

Barristers Hockey Match – New South Wales v Victoria

By Andrew Scotting

The NSW Bar has a long tradition of playing hockey, having fielded a regular team since the late 1950s for the Gordon club and keenly contesting the annual Barristers v Solicitors game. The team has contained many eminent silks and judges, both past and present. Unfortunately, eminence in the law has not always been reflected in skill on the hockey field, but the team has secured a number of premierships and appearances in finals, particularly in recent years.

The team's spirit is renowned, some may say notorious. It is embodied in the members such as our founder The Hon. Justice CLD 'Shagger' Meares and the patron of our team spirit trophy, 'Bunter' Johnson.

On 14 October 2000, the NSW Barristers hockey team travelled to Melbourne to take on the Victorian Bar. Fresh from the annual Solicitors game on 7 October 2000, played in 35°C heat, we were confident, but wary of an opponent that we had not faced since 1989.

We were met by wet, Arctic conditions but the rain cleared for the game itself. Players were left to warm up and mentally prepare for the game in their own way. Worthy of note, Bellanto QC, Ireland QC and Callaghan S.C. enjoyed a bottle of red at a Lygon Street restaurant. On the way to the game, concerns were raised that the Victorians may require urine tests from our players. It was thought that Bellanto QC and Ireland QC would probably return a positive result, but that Callaghan S.C. may not be able to provide a sample.

NSW reached an early lead, as the best-dressed team, resplendent in blue with the Waratah over their hearts. Sadly, it did not take long for the Victorians to establish that they had the younger, fitter players, especially when they failed to field a silk at any time during the game. In response, Larkin and Mallon were our fittest players, who did everything in their power to be everywhere. Mallon, named as on-field captain for the day, was inspirational in command and in attack. Moen was superb in defence and was acknowledged by the Victorians as a force to be reckoned with.

Katzmann S.C., playing in goal, was called on to make a number of quality saves and was certainly equal to the task. A



Left to right: Giagios, Pritchard, Scotting, Mallon, Ireland QC, Moen, Bellanto QC, Callaghan S.C., Larkin, Katzmann S.C., McManamey, Robertson (ring-in), Warburton



Our Silks, left to right: Callaghan S.C., Ireland QC, Bellanto QC, Katzmann S.C.



Mallon laying down the law at half-time warm up.

brilliant save in the early part of the game caused her a nasty injury but she felt no pain as the ball was deflected wide. I understand that the injury now causes considerable disability and someone really should pay for that.

Unfortunately, the Victorians were too strong on the day and we were well beaten, 6-2. Ours was a similar fate to the 1989 team.

A great night in hockey history was celebrated at a dinner hosted by the Victorians, where we managed to exact sweet revenge on the bar tab.

Sunday was spent in recovery, and in transit back to Sydney. On St Kilda Beach, the 2001 Match Committee (Ireland QC, Callaghan S.C., Katzmann S.C. and Scotting) pondered, over a dose of anti-inflammatories and an excellent Sauvignon Blanc, the need for the recruitment of younger, fitter players.

Thanks to our Victorian hosts and in particular to Phillip Burchardt for organising the local content of the game.