

## **All about being Better**

Graeme Clements recently invited me to conduct a training session with his Under 18 Central Explorers (Victoria) bowls squad. 'Clemo' first invited me to conduct training sessions/ presentations way back in the year 2000. Another invitee at that early stage was one Bill Cornehl who went on to secure gold in Commonwealth Games. At the time of the invite, I was involved with the Olympics and coincidentally at the time of the recent Central Explorers program, I came across some written material used to assist the Olympic athletes and coaches.

The thrust of that pre Olympic program was to shift these athletes / coaches to a higher attitudinal level by using a series of quotes / clichés from former champions as a discussion point in workshops. Years on some of the statements readily apply to bowlers, and coaches, who are hungry to be better.

Do you see yourself as a bowler in any of these statements – maybe you are truly fair dinkum if able to say yes or willing to take up some of the comments to your own game:

### **...the best athletes (we should read here bowlers) might well be those**

- Who write themselves notes to focus on facets of their game and training that require improvement to motivate himself further
- Who believe in the classic of hard work in the knowledge it generally produces the desired result
- Who are never self satisfied
- Who are constantly on about continual improvement
- Working on every aspect of their skill
- Who have the inner confidence to challenge themselves further
- Who always display professionalism, by that I mean they have detailed planning sessions, set personal sport goals, work on tactical and mental skill development, aspire to better game analysis systems
- Who know it is a sacrifice to be good

Now for all that, I also believe the coaches can, no should, reach out for constant improvement. If the players excel they need coaches who want to excel (in their coaching craft also). A coach not up to the speed of the player is quite honestly a hindrance. In other industries it is referred to as professional development. Again to borrow from the information from year 2000

### **...the best coaches might well be those**

- Who have a thorough focus on their player's goals
- Who plan well
- With a quality training program, and a competition program to give the player best chance of success
- Working at and succeed with team goals with players
- Who have a good network with other coaches

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- Who use and listen to experts who may include champion players, past or present
- Who share their goals, dreams, plans and in so doing help educate more to the 'cause' of their coaching
- with a training environment that is welcomed by the players as it mirrors the level of competition and combines intensity with fun with skill acquisition
- who can get players to move more to self coach

I was once told years ago by an eminent person in Australian sport...**if you are not known you are not professional**...never any mention made of having to get money to be regarded as professional.

'Clemo' is a professional. He clings to that commitment to do better all these years on. Fire is still in his belly. And the beneficiaries? Those keen young boys and girls in the Explorers squad fortunate to be in his charge as their coach.

Well done, mate!