Welcome to the second edition of Backpage Newcastle University's monthly sports letter and my first article reporting on all the excitement of the first part of the university games for 1998, the Easter Cluster Games (Eastern Conference Games).

Due to the limited facilities of Wagga where the remainder of the 23 sports held at an Eastern Conference Games are to be held in July, four sports namely, Basketball, Tennis, Squash and Volleyball were unable to be catered for and as a result were held over the Easter break at the Sydney University Sports and Aquatic Centre and finally enough the host was Sydney University.

For those who aren't in the know ECG is basically the NSW state University Games where Universities from all over the state including universities representing Lismore, Armidale, Bathurst, Wagga, Canberra, Sydney and of course Newcastle compete in up to twenty seven different sports in order to qualify for nationals or the Australian Universities Games which are to be hosted by Latrobe University in Melbourne in the September break later this year. Which may even lead to a chance to compete at the World University Games which is the third largest sporting event in the world after World Cup Soccer and the Olympic Games!!!

Newcastle University was well represented at the Cluster Games, entering teams in Men's Squash, Men and Women's Basketball and Men and Women's Tennis, unfortunately we did not get acts together in time to enter teams in the Volleyball competition.

Nevertheless, Newcastle University did an outstanding job managing to qualify top three in all but one of the competitions we entered.

The Men's squash team played exceptionally well to take the title in a close finals match. The Men's tennis team also played exceptionally well to win the title and qualify first for the nationals, well done boys. Although, they did not finish first the Women's tennis team did well to finish third.

Newcastle University Men's Hockey side has had a lacklustre start to the 1998 season thanks mainly to the absence of several key players.

After suffering losses to last year's wooden-spooners, Maitland (0-1) and last year's finalists South (1-7), the students went the Easter break with a less than impressive 0 from 2 win/loss record.

According to Club President John Kennedy, "the loss of experienced first graders Greg Reynolds, Scott Smith, Chris Hayes, Jamie McKenzie and James Hodgson from last year's semi-final making side, has left a void that could take some time to fill."

Add to this the unavailability of star players Michael Cannon (overseas) and Shane Ambrose (work commitments and overseas) until May and June respectively and you can see why the side is struggling at present.

With so many new players in the side, it was always going to take the players some time to gel as a team.

Kennedy indicated that, "training, fitness and teamwork" were the areas the students must address if they are to be competitive in the top competition this season. He also added that an increase in social functions would, "help the side bond and understand each other better."

Having said this, Kennedy was quick to clarify the main reason for playing any team sport, that is, TO HAVE FUN.

"Our main aim is to enjoy the season and to play to the best of our ability, it is important for us not to set unrealistic goals for ourselves", said the Sea Figs President.

University will get a chance to atone for early season disappointments when it takes on defending premiers North on Saturday 2 May, at 4.00pm.

Get along and support your team!!
This is the end of my fifth year as President. The exciting news from previous years was that we received approval from the University Council in December 1995 to proceed with a Multi-Purpose Health and Recreation Centre and an indoor-heated swimming pool. All the positive results of years of planning, meetings and negotiations came together on 1 July 1996 when the then Vice-Chancellor Raoul Mortley signed a $15.25 million contract with McCloys.

By August 1997 the contract for the building was largely completed and by the end of October a manager, Mr. Stuart Allen, had been appointed for the complex. Shortly afterwards Mr. Bill Nelson (acknowledged as a "legend" by The Newcastle Herald) was appointed as the swim coach, and by December several staff were being inducted.

The official opening was on Friday 27 February, 1998; when Mr. Bernie Curran announced the name 'The Forum' and in the following first full month of operation, most sections of the Facility were in full swing. The Forum was on its way! The Sports Union owes a large debt to several persons, especially Professor Michael Carter as Chair of the Project Planning Committee and our last three Vice-Chancellors for their foresight and perseverance.

Members of the Sports Union will be the primary users of the new complex and must insist on first priority in the enjoyment of the facilities. They have a considerable cost advantage in the use of the facility, having paid by way of fees for it over the last decade and for the next couple of decades). The community of Newcastle is also allowed access. The 2000 Olympics, and the subsequent Para-Olympics, should provide us with a unique opportunity to expand our profile by offering overseas teams an opportunity for training facilities.

This past year has not just been a continual round of meetings and negotiations about The Forum. There have been several outstanding achievements by our sporting clubs and individuals. Several have been selected in national squads and represented overseas in wide ranges of sports as diverse as judo and karate to the more conventional athletics, swimming, hockey and most codes of football.

The University of Newcastle recorded some excellent results at the University Games held in Melbourne. Only a few of the bigger Universities were ahead of us. Again, fine individual and team results were recorded with several of our competitors being chosen in Australian Universities merit teams.

On the home-front, the Campus Scamper proved to be another record breaking event with large participation from the colleges which used it as one of their inter-collegiate events. Pleasing features were the involvement of the Vice-Chancellor Roger Holmes in the starting of the event and the large number of prizes donated by sporting and other firms who wished to be associated with us. The success of this and our other endeavours means that we must have some very skilled and successful people working for our organisation.

A continually pleasing feature of our operation is the number of members who have availed themselves of the opportunity to undertake sporting administration, coaching or appropriate first-aid training. Funds are made available for this through the Neil Dickinson Award scheme and there is no doubt that there will be a future requirement for all clubs to have accredited coaches and administrators.

Over the last few years, the University, and the Sports Union, undertook some negotiations with the Hunter Mariners and News Limited. Those deals saw the implanting of $410,000 worth of excellent lights into No. 3 Oval and the commissioning of some sports scholarships.

The Mariners went with the amalgamations in the National Rugby League competition, but after some protracted discussions, it is pleasing to see the Newcastle Knights now training on No. 3 Oval and becoming involved with the usage of facilities at The Forum. The eventual commercial success of The Forum is an item which has occupied many an Executive Committee meeting of the Sports Union.

The development of a field to specialise in baseball on a land adjacent to No. 3 Oval and the Steelworks golf course has begun. Maybe it will be ready next season. This will have a flow-on effect of eventually freeing up half of No. 3 Oval for our planned future developments. The assistance of the Division of Physical Planning and Estates and their ground staff is gratefully acknowledged with respect to this development. Another major development task we are commencing is the building of a new pavilion on Ray Watt oval. Our soccer club has really outgrown our facilities for change-rooms, etc. for players, referees and spectators. The apparent tardiness of this project to get fully underway has obviously been associated with our involvement in loan repayments and financial obligations to The Forum, but these latter matters are now largely determined, so we can release the brakes and start to provide extra services to members.

This next year for the Sports Union promises to be one of consolidation of our position and obligations to The Forum, with just a hint of future developments with the new baseball oval and Ray Watt Pavilion. Let's hope it is also a most rewarding one for all clubs, and members help identify opportunities for their future successes.

John Fryer President, Sports Union

(full report will be presented at the AGM)
FROM THE EDITOR
by Trevor John

It appears some sports have had an unusual start to their seasons, one round of competition, then a break for Easter and then the much needed soaking rains. On the field, there has been the usual mixture of success and disappointment. We now have a good chance to get into the groove and find some form as we get active during the Autumn months.

Thanks for the positive and supportive comments received after the publication of our first edition. We're trying to keep everyone up-to-date with what's going on in sport and recreation at The University of Newcastle, so please let us know about the things that are getting you active and healthy.

DEADLINE - Stories, Photographs, Reports, Results and Fixtures for the next edition of Back Page to the editor by 20 May, 1998.

FROM THE PROGRAM MANAGER
by Chris Tola

Starting Monday 18th May for six weeks, the Sports Union has organised a Sports Photography Course. Two hours a week of honing your photographic skills, snapping action photographs of action people doing action things. The Course costs $90 and includes free film and developing, along with transport to and from the various venues. We've also organised a lecture which will highlight the skills required and what you will get out of the course. All you need is your own camera (preferably manual with tele/lens/wide angle lens if possible) or we may be able to grab one for you. For more information please contact Lisa or Chris on 4921 6965.

A great opportunity to practise your photographic skills is a training session. Every week, rain (well light rain anyway), hail or shine, mosquitoes, sprinklers, raked hares, marauding BOTTLE'S, no matter what, hundreds of University Students and interested others (like the Knights) train on one of our fine ovals.

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY - OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS FOR YOU!

One opportunity you will certainly want to take full advantage of is the Sports Photography course we have organised. Amelia will be taking students out and photographing different sports doing the things that they do. This is an opportunity not to be missed. Learn the skills to produce the type of photographs that picture editors are looking for.

The photographs will be scanned in to our new computer and used in documents like the Annual Report and Back Page. This will be a valuable addition to your CV if you are looking for work in the media.

Copies will also be made available for you to use as well. Want to know more?

King Amelia on 4968 2250.

POLL FOR ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A poll for the election of Sports Union office bearers for 1998 will be held at the Great Hall immediately following closure of the Annual General Meeting and on the following day (Thursday 7 May) between the hours of 10.00am and 8.00pm.

On Thursday 7 May ballot boxes will be placed at the following locations:

- Shortland Campus - Sport and Recreation Unit Office;
- Squash Complex Sports Shop;
- Conservatorium of Music - Student's Common Room

Only Ordinary members of the Sports union are permitted to vote.

A.L. Iakin. Executive Officer.

ACCIDENT AND INJURY INSURANCE

The Sports Union subscribes to a personal accident insurance policy on behalf of its members, ie. students who have paid the General Service Charge to the University, Associate Members of the Sports Union and University Staff who have joined the Sports Union.

The policy provides financial assistance towards expenses incurred as a result of campus related accidental injuries. Cover is provided 24 hours a day. Claims must be made against Medicare, private health insurance and compulsory insurance policies held by district sporting associations in the first instance.

Medical benefits are restricted to those which Medicare does not cover such as physiotherapy, chiropractic, ambulance and dental.

Accidents must be reported within 30 days (but preferably 48 hours) to the Sport and Recreation Unit on an abridged "Student Accident Report" form which is available from the Sport and Recreation Unit, Squash and Tennis Pavilion, offices of International House, Edwards Hall, Evans Hall and all sport club secretaries.

Information on all matters regarding accident and injury insurance is available from the Sport and Recreation Unit's Finance Officer; Craig Buckles on (02) 4921 6965.
Club Open Day Free Coaching and BBQ Lunch
N.U.B.C. Boat Shed King St, RAYMOND TERRACE 10.00 am
Contact: Jim Bardakos: (02) 49673350 or Liz Alldritt: (02) 49697486.

Australian University Rowing Championships will be hosted by Adelaide University. Don't worry I have already volunteered Jim to tow the trailer - but he can't do that unless we have some rowers, so .start thinking about it. The club needs to know about any interest now, so that crews can begin to start training, we can look accommodation and we can start to organise sponsorship and fund raising events.

Shed Times and Contact No.'s. If you are interested in training or learning to row, this is a short note regarding the people to contact to organise going for a paddle. The shed will be open on the following days, however if you would prefer another time, day etc. please call someone and we will see what can be done:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Key Holder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>6.00 am</td>
<td>Jim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td>6.00 am</td>
<td>Liz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td>6.00 am</td>
<td>Jim and Liz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td>6.00 am</td>
<td>Jim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat</td>
<td>6.00 am</td>
<td>Jim and Liz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.U.B.C. Home Page http://orpheus.newcastle.edu.au/NUBC Have a look and send any comments/complaints/questions/suggestions to Geoff Daly, at msgdd@alinga.newcastle.edu.au

MEN'S HOCKEY
The Newcastle International Hockey Centre, Turton Road, Broadmeadow.
The University of Newcastle Sea Pies versus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Round 5</th>
<th>Round 6</th>
<th>Round 7</th>
<th>Round 8</th>
<th>Round 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sat 2 May</td>
<td>Sun 17 May</td>
<td>Sat 29 Sun 24 May</td>
<td>Sun 31 May</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>North 4.00pm</td>
<td>Phantoms 4.00pm</td>
<td>West 12.00pm</td>
<td>Maitland 5.00pm</td>
<td>South 4.00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>North 2.30pm</td>
<td>West 2.30pm</td>
<td>Tigers 10.30am</td>
<td>Maitland 5.00pm</td>
<td>South 2.30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>North 1.00pm</td>
<td>West 1.00pm</td>
<td>West 9.00am</td>
<td>Maitland 5.00pm</td>
<td>South 1.00pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Training time All Grades Thursday 8.00 - 9.00pm The Hockey Centre
Contact: Simon Page (Hon Sec) tel. 49466927

WOMEN'S HOCKEY
Training time All Grades Thursday 7.30 - 8.30pm
So Far: University Women's First Grade side has won 2 out of 3 games. For the FIRST TIME in years, the University 6th grade side have broken through for a win

BASEBALL
A great start to the season with 1st, 2nd and 3rd Grade sides all securing wins.
Congratulations too Tony Hickey on your No Hitter - your Catcher tells us that it's all in the signals he fires your way.
Training times All Grades Wednesday 7.00pm No. 3 Oval

WOMEN'S SOCCER
Season commences on Sunday 3 May 1998 at Ray Watt Oval.
Training times Tuesday and Friday 6.00 - 8.00pm No. 2 Oval

BASKETBALL - Correction
The basketball contact for new players is Robyn Connett (02) 4921 0376 or (02) 4943 5889
Apologies if any inconvenience was caused by the publication of contrary information.

NUBC WINS THE SINGLES PENNANT

Congratulations to everyone who helped win the third placing in the Central Districts Rowing Association point score.
Although all the results are not official yet, the club has scored more points and was closer to gaining second, than in any other year of local competition.

After our previous success with the Sweep Oar total, it is strange that Uni has won the Singles Pennant, but if we can combine all these rowers and scullers, then in 1998/99 the first place pennant will be ours.

Back Page

CONTRIBUTION DEADLINES:
no. 3 - 20 May
no. 4 - 17 June
no. 5 - 22 July
no. 6 - 19 August
no. 7 - 16 September
no. 8 - 21 October
no. 9 - 18 November

Send stories, publicity blurbs, photographs, results, fixture lists, to:
The Editor, Back Page
Trevor John
The University of Newcastle
Department of Communication & Media Arts
Callaghan 2308
(02) 4921 6773
mat@cc.newcastle.edu.au
Fax: (02) 4921 6944

CONTACTS:
Sports Union President,
Prof John Fryer
Executive Officer,
Adrian Iakin
Administrative Assistant,
Lesley Woodhead
Program Manager,
Chris Tola
Finance Officer,
Craig Buckles
Accounts Payable Clerk,
Margaret Horon
Reception, Lisa Bradley
Steward, Pat Galvin
Squash & Tennis Pavilion:
David Pembroke, Stephen Dowdell, John Price
Simon Hestop.

Telephone:
Enquiries -
(02) 4921 6960
Sporting Facilities -
(02) 4921 6963
Squash & Tennis Pavilion -
(02) 4921 8850

Back Page
Editor - Trevor John
Designer - Michael Meany
Print - Lloyd Scott Pty Ltd, Hamilton, Newcastle.

Produced for the Sports Union by the Department of Communication & Media Arts.