

Obituary – Ernie Wall, an Inverleith legend

Inverleith Hockey Club have confirmed that former international umpire and administrator Ernie Wall has died. He was 95.

The club describe Ernie “a lovely man, great friend and one who never seemed upset by anything or anyone. He is one the term legend barely does justice to, having given so much to our club and world hockey”.

Ernie was East District President, Scottish Hockey President and vice-president, Scottish Hockey chairman, Scottish Hockey Hon Secretary and assistant secretary 1965 to 1970, Scottish Hockey match secretary and a representative to the British Olympic Hockey Association.

He was a senior International umpire and he was appointed as a tournament official to European Cups, Champions Trophies and World Cups at club and international level, for both men and women.

This included the officiating the first ever European Indoor Nations Cup Qualifier (1973) and Finals (1974) and Club Championship Finals in 1973 and 1975.

The former Inverleith first eleven player was also involved with the International Hockey Federation and European Hockey Federation, Hockey Rules Board, was a member of the FIH Council, a member of the Technical/Competition Committee, member and secretary to FIH Indoor Committee and he was also appointed OBE for his services to Scottish Hockey 1982. He was the first member inducted into the Inverleith Hall of Fame.

Club archivist, Alan Veitch, confirmed Ernie joined Inverleith in September 1949 and was elected Inverleith’s match secretary in 1954, a post he held for four years. He also contributed to

the club's newsletter.

In his day job, Ernie was a civil servant and, in the late 1950s, there was a need for more hockey clubs in Edinburgh. He along with other Inverleith playing civil servants formed the Edinburgh Civil Service HC in September 1958 (now Edinburgh HC).

Ernie remained as a player with Inverleith then joined Edinburgh Civil Service completing his playing career in 1964, however, he wrote the history of Inverleith Hockey Club to mark the club's 50th anniversary.

He moved to Peebles to enjoy his retirement from work but he continued to umpire. Veitch said: "Mixed hockey provided one of those great stories when he was umpiring. One of the players took exception to

Ernie's decisions and asked if he had ever read the rules. Ernie simply replied that he wrote them."

The club legend retired from umpiring in the early 90s choosing the Centenary of the Loretto v Fettes match as his final fixture.

Veitch added: "What a contribution to hockey, a true legend of the game and one who touched all our lives in such a nice way."