



Ron McKenna

*You can learn lots of facts from books and take note from those who preach it
While practical experience, it's near impossible to teach it
It's a feeling in your gut that's too hard to define
But it's a critical component when you're working in a mine*

*When there aint no time to think and you have to make the call
What you learnt in Chapter 5 might equate to bugger all
It's experience that counts and I'd like to lay a tenner
That no one knows this more than the legend Ron McKenna*

*Mining's in his blood, the lines go back to Torbanlea
At Burgowan No. 13 he got experience for free
With Cousin Wade in No. 12, Ron was living out his dream
Boss of his own mine and working with a team*

*But he had a thirst for knowledge, Ron was certainly no fool,
So he headed down to Ipswich where he went to mining school
Won a bursary that took him to The Snowy Mountains Scheme
Plus two months in The Hunter working on The Greta Seam*

*You're part of a community when you're in a mining town
When your family's in the business, things get handed down
Ron had seen his share of tragedy, Box Flat haunts him to this day
He knew things had to change and now they do things Ronnie's way*

*He got into training rescue teams and really shook it up
Ron's men went on to dominate the EK Healey Cup
He took the knowledge of his forebears and the men who'd done their time
To rewrite the rules of rescue and of safety in the mines*

*He'll say it's all about prevention, that's the way it's always been
And just like rugby league you must work as a team,
You have to listen to the mine, take in what it has to say
'cause there aint no second chances at the back end of the day*

*The experience of Ron is written in his face
We could list his great achievements but we haven't got the space
But if you're starting in the mines and you plan to get ahead
You'd best remember just two words and those two words are "Ronnie said".*

*Murray Hartin
6th August 2017*