



A Blue

A Gold

A Red

A White

B Gold

B White

B Blue

C Blue

C Gold

C Red

C White

Masters Matters

Issue No 1

January 2018

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Dates For The Diary:

2018: January 3rd: Combined 'A', 'B' and 'C' divisions on PHS 1 from 2:00 to 5:00 pm.

January 6th: Play re-commences at Perry Lakes.

June 20th / 30th. WGMA World Cup - Barcelona. } Australia and Southern Cross

July 27th / August 5th: IMHA World Cup - Terrassa. } Australia

September 21st / October 6th. Interstate Masters Championships - Lismore / Ballina NSW.

2020: World Cup - possibly Japan. } Australia and Southern Cross

WHM Christmas Party: Thank you and well done to the organisers. These included Simon Thomson, Bob Bowyer, and Steve Farrar (who got the numbers right - in due course). Many thanks also to Stadium bar manager Jason de Wind and the staff who prepared the tables and food. I thought that the night was excellent value for money - and that the black and gold settings looked great.

A few highlights from the evening:

- Bob raffled no less than 14 bottles of wine and 4 hampers. Our charity fund raising for next year is off to a terrific start. By the way, I won a wine myself, which is a first in more than 10 years of attending this function. Next one due in 2028.
- The Claxton family had a pretty good night. Wine winners included Bob Claxton, followed a short time later by Hockeyroo Jane Claxton. Then the hamper winners included Jan Claxton. Last year the hamper winners included another interstate visitor in Ric Roberts.
- IGA Canning Bridge donated a hamper again, Bob tells me for the seventh consecutive year. Coles and Woolworths each gave \$50 & Bob's wife Jan assembled the other two large ones starting from that. And Irene Simpson donated the small one. Other winners were Darryl Richards, Tommy Long (must have gone nicely with all the Hips/Knees goals) and Ian Brown.
- Our Chairman thanked recently retired Treasurer Brian Lester, and made him a presentation. Simon also thanked the WHM Committee and all other workers on our behalf.
- Jason de Wind was acknowledged for his work throughout the season in providing bar snacks and bar service each Wednesday, and especially for the Christmas Party dinner.
- The George Winning trophy was presented to John Mercer. The "Masters Matters" editor asked for an in depth interview but John declined. He claimed that he says all he has to say in these pages, and has very little more to add. He did state that he would like to thank all readers for their support and feedback.

New Look Saturday O/65s: As players in the WA O/70 Black team here in 2014 may remember, when Jim Wright turns his talents to obtaining hockey gear the results are pretty good. On Saturday 16th December the new Saturday shirts were issued to all those attending and in my humble opinion look excellent. A photograph of the stylish new gear can be found in the regular O/65s report.

Vale Adolphus Abrahams: It is with sorrow that we heard Adolphus had died on the 23rd December. He was a regular with the 'A' Division Red side in the first half of this year, but has been most unwell since. Several members of WHM attended the funeral service on the 30th December.

Fees for 2018: These are now due. The details, and how to pay can be found on Page 4.

Department of Health: Vern Gooch was reported on the day of the Christmas party (20/12) having gone to hospital for emergency cardiac treatment, and was on the operating table during the event. Thanks to Mike Gottschalk for this update on the morning of the 22nd: "I'm pleased to advise that Vern (my father) is going pretty well following installation of a pacemaker on Wednesday evening. Hoping that he'll be home again mid this afternoon. Thanks to all of you in the Wednesday hockey community for your thoughts and well wishes - it really meant a lot to me." *And thank you Gorby for keeping us in touch - Ed.* Robin Bailey's knee replacement has been scheduled for January 15th - hope all goes as it should for the operation and the recuperation period. John Burt has had a knee replacement, and is now on the road to recovery. He was taking notes at the Knees/Hips match now that he qualifies. Fellow goalkeeper Ross Easton had his operation earlier this year (unknown to me) and was back in action very quickly. Neil Scaddan is missing out on hockey until a persistent muscle injury clears up. Harvey Davies has a severe case of sciatica and at the time this edition closed off was considering surgery. Best wishes to you all, including those we have not heard about.

Letters To The Editor: Many thanks to the December correspondents Ian Lyon, Phil Anderson, Neil Mannolini, John Jeffreys, Ric Denny and John Milner.

Ian Lyon: *Our "Test our Hockey Knowledge" question in the November issue asked which of the 10 team names listed did not compete in the Women's 'A' grade in 1937. One of them was North Fremantle, which turned out to be the answer, as that year they were the only one of the listed teams to have played in Reserve grade. "I refrained from sending an advice to John Sanders question in the previous publication of WHM as felt that I had been given too much of a hint by the two of you on a previous Wednesday. My mother did play for North Fremantle Ladies but well before 1937, at which time she was heavily pregnant with yours truly and living on a farm 10 miles out of Merredin. When the team was being formed she helped to plant the grass on the ground behind the football goal posts and this fact was recorded in the North Fremantle Football club book published in 2006 to celebrate 85 years as a successful amateur club. I actually played football for the club for two years on a Sunday while playing hockey on Saturdays."*

Thanks Ian - not useless trivia at all. I remember you playing for North Fremantle at Gibson Park. Ed.

Ric Denny: It's always good to hear from Bowral. For the benefit of newer Saturday players, Ric was one of the prime movers in establishing that competition. In addition to a few nice words about 'Masters Matters' he added, "Wishing you and all Wednesday and Saturday players a Very Happy Christmas and injury free New Year."

Masters Interstate Tournament 2018: The venues were announced on the 12th December, and will be Lismore (200 games approximately) and Ballina (100 games). Good luck to team managers for WA sides who are trying to secure accommodation in this area during the school holidays. My source for the story was the Australian Masters Hockey Facebook page, and I would suggest that readers who would like to know more will need to use their internet search facility. I have checked on the cost of flights to and from Ballina on Virgin Airlines, and it appears that as is usual nowadays the trip is going to cost West Australians a lot of money. Alternatively, an earlier and cheaper (by close to \$250) flight would cost several days' worth of extra accommodation charges, at school holiday rates. The price of attending is going up and my income is travelling in the opposite direction.

Department of Corrections: Last issue did not feature too many major errors of fact as far as I know - or at least nobody has told me about them yet. There were quite a number of missed out words, and I managed to mis-spell John Jeffreys (with an 'ies') and Nick Pazolli (spelled as 'Pazzoli'). The proof-reader for "Masters Matters" would like to apologise to you both.

Punology One: Did you hear that there is a bi-partisan push in the Senate to legalise marijuana for arthritic therapy. In other words, there's joint support for joint support for joint support.

'A' Division / Saturday Lack of Respect: A distinct trend in recent years has been that many of us on both hockey days choose to ignore our umpires and make their own decisions at will. To me this shows a total lack of common courtesy - the game has to be under the control of the umpires rather us awarding ourselves free hits and corners whenever we think we've earned one. There is also far too much very audible and occasionally profane dissent from decisions. I mention the profanity as there has already been one spectator comment on it. Also it's only a few years ago that 1st Division umpires were instructed to award a yellow card for an audible obscenity.

Umpires are going to make errors, but not nearly as many as the players. To my way of thinking, the best way to handle an umpiring mistake is to give up the play when we know we have offended. And why can't we all be honest, with one another as well as the umpire? We no longer play for points and there are no sheep stations at stake. So why is it that we cannot just shut up and get on with the game? We also need to remember that not all our umpires are as mobile as they used to be and lack x-ray vision if players get in their line of sight.

In general, the principal dissenters never seem to take the whistle to demonstrate how the job should be done to the rest of us. It is not a good thing that blowing the whistle on a Wednesday or Saturday afternoon should have become so unpleasant and I am sure that it has prevented some of our more competent player umpires from officiating.

Could we all please make an effort to be more polite in 2018? And if any umpire ever wants to carry a set of cards I will have some in the technical dugout each Wednesday. They will also be there on Saturdays, but I trust will never be required at Perry Lakes.

One final request: I ask all players who are about to say anything to an umpire to subject it to this simple test. If you had the whistle and a player said this to you, how would you react? A lot of what is said now would not pass this test, and so would be much better left unsaid. We should limit our comments to owning up (for example - "off me") and perhaps an occasional word of praise if the advantage rule is used correctly.

We play the game at our age for enjoyment rather than to win at all costs - or we did when I first joined WHM some years ago (even though we preferred to win). Let's make it fun again.

2017 Honour Roll: Apologies go to a couple of serious omissions from the non-playing umpires. Not included were Saturday whistlers Peter Brien and Ken Edwards. I should have acknowledged the representatives from each division on the WHM Committee - Colin Gee ('A'), Peter Andrews ('B') and Ian Pestana ('C'). These are the gentlemen who usually bear the brunt when sides are short. Also mentioned under this heading should have been those players who took the whistle while injured. Once upon a time (that means a very long time ago) I had a memory I could rely on, but now I get increasingly reminded that such is the case no longer. Thanks to you all.

Quotable Quote One: *I get occasional comment on the sheer size of "Masters Matters" and have been searching for an explanation I can offer without filling another couple of pages. Here's one: "I have made this [letter] longer because I have not had the time to make it shorter." Blaise Pascal (1623 - 1662) French mathematician and physician.*

Fees for 2018: These are due now for all Wednesday players. Details are:

- a) All players pay \$300 - no allowances for sabbaticals, travel, etc.
- b) New players pay \$350, which includes a shirt and socks.
- c) Players who are over 80 on 1st January 2018 will pay only 50% of the fee.
- d) All goalkeepers pay \$200. Unless they are over 80.

If paying by bank transfer (the preferred option), please include your name, division and team in the reference (for example 'Mercer A White'). The BSB is 036-004 and the account number is 111511. Cheques are to be placed inside an envelope with your name, division and team written on the outside. Pass the envelope on to Treasurer Steve Farrar, either directly or via your team captain.

'A' Division Blog: Fourth quarter numbers have been down as usual. Let's do better next year.

December 6th: As has become customary there were not enough players for two teams 15 minutes before play was due to begin. Gold were the only team not to win one game, with Red and Blue having two draws each to go with their solitary win. Gold were missing Jim Balding, Greg Black, Peter Blockley, Phil Metcalf, John Milner, Ken Walter and Peter Willett. It must have been disconcerting to see 'A' Division elite forwards Peter Dennis (Blue) and Ham D'Souza (White) recruited to play against them. The standard of passing, finishing and teamwork was low most of the day, with exceptions. Bill Williamson scored two goals for Red, with John Ree doing likewise for Blue. Peter Dennis produced the pass of the day (while filling in for Red) to Peter Stevens, who was on the opposite side of the circle to the one remaining full back, and scored well. Ash Foster is running at a pace belying his age and generated a good fight-back by Gold against White. After trailing 3-0 Ash not only set up Ian Lyon for a goal, but then scored one himself on the reverse stick from somewhere near the backline, which had to be goal of the day. White recruited Bob Hotinski, obviously knowing that numbers would be down. Actual counts were Blue (10), Gold (8), White (8) and Red (7). The day's last match was not played as the Red team was unable to field a side. Total goals (13).

December 13th: All four teams had a win, a loss and a draw in our most even day for some time. Both Gold (Jim Balding / Peter Willett) & Red (John Jeffrey / Trevor Kerr) welcomed back key players and most games were good contests. Red also added Julian Gardner (up from Esperance) and Geoff Roberts (Saturday player getting turf time before the Orthopaedic Challenge match). The only blow-out occurred when Red could not handle the play two, miss two fixtures and went down 3-0 to Blue. Two players claimed the same goal in this match so I will not give exact tallies for the day. The White team had another terrible day in the attacking circle as mentioned elsewhere in this edition. Looking on the bright side (as per the Pythons in "The Life of Brian") some of the hockey was not too bad and our numbers were improved. We even managed to play the last game - with goalkeepers. Multiple scorers were John Jeffrey and Ree - JJ getting goal of the day for a rocket like corner conversion. Barry Rutter earns a special mention for a great match for Gold against Blue in the last game which assisted them to a 1-0 win despite being under severe pressure for most of the match. Player numbers were: Red (10), White (9), Gold (9) and Blue (10). Total goals scored (8).

December 20th: The fixtures had been changed to 20 minute games starting at 12:30 but a lot of players seemed to have decided to stay away - at 12:25 there were not enough present for two teams. Some more arrived a little later and several decided to save themselves for the Orthopaedic Challenge match. Only Barry Rutter arrived to put the pads on so an approximation of the scheduled fixtures was all that could be played. Much of the hockey was surprisingly good and of course a lot of it was decidedly not so good. Players who ran and distributed well included Peter Dennis, Terry Gaston, Ian Hill, Peter Gason, Bob Robinson, Peter Willett, Howie Herbert, Jim Wright, George Bradbury, Keith Kessell and Ron Venables (who is impossible to leave out from a list like this). My apologies to any player who feels he should have been included. Commiserations to Neil Patterson who had to leave the field with a very sore back. John Ree made several appearances at his favourite goal post and popped three of his chances in - with a reflex volley to a ball in the air getting the nod as goal of the day. Dave Horsley has been spending his time in defence this quarter as his White side is overloaded with goal missing forwards, but finally got on the board while filling in for Red. It doesn't matter how they go in; they all count as one. The scorers also featured Jim Balding who is usually found at the other end of the turf - and very nearly had a second. Player of the day would have to be Peter Dennis who was much in demand with all captains seeking him out constantly. He delivered many defence-splitting passes as well as providing great run and carry and seemed to have tired a bit by the last game (no wonder). Player numbers (counting everybody who arrived) were: Blue (10), White (8), Gold (7) and Red (6). Total goals (11).

Looking to 2018: To the best of my knowledge there will not be a complete re-allocation of teams. And I have not heard that any players want to make the move from 'B' Division. Maybe we could check the team lists for long-term injuries or absences and make some temporary changes to even the numbers, and the games, if necessary. See you all on the turf next year.

New Saturday Gear

Photo Roger Partington



George Bradbury, Jim Wright and Simon Thomson

From The Saturday O/65s: Play resumes on January 6th - be there by 1:30 pm for a 2:00 pm start.

The undoubted highlight of December was the new gear, which made its playing debut on the 16th. I thought that the hockey appreciably smartened up to match. *See limerick Page 7.*

Very well done to Jim Wright who did the hard yards on procuring and distributing three new shirts in the right size to each financial playing member of our Saturday group. If you have not received yours yet, make sure Jim knows when you are going to be there next.

The shirts definitely do give us a more professional appearance. So would matching socks, but we could only implement these by giving up the current flexibility of our team selections.

Jim was again heavily involved in our little pre-Christmas party after hockey on the 23rd. He and Bob Bowyer between them arranged for the cold meats, salads and fruits we feasted on. Jim and Bob also organised condiments, plastic plates, cutlery and glasses, and more than sufficient wine. Howie made sure that there was plenty of beer available, with the light and ginger varieties proving to be the most popular on the night. A very enjoyable evening followed, with the cleaning up being done in very quick time due to the foresight of the organisers in minimising washing up.

For the benefit of new players the current membership of the Committee is:

Club Captain: Les Waldon

Club Vice-Captain: Jim Wright (and also nibbles organiser)

Club Secretary/Treasurer: Bob Bowyer

Club Social Director: George Bradbury (and organiser of the selection roster)

Club Drinks Director: Howie Herbert

Assistant drinks manager: John Mercer (who is also assistant treasurer)

At least that is so until the AGM which is generally held at the conclusion of the summer season.

The French Letter No 37:

Well, Christmas has come upon us all and I trust you all enjoyed it with your family and friends. We had a family gathering with our daughter and two granddaughters and their father. It was an enjoyable time greatly enhanced by Joelle's cooking and we enjoyed some fine wine as well.

The weather has been relatively mild temperature-wise but we have been hit by some really strong winds with several days where the wind blew at 110kms for hours on end.

Tomorrow, New Year's Eve we are going out to lunch at a restaurant in Dieppe - the Comptoir du Malt. We had originally booked for an evening dinner at a different restaurant but we then discovered that the four courses were going to be spread out over four hours, with the desert being served at midnight. On reflection, we thought that wasn't the best scenario for us so we cancelled and organised lunch instead. I can already hear some of you saying (or thinking) - "Purds is showing his age", and I can't help but agree.

I guess you are all looking forward to another year of hockey and I wish you well.

Ian Purdie (*Thanks Ian; I can assure you that you are not the only one showing signs of age at this time of year. I haven't seen the New Year in since 2000. Ed.*)

Grumpy Old Men (and Women) One: "It is not a bad idea to get in the habit of writing down one's thoughts. It saves one having to bother anyone else with them." *Isabel Colegate (1931 -). English author - my information is that she wrote novels about the upper classes.*

"Say all you have to say in the fewest possible words or your reader will be sure to skip them; and in the plainest possible words or he will certainly misunderstand them." *John Ruskin (1819 - 1900). He is described by Wikipedia: English writer, art critic, draughtsman watercolourist and social thinker. These were included as there is a definite connection to "Masters Matters."*

Early Christmas: Our new Saturday O/65s shirts came just before Christmas, and had to make it into a limerick for "Masters Matters." It was interesting to note that all three colours were represented about equally in the shirts chosen to be worn to Perry Lakes on the 23rd.

The Saturday crew's to appear
 In very smart stylish new gear
 From now will be seen
 Maroon, blue and green
 A great way to start the New Year.

Something Viral: Hope you've managed to avoid both the computer and respiratory varieties. This quote says it all about the computer kind. "I think computer viruses should count as life. I think it says something about human nature that the only form of life we have created so far is purely destructive. We've created life in our own image." Stephen Hawking (1942 -).

WHM Gear: New members may not be aware that it is possible to acquire walk-out shirts (grey) and soft-peaked caps (gold) with our logo. Several examples of the walk-out shirt were on display at our Christmas party on the 20th, and George Winning actually turned up one day in December wearing his. If interested contact uniforms officer Robin Bailey, but you may need to be quick. Robin goes in for his knee replacement on January 15th and it may be some little time before he's back on deck. We wish him all the best, and hope that he's able to find a 'Knees' shirt for next year's match in the correct size. (*If anybody can help during your convalescence Robin, please don't hesitate to ask.*)

Quotable Quote Two: "To get something done, a committee should consist of no more than three men, two of whom are absent." *Robert Copeland. Good quote, but I cannot discover anything about its source. By the way, neither our Wednesday nor Saturday committees operate like that - everybody just pitches in and does their job. With a minimum of meetings and fuss.*

Balinese Bulletin No 30: Musing from Bali for January

WHAT WAS THAT....????

Sitting here at my computer, looking out into our overgrown tropical Balinese garden following overnight rain, I find myself in disbelief that 12 months has flashed by. Having moved to Bali almost 5 years ago it seems every ensuing year seems to fly by at an ever increasing speed. Fortunately, however, both Erin & I have not aged at that same increasing speed & can report continuing good health. We wish you all down there a Very Happy & Healthy 2018.

THE BALI WET.

You may remember me mentioning the onset of “The Wet” in the December Newsletter ...well I can confirm the rains are well & truly entrenched here. A few days back we experienced almost 6 days of continues tropical rain with little or no respite at all. Fortunately where we are the water drains away without much flooding.

VOLCANO UPDATE.

It’s a little like “waiting for the other shoe to drop”. The first report of an impending eruption was back in September. Here we are at the end of December & apart from several “Huffs & Puffs” not a lot has happened. We, like everybody else where we live, is just going about their normal business. This morning, on the News.com website out of Australia, I couldn’t help but notice the lead story that a legendary Bali Holy Man has predicted the Mt. Agung volcano would erupt with enormous force ... etc, etc. It wasn’t until you read through to the very end of the story that he was also predicting that it wouldn’t erupt until 2026. The Australian media need to take a good hard look at themselves.

In closing I, like most of you down there, was saddened to hear that Adolphus had passed away. .Another Wednesday Master that just loved his hockey.

Peter Hammond (*Thanks again Peter - Happy New Year to you and Erin. Ed.*)

Test Your Hockey Knowledge With John Sanders: December’s question was: Which of these statements about early hockey in Western Australia is false? a) The RAAF fielded a team in the Perth A grade in 1941. b) A team called Triangles played in the top Perth women’s grades before WWII. c) May Pearce played for WA, Australia and the Surf hockey club. d) Old Modernians won the premiership in WA Women’s hockey 1934 season. Nobody attempted an answer. Had I thought of John’s connection to Mods I might have guessed d), which is correct. John tells us that Mods actually won the premiership the previous year in 1933 and that in 1934 they lost the grand final to Boronias, who went through undefeated. January’s question is: Four Kookaburras were named in the FIH World All Star team of 2006 including Jamie Dwyer, Brent Livermore, Stephen Mowlam and one other. Who was the fourth player, a West Australian. *Answer next issue.*

Dummy Spit Of The Month: Forwards tend to react in different ways after missing easy goals. This month could also have been another selfie, but the award goes instead to everybody from the ‘A’ Division White side who failed to take advantage of a scoring opportunity during December. Will 2018 be any different? MM’s limerick writer does not appear to think so.

Wanted To Buy: The ‘A’ Division White team are very interested in a radar set, as they seem to have forgotten where the goals are. The MM resident limerick writer would like to assist with a solution, but this would not be possible, as he definitely is a part of the problem. So what we got was ...

White forwards are right off their game

And have lots of problems with aim

The post Hobart Blues?

Too much Tuesday booze?

Or maybe it’s old age to blame.

Perhaps we could ask Ash Foster - how do you obtain a new birth certificate. Though I believe the one Ash located actually increased his age rather than reduced it. Anybody got a time machine?

Rules of the Month: The last quarter of 2017 revealed that there is not a great depth of knowledge about the conduct of penalty corners. So I'll include some more of those rules this month. This is a follow on from the August issue of 2017 (web-site No 8) which included some penalty corner rules regarding the awarding of corners. This issue has some of the rules for taking corners.

Rule 13.7: For an offence during the taking of a penalty corner:

- a. The player taking the push or hit from the back line does not have at least one foot outside the field: the penalty corner is taken again.
- b. The player taking the push or hit from the back line feints at playing the ball, the offending player is made to go beyond the centre-line but is replaced by another attacker: the penalty corner is taken again. *If the feinting leads to what otherwise would be a breach of this rule by a defender, only the attacker is required to go beyond the centre-line.*
- c. A defender, other than the goalkeeper, crosses the back-line or goal-line before permitted, the offending player is required to go beyond the centre-line and cannot be replaced by another defender: the penalty corner is taken again. *If a defender at this or any subsequently retaken penalty corner crosses the back-line or goal-line before permitted, the offending player is also required to go beyond the centre-line and cannot be replaced. If a defender crosses the centre-line before permitted the penalty corner is taken again.*

[This means that the defending team can be reduced further in numbers than the five they have at the start of defending a penalty corner. I have seen three players defend a corner. Ed.]

- d. A goalkeeper or player with goalkeeping privileges crosses the goal-line before permitted, the defending team defends the penalty corner with one fewer player; the corner is taken again. *The defending team nominates which player is required to go behind the centre-line, and they cannot be replaced by another defender.*

[There is much more here on re-taken corners where the reduced number of defenders still does apply as compared to subsequently awarded penalty corners, when it's back to 5 defenders. Ed.]

- e. An attacker enters the circle before permitted, the offending player is required to go beyond the centre-line; the penalty corner is taken again. *Attackers who are sent beyond the centre-line may not return for re-taken penalty corners but may do so for a subsequently awarded corner.*
- f. For any other offence by attackers; a free hit is awarded to the defence.

My personal opinion on this rule is that umpires need to be able to differentiate between a balk and a legitimate hesitation by the attacker putting the ball into play from the back-line. If it's a hit, stopping on the down-swing is a balk in my opinion, and should be penalised. That's why a push is the preferred option, provided that the necessary power and accuracy can be achieved.

Past Players, Non Players and Injured Players: I am certain to have overlooked many visitors on the night of the Christmas party. Those I did manage to note during December included Robin Bailey, Graham Challenor, Jeff Godfrey, Derek Jobe, Brian Lester, Rusty Phillips, Neil Scaddan, Bob Stidwell, Ricky Watt and George Winning. And at Perry Lakes we saw Rob Ainsworth, Marty Greay, John Mercer, Neil Scaddan and Ken Watt. I think John Mercer was the only one who did not umpire.

Shakespeare Said It: For anybody who had a senior's moment over the festive season: "... Bear with my weakness, my old brain is troubled, be not disturbed with my infirmity..." The Tempest Act IV Scene I. *I actually had more than a moment or two, but everybody is still speaking to me. Ed.*

"Or you shall hear in such a kind from me, as will displease you." First Part of King Henry IV Act I Scene III. *Hockey umpire decides to issue a general warning to quell back chat.*

"... get thee gone, for I see danger and disobedience in thine eye." First Part of King Henry IV Act I Scene III. *The same umpire loses patience, and issues a card.*

Punology Two: Did you hear about the WA householder who opened his water and electricity bills at the same time. Needless to say, he was shocked .

Orthopaedic Challenge Match: As stated last issue, I played in the curtain raiser to the big match. So I not only missed the team introductions, I also missed the first few minutes of the game. It was a great surprise to discover that by the time I reached the sidelines the score was 2-1 to the Knees. It would seem that both sides threw all their big name players into the fray from the opening and the pace was still on. I was told that Ash Foster had scored for the Hips, and that Tom Long had both the Knees goals. He promptly added another one from a good corner variation and the Knees went into the quarter time rest 3-1 to the good. The Hips side re-grouped during the break and started to win some more of the ball with Ashley Knapp, Dudley Evans and Simon Thomson (Mr Everywhere) all prominent. Despite this the Knees looked very dangerous in attack with Tom Long, Adrian Gabriel and Peter Fogels displaying a lot of skill in addition to amazing bionic speed. The Hips weathered the storm well and Simon picked up a good goal before half time.

The third quarter had been the deciding period of the previous year's match, and it seemed that both sides remembered this. The pressure was on from the moment the second half began and both teams had promising attacks. Another corner variation resulting in Tom Long's fourth goal looked to have sealed the result, but Hips came again and Bob Claxton netted a rebound on his reverse stick. Tom Long was only denied a fifth by a terrific save from Hips goalkeeper Andrew Robertson with a fully outstretched stick. The last quarter did not produce any more goals, though the Hips continually threatened but Knees hung on to reverse the result of the 2016 match.

The quality of the hockey was in the main very high, as was the athleticism on display which totally belied the participants' ages and bionic metal parts. The crowd was probably at about the same size as in 2016, but the larger stand on Turf 1 made it appear slightly smaller. Former president (now RACS representative) of the WA branch of the Orthopaedic Society Greg Witherow was again in attendance to present the trophy to the Knees team. He also gave a framed certificate to each side. In post-match discussion Knees player Geoff Roberts advised me that Greg had been his surgeon. (*I'd be curious to know if there are any others? Ed.*)

My congratulations go to the organisers of the match - Bob Bowyer and Simon Thomson. Uniforms officer Robin Bailey arranged for a new set of shirts for both sides with the WHM logo, and also kitted them both out with appropriate socks.

Hips Versus Knees Publicity I understand that on the day of the game the ABC's 1:00 pm news had coverage and Simon was on the air too. The West Australian's Inside Cover featured a story and an Alston cartoon on December 22th, and I have included a copy of this on the following page.

Simon Thomson, Greg Witherow, Bob Bowyer, Ross Easton



Team captains Simon (Hips) and Bob (Knees) with the framed certificates from the Orthopaedic Society. Many thanks to Greg Witherow and all the medical people who made this match possible.

Knees Half-Time Huddle

Photo John Mercer



Perhaps Ivan Wilson (Hips player) was watering the turf

“Inside Cover” in the West Australian 22/12/2017



Simon Thomson and Bob Bowyer

JOINT EFFORT

Up by one goal and 11 hips, Bob Bowyer's hockey team just had to see out the last few minutes.

They lost the inaugural Bionic Cup last year and were determined to level the series at the Perth Hockey Stadium on Wednesday.

Bowyer's boys were named the Knees, a rag-tag bunch with

two things in common — a passion for hockey and at least one knee replacement.

The name of their rivals, the Hips, speaks for itself.

"They were giving us a really hard time at the end but we held on," Mr Bowyer, 78, said.

The Bionic Cup, supported by the Australian Orthopaedic Association, aims to raise awareness about the ability of joint replacement patients to get back into sport.

"We desperately want to get the message out there to contradict some of the stuff you hear," Mr Bowyer said.

"You can get your physical life back now and do whatever you were able to do before."

Inside Cover editor Ben O'Shea returns on December 26.

The "Masters Matters" limerick writer was moved to comment on this gem of a cartoon from the West's Dean Alston.

The Knees had embarked on a quest
 For bionic team of the West
 And so had the Hips
 So they came to grips
 But Alston's cartoon was the best.

By the way, a pedant would point out that the Knees actually were 13 hips in front, as the Hips included at least two double replacements.

Wine Winners for 2017: This is by no means a complete analysis of all winners and I have not attempted to categorise the successful purchasers of tickets by either team colour or division. Those included are only people who won more than once in any quarter. The highest number of wins by any one player is 7, and the best way to achieve such a total is to be in the bar every Wednesday that hockey is played and buy at least 3 tickets. This seems to have worked for Peter Gason and me.

Seven wins: Peter Gason and John Mercer. (*Selfies policy suspended for Christmas*)

Six wins: Mike Robinson.

Five wins: Glen Mihala.

Four wins: Bob Bowyer, Phil Hewton and Peter Murray.

Three wins: Ken Beer, Jason de Wind, John Jeffreys, Tom Long, Roger Partington, Neil Patterson, Paul Robinson, Leo Welten, Ivan Wilson and George Winning. (Howie Herbert also had three wins).

'A' Division Goals for 2017: 'Masters Matters' does not believe in making too much of tallies in this area, as a goal is almost always scored by a team effort. We also do not believe in extravagant goal celebrations and group embraces. So as in past years, here are the names of those who got ten or more goals for the year. White scored the most goals, and so have more players in the list.

Blue: Bob Bowyer, Peter Dennis, Jim Malcolm and John Ree.

Gold: Ian Lyon and Phil Metcalf.

Red: Trevor Kerr.

White: Ken Beer, Scott Blackwell, Ham D'Souza, John Mercer, Paul Robinson and Ron Venables.

There are some remarkable performances included here, as many of these players were not here for much of the year due to injury or holidays. Also well worthy of mention is that 70% of Scott Blackwell's goals came from filling in for other sides, where he can get a run in the forward line. When he plays for his own White side he usually ends up in defence, like captain Dave Horsley.

WHM in 2018: One of the very best bosses I ever had used to issue each Christmas his predictions for the forthcoming year. These included things such as: Fremantle Dockers will be premiers, the work syndicate will win Lotto, etc. So here are my forecasts for 2018, with a WHM emphasis:

- 'A' Division will be polite and respectful to umpires.
- So will the Saturday O/65s.
- 'C' Division will provide regular reports for "Masters Matters."
- There will be full houses in the bar each Wednesday.
- Nobody will suffer an incapacitating injury.
- Nobody will arrive late for the Saturday O/65s (bar the self-employed with strict bosses).
- 'A' Division will convert a lot more of their scoring opportunities.
- 'A' Division will get good numbers in every quarter.
- 'B' Division will get good numbers in every quarter.
- 'C' Division will get good numbers in every quarter.
- Simon will find a Social Secretary who remains in Australia.
- John Mercer will win Lotto in addition to Wednesday wine.
- Donald Trump will tweet something sensible.
- The Fremantle Dockers will win the AFL premiership.

Well Dones: The December 'A' division umpires included: Jim Balding, Ken Beer, George Bradbury, Peter Evans, Colin Gee, Neil Mannolini, John Mercer, Roger Partington, John Sanders & Neil Scaddan. Thanks also to the unknown 'B' and 'C' division whistle blowers. Saturday whistle blowers I noted were: Eric Alcock, Peter Brien, Colin Gee, Marty Greay, Roger Partington, Steve Powles, Neil Scaddan, and Ken Watt. The December cooking was mainly done by Jason and the Stadium staff for the Christmas party, and our Perry Lakes Christmas party was a Committee-catered event. And we must thank all the rostered providers at Perry Lakes too.

Hobart - From the WA O/75s: Alert readers may have detected a note of disappointment last issue about there having been no stories from the Hobart tournament. That lack has well and truly been filled now, and my thanks go to the author of this piece in Barry Rutter. I've always wondered how a gold medal winning State side goes about it - and here is the inside story.

Before we left WA we held a special night called 'Hockey Cares' at the Perth Hockey Stadium to show how our hockey players care about the less fortunate. Disappointingly, only about 20 people attended, mainly Hockey WA staff & Ken Beer who was looking for a free feed. (*Advertise here. Ed.*)

The function featured as guest speaker John Sanders, who spoke about his personal collaboration with ex-Australian coach Richard Aggiss. It was a very emotional speech, but we felt bad about starting the slow hand-clap, as he was going on a bit and we, as over 75s had to be home early and go to bed.

Ian Hill stated on his CV for the coaching position that he once coached a Seventh Day Adventist side, which he said could have reached the finals if they had been prepared to put in a little more effort, like showing up on a Saturday. He was also sweating on receiving a Certificate for Working with Children but fortunately for the group it didn't arrive in the mail before departing.

Howie Herbert can still remember a talk by his very first coach who used to be in charge of the under 11s. He would always say to the team "The three most important things about playing hockey are fitness, fitness, fitness." He had a stutter so Howie never did learn the other two.

As we were to be away for two weeks in Hobart we had to take quite a lot of clothing for all types of weather. Some of the players even packed a change of undies.

In our age group most studies show performance is 30% physical and 60% mental with the other 10% being derived from energy drinks and caffeine.

The question of whether wives and partners should join us at championships is a vexed one. In the old days we said our goodbyes at the airport, often with little more than a handshake or a soft tap on the shoulder, and then head off. But now the girls are being allowed to talk to us (on non-match days) and join us in some of the social events.

At the airport some of the guys were sharing emotional farewells with loved ones and were very lucky their wives weren't there to witness it.

An interesting feature of the pre-flight safety talk these days is a warning about the dangers of deep-vein thrombosis or DVT as it is more commonly known. This condition can be a very real problem for the departing hockey players and occurs after long periods of inactivity such as sitting in a plane or playing as a goalkeeper. The following day after our arrival in Hobart we were all given the day off to recover from the flight over (a similar offer was made to the Qantas flight crew).

As the first day was a rest day, we decided to have a good look around Hobart. 20 minutes later we were back at the hotel, where we decided to do some exercises, like walking round the pool, some leg swings and frog jumps. By this time a large crowd of onlookers had gathered forcing management to ask us to put on bathers. We were quite fortunate because of the various physical conditions and age of the players we could leave the team bus in the hotel's disabled parking bay.

As the O/40s were scheduled to play in the afternoon that day we decided to give them our support. It was easily very apparent that this group get numerous pulled "hammies" compared to the O/75s who mainly suffer from gout or Alzheimer's.

In the 35 years of participating in the Masters Championships most of the O/75s have never taken anything stronger than Bex or Aspros. The only exception, and one we very much regret, was when we were in Darwin a number of years back and we were really struggling with the heat and energy-sapping conditions. At one stage it got so bad that a lot of the players feared falling asleep during one of Tom Crossen's half-time addresses. Subsequently we asked the physio if he had anything that might keep us up. It took two days before we realised he had given us Viagra and a week before Graeme Samson could comfortably wear a box.

It was good to see that our oldest player, David Lester, still has hockey in his blood, as well as a few other things that pathologists have not been able to identify.

We were reminded in Tasmania that we were considered ambassadors for our State, a role that brought with it huge responsibility. On the positive side Peter Murray added, as ambassadors it also technically made us immune from prosecution.

We had never before seen Kieran McLernon looking fitter, with a twinge in his hammy, torn thigh muscle, pinched elbow nerve and hairline spinal fractures his only major concerns.

David Lester was the only player who didn't stay with the team at the Shoreline Hotel, which led to his team-mates questioning where he was staying. The only clue we had was that the only other time a player didn't stay with the group was when he slept overnight in the police lock-up.

The next day, on being told he was in the opening eleven Lester was elated and celebrated the news in typical fashion - face down on the physio's bench receiving treatment for???

We began the Championship playing Victoria and after scoring the second of his three goals in the match John Ree raised both arms and then kissed his hockey stick in a fit of jubilation. Afterwards, some people described him as a German scoring a geriatric. Ivan Wilson was slightly less demonstrative, merely raising his stick and adjusting his box, but the sentiment was still there.

There's a lot of superstition and ritual in our change-room before a match. Kieran prefers to sit by himself, Ivan Wilson listens to Bing Crosby through his headphones, Peter Gason tends to walk around naked, while the rest of the group just try and stay as far away from Gase as possible.

There is no doubt about it, the hockey centre is a true test of character. The confronting environment of noise, smell, pollution, heat, a hostile crowd and appalling food - and it's even worse when you venture outside our change-room.

To celebrate our two wins from two matches we had a few drinks in the bar at Bellerive Oval and it looked like turning into quite a pleasant evening until one of the security staff discovered us there and threatened to call the police if we didn't leave right away.

In the hotel's gym doing the training circuit with different stations: sit-ups, push-ups and weights. In one corner George and Stan began exercising in a boxing routine, or so we thought. It later turned out they were having a punch-up over who should sit on the interchange bench during our next match. Stan lost. But it was great to see sportsmanship prevail when the whistle to end the game. Stan ran onto the field to shake George's hand and offer him a drink. It was George of course who kept Stan on the bench for a considerable amount of time, yet there they were after the heat of battle sharing a drink. It's what makes this team so great. We were up early the next morning when we received some bad news. George had come down with food poisoning and the Doctor thought it may have been something he drank yesterday!

This saga will have to be continued next issue, as the Hips/Knees has taken up a lot of space which might have otherwise been available. I can assure readers that the Stan / George and David Lester sub-plots will be continued, and (spoiler alert) there is a happy ending. Ed.

Grumpy Old Men Two: "The whole problem with the world is that fools and fanatics are always so certain of themselves, but wiser people so full of doubts." *Bertrand Russell (1892 - 1970). British author, mathematician and philosopher.*

Club News: Thanks to Peter Willett for some gossip from the Old Aquinians O/60s, who in 2017 topped the ladder and won the Grand Final. They recently had their team windup and ...

- Jim Banks won the prestigious Tony Grace trophy as best Masters club-man of the year.
- Ivan Wilson was presented with a medal to acknowledge his 750 games with the club.
- All team members got medals - for such a good year.

All news and other contributions to:

John Mercer - 'A' Division White team. Email: johnmercer@iinet.net.au.

Season's Greetings: Happy New Year to all our readers. I hope you all saw in the New Year well or wisely. Even better if you managed to do both - I gave up trying a long time ago.