

Touchies Voice

The Touch Fraternity's Newsletter

Edition Number 2/2001 – February

EDITORIAL

Thank you to all those touchies who wrote and congratulated me on the first issue. Everyone was excited about the concept and it is only with your support that future issue will get published.

GREAT MOMENTS IN TOUCH

Many touchies will argue about what were the great moments in touch and I won't assume my opinion is any better than the next person. So in order to get the arguments rolling and create some discussion (debate etc.) I will simply list some early GMIT.

According to the Aussie Touch Footie Allstars Card Series for 1980 the GMIT that year were: -

1. The formation of the ATA
2. The first National Championships on the Gold Coast in Queensland,
3. The opening of the first Touch Office by the NSW TA in a small building in Kingsgrove.

You will have to wait with baited breath for the next GMIT.

ALLSTARS OF TOUCH

Again I could cause a riot by stating who I believe who the legends of our sport are, but instead I will go back in time again and mention the Allstars Card Series from 1980 - then allow all the critics to agree or disagree.

Ken Irvine, Chris O'Sullivan, Steve Saunders, Terry Jack, Owen Lane, Cheryl McCormack, Karen Smith, Arthur Tsakissiris, Bob Betts, Ray Beatie, Gordon Abercrombie. Coach was Barry Reynolds; Manager was Debbie Down while the referee was Michael Horne.

GREAT TOUCH TEAMS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Well you may have thought the first two categories were controversial – wait until I give you my opinion here.

NSW Mixed Open - Won National Championships 10 consecutive years 1985 to 1995 (Has never lost a State verse State series including the State of Origin Challenge). Have played 60 games at Nationals for 56 wins, 3 losses and 1 draw. Have the second best highest score at Nationals, 24-0 against Victoria in 1988. Went for 41 straight games without a defeat from the semis of the Nationals in 1986 to round 1 in 1994.

Australian Women Open Team



(Courtesy of Sporting Images)

On a national level it is hard to go past the **Australian Womens Open Team** - Undefeated in International competition. World Cup results are; 35 games played, 34 victories and only 1 drawn game. 409 touchdowns at an average of 11.69 per game and only 24 touchdowns scored against them.

Biggest win was 28-0 against Tonga in 1999. Their Test history is just as impressive with 15 wins from 15 tests and scoring 116-20.

Now how about letting me know of some Great Park Teams out there in Touchland so we can feature them.

ATA ASSISTS BRISBANE METROS' EFFICIENCY DRIVE

The ATA broke new ground by recently providing a concessionary working capital advance to Brisbane Metropolitan Touch Association (BMTA). The purpose of the was to help BMTA to continue its current program of improving the efficiency of its operations to facilitate team fee cuts and better services to improve competitiveness with unaffiliated competitions.

BMTA is the largest affiliated Touch association in the Brisbane City Cobras region. It fields about nearly 240 adult teams and 70 junior teams per season.

For a number of years, BMTA has been losing teams to aggressive, privately owned unaffiliated Touch enterprises. However, the trend was reversed in the summer 2000-2001 season as a result of fee cuts of more than 10%, which were funded by cost reductions.

With the buffer provided by a good working capital position, BMTA is continuing its quest of streamlining operations and passing on the benefits to members. As a result of this, BMTA hopes to increase team numbers significantly in winter. We wish to thank the ATA.

8th AUSTRALIAN MASTERS GAMES

The touch events at the Eighth Australian Masters Games are being organised by Newcastle City Touch Association and will be held from 11th to 14th October 2001. Other games events will also be staged over this period.

8th AUSTRALIAN MASTERS GAMES (Cont.)

The tournament will be held at the Regional Touch Centre, which is located inside the Harness Racing Club at Broadmeadow.

These grounds are the home of Newcastle City Touch Association and the touch program promises to be an exiting event for both competitors and spectators, with the facilities at the Harness Racing Club being first class.

There is ample seating inside the air conditioned club as well as outside and all touch fields can be clearly viewed from both positions. Bar and food outlet service is available inside the club which also has wheelchair access.

There is ample off street parking facilities at Marathon Stadium. Any referees visiting the area at the time and wish to participate please make contact. For more information call Kerry (Joe) Campbell, President of Newcastle City Touch at Phone No. 0249468752 – campbell@idl.net.au or visit the Masters Games website www.nhevents.com.au



(Courtesy of Sporting Images)

BIG NAMES IN UNDER 10's

Brisbane Metropolitan Touch Association boasts one of the most popular junior competitions in the country.

This is due by no means to the talent that is currently playing in the under 10's division and if the players pedigree is anything to go by then they are destined to become champions.

The names, Norman and Jacks, terrorised opposing Touch players for many years in the past. Now, it's happening again. Terry Jack's boy, Riley and Kerry and Greg Norman's son Peter, play in the same under 10 mixed team Chalkees Alakazam.

They play at Brisbane Metropolitan Touch Association's Whites Hill complex on Thursday nights. Other team mates include, Josh and Cara Ruggeri, children of former QLD State player Mark Ruggeri, and Zac Grieshaber, son of well known local referee, Ray Grieshaber. The team is coached by Mark Ruggeri.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

2001 is the 20th anniversary of the incorporation of the Northern Territory Touch Association and its affiliation with the ATA

LETTERS

As a player I find it very distracting having my coach continually yell instruction from the sideline to myself and team mates. I've tried to approach the subject with him but it is difficult as he is more experienced and was a good player himself.

I don't think this a good coaching technique but how do I tell him it is not helping our game.

Firstly if the coach is yelling and expects the players to take notice of him, he must ask himself – "what are the players supposed to be concentrating on – the game plan or my yelling"

To effectively compete they can't do both. Whatever is their role – be it in attack or defence – if they are concentrating on that role then they could not possibly hear anything being yelled at them from the sideline.

Secondly, may I suggest that several of you approach him and discuss that matter. Most coaches are open to ideas and suggestions and if his yelling is distracting then he should know.

Yelling encouragement as opposed to instruction are two separate issues and you should distinguish these with him. Good luck.

In the "Mexican Standoff" - what happens when a defender, engaged in moving forward in an attempt to effect a touch, jumps backwards to "milk" a penalty as the attacking player dumps the ball thus effecting a voluntary Rollball.

A defending player, once engaged in the "no freeze" situation, will be penalised if they back away from a touch whilst trying to "milk a penalty for a voluntary Rollball as the Rule states they must move forward in an attempt to effect a touch. Not effecting the touch is a breach of the rule and the defender should be penalised.

WORLD CLUB MASTERS

Must keep pushing World events, simply for the overseas exposure for the sport. The tournament is open for age categories from 30 years – in 5 year increments – to 50 years and over.



Touch of the Tropics

For information, entry forms or any enquiries – contact Singapore Touch Association - (Bryan O'Connor) at eventsasia@pacific.net.sg

REDCLIFFE TOUCH

In any sport the history of the game and its participants are important. In the origins of touch in Qld this certainly can be said of Redcliffe and District Touch Association.

In 1973, 2 years prior to the association being formed, Redcliffe Dolphins won the first organised touch premiership in Brisbane.

REDCLIFFE TOUCH (Cont.)

After making the grand final in 1974, the members decided that a local competition at Redcliffe was required. In 1975, with 6 teams the first local competition commenced.

Today, 5 members who played in 1975 are still participating. Those original players from 1973 were part of the push to form Queensland Touch Association and this made the association a foundation affiliate in 1979.

The switch to night fixtures in the 1980s saw an immediate increase in team numbers. The association has consolidated what was originally a multitude of venues into a single venue at Bradley Park.

The Council has submitted a grant for a clubhouse at a new venue. If this is successful, together with a government grant for lights, this will see the association move to a better and bigger venue capable of hosting carnivals utilising up to 20 fields.



Representative touch was low key until the early 1990s. A change in committee, the advent of the State Cup and other carnivals saw this change. While the emphasis is on youth of which we are proud, the masters of the association have also represented very well, culminating with a victory in 2000 New Zealand Masters Games.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S GAIN !

“One man's loss is another man's gain” – or so the saying goes. In this case the loss is the resignation of Col Mcquire and Marianne Arthur from NSW Touch and their arrival in Adelaide to commence work for Touch SA.

Both Col and Marianne were former development officer with NSW but under a plan worked out between ATA and TSA the two now are in a position to assist with the future development of South Australia.

Their roles will not sufficiently change although both will undertake more administrative duties due to the City Touch competition now being back under the umbrella of Touch SA.

FAMOUS INTERVIEWS

The first in our famous interview segment is with the Australian Mens Open Coach – Ian Stanley.

Q. What are some of the significant changes that need to be made now that legends like Boland, Notley and Brindell have retired ?

I don't believe we need significant changes but more "subtle" changes to ensure we maintain our position as No 1 in Touch.

We have lost a considerable amount of experience with the departure of Scott, Mark and Bobby, and when you add Darren Currie and Steve Murphy the Mens team needs to ensure we replace these guys with players that are recognised as being able to play at the top level.

I have absolute faith in the remaining 9 members of the current Australian Mens team and know that I can supplement their talent and experience with suitable players to ensure continuity.

Obviously we will review our positions within the team and then select the right players to fill the remaining positions.

Q. After watching NZ Youth demoralise the Australian at the recent YWC what plans do you have to combat their strength in Japan in 2003?

Firstly I wouldn't say that the NZ team completely demoralised our guys, it was more a lesson in

sticking to our game plan and being more disciplined in our play.

The observations that I gleamed were that NZ had adopted a more disciplined and structured attitude to their preparation and in their way of accommodating their teams and engendering a "whole of team harmony" approach throughout all their teams. This is usually the domain of Australian touring teams but I think we were greatly lacking in this attitude this time around.

The NZ Youth teams exhibited their strengths in speed and skills and are now displaying more maturity in their game sense, which we will need to be respectful of in the future.

Q. If there was one rule in Touch that you could change what would it be ?

There is not just one rule that I would change but more a situation of gaining consistency in rule interpretations and the way the 3 referees during a game unduly influence each other.

The main rule that demonstrates inconsistency is the "Mexican Standoff". You would think by now that we would have a consistent approach to this rule by now, but we have exactly the opposite. This is highlighted at an international level between the Australian & NZ referees and the players find it very hard to adapt to the differing rulings (interpretations).

The other area, which mystifies players and coaches alike, is the ability of linesman/referee to over-rule the on field referee on decisions regarding passes on the scoreline. Too many times now we see the far side referee/linesman adjudicate on a pass or touch when the other referees are on the spot.

Q. Name your "player of the future"

At this stage it is very hard for me to single out any one player as "the" player of the future. I have some very excellent standout players already in the Australian Mens

Open who are considered "young", these being Neil Ward and Trent McDonald.

In terms of younger players starting to display the qualities required to play for Australia in Mens Open and establishing themselves as a Scott Notley, Mark Boland or Bobby Brindell, then I would name guys like Chris Farrow, Brad Holden, Brenton Madders and Jye & Troy Malcolm.

Q. Name your favourite sporting personality and why did you choose them ?

Muhammad Ali, mainly because he epitomises what great champions are and what they must do to succeed and remain successful.



(Courtesy of Sporting Images)

Q. Name your favourite food

Any seafood dish

Q. Name your favourite TV Show

X Files How could you go past Scully!!!!

Q. Who has had the most significant influence on your touch career and why ?

There are a number of players and coaches over the years that have influenced and guided me over the years and I am indebted to them all, but I would have to say that the one person that has a direct influence on me personally would be Gary Toohey.

Gary has had a magnificent career with Parramatta, NSW and Australia, but his best attribute is his ability to analyse the game and pass that knowledge on to others. He can make the most simple statements at times that in effect make the most sense and are easy to follow, especially tactically. He will undoubtedly make a first class coach in the near future.

Q. Where do you see Touch heading in say the next five to ten years.?

This is a very perplexing one at this point in time. I am actually concerned where we are headed and how we get there as the sport needs some specific direction to combat the likes of OzTag and NTRA.

We have ridden the wave of popularity for so long now that we have become complacent and therefore are losing numbers in certain affiliates and States.

We seem to have lost the very large affiliate based competitions of days gone by and now find that these affiliates are content to run a minimum of teams, which are easy to handle.

If we could put in some sort of structure i.e./ franchising as OzTag and schemes to help the volunteers, I believe our player retention rate would be higher.

We are placing an impost on our elite players by continually expecting them to pay higher prices and utilising more time off work to participate in order to gain selection for Australian honours.

We need to make the path less expensive and arduous in order to represent your country. As a National coach, I need to have the best players available for selection.

AUSTRALIAN UNDER 18 GIRLS

The Australian Under 18 Womens kept the record going for Junior

Teams having never lost an Under 18 game over the past three years. All up during the World Cup from 8 games including semi finals and finals we scored 72 touchdowns and had 8 scored against us winning the final against New Zealand 3-1

Our winger Candace Winder from Gold Coast was our top scorer with 10. Candace was also the Player of series as voted by the Coaches. Dannielle Locke from Townsville was voted the ATA President's Player.

The girls put in a great effort in the build up to the event training every second weekend in Brisbane for the girls in South East Queensland and by attending the NSW State Cup for a training weekend with the NSW girls. Well done everyone.

ATA'S NEW INSURANCE

The change of Insurance is now to Sportscover. They have their claims lodgement telephone number now up and running and the number to call for all claims is: 1300 736 390. Claims can also be lodged on line @ www.sportscover.com

The ATA homepage will soon be linked to the Sportscover home page, in the next week or so.

Injuries occurring in competitions that commenced prior to 31 Dec. 2000 call Jardine on 1300 136 132

Injuries occurring in competitions that commenced after 1 Jan. 2001 call Sportscover on 1300 736 390.

If you require additional information please phone Lyn Dunn (Office Manager) on 1800 654 951 or email lyn@austouch.com.au

**This is your newsletter
Please e.mail this on to all
the addresses in your
address book**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

4 th February 2000	Sydney Rebels Junior Gala Day - Campbelltown
10/11 February 2000	Golden Oldies tournament – Milton / Ulladulla
11 th February 2001	Hunter Hornets Junior Gala Day - Parkes
11 th February 2001	Sydney Mets Junior Gala Day – Five Dock
17 th February 2001	ATA Board of Management Meeting - Sydney
11/13 March 2001	NTL (Opens/20's) – Coffs Harbour
15/17 March 2001	NTL (Seniors) – Coffs Harbour
4/11 May 2001	Broome Masters Games – Broome
5/6 th May 2001	NQ Open Championships - Townsville
11 th May 2001	NSW Catholic Colleges – Coffs Harbour
Mid May 2001	NSW Independent Schools – T.B.A
TBA May 2001	State of Origin (NSW v QLD) – NSW
19/26 May 2001	ARAFURA Games – Darwin
9/10 th June 2001	NQ Junior Championships - Townsville
19/21 June 2001	NSW Combined High Schools Girls – Walsend
6/7 July 2001	QLD Southern Junior State Cup - Glasshouse Mountains
20/22 July 2001	QLS Secondary Schools Trials – North QLD
TBA July 2001	Trans Tasman Tests – TBA
26/29 July 2001	World Clubs (Masters) Championships – Singapore
31 July/2 Aug 2001	NSW Combined High Schools Boys – Cabramatta
16/18 th August 2001	Queensland Country Cup - Rockhampton
20/23 Sept. 2001	Australian 18 Years C'ships – Coffs Harbour
28/29 Sept. 2001	Yass 1975-2001 Reunion
TBA Sept. 2001	ATA Annual General Meeting
29 Sept/1 Oct 2001	World Beach Touch (Clubs) – Forster
October 2001	Australian Masters Games - Newcastle
18/21 October 2001	World Schools – Gold Coast
26/28 October 2001	Bangkok Int'l Sevens – Ladies Touch
17/18 November 2001	Southern Suns Regional C'ships – Wollongong
24/25 November 2001	Northern Junior State Cup - Cairns
TBA March 2002	NTL (Opens/20's) – Coffs Harbour
TBA March 2002	NTL (Seniors) – Coffs Harbour
July 2002	European Championships - Wales
TBA 2003	FIT World CUP – Master - Japan
TBA 2003	FIT World CUP – Opens - Japan

If you wish to have any Touch event listed here then please provide details and it will be published in the following issues.

TOUCH WEB SITES

Federation International Touch
www.internationaltouch.com.au

Australia Touch Association
www.austouch.com.au

ATA Insurance – Sportscover
www.sportscover.com

ACT Touch
www.acttouch.com.au

NSW Touch
www.nswtouch.com.au

Queensland touch
www.qldtouch.com.au

South Australia Touch
www.touch-sa.asn.au

Victoria Touch
www.victouch.com.au

Western Australia Touch
www.watouch.com.au

Chile – Santiago Touch Rugby Club
www.atamericas.com/touch

England Touch Association
www.english-touch.com

New Zealand (unofficial) Touch site
www.nztouch.co.nz

Paradise Touch (USA)
www.mecatwork.com/paradisetouch/nt00.htm

Portugal Beach Touch Rugby
www.bdj3.pt

Scottish Touch
www.scottouch.connectfree.co.uk

Welsh Touch
www.rcttouch.co.uk

Michael Braodhurst's photo gallery
www.sportingimages.com.au

Arafura Games
www.arafuragames.nt.gov.au

Masters Games
www.mastersgames.com.au

South Africa
www.touchrugby365.com