

NSW Bar FC 2017 10th Anniversary

The year the silverware returned home

Introduction

The NSW Bar Football Club (NSW Bar FC) is open to barristers, members of the judiciary, judges' associates and tipstaves, clerks and employees of the Bar Association, regardless of gender, level of ability or fitness. It currently consists of some 90 members.

Domain Soccer League (DSL)

NSW Bar FC competed in the DSL competition which was held at lunchtime between April and September in the Domain.

Promoted to Division 3 for the 2017 season, it was a season filled with close contests that saw Bar FC remain competitive with many teams who had age on their side. The results for the season overall proved that football is a game of fine margins with Bar FC being unlucky on a number of occasions not to win games or, at least, draw games that were ultimately lost.

From 15 games played, Bar FC won only 1 game, drew 6 and lost 8. The games were tight and the result decided by no more than one goal. The team played a brand of football that was both attractive to watch and competitive.

Special mention should be made of a few players who have contributed significantly over the years. Captain Simon Philips has been a stalwart in central defence and a constant inspiration to all members of the team. On the few occasions he was not present, his lack of instruction and intuition were sorely missed. Goalkeeper John Harris also put his body on the line repeatedly, resulting in an orbital fracture being sustained during the course of one of the DSL games (Captain Philips denies he was the culprit). Harris was sidelined for a few games and, as might well be expected, somewhat cautious upon his return. Within a few weeks though, Harris was back to his winning ways and kept a clean sheet in the last two games of the DSL. Some newer members also proved invaluable to the team. Anais d'Arville and Sebastian Hartford-Davis toiled hard all year and provided finesse, pace and guile to the midfield. A welcome addition to Bar FC was the return of Jeh Coutinho (clerk, Banco Chambers) who played in the opening season and has strapped on the boots yet again in 2017, a testimony to the pull of the beautiful game. A final mention should be made of Joe Hunter, a German student who worked with David (Sir Alex) Stanton during the year. He brought a European flavour to the team that was appreciated by all although, he was heard to exclaim on a number of occasions

following what he thought was a foul, 'Why does the referee not see this?' I guess we play the game a little bit differently here.

7th Annual Sports Law Conference

The 7th Annual Sports Law Conference was held at the TAG Room at the Sydney University Soccer Football Grandstand on 9 September 2017. It was opened by the Hon Justice Anna Katzmann of the Federal Court of Australia and chaired by the Hon Justice Geoff Lindsay of the Supreme Court of NSW.

Approximately 40 barristers were registered for the conference. Also in attendance was Mr Stephen Doherty, senior claims advisor, Suncorp.

Alan Sullivan QC spoke about 'Ethics in Sport—the FIFA Code of Ethics and the Garcia Report'. He provided an incisive and illuminating account of his work as deputy chairman of the Adjudicatory Chamber of the FIFA Ethics Committee. During his four-year term which ended in May 2017, many big names in football were suspended or banned from the game by the Ethics Committee, including the then president of FIFA, Mr Sepp Blatter, the president of UEFA and a senior member of the FIFA Executive Council, Mr Michel Platini and the FIFA secretary-general (CEO), Mr Jerome Valcke. Alan spoke about why football is particularly susceptible to corruption, the work of the FIFA Ethics Committee and the challenges faced by it. He concluded with a consideration of the controversy surrounding the preparation and publication of the Garcia Report (a report prepared by the former chairman of the Investigatory Chamber of the FIFA Ethics Committee, Mr Michael Garcia and the then deputy chairman of the Investigatory Chamber of the FIFA Ethics Committee, Mr Cornel Borbely) into the 2018/2022 FIFA World Cup bidding process. Professor Deborah Healey of the University of NSW, addressed aspects of the law, practice and policy of anti-doping. She spoke about how doping undermines the value of sport. She quoted David Howman, the chief executive of WADA, who said that 'the intrinsic value of sport, often referred to as the 'spirit of sport' is a celebration of the human spirit, body and mind, and is characterised by values such as ethics, honesty, respect for rules, self-respect and respect for others, fair play and healthy competition. If sport is void of these rules (and others) it might be argued that is no longer sport'.

Professor Healey also spoke about the Code as providing a practical need to create a level playing field for sport from which the most skilful athletes or teams ultimately emerge as the winners of any particular competition or event. She also touched upon the likelihood of Code compliance from a psychological perspective, whether the Code will actually

deter doping and the importance of education in promoting both breadth and depth of compliance with the Code.

Lastly, Graham Turnbull SC addressed the topic 'Toxic Masculinity or Men Just Behaving Badly'. The newspapers are seemingly replete with examples of professional sportspersons, men for the most part, behaving badly both on and off the sporting arena. Such conduct may give rise to a plethora of legal challenges for the player, his/her club, sponsors and for the game as a whole. Some sociologists are referring to such conduct as an emanation of 'toxic masculinity'. Graham took to his task with relish and provided an entertaining account of both endearing and some not so endearing moments in world football.

Bar Football – Suncorp Perpetual Trophies

At the conclusion of the seminar and lunch, some 45 barristers and a few of their sons, took to the Sydney University Football Ground for the annual Suncorp Football Challenge.

Game 1: Victoria v Queensland (one-all draw)

The Victorians led by Captain Anthony Klotz and otherwise comprising Alexander Solomon-Bridge, Phil Cadman, Nicholas Phillpott, Daniel Nguyen, James Fitzpatrick, Douglas James, Mike Kats, Chris Pearson, Chris Beach, Chris Archibald, Keeper John Harris (NSW) and Xavier Bolger (Craig Bolger's son) (NSW), took on an understrength Queensland Team consisting of Captain Johnny Selfridge, David Chesterman, Eoin Mac Giolla Ri, Jens Streit, David Purcell, Michael Hodge, Samuel McCarthy, Daniel Favell, Andrew Skoien, Mac Giolla Ri Junior and Daniel Lo Surdo (Anthony Lo Surdo's son)(NSW).

In a fairly even contest each team had their share of chances with neither able to fully capitalise on their opportunities. In the end, it was a fitting one all draw. Best and fairest for Victoria was Michael Kats and for Queensland Jens Streit. The match was refereed by Simon Burchett (NSW).

Game 2: New South Wales v Queensland (NSW 7, Queensland 2)

The Queenslanders joined by Craig Bolger (NSW) and Keeper Alex Kuklik (NSW) were required to play on against a rested and well-prepared NSW team consisting of Hugh Morrison; John Harris (GK), Simon Philips (C); Anais d'Arville; Jeh Coutinho; Vahan Bedrossian; Michael Fordham SC; Richard di Michiel; Shereef Habib SC; Lachlan Gyles SC, Rohan de Meyrick, Adrian Canceri and Darren Covell.

The much-anticipated contest between Queensland, the then holders of the Suncorp

NSW Bar v Vic Bar v Qld Bar Challenge Cup and a NSW team out to avenge its narrow loss in 2016 loomed as a classic 'State of Origin' showdown. However, such was the dominance of the home team, that the match was effectively over well before half time. The game plan of NSW (cooked up by the brains trust of Coach (Sir Alex) Stanton and Captain Philips) involved using a 3-4-3 formation to take advantage of the huge expanses of the Sydney University Football Ground and the pace of our front three – and it certainly worked a treat (much better than for the Socceroos earlier in the week) as NSW found themselves 2-0 up after only a handful of minutes, with well-taken goals by Di Michiel and 'speed machine' Morrison. The NSW midfield of d'Arville, Coutinho, Canceri and Habib dominated all aspects of the game, leaving our defence (Fordo, de Meyrick, Philips and 'Bomber' Harris in goal) with little to do except keep score. The hapless Queenslanders, already exhausted from their exertions against the Victorians, could do little to stop the NSW juggernaut and further goals to Bedrossian, Coutinho, Morrison and Di Michiel made the half time score 6-0.

At half time, several home players swapped the blue and white for maroon and played for Queensland in the second half, which made for a much more even affair. Gyles and Covell came on for the home team. Bedrossian, playing for Queensland now (on matrimonial instructions), pulled one back for the visitors, before Canceri stepped up at the other end with a brilliant curling shot which evaded Keeper Kuklik (in goal for Queensland) and snuck in off the inside of the far post – a contender for goal of the tournament to put NSW up 7-1.



Further sustained pressure from Queensland, especially by Bolger in concert with his son Xavier and Daniel Lo Surdo allowed Bedrossian another goal. In the end, NSW won comfortably, 7-2.

The victory for NSW meant that avoiding a loss to Victoria would ensure the 'Tri State' Cup returned to its rightful and proper home. Best and fairest for NSW was Richard Di Michiel and for Queensland, Craig Bolger (NSW). The game was refereed by David (Patchildinho) Patch (NSW).

Game 3: New South Wales v Victoria (NSW 3, Victoria 2)

The third and final match of the day was a much tighter affair. The members of the NSW contingent for this encounter were Alex Kuklik (Keeper), Geoff O'Shea, Craig Bolger, Ivan Griscti, Nicole Compton, Oshie Fagir, Tim Hackett, Richard Sergi, Jeh

Coutinho, Simon Philips (C), Vahan Bedrossian, Glenn Fredericks and Anais d'Arville.

NSW swapped Kuklik into goal, Fredericks and Griscti into defence, Sergi and Fagir out wide and Bolger and debutant Hackett up front. Harris was in goal for Victoria, who also had the speedy Xavier Bolger to bolster their squad.

The Victorian line-up consisted of a few first-timers for Bar football. Notwithstanding that fact, the Victorians probably played the most inspired football witnessed in many years of this contest.

While NSW generally controlled the game, the Victorians defended resolutely, with Tony Klotz marshalling his troops brilliantly, and played strongly on the counter attack. Fredericks had his work cut out denying his much younger opponent, but did his job effectively. D'Arville and Coutinho again dominated the midfield battle and the latter appeared



Back Row (left to right): Craig Bolger, Vahan Bedrossian, Darren Covell, Adrian Canceri, Lachlan Gyles SC, Richard di Michiel, Rohan de Meyrick, Gillian Mahony, Geoff O'Shea, Jeh Coutinho, John Harris, Ivan Griscti, Tim Hackett, Shareef Habib SC, Hugh Morrison, David Stanton (Mgr) and Anthony Lo Surdo SC (Referee).
Front Row (left to right): Richard Sergi, Michael Fordham SC, Nicole Compton, Anais d'Arville, Simon Philips (C), Alex Kuklik, Glenn Fredericks and Oshie Fagir.



to have opened the scoring with a brilliant, dipping long range effort which beat Harris all ends up but unluckily cannoned back from the underside of the cross bar. Soon after, Hackett calmly finished off a great spell of team passing to put NSW 1-0 up (which was the half time score).

Two further goals to the home team early in the second half then decided the contest. First, di Michiel beat the offside trap (much to Harris' displeasure) to tap one in and then soon after, Bedrossian finished off a brilliant team move of four one touch passes involving d'Arville, Coutinho and others for what was undoubtedly the silkiest goal of the day. NSW then rang the changes with Compton and O'Shea providing much-needed fresh legs.

Needing to score an unlikely four goals in about 15 minutes to claim the silverware, the Victorians did not lie down. A complacent second half start by NSW saw Phil Cadman (Vic) nutmeg Simon Philips (NSW) in the middle of the pitch which gave the cover defence a few anxious moments as did Alexander Solomon-Bridge's (Vic) spectacular bicycle kick attempt on goal which flew comfortably over the cross-bar to the relief of Keeper Kuklik. However, from well outside the box, one of the Victorian midfielders outrageously chipped over Kuklik and under

the bar for another contender for goal of the day, to make it 3-1.

The Victorians continued their relentless pursuit for the back of the net and with a tiring NSW defence and Captain Philips having firstly pushed further forward and then retired from battle to avoid an official sanction for 'being egregiously out of position', Chris Archibald (Vic) had a cracking shot at goal from about 20 metres out. It was hit with such vehemence that NSW keeper Kuklik didn't see it coming as it slammed into the back of the net.

The final score of 3-2 in favour of NSW was a reasonable reflection of the closeness of the match. It also meant that NSW retained the Suncorp NSW Bar v Victoria Bar Challenge Cup and regained the Suncorp NSW Bar v Vic Bar v Qld Bar Challenge Cup!

Best and fairest for NSW was Jeh Coutinho and for Victoria Chris Archibald. The game was refereed by Anthony Lo Surdo SC (NSW).

The games were followed by drinks and canapes and then a sit-down dinner and speeches. It was a fun and memorable way to celebrate the 10th anniversary of NSW Bar FC and the inaugural NSW Bar v Vic Bar game played on a rain-sodden St Johns Oval all those years ago. In attendance at the dinner and during the day were John Marshall SC, Gillian (The

Enforcer) Mahony and Graham Turnbull SC, each foundation members of NSW FC but who, for various reasons, were unable to take to the field. Also in attendance was Peter Agardy of the Victorian Bar who founded the Victorian Bar Team.

Donation

The Sports Law Conference raised \$1,500 which was donated to CanTeen to assist with its ongoing support of, and commitment to, children battling cancer, including the funding of sports and other camps to provide those children and their parents with much-needed respite.

Acknowledgements

NSW Bar FC acknowledges Suncorp for its ongoing and generous support.

A special thanks to:

David Chesterman of the Queensland Bar, Anthony Klotz of the Victoria Bar and David Stanton of the NSW Bar for arranging their respective teams;

Justice Katzmann for opening the Sports Law Conference;

Justice Lindsay for chairing the Sports Law Conference;

Alan Sullivan QC, Professor Deborah Healey and Graham Turnbull SC for speaking at the conference;

Each of the participants and especially those members of the Queensland and Victoria Bars for travelling to Sydney; and

Anthony Lo Surdo SC for organising the day.

The future

NSW Bar FC provides an ideal opportunity for barristers to mix with other barristers, judges and members of the profession in a healthy way. The forty-minute games at lunchtime in the DSL have proven time and time again to be the best form of Zen for busy barristers.

The Bar Football 'State of Origin' and Sports Law Conference will be held in Melbourne in 2018.

We look forward to welcoming new members to the squad in 2018. If you are interested in joining the team, please email David Stanton (d.stanton@mauricebyers.com) to join the mailing list. If you would like to attend or speak at the 8th Annual Sports Law Conference in 2018, please email Anthony Lo Surdo SC (losurdo@12thfloor.com.au).

Anthony Lo Surdo SC

David Stanton Simon Philips