



A Blue

A Gold

A Red

A White

B Gold

B White

B Blue

C Blue

C Gold

C Red

C White

O/65 Blue

O/65 Green

O/65 Maroon

Masters Matters

Issue No 2

February 2018

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Dates For The Diary:

2018: February 3rd: Pizza night at Perry Lakes.

Last Wednesday each month: Sausage sizzle at PHS. Next one due February 28th.

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

Interstate Tournament 2018 - Country: WA Country have already opened nominations for coaches, managers and players. Further details and forms can be obtained from their web-site which is accessed via <https://wachokeymasters.wordpress.com>. I think this indicates an effort to fight back against the drastic reduction in their number of teams which occurred last year, and thoroughly approve. I also note that the training program is announced, and this is:

- April 15th: Mandurah or Lark Hill.
- May 13th: Bunbury (team selections).
- June 17th: Collie.
- July 15th: Narrogin.
- August 12th Busselton.
- September 9th: Bunbury.

These dates and venues are still subject to alteration - we will endeavour to keep you informed.

Interstate Tournament 2018 - Metro: In the excitement of the Christmas Party & the Orthopaedic Challenge match I overlooked informing MM readers that nominations for off the field roles (coach, manager, selector and medical) in the various WA State teams had opened via the WA Masters web-site. Unfortunately, they were due to close on 29th January so you may be too late.

Fees for 2018: Our WHM treasurer Steve Farrar advises that as at Australia Day about half the fees have been paid, which means that there are 92 players who haven't paid. A reminder on how to pay:

- 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.

Steve also has advised that so far only 5 players did not pay their 2018 subs by bank transfer, but the percentage of Christmas party payments was not as good, with about 15 percent using cash or cheque. Maybe we can improve that in 2018. *Note: These are Wednesday fees, not Saturday. Ed.*

Department of Health: It is pleasing to be able to report some good news. Vern Gooch was at PHS on January 10th and appeared to have resumed umpiring on the 24th. Also there on the 10th was Chip Challenor who seemed to have returned to work, but claimed he had only gone back to annoy some of his employees. Hope you make it all the way back. John Harper has had his gall bladder removed, and a few complications followed. Though judging by the way he played on the 24th he's back to top form already. Brian Soares has had a deferment on his operation which is now due to be done in early February. Bob Bowyer is also having an operation in early February, for atrial flutter (I had to Google it, too). Ham D'Souza may also have an operation pending, on his eyes. Neil Patterson and wife Celia were on the way to a cruise to Antarctica when she developed heart problems and was admitted to hospital in Buenos Aires. Neil and Celia managed to begin their return journey on January 28th, and have just arrived back in Perth. There is more bad wifely news, Beth Wright broke several bones in a foot during December necessitating a few weeks of total inactivity. Rumour has it that Jim's housekeeping is a little rusty. Eric Alcock has had a foot operation resulting in a moon boot to be worn for a couple weeks 24/7. And wife Judy broke a toe concurrently. No wonder Eric referred to his home as "Limp Villa." The specialist consulted by Harvey Davies gave him a different diagnosis to his GP, and said that no operation would cure the problem, so he's back playing again. Robin Bailey had his knee replacement on January 15th. On the 31st he was back at PHS distributing WHM gear again, with no sign of crutches and no sign of pain (he said). He also said that despite appearances he will not be back on the turf this month and intends to see out the recommended six months of recuperation. A rapid recovery to all.

Department of Health (continued): For a while now the reports here have mentioned another joint replacement taking place. But might they cause an imbalance in our Orthopaedic Challenge teams? MM's limerick writer certainly appears to think so:

As players go under the knife
More bionic parts will be rife
It seems all of these
Have been metal Knees
Which could leave the Hips in some strife.

Letters To The Editor: My thanks to all of you who responded to the January issue, and to all who mentioned the George Winning award. Correspondents included Jim Wright, Rusty Phillips, John Milner, Neil Mannolini, Keith Kessell and Phil Anderson.

Neil Mannolini: "I cannot understand why the powers that be continue to schedule the Vets to be held during school holidays when fares are dearest & accommodation is always costlier. My English teacher told me that 'common sense' should be called 'uncommon sense.' *I certainly do not understand either Neil - our recent attempt to have it changed was again not successful and I have yet to read the reasons why this is so. Ed.*

Masters Interstate Tournament 2018: Last issue I wrote a few words about the air fares from Perth to Ballina. I have done a little more research since then, and a good alternative appears to be to book your flights to Brisbane. The drive from Brisbane Airport to Ballina is reported as a distance of 194 kms but is all on the M1 and is estimated to take only 2 hours 2 minutes.

New Look Masters Matters: Did you notice the changes to the cover page on your way in? Now that we have three official Saturday colours it was time to recognise it properly. The resulting limerick:

All newsletter staff are upbeat
MM has a new cover sheet
Our Perry Lakes hues
Are still recent news
And now make our front page complete.

Rules of the Month: Several players seem to have been developing new skills lately, and the over-head pass is much more common than it was. Following some discussion at Perry Lakes on the 13th here is the relevant rule in full and the explanatory notes, plus comment from Neil M and me.

Rule 9.10: "Players must not approach within 5 metres of an opponent receiving a falling raised ball until it has been received, controlled and is on the ground.

The initial receiver has a right to the ball. If it is not clear which player is the initial receiver, the player of the team which raised the ball must allow the opponent to receive it."

[My interpretation of initial receiver is the player who is closest to where the ball will land. Note that the defender only has priority in cases of doubt. And if the ball lands and bounces it is then not on the ground, so would be tacklers may not approach until it is. Thanks to Neil Mannolini for adding: "If there is any danger to a player or players, blow it immediately." And Neil adds that players should buy a rule book - and then read it. Ed.] (See 'Rule Books for 2018?' below - Ed.)

There has also been discussion on that hardy perennial, the obstruction rule. So we'll include it again this issue - in full. This can cause difficulties at international level too, as players are so quick that they can avoid tackles by interposing themselves for a very short time.

Rule 9.12: "Players must not obstruct an opponent who is attempting to play the ball.

Players obstruct if they:

- **back into an opponent**
- **physically interfere with the stick or body of an opponent**
- **shield the ball from a legitimate tackle with their stick or any part of their body.**

A stationary player receiving the ball is permitted to face in any direction.

A player with the ball is permitted to move off with it in any direction except bodily into an opponent or into a position between the ball and an opponent who is within playing distance of the ball and attempting to play it.

A player who runs in front of or blocks an opponent to stop them legitimately playing or attempting to play the ball is obstructing (this is 3rd party or shadow obstruction). This also applies if an attacker runs across or blocks defenders (including the goalkeeper or player with goalkeeping privileges) when a penalty corner is being taken."

Also relevant here are:

Rule 9.3: "Players must not touch, handle or interfere with other players or their sticks or clothing."

Rule 9.4: "Players must not intimidate or impede another player."

Rule 9.13: "Players must not tackle unless in a position to play the ball without body contact.

Reckless play, such as sliding tackles and other overly physical challenges which take an opponent to ground and which have the potential to cause injury should attract appropriate match and personal penalties" (meaning cards - Ed.).

[The wording is fairly explicit but interpretation can be difficult. Though surely the rules make it clear that bumping into an opponent is an offence. Good luck to all WHM umpires. Ed.]

Rule Books for 2018? The current F.I.H. practice is to review the rules every two years, which means that our 2017 rule books are still current. Hockey WA will not be ordering any for this year but rule books are in (limited) stock at Just Hockey, Burswood for \$7.95. The rules can also be downloaded from the F.I.H. web-site, and it appears that the receiver can be a variety of devices.

Vale Adolphus Abrahams: Thanks to Peter Blockley for informing me that in addition to those who attended the memorial service in Gosnells (Howie Herbert, John Mercer, Bob Stidwell and Ken Watt) that Peter Blockley, Chip Challenor and Ian Lyon were present at the interment in Fremantle.

Department of Corrections: One of my predictions for 2018 encountered finger trouble. The POTUS line should have read: "Donald Trump will tweet something sensible. Not covfefe, so last year."

'A' Division Blog: Play on the 3rd January was combined scratch games from 2:00 to 5:00 including 'A', 'B' and 'C' Division players. Obviously I did not know enough names.

January 3rd: At 1:50 pm it seemed that we would struggle to fill two teams. Then throughout the rest of the day many more players arrived than departed and we ended up with a White, Blue and Gold team, umpires Neil Mannolini and John Lindsay and no goalkeepers. At times there were spare players on the sidelines too. Despite some confusion over penalty corners which resulted in a few of them actually being taken ('A' Division local rule is that no goalkeepers means no corners) and some doubts about hits at goal several entertaining games were played. Given the age range on the turf (50 to 84) some variability in the hockey quality was to be expected, but the younger blokes set a high standard and were kind enough to provide an occasional hit for the eight members from the 'A' Division who played. Goal of the day would have too many contenders for me to be able to make an award. Possibilities included a late Blue team deflection and the orange shirted Gold team right wing who got so many goals that sheer quantity alone would qualify him. Kicking full back of the day would have to be Mike Gottschalk, who saved very well many times in the game he played there - perhaps it's hereditary. I hope all enjoyed the afternoon.

January 10th: Red began the day with a formidable line-up featuring star recruits Geoff Roberts and Bob Claxton while White managed to pick up right from they left off in December by creating many scoring chances but repeatedly failing to convert. This is a common problem in 'A' Division, but White has the worst case of it. The other problem, as usual, was frequent turnovers, but this one appears to be shared evenly among all teams. Gold had the lowest numbers and struggled to be competitive in most games, usually depending on the quality of their fill-ins. Blue put in a bad one against White, then managed to snatch two draws from the jaws of victory against Red and Gold. Geoff Roberts (Red) and Ham D'Souza (White) both got three goals and a couple were scored by Peter Dennis (Blue) including the goal of the day for a good strike in the last match. John Jeffreys converted well from the top of the circle for Red before succumbing to injury. Scott Blackwell is still returning to full fitness, but managed a great run to set up Ham while both filled in for Gold. Pass of the day goes to Peter Willett for a great reverse stick effort which beat everybody, including the last-in-line intended recipient. Comeback of the day went to Len Blyth - the rumour in the White dugout was that the captain had asked him to wear his name badge for the benefit of his team-mates. It was good to have four goalkeepers again (Colin, Tony, Bill and Barry - welcome back Bill). Both John Jeffreys (Red) and Mal Jackaman had to stop playing due to muscle strains. Player numbers were: Red (10), White (10), Blue (9) and Gold (7). Total goals scored (13).

January 17th: The weather was not conducive to filling for other teams in 25 minute games due to the oppressive humidity. Despite this some players played five matches (Peter Dennis/Ron Venables) and others just the three. This resulted in oddities, such as Ron Venables now being the leading goal scorer for Gold and Peter Dennis lining up against White in every match. Bob Claxton was a guest player for Red again. All four goalkeepers (Bill, Tony, Colin and Barry) played well, making several excellent saves. In one hectic passage Bill Baldwin must have averted a goal at least six times by always being in the right place. Despite this a lot of goals were scored in one of the most even days we've had for a while with no margin greater than the odd goal & Gold the only team not to register a win. Red did not lose a match, but had two draws in addition to their solitary win, while Blue won twice. After lengthy deliberations goal of the day went to Graham Harler's deflection. Save of the day, despite Bill B's heroics, has to go to Mark Faithfull for somehow getting his stick to a goal bound and off the ground ball, and sending it wide. Jim Banks lasted only a couple of minutes before coming off with a calf problem. He did say that the new hip was fine. Total player numbers (counting everybody who arrived) were: Blue (9), Gold (7) White (11), and Red (7). Total goals (16).

/11

Quotable Quote One: "We live in a society exquisitely dependent on science and technology in which hardly anyone knows anything about science and technology." *Carl Sagan (1934 - 1996). US astronomer and populariser of astronomy.*

Perry Lakes Car Park Sign



From The Saturday O/65s: There will be a Pizza night on February 3rd. Drinks included.

The new shirts have already resulted in the Maroon team being dubbed Queensland and the Green team Tasmania. While I believe the Royal Blue team could be called Albury-Wodonga, as the colour is mid-way between the light blue of NSW and the navy blue of Victoria.

It was with a lot of regret that we heard that Geoff Roberts will have to return to NSW. Wife Gail has suffered a stroke and has already gone back. He will follow as soon as he can get everything sorted over here. We've enjoyed having you with us Geoff, both on and off the field.

Play restarted on the 6th, but goal-scoring did not. It was not until the very last match that Simon cracked in the only one. The unmowed field did not help and possibly nor did the Christmas pudding.

We had some difficulties with the drinks on the 20th. The store-room fridges were not working when we arrived, and some hasty improvisation with the bar fridges was necessary. I hope that the drinks were at least tolerably cool.

Due to the use of the bar fridge and the necessity for the bar to be manned I did not hear all the details, but I understand that Greg Street's car was broken into on the 20th by means of a smashed window. Commiserations to you Greg. None of us ever leave any valuables in our vehicles (I hope) as per the sign above - judging by the number of them which have just appeared it's a problem area.

Our sympathy also goes to Mike Harris, who accidentally was hit just under the eye by a deflected stick - also on the 20th. We hope that the headache did not last too long, and that the stitches will do their appointed task. Sympathy also to Bob Hotinski who tore a calf on the same day. Quite badly.

It's been a while since we printed the drink prices, and as it's very rare for the till to balance these days another reminder might be in order. All beers are \$3, all soft drinks are \$2, Wild Turkey costs \$5 and a small wine (red or white) will be \$5. Except on free days, of course.

Welcome to recent additions to our playing roster Jim Balding and Mike Gottschalk.

The French Letter No 38:

Hi, one and all. The winter here has continued unabated, although I must say we have gotten off lightly compared with other parts of France. Snow & rain have been the dominant factors. Many of the ski resorts were unusually snowed in with some recording depths up to six metres. (makes it very difficult to find your car!). This also meant no skiing because of the avalanche risk.

Flooding has been very bad with lots of the smaller rivers flooding small villages and towns and of course feeding the volume into the Seine which is now at its highest level since 1910. It is expected to peak this coming weekend.

The gauge Parisians use to check the height of the river is a statue of a soldier at the Alma bridge called the Zouave - the name coming from the fighting forces originally drawn from French North Africa and which distinguished themselves in the 1854 Battle of the Alma in the Crimean War.

When the water reaches the soldier's feet the river is closed as the boats and barges cannot pass safely under the bridges. In 1910, the worst ever recorded, the level reached the soldier's shoulders - 8.62 metres above normal. The current situation is that the peak may well be over six metres which will make to the worst flooding for over a century.

Paris is affected by such floods in a number of ways - transport systems are worst hit with the underground railway & even the above ground rail being closed down. Many streets are impassable to traffic. Two large and popular tourist attractions - the Louvre and the Musee D'Orsay - flank the river and both have to implement their Risk Management Plans which means "shift all the bloody treasures to a safer place as quickly as possible".

We are fortunate in that we live on a bit of a plateau, although that means we really cop the wind, but many parts of Normandy have been badly hit by flooding. Talking about the wind - when we first purchased our property in 2007 there were no wind towers on the nearby farming land, (aeoliennes in French). However later on four towers were built. This was OK and I personally thought it was a good development from a renewable energy point of view. However last year they built four more towers in the same area, one of which is only about 500 metres from our house. It's starting to feel a little crowded!

I've also been following the Australian Open Tennis and of course the controversy with the playing conditions. For what it's worth my opinion is that the organisers need to do a rethink. Surely its extremely dangerous for players to be running around in such searing temperatures. They may be elite athletes but they can die or suffer severe damage when exposed to such harsh conditions.

Well, that's all from me this month. Good hockey to you all.

Ian Purdie (*Thanks again Ian. We have now seen some footage of the swollen Seine, which looks quite horrendous. And I totally agree with you on the Australian Open. My customary comment is that it has now become show business and the show must go on. Ed.*)

Shakespeare Said It: "..... what haste? Can you not stay awhile? Do you not see that I am out of breath?" Romeo and Juliet Act II Scene V. 'A' Division defender to (in alphabetical order) Peter Dennis, Ham D'Souza or Ron Venables who all have a habit of not waiting around to be tackled.

"Devise, wit; write pen; for I am for whole volumes in folio." Love's Labours Lost Act I Scene II. The editorial policy for 'Masters Matters' - with allowances for technological advances.

"We'll mannerly demand thee of thy story, so far as thou will speak it." Cymbeline Act III Scene VI. "Masters Matters" reporter requests an interview.

Quotable Quote Two: "In the part of this universe that we know there is great injustice, and often the good suffer, and often the wicked prosper, and one hardly knows which of these is the more annoying." Bertrand Russell (1872 - 1970). English author, mathematician and philosopher.

Grumpy Old Men One: "To be stupid, selfish and have good health are three requirements for happiness, though if stupidity is lacking all is lost." Gustave Flaubert (1821 -1880). French author.

Balinese Bulletin No 31: Peter has said that not much is happening lately, like our 'A' Division scoring on the 24th. He was good enough to write and tell us that there is nothing to write about.

"... Unfortunately I have to admit that the past month has been nothing more than a couple of blank lines on an empty page.... certainly nothing remotely of interest to the average elderly hockey player down there in Perth. May I then be excused for this month and "gird" my loins to find something fascinating to report for the March edition."

Peter Hammond (*Not a problem Peter - best wishes from us all down here to you and Erin. Ed.*)

Test Your Hockey Knowledge With John Sanders: January's question was: 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? Nobody attempted an answer, even after the player in question appeared on our TV screens in connection with the recent Kookaburras games in Narrogin - Bevan George. February's question is: The Kookaburras finished 8th in their first World Cup in 1971 but 15 years later finished a) First b) Second c) Third d) Fourth. *Answer next issue.*

Well Done: January (including combined games on the 3rd) 'A' division umpires included: Ken Beer, Bill Campbell, Bob Claxton, Dudley Evans, Peter Evans, Ash Foster, Colin Gee, Ian Hill, John Lindsay, Neil Mannolini, Geoff Roberts, Barry Rutter, John Sanders Ken Watt and Ivan Wilson. Thank you to all 'B' and 'C' division whistle blowers (Vern included?). Those who umpired on Saturdays were: Rob Ainsworth, Peter Brien, Dudley Burrell, Peter Gason, Mike Gottschalk, Marty Greay, Ian Hill, John Mercer, Roger Partington, Brian Soares, Rod Spencer, Ron Venables, Les Waldon and Ken Watt. The cooking for the sausage sizzle on January 31st was done by the 'A' Division Blue team - thank you. And a special thank you goes to the rostered providers at Perry Lakes who are doing a fine job.

WHM in 2018: Last issue included several tongue in cheek predictions. Some of these will run until the end of the year, but others have already achieved their likely fate. The scorecard follows:

- 'A' Division will be polite and respectful to umpires. (Wrong)
- So will the Saturday O/65s. (Wrong)
- 'C' Division will provide regular reports for "Masters Matters." (Open to end of year)
- There will be full houses in the bar each Wednesday. (Wrong)
- Nobody will suffer an incapacitating injury. (In doubt - two already on Saturday)
- Nobody will arrive late for the Saturday O/65s. (Wrong)
- 'A' Division will convert a lot more of their scoring opportunities. (Not so far)
- 'A' Division will get good numbers in every quarter. (Still open - just)
- 'B' Division will get good numbers in every quarter. (Still open?)
- 'C' Division will get good numbers in every quarter. (Still open?)
- Simon will find a Social Secretary who remains in Australia. (Open to end of year)
- John Mercer will win Lotto 1st division in addition to Wednesday wine. (Open to end of year)
- Donald Trump will tweet something sensible. (Open to end of year)
- The Fremantle Dockers will win the AFL premiership. (Open to start of final round)

In Your Dreams: Obviously the MM editor is worried about the continued absence of the 'C' Division from here, if recent events following these predictions are any guide. The resulting limerick:

The Editor said "I'm a seer
Here's what will happen this year."
But had quite a fright
One seemed to be right
A 'C' Div report did appear.
(And then I woke up)

'B' Division Report - January:**INJURIES:**

The Knees and Hips contest is going to have a few new players in 2018 after a raft of off season operations amongst B Division players. **Greg Allen** is due to return in Feb after knee replacement surgery last year. **Ray Domingo** was slowed down for a couple of months as he had a half knee replacement as has **Brian Thomas**. Although not certain Brian could get any slower. Would love to have seen a 20 metre race off between him and **Alan Osborne**, who also has undergone knee replacement and is due back shortly. **Neil Miller**, **Shane Knapp** and **Jim Campbell** (his second) have all undergone hip replacement surgery in Oct/Nov and due back in Mar/Apr 2018.

Chip Challenor had two operations on back discs as it was too cold to play in Hobart and has just recommenced jogging (very slowly he says). Uncertain as to when he will make a comeback.

Vern Gooch defied the passing of time by returning to umpiring B Division hockey two weeks ago after having a few serious heart problems late last year that resulted in a pacemaker being added to his retinue. Vern plans to outlast the pacemaker.

Graham Harper had a bit of time off over the Xmas period with a knee problem and looks to be heading for the knife when arrangements can be finalised. **Roger Davey** returned to the field today after a bout of heart issues. Looked to be in good form with his trapping and ball movement.

Bill Campbell continues to suffer with arm problems (tennis elbow) and has spread that suffering to all by umpiring throughout the month. I understand some players are hoping he gets better soon.

VISITORS:(And New Players):

Given the tight nature of the competition in 2017 it was felt that only minor adjustments to balance numbers needed to be made to the team lists to maintain the competition's integrity for the 2018 season. The changes see **Bill Rochester** move from Gold to Blue and **Ian Brown** and **Peter Gallows** from Blue to Gold.

Welcome mat has been set for **Fred Flanagan** who has graduated from the O50's and added to Whites ailing squad. Fred a born and bred Canberrian has been in the West for 3 years and is looking to make an impact on the B Division.

Eddie Ebert (Brads second cousin) has joined the Wed hockey ranks as another Blue player. Eddie has previously played for Willetton and Fremantle (and others) but is new to the Wed hockey scene. Welcome.

Simon Williams (O70's) made a guest appearance playing for Blue last week. Good to see Simon could spare the time away from his busy work schedule. And he recommended **Peter Havlin** (holidaying in Perth and soaking up some sun) from London make his way down for a game. Peter played for the Welsh O70's team in Glasgow, is from London and his father was born in Glasgow. Peter appears to have his foot in several doors.

LIFES LINGERING MOMENTS:

1. Sin!!!!. Because if you don't, Jesus died for nothing.
2. Americanism: Ban pre shredded cheese. Make America Grate Again
3. The Coolheaded Heroine: (in her own words): While out walking along the edge of a lake just outside my house, with my soon to be ex-husband, discussing property settlement and other divorce issues, we were surprised by a large 3.5m Alligator, which suddenly emerged from the murky water and began charging at us with its large jaws wide open, She must have been protecting her nest because she was extremely aggressive. If I had not had my small pistol with me, I would not be here today!. Just one shot to my estranged husband's knee cap was all it took. The gator got him easily and I was able to escape by just walking away at a brisk pace. His life assurance was a big bonus.

GUESS WHO: The photo on the next page forwarded by an avid reader, was taken in January 1981 and features two current Wednesday players, one in A Grade and one in B Grade and has a country flavour having appeared in the Countryman in that year. Be interested to know if anyone can pick all three. I could pick one without assistance.



Looking for further photos to be included in later editions, especially those of a much younger nature, especially if recognition could be difficult. (gordon.jeffery@ninety3.net)

THIS MONTHS HOCKEY

Following on from a successful 2017 Blue (by winning most games in the year) have decided to give opposition teams an early break in 2018. Their goal scoring has dried up and their defence is leaking goals, then Graham Harper comes on for a cameo appearance and scores 2 goals in 2 minutes and they won 2-0 against Gold. This is the only game Blue has won in recent weeks. With the addition of Fred Flanagan to the team, has seen White convert from the best defensive team in 2017 (50% of their games were draws and most were 0-0 draws) into a more attacking side with Arch and Simon Thompson taking advantage of the ball in the forward line and scoring 3 goals apiece. In the last 3 weeks White has won 6 of their 9 games built on the strong defensive work of Gorby, Dave Mellor and Mike Robinson and the transition from defence to attack by Peter Morgan, Shane Williams and Heath Tyrell, giving the forwards many opportunities in attack.

Gold on the back of leading goalscorer so far this season the dynamic Leo Welten (6), has also had a successful start. Glenn Mihala has been impressive as always at full back, Peter Fogels received after burners for Xmas, and is speeding around the ground and has scored 3 goals and a couple of assists whilst Bob le Merle marshals the midfield with strong assistance from Phil Hewton and Geoff Riley.

The season started with just 2 teams having a picnic run on the 3rd Jan. Since then the teams have struggled with numbers with perhaps only White having full numbers until the last week. Players have been quite happy to mix and match helping the teams out as required. The last game for January saw all teams have at least one reserve and the games were most competitive.

Some of that competitive spirit has spilled over into the game with a number of players exhibiting a sense of injustice at times, perhaps too often.

Goalies for the month have been well served by Richard Osborne, Ross Easton and Graeme Sansom. Whilst umpiring duties have involved Bill Campbell and Vern Gooch, ably supported by players as required.

Thanks Gordon - good to have you back. In the past we included 'young' photos; send them in. Ed.

Punology One: Did you hear about the cafe owner, who complained that his customers not only had a stand-up comedy session making jokes about his coffee; but also called it a brewhaha.

'A' Division Blog (continued): Some might say that the title should be "Much Ado About Nothing."

January 24th: This fell well short of being one of our better days. Searching for positives has been difficult, as even Pollyanna would have had some trouble, but I eventually came up with some very good play by the goalkeepers and defences, and the evenness of the games (of course they're even when nobody scores). Mark Faithfull & Bob Robinson both saved well on the goal-line, John Harper ensured that Gold were the team of the day with the only win. This was over Blue who dominated territory and possession, but could not get the ball past Harps (Red had similar problems earlier). After several almost open goals had been missed during the four scoreless draws which opened the day's proceedings Trevor Kerr put a screamer into the top corner for Red in the 5th game, only for Jim Malcolm to scramble an equaliser. Then in the last match Ian Lyon used his reach to advantage and got one past Tony Marshall. Turnovers and errors were the order of the day. High flyers White came back to earth with a thud by failing to score at all - Ham D'Souza's absence possibly had plenty to do with it. David Horsley, John Mercer and Brian Soares spent time filling in for other colours too. On a more positive note, comebacks were made by Phil Metcalf, Mal Jackaman, Len Blyth (again - see January 10th) and Neil Scaddan (again). And I sighted Vern Gooch later wearing an orange umpire's shirt. Player numbers were Red (9), White (12), Gold (9) and Blue (10). Total goals (3).

January 31st: Most of us had read our captains' emails about the early start and we managed to finish our games on time. Blue took the centre pass for the first match of the day and less than a minute later John Ree scored - Gold not having touched the ball. Much of our hockey was better than last week (it could hardly have been any worse) though the standard fell away towards the end of the day. The games were evenly contested right up to the last when some of the White players found their good form and inflicted Red's first loss for 2018. Gold have only scored five goals for the year and even when Peter Gason seemed to have one from a corner it hit the post. Goal of the day goes to Ham D'Souza for a good hit into the far corner against Red, with honourable mention to John Ree's second (a deflection to draw against White). Ham also got two while singles went to Bill Williamson, Ron Venables and Brian Soares. Miss of the day will not be awarded due to a hastily re-imposed ban on any editorial selfies. Jim Banks made another appearance and got through one complete game in good style before stopping. Player numbers Blue (11), Gold (10), Red (9) and White (10). Goals (7).

Reader Contribution: Marty Greay and Ken Watt sent me this, both having correctly thought that it might appeal to my peculiar sense of humour. I hope that you like it too. The only dissenting vote on the "Masters Matters" staff came from our proof-reader.

Ode To The Spellchecker

Eye have a spelling chequer
 It came with my pea sea
 It plainly marques four my revue
 Miss Steaks eye kin not sea
 Eye strike a key and type a word
 And weight four it to it to say
 Weather eye am wrong or write
 It shows me strait a weigh
 As soon as a mist ache is maid
 It nose bee fore too long
 And eye can put the error rite
 It's rare lea ever wrong
 Eye have run this poem threw it
 I am shore your pleased two no
 It's letter perfect awl the weigh
 My spell chequer tolled me sew.

To err is human, to forgive divine, but to really stuff things up you require a computer.

Hobart - From the WA O/75s (continued): As promised last issue the serial is concluded here. You may wish to re-read part one from the January issue to refresh your memory first.

Heading to the ground to meet NSW Ian Hill made a point of having a chat with George. He thought it might be worth just trying to help him prepare mentally for the match. We all thought George seemed remarkably relaxed while listening to the Coach. Then we heard him snore.

One of our opponents, NSW goalkeeper Allan Crouch, we learnt (in a way that won't be disclosed) refuses to wear a box as he believes this shows a complete lack of courage. He also never had any children. (*Secrets of the goalkeepers' union? Ed.*)

After our third win from as many matches, Ken Watt wanted a smoke and it was time to go outside. Sure, Kenny didn't feel good about making the entire team stand out in the cold and the rain but after all it was for their own well-being.

Another rest day to re-charge our batteries and once more we decided to frequent the city centre. As we navigated our way through some of Hobart's streets, people who recognised us generally smiled or waved, while the more enthusiastic actually ran alongside the bus in the hope of a quick handshake or autograph. One very keen bloke could actually be seen from out the back window sprinting towards us waving and desperately trying to attract our attention. It turned out to be Brian Soares who had been left behind at our last point of call.

Ken Watt actually had to share a room with heavy snorer David Horsley who was so bad that he was actually fined for snoring. Admittedly it wasn't just the noise level but the fact he was doing it in the middle of a meeting. (*Dave's been to so many tournaments that he's not only heard it all, he's also said it all. Ed*)

It was during one of those team meetings that it was mentioned that Peter Gason can still strike a powerful penalty corner hit with pin-point accuracy. Ron Venables added, "Unfortunately, just not at the same time."

At the meeting it was decided to organise a wives/girlfriends support group. Unfortunately, at the first event it ran into trouble when a certain person's wife and girlfriend both showed up. (*The team contained two former winners of WA Country's Viagra Award - Ed.*) As you can imagine, not only did this cause a lot of tension, it played havoc with the catering arrangements.

While having dinner at the Shoreline that night, Ivan began reminiscing about his house he sold several months previously. His home apparently featured three bedrooms, a gymnasium (presumably never used), four separate bars and a massive "Trophy Room" featuring 60 years of hockey memorabilia - mainly photos of himself wielding his favourite "Boomerang" stick. There were self-sized portraits adorning every wall not covered by pennants, trophies and life sized mirrors. The house had its own outdoor bar (presumably very well-used). It still brings tears to his eyes every time he mentions the full bottle of Johnny Walker he accidentally left behind.

For the start of the second round of fixtures we decided to seek the support of a couple of former Kookaburra players to help pump up the boys. Instead of getting the contemporary players both were in their nineties & were great until they began nodding off five minutes into the session. We sent out an urgent appeal for someone younger and almost straight away our prayers were answered. Not only did she hold the attention of the entire group, she even danced on the table.

The return match against Victoria proved much harder than we envisaged, due no doubt to the previous motivational speakers and the effect they had on the group. A scoreless draw naturally created a fair bit of soul searching afterwards. Followed by Ken searching for an esky and Peter Gason looking for a cold one, but was left disappointed when it turned out to be a cold shower. The way some people described us after the poor showing you would think we were a bunch of dodderly old-age pensioners.

The only sour note came during the presentation ceremony when Stan Balding was named Player of the Match and was loudly booed. Frankly we found this both unfair and unsportsmanlike, but George refused to stop.

That night it was bitterly cold with snow covering Mt Wellington next morning as we began our warm-up routine, which consisted of a brisk walk, followed by a run, another walk, push-ups and sit-ups. Lucky for us, we all managed to complete most of it in the warm surrounds of the bus.

At this stage Ron Venables had spent a couple of afternoons in the physio's room. There was no-one else in there at the time, but it was such a great place for Ron to have his nanny nap.

The only person some of the boys never really got on with was John Ree, and that was for obvious reasons. Before some players had actually met him they had heard the rumours about his "preferences" and sure enough they turned out to be true. Now most of the team members are typical Aussie blokes and simply don't have time for his type, especially over a two week championship. Sure you can give us all the politically correct talk about "Freedom of Choice" and life-style decisions, but we're sorry - there's definitely no place in the over 75s for a teetotaller.

The match against Queensland was another lacklustre affair until the team came home strongly in the last quarter to register a 2-0 victory. Addressing a small audience at the players' presentation can send some people into a panic. Truth is Kieran was never good at public speaking. In his younger days in Scotland he'd often get so nervous and tongue-tied the Magistrate usually just told him to sit down. He finally overcame this impediment by becoming a Magistrate himself.

Our last qualifying match was against the old enemy - New South Wales and what a match it became. A complete whitewash - 8 nil. After moments like this it's hard not to show any sign of over-excitement or emotion. Especially when it is customary for team managers to exchange gifts, whether they be towels, caps, shirts or as in this case a large cash payment to their goalkeeper.

David Horsley loves nothing more than a good book, but with everyone in such a state of ecstasy there was no-one free to read him one that particular night.

Well, we finally discovered where David Lester had been residing ... at his rellies. Apparently they were really great sharing their home with David, having meals together, sharing a glass or two, doing his laundry and giving him a dollar or two when needed. David said he would always appreciate how they looked after him so well, and taking them to Court was one of the hardest things he ever had to do.

The one thing you're guaranteed to find during any event is a colourful character and one such gentleman was an elderly local legend who had occupied the same seat in the stand and worn the same Tasmanian jacket each day of the championships. It's a delightful tale, but one with a slightly sad ending, as ground staff discovered on the last day of the event that he had been deceased for the last six days.

Arriving at the ground for Gold Medal match it was interesting to notice the expressions on the guys' faces, ranging from sheer relief in making the final to let's get it over with so we can celebrate. It was a little difficult to make out David Lester's expression as by this time he was in his normal position ... face down on the physio's bench.

At the same time Kieran informed everyone he was going for a final fitness test. It was hard to tell how it was going for him, but the sight of Dr Hill, a physio, two stretcher bearers and an ambulance standing by didn't exactly fill us with confidence. But our concerns proved unnecessary as Kieran made the line-up.

In the hard fought final one of the Victorians was injured & players, being concerned for his welfare, stopped playing to offer assistance. While this stoppage was underway another opposition player, completely unconcerned with his team-mate's health, decided he would put the ball into what was then a deserted goal, with the end result the umpire awarded the goal. (*Quite true. Ed.*)

It's moments like these when it's natural to vent your frustration, so one of our players (who shall remain nameless) backed by other team members stepped over to tell the umpire he was very disappointed with the decision to allow the goal. We know these weren't the exact words he used (he only used two) but things were certainly a little tense out there at the time. At half-time one of our players remarked that he reminded him of a testicle with legs.

We weren't surprised to see quite a few comments on Facebook after the final, complaining about the unfairness of allowing the opposition to score a highly controversial goal. It was kind of Lesley to lend Barry the use of her iPad.

Winning a match is so important for the over 75s that they join arm-in-arm and sing the team song. This is a truly special time not to mention one of the few occasions when players are legally allowed to touch each other. The words are simple and known to all of us (although Ron Venables will often ask for the lyrics to be written on large cards).

Howie was so pumped with the win, his first gold medal, that he announced he would be wearing the medal for an entire week, a practice normally reserved for only his underwear.

Back at the hotel we decided to ring Harler who had been forced to withdraw from the squad before we left Perth and give him the good news of our victory. It was great as we managed to reverse the charges and keep him on the phone for a lengthy period.

Coach Ian Hill was very pleased with himself, having called a final team meeting back at the hotel. The fact that he was the only one to show up didn't seem to bother him at all.

After the championships had concluded, Ian went for a well-deserved holiday to South Africa where he enjoyed writing a coaching book for the ages .. the ages between five and seven. We won't be surprised to see him make a guest appearance on "I'm a Celebrity ... Get Me Out of Here."

Well done to the team, management, players, partners and all our supporters. A Job Well Done!
And thanks to you for this piece Barry - definitely another job well done. Ed.

Should It Stay On Tour? There is an adage which reads "What goes on tour stays on tour" which just possibly may not have been strictly followed in this piece. The Editorial board of "Masters Matters" considered this and decided that there was sufficient fiction included for an exemption. And besides:

The question of whether to flout
The "stays on tour" rule caused some doubt
But Barry R's story
Of Hobart team glory
Was too bloody good to leave out.

Past Players, Non Players and Injured Players: The note book has not functioned well to begin 2018, but it managed to record: Robin Bailey, Graham Challenor, Neil Scaddan, and George Winning. It did not function at all for Perry Lakes, like John Mercer on the 27th.

Punology Two: Heard a new definition of a chiropractor the other day. The one I met described himself as a lumbar jack.

Grumpy Old Men Two: "I can remember when the air was clean and sex was dirty." *George Burns (1896 - 1996). US actor and comedian.*

Guest Player: Peter Havlin (see the 'B' Division report) is a former team mate of Steve Farrar. Steve tells me that they last played together in an army team in 1984. (*Just before I started Vets. Ed.*)

Stop Press: Bill Williamson (team manager) has found the two billets he was seeking for members of his Australian O/75s team during their Perth training camp from Monday 5th March up to and including Thursday 8th March. I believe that there are moves afoot for the side to take part in the 'A' Division competition on March 7th while they are here - hopefully more on this next issue.

All news and other contributions to:

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