# O'Connell honoured with Under 19's Medal

*For immediate distribution*

The Bendigo Football Netball League is pleased to share that the Best on Ground medal for the Under 19's Interleague match has been named in honour of Bendigo FNL Hall of Fame member, Robert O'Connell.

A career of more than 250 senior BFNL matches started with Golden Square in 1974 where the man affectionately known as 'Ninga' would go on to score three premierships before heading to Eaglehawk where he'd claim another two for the Borough.

But it's O'Connell's representative football resume that stands out.

Robert represented the Blue & Gold of the BFL on 16 separate occasions including two as Captain in 1986 and 1987.  He also represented Victoria Country in 1982.

When speaking to honour of receiving this type of recognition, Robert said, "It's a massive honour. I was involved with interleague for many years and to be back involved in this way is very special for me."

"Interleague Football is important for all involved and particularly the players. They are competing against the best of the best from other Leagues which helps bring the best out in everyone."

Interleague provided Rob with many memories but the standouts are the overnight trips, "The comradery we developed on those overnight trips is something that lasts with you forever, a lot of us are still mates today."

The first Robert O'Connell Medal will be awarded to the standout BFNL performer in the Under 19 Interleague clash against the VAFA, to be played on Sunday, July 13 at the Queen Elizabeth Oval.

The Robert O'Connell Medal joins the Derrick Filo Medal for the BFNL player adjudged Best on Ground in a Senior Interleague match.

Robert will be in attendance on Sunday to award the medal to the winner.

The BFNL extends its thanks to Robert and his family for their support in accepting this recognition and looks forward to celebrating his legacy with this medal for years to come.

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