

**RECEPTION TO MARK THE 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA FOOTBALL CLUB (UTASFC)  
REMARKS BY  
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC  
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA  
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, WEDNESDAY 14 AUGUST 2024**

Good evening, everyone, and a very warm welcome to Government House and to this reception to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your University of Tasmania Football Club.

I begin by acknowledging the Muwinina people upon whose Country we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their enduring culture and deep connection to land, sea, and waters.

It is a great pleasure to have you all here to celebrate this significant 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the University of Tasmania Football Club (UTASFC). Your Club was founded in 1949 by a group of friends, and it has become a cornerstone of our university. It is not just a club to play football but is also a club for lifelong friendships and memories<sup>1</sup>.

Over the decades, UTASFC has enjoyed substantial growth. You started with a single team and expanded during the 1950s and 1960s, for the growing number of students. In addition, many graduates continued to play with the Club after completing their studies. 1971 was a significant milestone for the Club, as you won promotion to the top tier of Southern Tasmanian football<sup>2</sup>.

Another milestone in the Club's history occurred in 1977, when UTASFC became one of the founding teams in the Southern Tasmanian Women's League. This move demonstrated the Club's commitment to inclusivity and providing opportunities for women in football.

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<sup>1</sup> Email Mimi Refaei / Paula Chatwood 28 July 2024

<sup>2</sup> Email Mimi Refaei / Paula Chatwood 28 July 2024

Today, UTASFC continues to field a range of teams, including senior men's, women's, social, and junior teams. This diversity reflects your Club's welcoming dedication to promoting football at all levels. You even welcomed my husband to the Grads team for many years, although I only saw him play once. He was tackled, rolled around, shouting... "expletive... foul!" The referee and his Grads team ignored him. I never watched again.

Our grandsons, Lachie, Liam, and Sam follow their grandfather's love of football, but without the theatrics! Yet. We have spent some busy and fun afternoons on the Government House Green lawns chasing soccer balls. So, I must say that I am very pleased to see the return of the UTASFC Youth Program!

Engaging in sports from a young age builds essential life skills such as teamwork, discipline, and perseverance, so I am very supportive of youth sports within our community. Your Youth Program provides a structured environment for young people, from age 11, to participate in football. In this way, UTASFC contributes to the overall wellbeing and personal development of its younger players<sup>3</sup>.

May I conclude and acknowledge UTASFC's many achievements over these 75 years, particularly your State League championships and representation in both men's and women's competitions. I acknowledge also the dedication of your members and volunteers who have been crucial in your success. I note the upcoming milestone of a senior women player's 300<sup>th</sup> game, which highlights the dedication of the Club's players. This celebration is not only about the 75 years and success of the Club, but also a celebration of your team spirit, community and friendship.

So, happy 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary! Congratulations on this historic milestone.

Please now enjoy your reception.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.utasfc.com.au/memberships>