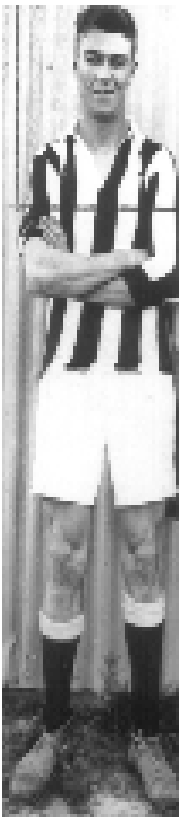


WEST WALLSEND BLUEBELL'S LEGENDS

	Name	COUTTS, CLARRIE 'ROCKA'
	Member of the Newcastle Sporting Hall of Fame	Yes
	Biography	<p>Clarrie Coutts considered himself lucky to be in the right place at the right time to play in a golden age of soccer for the famous West Wallsend Bluebells. This modesty is typical of the man, yet somewhat misplaced when you consider the enormous contribution he made to the team. At a time when the Bluebells were laden with the talents of such legends as William "Podge" Maunder, Dick Sneddon, and Frank and Bill Coolahan, Clarrie stamped his name indelibly in the clubs annals, and was recognised as one of Australia's greatest players.</p> <p>Born in Merewether, Clarrie 's family moved to West Wallsend in the early 1900's. It was at school that Clarrie began playing soccer, and his remarkable skills and natural talent were soon noticed by the Bluebells junior teams coaches, who quickly signed him up. From there he gained a place in the West Wallsend Woodpeckers, one of the most outstanding Age-Group teams in Australia's soccer history. His call-up to the ranks of the senior team in 1919 was inevitable, but still remarkable, considering his youth and the quality of the players in the team. He quickly became a fixture in the side, starting as a right half-back before moving to his preferred role as centre half, the position he is perhaps best remembered in.</p> <p>In 1921, Clarrie was in the Bluebells team that won the famed Gardiner Cup, a feat they repeated in 1923, 1924 and 1926. In 1923, he played his first Test for Australia against China. In 1924 he captained the Bluebells to a 3-0 win over a visiting Canadian national team, then was chosen in the Test team to play England. Clarrie played his last Test in 1927, against Czechoslovakia. Both the Chinese and English touring teams considered Clarrie the player of the series.</p> <p>Just how great a player and a presence Clarrie Coutts was, can perhaps best be summed up with a few examples of his worth to a team. When age caught up with most of the West Wallsend team, they lost their place in the State competition for a short while. Clarrie joined Adamstown in 1930, and they promptly won the State Cup. In 1931 he rejoined West Wallsend, and they won it ! In the late 1930's Clarrie came out of retirement to help the Bluebells team (who had not won a game) in a match against Weston (who had not lost one). Clarrie guided , coaxed and cajoled the young team to a memorable victory. It was his 505th senior grade game, and his last.</p> <p>Stangely enough, Clarrie was never chosen to play for NSW, but after he retired, he was appointed as the coach of Queensland ! In their previous two meetings NSW had thrashed Queensland 10 - 1 and 12 -2. But using his great football knowledge and shrewd judgement, Clarrie orchestrated an amazing 5 -3 win, earning him the tag of "the cleverest coach in Australia". Perhaps the last word should be left to Lai Wai Tong, the captain of China in 1923. Out here in 1956 as the Manager of the Chinese Olympic soccer team, he was asked about Clarrie Coutts. He immediately became enthusiastic, and said ; "I remember him well. What a great player he was. I see few like him today."</p>
	Achievements	505 senior 1st Grade games with West Wallsend, Kurri, and Adamstown West Wallsend - winning Gardiner Cup team in 1921, '23, '24, '26 Adamstown - winning State Cup team in 1930 West Wallsend - winning State Cup team in 1931 Captained West Wallsend in a 3-0 win over a visiting Canadian National team in 1924 For Australia – 1923 - Test Series against China. Player Of The Series. 1924 - Test Series against England. Player Of The Series. 1927 - Test Series against Czechoslovakia.