliers Jardine.

That very briefly covers Bob's business career. Successful as that was, he was even better known for his community activities – Rugby in particular, for which he was not remunerated in cash but which gave him great satisfaction, pride and acknowledgment.

In 1987, he was given an Advance Australia Award and he was an Honorary Ambassador for the City of Brisbane. In 1988, he was awarded an MBE for his service to Sport.

In addition to his Business and Rugby involvement, Bob found time to serve charities. He was a board member of the Queensland Society for Crippled Children – Montrose Home and the Abused Child Trust. For the past year, he and I were co-chairmen of the St. Aidan's School Foundation Trust.

Bob was a 31 year member of Tattersall's Club, being a committee member from 1985. He served his term as President from 1996 – 1998. He was made a life member this year.

Tatts motto is "Friendship is Life" - how appropriate for Bob Templeton.

He was also a member of Burleigh Heads Surf Lifesaving Club in his youth. Bill and Gavin Horsley tell me there are no club records of his saving any damsels in distress!

It goes without saying that apart from his family, Rugby was Templeton's great love. He started at school and when injury cut short his playing career with the GPS Club, he immediately became deeply involved in administration and coaching. Here was his destiny - and his achievements are legendary.

He coached GPS to their first ever Premiership as a curtain-raiser to an incredible career with Queensland and Australia as Coach and Manager.

He was Queensland Rugby Coach from 1962-71 and 1976-88, a Queensland selector 1962-71 and 1987-88. He toured Fiji / New Zealand / United Kingdom / Holland / France / Italy / Japan / Canada and USA with Queensland Teams.

He was an Australian Selector from 1972-90, The Australian Coach from 1972-74, 1976, 1979, 1980 and 1981 and Assistant Australian Coach from 1988-1995.

From 1972-1982, he toured 7 times as the Wallaby Coach and Assistant Manager and from 1988 – 1995, he toured 7 times as the Assistant Wallaby Coach which included the euphoria of the World Cup Victory in 1991.

In addition, he was the Manager of the 1986 International Rugby Board Centenary Team, the Coach of the 1989 International Team for the South African Rugby Centenary Celebrations, the Coach of the World 15 for New Zealand's Centenary Celebration and earlier this year he coached a World 15 in Argentina.

As well, he had a long term involvement with the University Club as Coach and Adviser and had stints coaching Black Rock in Ireland, The Harlequins in England and provincial sides in South Africa and Argentina.

Bob was a Foundation member of the Rothman's National Coaching Panel in 1974 and was active in that role until 1992, being Chairman for a number of years.

He was also President of the QRU from 1996 – 1998. It is therefore not surprising that he was honoured with Life memberships of :

- **The Australian Rugby Union**
- **The Queensland Rugby Union**
- **University Football Club**

He was passionate about his sport and his country and had actually threatened to "streak" if Australia won the World Cup this year. Cardiff Arms Park was spared this spectacle, although he was there to cheer them on!

Bob set goals. He was ambitious. He had one destination left in Rugby. He wanted to be President of the Australian Rugby Union and, I suspect, he would have achieved that goal.

Bob admired two men above all - Winston Churchill and Stan Pilecki. A couple of diverse characters who did things the Templeton way – without fear or favour.

When you dined at the Templetons and it was time to relax with a port in the lounge, it was always accompanied by Churchill's famous speeches, with Bob lying back in his leather armchair, eyes closed and tears pouring down his cheeks.

In the days when the Coach of Rugby teams did not have the luxury of support staff, including psychologists, and he had to do the lot himself, Bobby turned to Churchill for his pre-match psych.

There were no Templeton-coached Rugby players who could not recite "We shall defend our Island whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the hills, we shall never surrender".

Bob simply loved Stan Pilecki – the Big Pole. On one occasion, Stan had been reinstated in the test team and Bob was having a one-on-one motivational chat – telling him where his skills would win Australia the Test and starting to tell him why he was such a great player, when Stan interrupted with "Cut the bull, Bob – both you and I know, there was no one left to pick".

Bob's great communication skills didn't always work with Stan!

When Mark Loane was injured early in the 2nd half a Test match in Argentina, Stan (a reserve) was sent on to the field with instructions from Bob to re-organize the pack : Stan into the front row, Spider McLean from second row back to lock, etc. Stan got confused - possibly because he had to run back to the side line as he still had his cigarettes and matches in his shorts. No one except the Coach knew for the rest of the match who was supposed to be playing in the second row!

You do not last 38 years as a coach and manager if you "slip up". Bob had a remarkable capacity to walk that fine line where he was very friendly with his players and still retained the authority to command.

In the words of "his boys" – he was not only a great coach, but a great human.

Bob had many great traits and I particularly like the way he admired achievers. He certainly did not follow that terrible Australian habit of knocking "tall poppies". He praised them and successfully strove to become one.

Most of you are probably wondering why we are in St. Stephen's Cathedral.

It was Bob's wish – and he told Jo on several occasions that if the worst happened, he would like Archbishop Battersby to conduct the service. Tempo thought John Battersby was a great bloke and the best in his "business". What a great tribute to Bob that the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Brisbane acceded to the request knowing full well that Tempo was not one of his flock.

Bob loved and knew sport (not just Rugby). He was known and admired in all sorts of sporting arenas, from the days when we used to knock around with Lew Hoad and Neale Fraser in the early '50s, to the modern days. Only last month, I witnessed his popularity when we went to a day/night cricket match at the 'Gabba.

He phoned me looking for 9 holes of golf. I explained that I had to go to the cricket as I was the Conduct Commissioner for the match, so he decided to come with me.

There is limited parking at the Gabba, but I have an allocated spot in one of the 3 small car parks. That car park was not open, so I told Bob he was in trouble as he couldn't walk with his knees. "Don't worry" he said, "I know the bloke controlling the Players Only Car Park" that we had just passed. So – around the block and sure enough, the car park security man had no idea who the ex-cricketer and match official was, but Bob Templeton's 'driver' was welcome to park.

Bob loved to win. Winning may not have been everything but losing was nothing. This attitude caused him much anguish at golf. Like most of us who take up the game at a late age, his swing was far from perfect and it annoyed him. To make matter worse, Jo's swing was near perfect, but that did not stop him giving her advice. Once a coach, always

So Bob and his playing partners (often me) did not win too often and, in fact, our worst and most regular beatings were when we played our wives. However, Bob's ability to trivialize defeat and glorify victory had most members at the club convinced that we were evenly matched.

I believe it is fair to say that Bob was happiest swapping yarns with mates over a beer – he was a "man's man", which is understandable because I can attest that he got very little practice in mixing with the opposite sex in his youth. When I was courting Margaret, Bob would regularly 'phone her about 6pm on Saturday night suggesting that she find him a "bird" so he could join us for a night out. Margaret always suggested that this would be virtually impossible at that hour and he should ask on the Friday or preferably a week in advance - the shocked reply was always "But the boys might have a keg on!"

Bob did many clever and wonderful things but his smartest and best move was to marry Jo. She has supported all his passions with dedication and humour and enabled him to travel and use his talents whilst giving their three children, Ian, Jane and Andrew the very best values in life, epitomized by both their parents. His adored grandchildren will also inherit this legacy.

We have all come to honour and salute our much-loved friend and to offer our sympathy and support to his family. We feel saddened that we will no longer have his physical company. But he will remain part of every gathering where comradeship is shared.

Valé Bob"