

**The Power of Positive Thoughts:** Thank you to all readers who took the trouble to send back a response to the first issue. It appears that the comment about “Accentuate The Positive” has been taken on board by the readership and makes a good change from the relentless negativity of the mainstream media.

Our query last issue as to whether Peter Murray was available pro bono drew the following response from Pete himself. Those of you on the 60s list have seen it – but the rest haven’t. “I would not worry about law suits. The law has in many areas a defence of insanity. I can’t think of any players to whom this would not apply, the editorial staff included.” Now I know how I came to be doing this.

We also had a pleasant response from Ray Norton – including the words about our search for a correspondent from the 50s “... hopefully a 50s volunteer will arise. Not easy getting people and other things to arise .... these days.” Can our Wednesday Masters sponsor help at all?

John Burt suggested “You must have done the Apex bulletin in your infancy (true – Ed) but you can now run amok in your adultery.” Bit difficult in my situation John – doesn’t it take two for adultery? Or should that be three? I claim no expertise in this field (like the hockey field).

Eric Alcock was kind enough to suggest “Your editorial and writing skills are better than your hockey skills. Or at least less ruthless.” I hope so Eric. The pen may be mightier than the sword – but how does the keyboard compare to the hockey stick?

Irene Ree was offended by my suggestion that there are no spectators, and tells me that there are several regulars. My apologies for my lack of observation Irene – my story is that I concentrate on the hockey. My team mates will tell you that I can’t see the ball to trap it – let alone note spectators.

**Headline News:** The 2012 re-distribution of players is now in effect and as usual it will take a few weeks to settle down. Some of us will have to adapt to new team mates and all teams will be devising their most effective playing styles. The Electric Blue team have again been favoured by some “high” draft picks – hence the acquisition of Murray Sharp and Colin Murray-Smith.

**Vale:** Members of Eastern Blades have been greatly saddened by the recent passing of much-loved vets player and life member Neil Tindall. Neil had been away with WA State sides in the past – and all those who knew him regarded him as one of nature’s true gentlemen.

**Whistle While You Work – with Neil Mannolini:**

1 - Let’s appreciate the simple fact that the prime responsibility of the two umpires is to ensure that there is fair play and NO ONE gets injured. So if in doubt the umpire must err on the side of avoiding / stopping dangerous play.

2 - Obstruction Rule. Too often some of our eager players obstruct, and in simple translation of the rule: A player must not “deliberately” interfere with the opponent’s stick or person, ie you must not chop down OR UP on the opponent’s stick, and must not deliberately prevent the opponent from playing the ball either by turning clockwise or anti-clockwise in front of him so that he cannot reach to play the ball.

3 – If your opponent is in your way you cannot push him out of your way; you have to go “around him”. A hand in the back or an AFL hip & shoulder are not permissible at anytime, anywhere. If it happens in the circle a penalty stroke is the penalty.

**Department Of Limericks:** It is hoped to make this a regular feature depending on the availability of original 5-liners in 2012 (those who know me know that there will be plenty). As a starter this one was written by me about a different editor of a different publication. However, if the cap fits ...

John Mercer's a discretionary Ed  
About whom let it never be said  
That he'd use titillation  
To increase circulation  
But it means that at least he gets read

Please note that titillation does not necessarily mean a Page 3 girl – we haven't yet had a third page (Stop press – we have now in this issue). Female readers who wish to contribute an article are assured that it will not necessarily appear on Page 3.

**Where Are They Now?:** Ian Purdie sends his best wishes from Normandy to you all. For those of you who don't know Ian he is a former captain of the Blue O/60s who went with his wife (French by birth) back to France to open a B & B and live near her father. Joelle's health has suffered in recent years, and at the moment they would like to sell the place and downsize. The GFC has not helped. Best wishes to you both from the Wednesday Masters.

**Smarten Up:** As of the 31<sup>st</sup> January Robin Bailey still had 21 O/50s and 16 O/60s shirts to issue – presumably not collected because these players stayed away in the heat. Does this mean that the younger generation aren't as tough as their elders? Or does it mean that the more senior citizens are sillier? No correspondence please – we'll all vote based on our playing group where the 60s appear to have the numbers. By the way, doesn't the new gear look great on the turfs?

**They Said It:** The majority of what is said on the field (or in the bar also) should not be quoted, but here is an exception. This dialogue occurred on the warm 1<sup>st</sup> February:

Murray Sharp has just hooked a pass to the left wing and missed him by a few metres:

Umpire Peter Gason: "That looked like country hockey Sharpy."

Murray Sharp: "That's because it **was** country hockey."

Bill Campbell was enquiring after the health and well being of some of the senior citizens (i.e. 60s), and said something along the lines of "And how are the old men today?" Are you sure your own health is good Bill – that's by **far** the most polite that particular enquiry has ever been.

Both Barry Rutter and John Mercer said something along the lines of "Oh no!" when both failed to win a bottle of wine (again!) on the 8<sup>th</sup>. The one-two between Dudley Younger and Colin Sanders (congratulations on the birthday and thanks for the beer) was quite remarkable – each drawing the other's ticket in an exhibition of slick passing. Questions may be asked if it happens again.

Festival of Perth Announcer: "The Escher Quartet have collectively travelled in excess of 100,000 kilometres to be here. In return could you please make the small journey as far as your pocket or bag and switch off the mobile phone."

**Stop Press Happy Birthday:** All the best to Neil Mannolini who celebrated another one of those birthdays with a zero on the end yesterday (19<sup>th</sup>). Best wishes from all Wednesday Masters people.

**Awards and Honours:** Those of you who read the Hockey Bulletin will have noticed a photograph of Barry Rutter (and also Lloyd Tonkin) at Government House receiving their Service medals – very well done to you both and to Victoria Park Hockey Club. Very observant readers will have noticed in the Australia Day honours list that former 50s (and current Blades Saturday 50s) player Les Hayter was the recipient of an Emergency Services medal. Full details can be obtained by entering “Australia day honours FESA WA” into your search engine. Congratulations Les from Wednesday Masters.

**Editorial Corner:** What do readers think about the differences in ages, abilities, and fitness levels to be found in the 60s and 50s. We now have an age range in 60s of 22 years, and if goalkeepers are not included 17 years in 50s, which at times must make it difficult for the more senior players. I was only 16 years too old for my Saturday grade in 2011 – Neil Mannolini was 29 years over the mark.

This could lead to some players attempting too much when they have possession, while others attempt too little for fear of being run down and dispossessed. Either of these divergences from normal play is far from ideal preparation for an interstate tournament – what do our coaches think?

Most teams in the 60s appear to try to make use of all their players at most times, but it still can be very frustrating to go through an entire 25 minutes without getting a touch. To my mind the teams which appear to be most successful are those which manage to obtain the maximum contribution each of their players is actually capable of producing.

The presence of good players can be beneficial for those of us of lesser abilities and experience. There is no better way to learn a new skill than to have it executed against you, or to witness it being done at close range. At least none of us is ever called upon to perform at a level we cannot attain – excepting when we try to do the things our memories incorrectly tell us we still can do.

What solutions (if any) can be offered to address this disparity? Or should we leave things as they are? Do we split the competition further? If so – on what basis should it be done? Factors to be considered are probably those above – age, ability, and fitness. How likely is it that we all would accept our rating on these criteria without question? Is Solomon (complete with wisdom) available to judge? And if we add more divisions is it possible that this could result in repeatedly playing against the same opponent? This can happen now – as wingers and wing halves are well aware.

What do readers think?

**Department of Corrections:** In the previous edition I attempted to thank the staff member at the Stadium responsible for the marked improvement in our reception. Our research department was obviously not yet fully operational as he was described as the friendly ground controller. Apologies and thanks to Glen – the friendly Stadium Maintenance Supervisor.

Apologies also go to past players and regular post-hockey visitors Ian Lyon, David Munt, and Geoff Wood. It appears that my post-match vision is as impaired as my playing vision.

**Another Thank You:** To Ken Watt, who didn't play at all on the 8<sup>th</sup> but umpired on Turf 2 (for the 60s) all day. I hope all players read the first issue and took note of the comments on umpire abuse.

**Short Thought:** It isn't easy doing nothing. You never know when you're finished.

**More Umpiring Thoughts:** Neil Scaddan has come to the conclusion that a lot of us have very differing ideas on the rules (I quite agree Neil – all too often it's the umpire and me), and suggested that we might be able to raise the knowledge level. Possible methods of achieving this aim include a public forum (either before or after Wednesday Masters hockey) which should be run by those qualified - assuming that some of them will volunteer. This newsletter is also available to propagate up to date information about the rules – again to be supplied by those of us qualified to do so. What do readers think? (Stop Press – refer to Whistle While You Work on Page 1)

**Test Your Knowledge:** Thanks to John Sanders, who has offered to provide a regular test of our hockey memories (or internet search abilities maybe). This issue's tricky question is: Who made their debut for Australia first, Julian Pearce or Ray Evans? Answer next issue. As our budget is limited (actually zero) we cannot offer valuable prizes for correct answers. Maybe winners could buy a drink in the stadium bar for John Sanders and Mercer.

**Impertinent Question:** What happens to happy little vegemites? Stop now if you're sensitive as they turn into middle aged spreads.

**Canberra Correspondent:** Noticed recently that John Halley had joined (or re-joined?) the ranks of the letter writers published in the West Australian. Well done – they will not give me a look in lately.

**Yet More Umpiring Thoughts:** Mea Culpa from the editor of this publication who was making far too much comment on the Turf 2 60s umpiring on the 15<sup>th</sup> February. I can only plead after-effects from attending two funerals, some adverse personal vicissitudes, and a lack of sleep due to too much Festival of Perth. In fact on the day in question I was suffering from the Elektra blues – as was Neil Patterson. Fortunately the remainder of the Electric Blues were not.

**Quotable Quote from John Kenneth Galbraith:** "The only function of economic forecasting is to make astrology look respectable."

**Who Are We:** Many thanks to all who took the time to email some possible titles. Hope you don't mind being included in this edition – as there is still no stand-out newsletter name and I would not mind some further feedback. Suggestions so far have included:

Neil Mannolini: Wednesday Masterworks, or Masterstrokes, or Master Paras, or Master Asides.

Phil Anderson: Flickshots, Curtin Calls, The Hockey Age News, The Bully, The Dribble.

Dribbling is not one of my skills Phil. Drivelling is.

John Burt: Golden Oldies, Swinging Sixties Hockey.

John Mercer: Wednesday Masters Pieces (logo to be artist trying to paint with hockey stick)

Eric Alcock: Master Blasts, Wednesday Warriors

Graeme Sansom: Mercer's Musings

Phil Anderson (again): Wednesday Master Passes, Wednesday Adhoc News

**Hits & Misses:** Please let me know if you think we need to add anyone to the circulation lists. These have been amended since Issue No 1 – and no doubt will be further amended after this one.

To contact the newsletter please email or look for:

John Mercer – O/60s Electric Blue team. Stadium bar. Email: johnmerc@inet.net.au

No masthead before we have a proper title.