**How not to prepare a media kit**

**-- a review of the 2000 national league handbook**

Did you know that Manawatu’s clubrooms are at 51 O’Dowd Rd, Taradale, Napier? That University-Mt Wellington skipper Paul Bunbury is also member of the Christchurch City squad?
Welcome to the 2000 “Statistics Handbook” for the National Club Championship (It never uses the term “national league” though the clubs themselves regularly do.)
As a media kit, it is absolutely dreadful. It is easily the most slipshod, amateurish and unhelpful in the history of the national league and its bastard dead offspring, the superclub championship and North & South Island leagues.
For most clubs there is no contact number apart from their clubrooms, which will hardly help those in the media not fussed about ringing soccer clubs at the best of times.
There is no history of league records, no past winners, not even a summary of how the eligibility for the league was settled upon. There is nothing to put the competition in any historical context. It is as if we have never had a national league before.
Worse, there is not a single word about any of the players from any club.
Perversely, while readers get chapter and verse on the ancient history of the playing background of Mt Wellington coach Clive Campbell, you’ll not learn a thing about his far more interesting (in Year 2000 terms) son Jeff. Or any other player — not their age, position, playing honours, or previous clubs. Nothing.
To be fair to the clubs, they have pointed out they forwarded full player biographies to the league management. But somehow this information — the essence of a good media kit — was omitted from the publication.
The booklet fails to detail the home base of the 10 league referees (always an interesting one for media), and even more glaringly, fails to provide contact details or even name the league commissioner/manager.
Manawatu fared worst. Club contact Marc Proctor was given an incorrect email address, while the club suffers the indignity of not only being assigned a Napier clubrooms base, but also being referred to as “Manawatu Rangers” in the club listings. That’s the thing about names — they’re either right or wrong.
It must be said an effort has been made to add a few interesting things, like clubs’ record attendances and pitch sizes.
Some clubs, like Nelson, have obviously never had a record attendance, while others like Mt Wellington (4000) or Dunedin Technical (1500) merely pluck a figure out of the air without putting a match or date to it.
Napier tell us Paul Halford holds the club record for the most first-team appearances, and Martin Akers the most goals — but without ever quantifying their achievements.
We learn that Waitakere has supposedly the biggest pitch (110 x 75m) though the fact is rendered meaningless because either Miramar, Napier, Manawatu, Nelson, and Christchurch City couldn’t be stuffed sharing this information with the media, or it is another oversight by head office.
At this point it’s worth quoting an extract from Kevin Stratful’s amazingly short, shallow and passionless “Chairmans message” in the handbook.
“The participating clubs will also need to display a level of professionalism that will ensure that the NCC will enhance soccer, attract the attention of the media and public favourably, benefit sponsors and encourage new sponsors in the future.”
Well Kev, this media kit has fallen well short of the professionalism you are seeking. Whether you blame clubs, or your office is up to you. But as it stands it will only encourage erroneous, ignorant, glib media coverage of soccer.
# When this issue went to press we understood plans were afooot to re-do the media kit.
***-- Cordwainer Bull.***