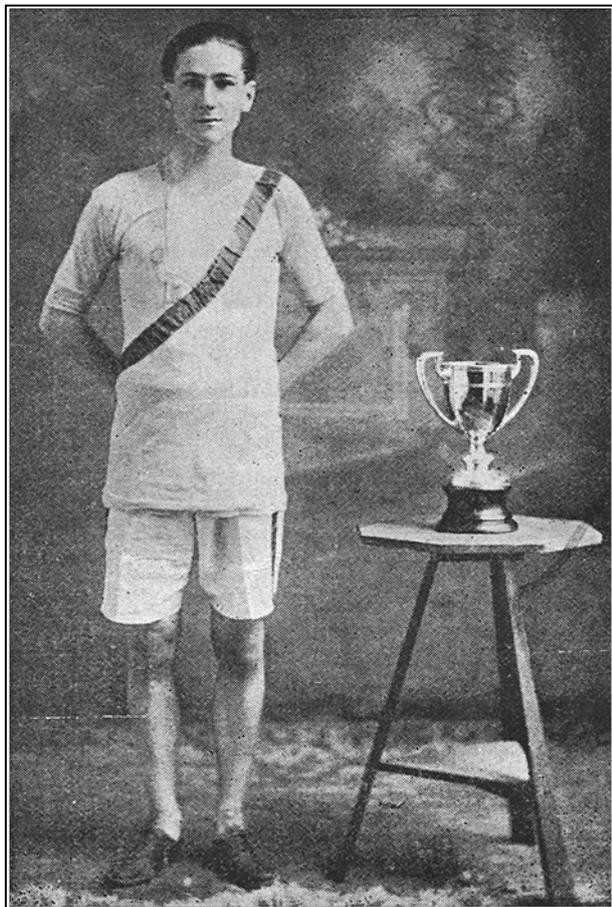


Albury Athlete Played Fullback for Australia

Greg Ryan

Not many Albury people will have heard of one of the best athletes produced locally.

Eric Frauenfelder was born in 1901, the grandson of Albury pioneer families.



Eric Frauenfelder in a photo taken from the CBC year book, 1918

A student at Christian Brothers' College (CBC) Albury, Eric excelled in several sports. The photo of Eric is from the 1918 CBC yearbook with the caption "Champion boy footballer of NSW, champion athlete, gymnast, boxer, cricketer, footballer and tennis player."

In 1919 he won a boxing bout held at Albury's Mechanics Institute. Then at the Brisbane Stadium in 1921, after leaving Albury for Ipswich, he won the lightweight boxing championship of Queensland.

In 1921 Eric switched from Australian Rules Football to Rugby League. It was recognised that his Aussie Rules skills would make him an ideal Rugby League fullback.

Eric was also making his mark as a cricketer with big scores playing in Ipswich, scoring 122 retired in his first knock. By late 1921 he was representing country Queensland cricket versus metropolitan.

But it was in Rugby League that he made his biggest impact. In 1924, Eric played three test matches at fullback for Australia versus England. England won the series, two tests to one.

In 1925, before "State of Origin" football was dreamt of, playing for Queensland v NSW, it was reported that "Undoubtedly the hero of the match was the Queensland custodian Eric Frauenfelder who served up one of the most spectacular displays seen for many a day."

The *Queensland Times* reminisced in 1944 "Frauenfelder took risks which broke all recognised rules of safety, but those are the players who make the turnstiles click. His finger-tip control of the ball was uncanny - a result of an apprenticeship served in the high-marking Australian Rules code. If we could produce a man as spectacular as Frauenfelder today the crowds would go mad."

After retiring from football, he became a successful Rugby League coach. In 1936 Eric coached North Queensland against a touring English team.

Eric's cricket career continued and in December 1936, he scored 48 representing Ipswich against the touring English cricket team.

Eric died in Brisbane in August 1993, aged 92.