



The Carbine Club of NSW

John O'Neill AO

Born: Sydney 1951

Carbine Club Member since: 2006

John was educated at St Joseph's College, Hunters Hill, and Sydney University. He is a qualified solicitor, as well as a Foundation Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Bankers. John has held numerous directorships, both sporting and business, as well as being involved in a number of community organisations over the years.

John was appointed CEO of Australian Rugby Union in October 1995, at the start of the professional era. Over eight years he transformed the sport in Australia from one run by amateurs to one with genuine professional management. In doing so, he established practices that other top Rugby nations sought to emulate, establishing Australia as an international Rugby power and, for much of his tenure, with the Wallabies clearly the best in the world. He took the ARU from being a financially bereft organisation to one with strong commercial revenue and a sound asset base.

During this period John fought for and won the right to host the Rugby World Cup 2003 wholly within Australia and then conducted the immensely successful tournament. As an Australian sporting event in terms of value and world standing it has only been exceeded by the Olympics.

John O'Neill joined the Football Federation Australia, in March 2004 and established the very successful A-League. He took the Socceroos to the World Cup for the first time in over 30 years, and beyond the pool round of the World Cup for the first time ever. Under his guidance FFA revenue rapidly grew to make the organisation more sustainable.

In 2007, John O'Neill returned to the Australian Rugby Union CEO and Managing Director.

John was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO), in the 2004 Queen's Birthday Honours List, for service to Rugby as an administrator, to the financial services sector, and to the community through educational and charitable organisations.

In August 2005, by the decision of the President of the Republic of France, John was awarded the French decoration of Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur, in recognition of his assistance in the preparation and organisation of sporting events in Australia and France, and for his contribution to the development of the bilateral relations in the field of sports between Australia and France.