

Bar football 2011

By John Harris, Simon Philips, Anthony Lo Surdo



The NSW Bar Football Club (NSW Bar FC) has grown in strength, popularity and skill since its inception in 2008. 2011 was no exception with the NSW Bar FC ranks swelling to well in excess of 60 members.

Domain Lunchtime Competition

NSW Bar FC competed for the third successive year in the Domain Soccer League (DSL) Competition. If success is measured by fun, fitness and collegiality then NSW Bar FC enjoyed yet another enormously successful and productive year in the DSL even if that success may not have been reflected in the competition table.

Sports Law Conference and Bar Football 'State of Origin'

On 10 September 2011, under sunny skies but unseasonably cool temperatures, the Queensland Bar Association hosted the Suncorp NSW Bar v Victoria Bar Annual Challenge Cup and the Suncorp NSW Bar v Victoria Bar v Queensland Bar Annual Football Challenge Cup

at the Robina City Football Club on the Gold Coast. Over 60 barristers and 3 members of the judiciary from the 3 States participated in the day.

The NSW Bar FC touring party consisted of Stephen Free, Michael Fordham, Vahan Bedrossian, Colin Magee, John Harris(C), Greg Watkins, Simon Philips(C), Nick Tiffen, John Marshall SC, Gillian Mahony, Houda Younan, David Stanton, Geoff Lindsay SC, Adrian Canceri, Graham Turnbull SC, Simon Burchett, Lachlan Gyles SC, Matthew Graham, Elisabeth Peden, Daniel Tynan, Jonathan Clark, Rohan de Meyrick, Cameron Jackson and Anthony Lo Surdo.

The games were preceded by a Sports Law Conference at the Vibe Hotel, Surfers Paradise led by the intellectual powerhouse of the NSW Bar and chaired by his Honour Wayne Cochrane of the Land Court of Queensland. Turnbull SC spoke on 'When physical contact on the field becomes a crime', (John) Marshall SC presented a paper on 'Anti-Doping in Sport', Elisabeth Peden/Daniel Tynan

explored 'Construction issues in sports contracts' and Peter Steele addressed 'Personal Risk Products'. The papers were followed by a lively discussion on 'Appearing before Sports Tribunals' led by Maconachie QC and a panel consisting of Marshall SC, Gyles SC, Harris and Burchett.

The Sports Law Conference raised \$1,125 which was donated to Camp Quality and will assist in sending children living with cancer on sports and recreation camps.

Game 1 – NSW v Qld

This was the second time that these States had met in fierce combat. Last year we reported 'Early fears that Queensland looked and appeared significantly younger and fitter were quickly alleviated by a game dominated by New South Wales.'

Qld again looked younger and fitter but they also showed greater speed, ball skills and dominance in the early part of the game and went into a deserved lead with a goal after 15 minutes. The score could have been



2 or 3 nil had Qld captain Selfridge converted a penalty kick and Harris for NSW not stopped another close range shot. Possibly the penalty miss was British justice as Referee Tiffen awarded what the critics have unanimously agreed was a soft penalty.

The early Qld onslaught lagged after it replaced more impressive players while NSW substituted Marshall SC and brought on Tynan and Philips. Philips and Magee then controlled the back line and the ball made its first incursion into the Qld half.

NSW made a series of attacks leading to what Tynan described as a shot which 'bamboozled' the Qld keeper. More conservative commentators described the goal euphemistically as the keeper being in the wrong spot at the wrong time. However the goal is described the game was then equal at 1-1.

NSW went into the lead when the impressive Free scored just before half time after good lead up passing through Watkins and Bedrossian. The score at half-time was 2-1.

At half time Harris implored his

players to forget Turnbull SC's comments on 'When physical contact on the field becomes a crime' with comments directed particularly at Mahony who is never shy in defending her patch. Maonachie QC, ever a lover of the World Game, looked on in wonder.

NSW continued its late first half dominance aided by new reserves Clarke and Younan. Bedrossian then scored what looked to be the winning goal to take the score to 3-1 with five minutes left in the game. Farr for Qld scored a late goal to close the proceedings at NSW 3 Qld 2. Best and Fairest honours for Qld went to Lee Clark and for NSW to Daniel Tynan.

Game 2 – NSW v Victoria

Having narrowly accounted for our youthful Qld hosts, the NSW team was reasonably confident that it could continue its unbeaten run against an understrength Victorian side. This confidence was well placed with NSW eventually achieving a dominant victory after meeting some strong early resistance.

The Victorians, led by their captain Mike Kats and the evergreen Peter Agardy and ably assisted by some temporary Southerners (Stanton, Mahony, Marshall SC, Harris and others from NSW who switched allegiances to balance numbers), had the benefit of a strong breeze in the first half and used it to good effect. While NSW keeper Burchett was not called upon to exert himself overly, his teammates found it difficult to penetrate the Victorian defences and, despite having a good share of possession, goal scoring chances were few for NSW. The match was scoreless at half time.

The second half was a different story. With the wind at their backs, the NSW midfield of Canceri, Free, Magee, and Gyles SC dominated and created regular scoring chances which were clinically taken. First Bedrossian scored the opener after some great lead up work. Then Magee poked home a second from close range. Philips converted a perfectly delivered corner from Gyles SC and Bedrossian sealed the result with a fourth.

Such was NSW's dominance that defenders De Meyrick, Fordham, Younan, Peden and Lindsay SC were able to begin planning the evening festivities without being distracted by their Victorian opponents.

The final score was 4–0 to NSW, which comfortably retained both the Suncorp NSW Bar v Victoria Bar Annual Challenge Cup and the Suncorp NSW Bar v Victoria Bar v Queensland Bar Annual Football Challenge and extended its unbeaten record in these contests. The game was ably refereed by Lo Surdo who not surprisingly selected Bedrossian as the Best and Fairest player from NSW and Lionel Wirth from Victoria.

Game 3 – Victoria v Queensland

Following the earlier victories by NSW, the third match of the day was a contest played purely for pride and bragging rights. To ensure that the tiring Victorians were not completely swamped

by the younger, fitter and more numerous Queenslanders, Magee, Fordham, Philips, Jackson, Lindsay SC and others from NSW joined Stanton, Harris, Marshall SC and Mahony in helping Victoria to keep the score respectable. This they did and restricted the rampant Queenslanders to a 3–1 win.

Special note must be made of the efforts of Nick Tiffen who traded his whistle for playing boots and took over as dead ball specialist for Victoria in a refreshing cameo in the second half.

The game was refereed by Burchett who selected Jim Fitzpatrick as Best and Fairest for Victoria and Johnny Selfridge for Qld.

Thanks

The organisers wish to thank all those whose support made the day a great success and especially the conference speakers for devoting their considerable time and expertise. Special mention should

be made of Peter Agardy of the Victoria Bar, John Selfridge and Paul Favell of the Queensland Bar and Lo Surdo of the NSW Bar for organising the day.

Thanks also to Nick Tiffen, Lo Surdo and Burchett who officiated.

NSW Bar FC acknowledges Suncorp, MLIG and Peter Steele for their continuing support. The Sports Law Conference and Bar Football 'State of Origin' heads to Victoria next year.