

# THE LIFE AND LEADER OF CARLTONS

"I nominate Dr. Morgan" came a voice from the crowded room when nominations were called for the position of president at the recent annual meeting of the Merewether-Carlton Rugby Union Club.

A short silence—applause—and Dr. Idris Morgan, one of the most remarkable sporting identities in New South Wales had started his 37th successive term as president of the club.

The election of the president was unanimous, which is not surprising, as the doctor has been elected president unopposed every year since the club's inception.

The Newcastle Rugby Union on April 8 embarks on a new season, and the re-election of Dr. Morgan could have foreshadowed one of the greatest seasons in the club's proud history.

The doctor has guided the club through many changes. Merewether-Carlton Club took its rise away back in 1929 when the old Cook's Hill Surf Club team amalgamated with Merewether.

Dr. Morgan had been president of the Cook's Hill Club, and was more or less automatic choice as president of the new Merewether-Carlton Club.

Merewether early dominated the Rugby scene in Newcastle, and has produced some of the finest players ever to come from the district.

Sid Malcolm — doyen of Rugby half backs right up to the time that Cyril Burke became the Australian half, was a Merewether-Carlton product.

Cyril himself, played his early football with Carlton.

Lin Fleming, Jack and Tom Hills, Ern Howarth, Neil Adams, Wal Steere, Fred Ball, Len McRae, Ted Raisbeck, Jack Taylor and Jim Rutherford as just a few top class district and State players whom Dr. Morgan recalls from among the Merewether-Carlton ranks.

During the late thirties Carlton strode across the Rugby Union scene like a

been an active competitor since its inception.

"Wouldn't have missed the experience for anything," he says.

"Like all Diggers, a great bunch of fellows."

Dr. Morgan's ability as a swimmer is a natural follow-on from his early days in Sydney when he was a member of the Bondi Surf Club, the club later seeing fit to elect him a life member.

## MEET THE SPORTSMEN

With hardly a line in his face, he appears fit enough to carry out a difficult surf rescue even today.

And he has passed on some of his swimming ability to his sons, Owen and Tom.

Owen, a fourth year medical student, won the championship in every stroke in every year as he made his way through the Newcastle Boys' High School.

"It got to be that nobody wanted to compete against him," one former school mate recalls.

Tom, an articled clerk in the legal profession, recently won the 400 metres cham-

ionship of the Premier Men's Swimming Club.

In his University days Dr. Morgan won a hockey blue, but confesses that he was a "very ordinary Rugby player."

While still in school he watched the immortal "Dally" Messenger in many Union matches with the Eastern Suburbs Club which was University's chief rival.

This, the doctor confesses, gave him a somewhat distorted outlook on Dally's ability when the doctor started at the University and fitted some Rugby between hockey matches.

Graduating at the age of 23, he served as an intern for six months before sailing for overseas as regimental medical officer with the 19th Battalion.

## TOUGHNESS

He was on active service before the end of 1915, and was involved in some of the historic battles of World War I.

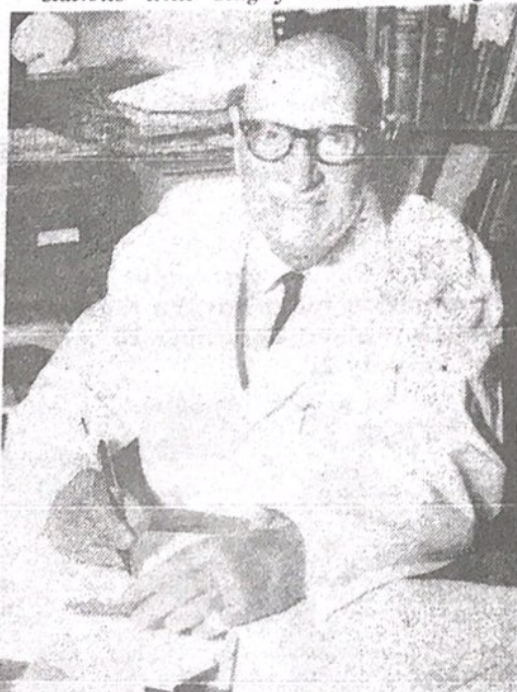
A shell carried away part of one leg, but the doctor was off the active list for only three months—a tribute to his toughness.

Dr. Morgan recalls many pleasant episodes in sport during his war service.

"I remember one day when I refereed a Rugby Union match in the morning, and a Soccer match in the afternoon.

"While I had never played Soccer, my experience in hockey had given me some insight into the rules and posi-

Today's picture of Dr. Morgan at his surgery desk. Several pictures on the walls serve to remind him of his pleasant associations with Rugby and swimming.



tions on the Soccer field."

"The players seemed satisfied, as they did not lodge any complaints.

"Then, of course, their silence could have been connected to my having been an officer", the doctor says with a sparkle in his eye.

"Doc" as he is affectionately known among the Carlton players, recalls that he has seen a grandfather-father-son trio active in the Merewether Club on two occasions during his long association with them.

One of these was Tom Hills, sen., Tom Hills, jun., and his son Gary.

Since the first World War, Dr. Morgan has made the care of his Digger friends one of his primary preoccupations.

"They let you know what they are thinking—sometimes in good old Digger terms.

"This I like," the doctor says.

Ted Clarke, one of the best known figures in Newcastle Rugby Union circles, is the only surviving foundation member of the Carlton Club with Dr. Morgan.

"Ted always has been a great worker for the Carltons, and the club owes him much," the doctor says.

Somehow, there is something "right" about Dr. Morgan's close association with Rugby Union.

With a name as Welsh as Ebbwvale, it would be just a little unnatural if he did not have some association with a game which is part of the way of life in Wales.

And there could not be a more fitting reward for a grand man in sport than for Merewether to take out the 1967 pennant for Newcastle Rugby.

—By WES CORNISH.