

FORMER BLUES PLAYERS

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

By Marie Davies

2025 marks the 20th Anniversary of the programme article 'Where Are They Now?'

The article was an idea of former player and Blues legend, Mark Howe meaning our supporters could stay updated on players who had, perhaps, played for the club for several seasons, or had only made a fleeting appearance.

I can't remember who featured in Mark's first article, but I do remember him asking me if I could think of any likely candidates.

We had come to live in Bedford and join the club in 1966, and in 2005, players from the '60s and '70s were still our great friends, so I had plenty to choose from.

However, one of my first articles, published in the autumn of 2005, was about a player who only spent a short time here but whose story is remarkable.

So now follows the life story of...



BUDERIM 2001

His family kept us up to date and told us he was having a long and delicate operation to try to save him from paralysis. Fortunately, in that respect, the operation was a success; however, his promising career as a rugby player had come to an end. While dealing with this devastating disappointment, he had to begin the long road of rehabilitation, which would enable him to walk again. He spent at least a month in hospital and had no feeling in his right arm for some time. He also had to wear a neck brace for six months.

In the summer of 2001, when we went on the British & Irish Lions tour to Australia, we saw what a remarkable recovery Warrick had made. The First Test was in Brisbane, and we visited and stayed with the Brant family at their home in Buderim. As well as his parents and grandparents, we met his brothers, Tyron and Greg, and his sister, Lauren.



WARRICK TRAINING

Sport was a big part of all their lives, and we enjoyed the family tennis court, their swimming pool, and watching rugby during our stay. Warrick was following a body-building programme and qualifying as a rugby coach.



BEDFORD FRONT ROW

He later worked in Sydney for the family business and also completed a personal trainer's course specialising in rehabilitation after injuries.

We have always kept in touch with the Brant family, and in October 2005, Warrick sent us the following update.

"How are you guys and all my friends in Bedford? To bring you up to date, I am now in Japan working as Head Trainer for SECOM, a Rugby Union League One side. Also in the league are NEC and Toyota, who played Newcastle Falcons on their recent tour of Japan.

Before I left Australia, I won the Power Lifting Championship, so next year I must return to defend my title. You will be pleased to know my life is now on track and I am doing what I love."

In June 2010, Warrick came to England for one of his many competitions. He certainly couldn't miss the opportunity to return to Bedford, and we picked him up at Bedford Station on 7 June. His first trip was obviously to Goldington Road, followed by a visit to Sainsburys, as it was obvious the 'new' Warrick needed plenty of food! He stayed for four days, making several visits to LA Fitness and to the club where our Physio, Mair sorted out a problem he had with his back. It was great to see him, and everyone was so pleased that he had made such a remarkable recovery.

Warrick's story will continue in our next programme!



BEDFORD VISIT 2010



WARRICK BRANT

PROP

Warrick was born in Durban, South Africa, in 1979. However, the family emigrated to Australia and settled in Buderim on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland, where they operated the Kooga business.

Warrick was a very promising prop who could play equally well at tighthead and loosehead. His first club was Wests in Queensland, and he was selected for Australia's U21 team. He came to Bedford in September 1999 and stayed with us for two weeks before finding a flat on Foster Hill Road. It was the beginning of our second year in the Premiership, when Alistair Murdoch was our player coach. Our first-choice props at the time were Adam Black and Adrian Olver, so Warrick started on the replacement bench. His first appearance in the starting line-up was away vs Leicester Tigers in October, and he was also in the away squad v Rovigo and Castres in the then Parker Pen Competition.

Late in December, he suffered a calf injury, so we took him to Heathrow on December 22nd to return to Australia for treatment and, of course, spend Christmas with his family.

Having returned to full fitness, he was summoned to a training session by the Queensland U21s, where tragically, contact in an early scrum left him with a horrendous injury when he broke his neck.



BALL CARRIER V LEICESTER TIGERS