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## **Adolescents and Sport : A Case Study of Boys' Drop-Out From Basketball**

P. N. A. Jelovsek  
*Edith Cowan University*

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**ADOLESCENTS AND SPORT: A CASE STUDY OF  
BOYS' DROP-OUT FROM BASKETBALL**

**P. N. A. Jelovsek**

**Faculty of Community Services, Education and Social Sciences**

School of Education

Department of Physical and Health Education

9<sup>th</sup> March 2001

## ABSTRACT

This thesis was designed to acquire comprehensible awareness of specific drop-out cases from basketball, specifically adolescent boys between the ages of twelve and fifteen, at Cockburn Basketball Stadium and hence abate the incidence of adolescent drop-out. My intention was to uncover what happened to these adolescents and what led them to decide to stop playing basketball. I also wished to ascertain what meaning these adolescents ascribed to the events that occurred whilst playing which led them to decide to stop playing.

The Cockburn Basketball Association had 190-plus junior teams in semester 1, 1996 and only 86 junior teams in semester 1, 1999. The fundamental basis for the research is that human beings are meaning-making machines and their perceptions are shaped by their past experiences.

The importance of physical activity, specifically to adolescents, is reviewed followed by surveying the different influences surrounding adolescents and sport participation. The influences on adolescent sport participation that are surveyed are significant others, parents, peers, coaches, self-perception, competitiveness of sport, umpiring, socio-economic status, media, and other activities.

The procedure employed for gathering data was the “Three-Interview Series,” described in Seidman (1991), on one pilot study and five other adolescent boys. This comprised of investigating into the life history of the adolescent in the first interview; procuring details of the experiences in the second interview; and a reflection, by the participants, on the meaning of the experiences in the third interview. A line-by-line analysis was

performed on all interviews conducted to generate categories commencing with lower-order categories then creating higher-order categories.

It was found that there was no single reason that represents the decision to quit basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium by the six adolescent boys in the study. Each boy had his own reasons for beginning basketball and for dropping out of basketball from the Cockburn Basketball Association.

Significant others played an instrumental part in the decision to quit basketball for some of the participants of the study. One participant was negatively influenced by the parents of teammates. Another participant cited the coaches as a major reason for his decision to quit. Some of the participants of the study mentioned teammates as having influenced their decision to quit basketball in different ways. One participant cited a loss of passion for the game after having played a heavy concentration of basketball for six years. It is interesting to note that this participant craved success and loved to win and over the years his Western Australian Basketball League (WABL) team, the one team he took seriously, experienced less success. Some of the participants had found another activity, which they found more enjoyable, to substitute for basketball. One participant said that receiving a “scabby uniform,” compared to the uniform he had in the previous season and compared to the uniforms his teammates had, as a contributing factor for his decision to quit basketball at Cockburn.

Recommendations are given for Western Australian Basketball to focus attention on the players and their enjoyment of the game and for further research into drop-out the sport.

## DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- (i) incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;
- (ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or
- (iii) contain any defamatory material.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



Date: 8/3/2001

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to Andrew Taggart, my supervisor, for being so patient, providing such excellent guidance to myself and creating a confidence within me for this thesis.

Thank you to the six young men who gave up their time and opened their hearts and made this research meaningful.

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## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Setting the Scene**

In 1987 there were approximately 80 junior basketball teams playing in Cockburn Basketball Stadium. Between 1987 and 1993 there was a constant rise in the number of teams and in 1993 reaching the high point of 193 registered junior teams. Between 1993 and 1995 the numbers fluctuated between 150 and 190 teams before re-establishing 190 junior teams in 1996. Since 1996 the number of junior teams has steadily declined to 107 teams in the semester 2 season in 1998 and 86 registered teams in semester 1, 1999. Since there are no annual reports from the Cockburn Basketball Association (CBA) these numbers were obtained from Cockburn directors, administrators and junior development officers. With these numbers and personal observations, one could easily declare that basketball drop-out at Cockburn has reached alarming proportions.

I have coached basketball at Cockburn for twelve years and enjoyed coaching in that environment. This steady and significant decline in the number of junior team since 1996 is a real concern for me, as is discovering the reasons behind the decline.

These fluctuations in junior team numbers in Cockburn is a reflection of issues facing basketball Australia wide. When one considers attendances, we see that the Perth Wildcats first played home games in the Perry Lakes Basketball Stadium from the early 1980s to 1986 in front of crowds in the hundreds. From 1987 to 1990 the Perth Wildcats played home games in the Superdrome in front of sellout crowds of 2,500. The sellouts continued when the Wildcats moved to the Perth Entertainment Centre in 1991, at this time there were 8,500 in attendance, which continued through to 1997. The Perth Wildcats proceed to play home games at the Perth Entertainment Centre, in front of

sellouts once more after a period of a couple of years where crowds dropped to around 4,500.

The television coverage of basketball in Western Australia mirrors, in its own way, the fluctuations of junior team numbers at Cockburn and attendances at Perth Wildcats home games. Prior to 1987, there was little live coverage of the Perth Wildcats on television. From 1987 the Perth Wildcats' games were televised at 'primetime' on the days they played and home games were telecast live. Games continued to be shown at primetime through to 1997 with additional basketball shows created to discuss basketball in all its detail. Since 1997 no Wildcats games have been shown live or televised at primetime on free to air television.

Basketball at all levels in Australia appeared to be in a state of flux. While attendances and television coverage were down, it was the decline in participation levels of adolescent boys that was of particular concern to me. The context within which this decline was occurring is nevertheless important. This study is about determining, through interviewing, why adolescent boys have ceased to play basketball.

### 1.2 Fundamental Basis of Study

I contend that there must be some reasons behind the drop-out from basketball at Cockburn since 1996, since every human act is for a reason. This is based on my belief that human beings add meaning to everything in their lives – objects, people, events, and situations. This is supported by Muuss (1996) who explains that human beings are “meaning-making creatures” (p. 265). Burns (1997) contends that the basis of people's

behaviour is how they attach meaning and what meanings they attach to everything in their lives. If humans add meaning to everything in their lives, special meaning must have been attached to what occurred at Cockburn or to a part of the CBA preceding to an adolescent deciding to drop-out of basketball.

I believe that how human beings perceive the world and how they behave is essentially shaped, if not completely, by their past experiences and what meaning is added to these experiences in their daily lives. Woolfolk (1995) describes perception as “the meaning we attach to the raw information received through our senses” (p. 245). Woolfolk (1995) supports the notion that the construction of meaning is based on “both objective reality and our existing knowledge” (p. 245). It follows that all human beings have different perceptions since no two persons can have the exact same knowledge base and experiences.

The experiences that have the greatest influence on a human’s perception and behaviour almost always involve other human beings. This is well supported by Muuss (1996) who describes Harry Stack Sullivan’s interpersonal theory of adolescent development. In Muuss (1996), Sullivan is quoted as saying “comfortable, successful interpersonal relationships are what life is all about” (p. 84). Furthermore, Muuss (1996) explained how interpersonal relationships influence a person’s development and what they are. Some ways in which humans can influence others are by verbal communication (for example, telling another they are great or horrible) and non-verbal communication (for example, isolating a person in a peer group).

The fundamental basis for this study is largely phenomenological. Muuss (1996, p. 321) describes phenomenology as a philosophy that “emphasizes that one’s personal and therefore subjective interpretation of the experience – the individual’s definition of the situation – is the crucial determinant of that person’s reality and hence, of his or her behaviour.” The fact that this study is about finding out, through interviews, why adolescents decided to quit playing basketball in the CBA almost singularly dictates that this has to be a phenomenological study.

Through this study I wish to determine what experiences the adolescent boys had that contributed to their dropping-out from basketball, what meanings were attached to their experiences and if other human beings contributed in any way to their decision. Information detailing each adolescent’s background, his daily experiences and what meanings were attached to those experiences will be attained to put into context and therefore make an accurate and holistic assessment of what contributed to their dropping-out from basketball.

### 1.3 The Problem

Adolescents as a group in our society struggle, perhaps more than any other group, with the dilemmas associated with being “meaning-making creatures”. What this study is interested in is determining what meaning was added by the adolescents to the events surrounding their drop-out from basketball. Were the events such that most people experiencing them would have made the same decision or was there meaning attached to the events to make them appear worse than what the norm in society would view them?

In practical terms the problem of this study is that the number of adolescent boys playing basketball at Cockburn was declining. Specifically, the number of junior basketball teams that played basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium went from over 190 teams in semester 1 1996 to 86 teams in semester 1 1999.

A problem exists only in language. In other words, a problem exists only if a person states something to the effect of “this is a problem”. For example, let’s assume there is a situation where the interest of a large number of adolescents shifts from basketball to Australian Rules Football over the course of a year or two. Coaches, administrators and stadium managers in basketball would conceivably say “this is a problem”, amongst other things. Football coaches and administrators and the AFL would look at this scenario as a blessing and it is likely that “problem” would not exist in their reality for the above stated situation.

The research aim for this study is:

To gain an understanding of drop-out from basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium.

The specific research question is:

Why do adolescent boys drop-out from basketball?

Drop-out is perceived to be a problem as I view basketball since adolescent participation promotes a broad range of positive outcomes for participants. I believe these benefits are particularly pertinent to adolescent boys.



### 1.4 Significance of the Problem

I have constructed the problem from my perspective however there are other perspectives that emphasize the significance of the problem. Of primary importance and significance to the problem is my belief that basketball, when taught and coached well, can teach adolescents several valuable lessons. Through my personal experience, the valuable lessons basketball can teach adolescents include the value and power of cooperation, teamwork, working hard, focussing on a task, goal setting, and playing a role.

Falling participation is a problem for the CBA as they are running the stadium and the associated basketball competitions as a business. Similar to any business entailing the supply of services, there is a minimum demand requirement for the Association to survive. From Cockburn's perspective, the demand is the number of junior basketball teams participating in the basketball stadium while the Association supplies the services of competitions, the stadium, scheduling, refereeing, food, drink, and hopefully a supportive and safe sporting environment. The minimum number of basketball teams, junior and senior, required for the CBA to survive is uncertain, though if this decline in teams continues its survival may be threatened.

There is less likelihood of there being an abundance of tall, talented or athletic players to select for representative sides with the number of junior players at Cockburn in steady decline. Having tall, talented and athletic players is meaningful for representative sides as it enables Cockburn to remain competitive in the Western Australian Basketball League. The 'law of large numbers' suggests that the greater the number of junior teams

playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium the greater the number of tall, talented and athletic players.

Greater participation rates increase the likelihood of even competitions since it enhances the possibility of having sufficient players at each level of playing ability to have ‘their own’ competition. In other words if there is a high participation rate there would be a smaller range of varying playing abilities in each level of competition. The importance of even competitions has been indicated by Taggart and Sharp (1997) who found that a large number of drop-outs were linked to low skill level, lack of opportunity (court-time) and uneven competition. If there is a growth in participation of junior players those who possess perceived low skill level are more likely be playing with and against others with a perceived low level of skills. This can be attributed to the law of large numbers, mentioned above, where greater participation rate would enhance the likelihood of the presence of a sufficiently large population of low-skilled players to compete in ‘their own’ competition. This would appear to diminish the feeling of not being good enough, eliminate perceived lack of opportunity and increase self-esteem.

The final reason emphasizing the significance of the problem is the need for adolescents to pursue an active lifestyle. Zubrick, Silburn, Gurrin, Teoh, Carlton, and Lawrence cited in Taggart and Sharp (1997, p. 2) stated that “for adolescents, the benefits of regular physical activity include not only the physiological benefits but also improved mental health, self esteem and self efficacy.”

If those adolescents who have stopped playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium no longer participate in any form of physical activity then this raises a different concern to that of adolescents who have changed to another form of physical activity. If any adolescents have dropped out of sport and physical activity entirely then uncovering why can help towards prevention of drop-out from physical activity. If adolescents have dropped out from basketball to participate in another sport then the data can be used to help maintain adolescent participation in basketball.

The significance of the problem can be summarized as articulating the importance of a physically active lifestyle for adolescents; basketball can teach various valuable lessons; Cockburn must have a sufficient number of basketball teams to survive as an Association; greater participation enhances the likelihood of having tall, athletic and talented players for Cockburn's representative sides; and greater participation improves the possibility of even competitions which can support just, equitable and enjoyable sport.

### 1.5 Researcher Profile

I have been coaching basketball at various levels for twelve years and all of these years in coaching have been with the CBA. Basketball coaching is what I intend to pursue as my profession. I love the game of basketball, I love coaching basketball and desire to see the game played by a huge number of people and at a high standard across Australia. I deem it important to stipulate that Cockburn Basketball is close to my heart and that I have a strong affiliation with the Cockburn basketball community. I will remind myself of this stance as I strive to undertake a dispassionate investigation of the problem.

I have grave concerns surrounding, what I interpret as, the large decline in the number of junior teams playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium. Therefore I declare this decline in numbers a problem to exist for me and for the CBA. I believe the Association may be capable of reversing the recent decline in participation by uncovering why adolescents have resolved to stop playing basketball at Cockburn.

### 1.6 Research Question

Research Question:

Why did adolescent boys, between the ages of 12 and 15, stop playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium between 1995 and 1998?

Through my investigations I intended to uncover what happened to these adolescents and what led them to decide to stop playing basketball. I also wished to ascertain what meaning these adolescents ascribed to the events that occurred whilst playing which led them to decide to stop playing. As Seidman (1991, p. 9) put it I wanted to “have the participant reconstruct his ... experience” surrounding his resolution to cease playing basketball.

I aspired to delve into the life-histories of the adolescent boys, travelling back to their first memories of games and sport and determine if there is any commonality between decisions they made prior to and for basketball. By inquiring into some of their relevant past experiences and what meaning was attached to these experiences I aimed to ascertain how these experiences have shaped their thoughts and prompted the resolution

to discontinue playing basketball at Cockburn. I desired to uncover any past experiences the adolescent boys deem similar to those experienced at Cockburn – that is, experiences which led them to stop playing basketball. Seidman (1991) emphasizes the significance of delving into a life-history by stating “People’s behaviour becomes meaningful and understandable when placed in the context of their lives and the lives of those around them” (p. 10). By fulfilling this I believe I was able to gain a healthy grasp of their realities and manufacture an accurate and holistic assessment about what happened, what meaning was attached and why they resolved to discontinue playing basketball.

If a problem emanates a person will often deal with it in the same manner that they have dealt with similar situations in their past, for that is what they know works. When anyone confronts a problem entirely different to anything they have experienced before they will deal with it as best they can. In any case, when a problem is perceived to have disappeared an individual would likely perceive that their problem-solving strategy was effective and possibly the best option available, unless some horrible outcome arises. So when an individual confronts a problem of a similar nature they are likely to deal with the problem in the same way as the first problem experienced. Weiten (1992) explains how “Skinner demonstrated that organisms tend to repeat those responses that are followed by favourable consequences” (p. 201). This adds to the importance of uncovering experiences from their life-history similar to those experienced at Cockburn. This is supported by Skinner’s theories on operant conditioning (Weiten, 1992). If and when a person, including adolescents, quits an activity involving negative experiences discovers the outcome has favourable consequences, often resulting in the person being

happier, it is highly likely the person will perceive his/her decision to be the 'right one'. Consequently if an adolescent male is suffering negative experiences whilst playing basketball at Cockburn, the adolescent is likely to relate his predicament to past experiences involving activities where there were negative experiences. In so doing deal with the present situation in the same manner as he dealt with those particular past activities. This may entail the discontinuation of his participation in basketball if the result of dealing with similar situations in the past in a similar fashion made him happier.

### 1.7 Selection of Subjects

The principal reason I limited the study to adolescent boys was to restrict the size of the population and the range of reasons that may eventuate when gathering the data. By focussing on boys I was able to draw on my personal history as a source of data for the structuring of interviews and my reactions to their responses. The possible variation between gender and age of reasons for dropping out of basketball is shown in table 1.

**Table 1: Reasons for Dropping out of Sport by Year Level and Gender (Taggart & Sharp, 1997, p. 29). Numbers are a percentage of the total number of drop-outs for each group.**

	Important or Very Important			
	Year 7	Year 8	Year 10	Year 12
<b>Boys</b>				
Other activities are more fun than this sport	51	51	49	31
Sport clashed with my job hours	11	11	26	50
I had to stop because of my study	18	18	34	59
<b>Girls</b>				
Other activities are more fun than this sport	62	63	43	37
Sport clashed with my job hours	15	25	40	46
I had to stop because of my study	35	49	50	75

I decided to limit the study to adolescent boys between the ages of twelve and fifteen for two primary reasons, they being, as found in Taggart and Sharp (1997), drop-out “occurs to different degrees at different age levels” (p. 57) and of all the drop-outs 42% leave a sport between the ages of twelve and thirteen. An additional factor is that over the years there have been approximately four times as many boys teams as girls teams playing at Cockburn. I am assuming that more boys’ teams have discontinued participation than girls’ teams between 1995 and 1998. I am also predicting that the biggest drop-off is between the ages of twelve and fifteen similar to the findings in Taggart and Sharp (1997). I believed it is important to investigate the group with the most significant drop-out rate considering they, and Cockburn Basketball, would benefit most from this study. By limiting the study to a specific group of juniors simplified the study and therefore allowed for more in-depth findings for that group.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

This chapter looks at the findings into the importance of physical activity and sport then into the different influences on drop-out from sport. The different influences found to have an effect on young people's drop-out in sport are categorised as significant others, self perception, competitiveness in sport, umpiring, socio-economic status (SES), the media, and other activities.

### 2.1 Importance of Physical Activity

There is an extensive body of evidence suggesting and supporting the importance of physical activity and sport. Weiss, Smith, and Theeboom (1996, p. 347) indicated "Educators, parents, and researchers have long regarded children's involvement in physical activity and sport as a means of deriving beneficial outcomes such as competence in motor skills, self-confidence, sportspersonship, and interpersonal skills". Zubrich, Silburn, Garton, Burton, Dalby, Carlton, Shepherd and Lawrence (1995, p. 27) found that:

The health benefits of sensible and regular exercise are now well recognized. Regular, moderate physical activity has been shown to increase life expectancy and to assist in the prevention and management of coronary heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, osteoporosis, obesity and mental health problems.

There is plenty of evidence on the benefits and importance of sport and physical activity specifically for adolescents. Taggart and Sharp (1997) found that "for adolescents, the benefits of regular physical activity include not only the physiological benefits but also improved mental health, self esteem and self efficacy" (p. 2) and "quality sporting



experiences play a crucial part in adolescent decision-making process” (p. 56). Embrey and Drummond (1996) add that sport plays a part in developing a positive, masculine self-image and overall self-esteem then adds that it is not only essential for boys to participate in sport but also to enjoy it.

Taggart and Sharp (1997) suggest there are certain key issues that need to be addressed by sporting associations so more of these benefits are experienced by more people. Taggart and Sharp (1997) warn that sport needs to “respond to key issues of inclusivity, meaning and enjoyment ... to impact positively on the social cohesion and health of our community” (p. 1). It seems logical that when the key issues of “inclusivity, meaning and enjoyment” are present that adolescents are more motivated to learn, learning is enhanced and it increases the chances of continued participation in sport.

Adolescence is not only a time when regular physical activity is important for current health but also a time to develop life-long exercise habits. This is upheld by Anderssen and Wold (1992) who declare that adolescence is an “important period for learning health-related behaviour patterns, including physical activity, that will carry over into adulthood” (p. 341). It is interesting to note that Taggart and Sharp (1997) found 90% of adolescents who participate in community sport expressed the importance that sport keeps them fit and healthy as an incentive to engage in sport. This suggests that a large percentage of adolescents are aware of the health benefits of regular physical activity but if their experiences in sport do not bring joy into their lives who is to say they will continue to participate in sport?

The benefits of physical activity and sport are not purely health related. There are clearly several social, emotional and intellectual benefits from 'good' sport participation. Adolescence, it has been found, is an important time to learn behaviour patterns that incorporate physical activity. It is also clear that poor sporting experiences can have negative outcomes for adolescents.

## 2.2 Influences on Sport Participation

### 2.2.1 Significant Others

There exists a substantial amount of research which reveals that significant others do have an impact on the participation in physical activity by young adolescents (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Brown, Frankel, & Fennell, 1989; Embrey & Drummond, 1996; Sale, 1991; Kirk, 1996; Ryckman & Hamel, 1995; Taggart & Sharp, 1997; WA Ministry of Sport and Recreation, 1996; Weiss et al., 1996). Anderssen and Wold (1992) found that having significant others physically active and/or encouraging had a significant impact on adolescents' participation in physical activity.

Significant others assert positive and negative influences on sport participation. Positive influences significant others can have on adolescents include being active themselves, provide support and direct help to participation. Significant others are often viewed as role models which points to the importance of being active themselves to promote the physical activity of an adolescent. If someone provides support to an adolescent to participate in sport and they are considered significant by the adolescent, it appears logical for that support to be meaningful and mean more than support provided by someone not considered significant. This is in alignment with the theory that humans

are 'meaning making creatures' since significance is a perception. Forms of negative influences on sport participation include inconsistent feedback, no involvement in the sport in any capacity, non-caring, insensitive, abrasive, too competitive, too critical and parental overprotection. One can easily perceive how the negative actions of significant others referred to above can have a powerful and cancerous effect on sporting participation, especially considering that actions of significant others would mean a great deal to most adolescents.

Significant others can be influential in many areas surrounding participation in sport. The Australian Sports Commission (cited in Taggart & Sharp, 1997, p. 2) found "impediments (to physical activity) included lack of ability, an excessive 'win at all costs' ethos, and limited pleasurable social experiences associated with sport." Lack of ability is a perception typically transferred to adolescents by significant others. If an adolescent boy has parents, peers and coaches expressing their belief in his ability it is conceivable that he would perceive himself as possessing the capability to play successfully. The existence of even competitions would help develop positive perceptions within an adolescent of his ability. Peers have a significant impact on the social experiences of adolescents in sport since it is generally understood that peers are highly influential and many social interactions during adolescence are with peers (Brown, et al., 1989). Parents and coaches also have an impact on the social experiences often through discipline, leading by example and conveying their values. These social experiences impact on how an adolescent boy perceives his ability, how success is perceived, how important winning is and how much fun it is to play sport.

### 2.2.2 Parents

Parents have been found to influence the participation of adolescents in sport (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Brown et al., 1989; Kirk, 1996; Taggart & Sharp, 1997). Anderssen and Wold (1992) found fathers to be one of the “most important socialising agents with respect to sports involvement” (p. 342). Parents can be perceived to be important sources of reinforcement and role models for young adolescents in sport, but direct help and active support in exercising vigorously were found to relate strongly to an adolescents’ participation in leisure-time physical activity (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Kirk, 1996).

### 2.2.3 Peers

There is a large body of literature outlining the influence peers have on the participation of adolescents in sport (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Brown, et al., 1989; Taggart & Sharp, 1997). Brown, et al. (1989) found that “during adolescence, the peer group emerges as a powerful socialising influence” (p. 400). It follows that peers are “important socialising agents with respect to sports involvement” and “important sources of reinforcement of physical activity” (Anderssen & Wold, 1992, pp. 342, 345). Peers have been found to be important role models for participation in physical activity for adolescents. One could argue that teammates would be classed as peers, along with friends from social clubs, primary school and secondary school.

Peers influence adolescent participation in sport indirectly through “peer comparison and evaluation”, since they are used to determine physical competence (Weiss et al., 1996). Weiss et al. (1996, p. 348) found that “peer comparison and evaluation ...

increase markedly between the ages of 8 and 14 years". In small sided games, like basketball, the potential for intense peer interactions exists subsequently impacting on many adolescent perceptions.

#### 2.2.4 Coaches

It has been found that "coaches and their effectiveness in coaching have a strong impact on young people's perception of and involvement in sport." (Taggart & Sharp, 1997, p. 6). This notion is supported by Sale (1991) who discovered that a small but significant number of young people mentioned the coach as a turn-off from sport. In their study, Taggart and Sharp (1997) found that 47% of year 8 boys and 44% of year 10 boys stopped playing a sport because they didn't like the coach (percentages are of all the drop-outs for a particular age group and gender). Coaches are often perceived to be the expert, therefore any comments directed towards an adolescent player may be made to mean a great deal and the adolescent may take on the comments as the truth. This suggests that the coach has the capacity to make the game enjoyable simply by the comments and feedback s/he imparts upon the players. By being well-educated in the field of basketball the coach can be effective in developing the skills necessary for an adolescent to experience success and therefore enhancing the enjoyment of the game.

Coaches have an enormous influence over how much game time each player acquires. This is significant since lack of opportunity for game time was a common reason provided by adolescents for dropping out of sport (Taggart & Sharp, 1997). This is magnified with evidence that "peer comparison and evaluation serve as important sources of physical competence information" (Weiss et al., 1996, p. 348). The coach has

a significant influence on opportunities for adolescents to participate and experience success and down play any negative peer comparison and evaluation.

### 2.2.5 Self Perception

How one perceives one's ability and what meaning one attaches to achievement has an impact on motivated behaviour (Embrey & Drummond, 1996). Embrey & Drummond (1996) suggest that sport plays a "significant role in the development of a boy's masculine self-image and overall self-esteem" (p. 6). For example, if an adolescent male perceives he possesses little ability and places a lot of importance on being competent and winning then this male may very well suffer from low self-esteem. Evidence suggests this adolescent male is likely to drop-out of the sport he is participating in (Zubrich et al., 1995).

It is important to note that success and achievement are perceptions. For example, one could perceive success purely on whether or not his/her team wins, which is frequently done in today's society. Another means to perceive success is deciding if one did their best, performed to their potential and thus made a significant achievement. Both perceptions are valid yet the second allows for greater satisfaction especially to those commonly perceived as lacking ability. These perceptions of ability are influenced heavily by significant others through verbal communication, past experiences, comparison and evaluation (Weiss et al., 1996).

### 2.2.6 Competitiveness of Sport

There are a range of findings about the competitiveness of sport and how it is related to junior sport participation. The WA Ministry of Sport and Recreation (1996) and Sale (1991) found some young people enjoy the competitive aspect of sport whilst others felt uncomfortable and suggested the emphasis on winning reduces the enjoyment of sport. Taggart and Sharp (1997) support “the notion that children’s motivation to participate in sport is to have fun and to be involved with their friends” (p. 6). This suggests that some adolescence would enjoy the competitive aspect of sport whilst others would not, depending on their experiences and values, but either way the importance is to have fun and be with their friends.

Uneven competition has been linked to adolescents dropping out of sport (Taggart & Sharp, 1997). Taggart and Sharp (1997) state that:

... critics argue that winning is emphasized over fun and that often youth sport programmes are, both physiologically and psychologically, stressful and create the potential for dropping out of sport all together. Programmes that emphasize competition and outcome over having fun, learning skills and individual improvement are the ones that usually create negative experiences. (p. 6)

This is supported by the WA Ministry of Sport and Recreation (1996). It is logical to discern that when winning is emphasised half the participants in any game are going to leave disgruntled. Whereas, if fun, learning and developing skills and doing one’s best is emphasised it is comprehensible that everyone can leave a game feeling happy.

### 2.2.7 Umpiring

Poor levels of umpiring have been found to decrease the enjoyment of sport and it has been suggested that if winning wasn't emphasised, poor umpiring wouldn't be an issue (WA Ministry of Sport and Recreation, 1996). This is well supported by Taggart and Sharp (1997) who discovered a key issue of competitive sport is poor quality umpiring. It is reasonable to assume that if winning is emphasised then umpires' and referees' decisions become very important and, some believe, can have an impact on the outcome of a game.

### 2.2.8 Socio-Economic Status

Family income, structure and support have been found to have an influence on an adolescent's participation in junior sport (Kirk, 1996; Taggart & Sharp, 1997; WA Ministry of Sport and Recreation, 1996). There is evidence that sport is becoming increasingly available to those children whose parents are in well paid employment (Kirk, 1996). In Western Australia there are some families who consider basketball too expensive (Womensport West, Malaxos & Wedgwood, 1997). Conceivably some families may decide to discontinue an adolescent's participation in basketball if there exists a perceived, and therefore real, financial strain that ongoing participation has on the family (Womensport West, Malaxos & Wedgwood, 1997). Kirk (1996) found that it was arguable that the participation of children and adolescents in sport is largely dependent on the SES of parents.



The costs involved to play a twenty week season of junior basketball at Cockburn for one player comprise of:

- \$5.50 per week to practice and play a game.
- \$40 to register with a team.
- Buy their own shoes and shorts, which would be at least \$70.
- Often contribute to the purchasing of singlets, where costs reach \$30.

With costs of \$150 and more plus travel costs money can be seen as a potential problem to participation in basketball.

### 2.2.9 Media

The Women and Sport Unit (Australian Sports Commission, 1993) found that “without their own publicly celebrated female role models, girls and young women miss out on the subtle support, encouragement and expectations our culture can provide” (card 11). It has been found that “media coverage of sport reinforces male sport, sports heroes” (Australian Sports Commission, 1993, card 11). The significance of these statements is that if a sport does not secure substantial coverage in the media then there isn’t a great deal of appeal to the sport and valuable role models from the elite competitions cannot be watched as readily as those in sports who receive considerable media coverage. With the media coverage basketball received in Australia for a large part of the nineties, the images adolescent boys received were profound. It was during this time that Michael Jordan, a professional basketball player in the United States, was the most recognised person in the world and basketball was fast becoming one of the most popular sports worldwide, both to participate in and watch. National Basketball League (NBL) games were shown live, National Basketball Association (NBA) games were shown on a

weekly basis, often on Saturday afternoons, and there were some basketball programmes discussing and promoting basketball all on free to air television. Over the past three years live coverage of NBL and NBA games and basketball programmes have moved to pay television leaving the ABC to present delayed telecasts of NBL games and air one programme promoting basketball.

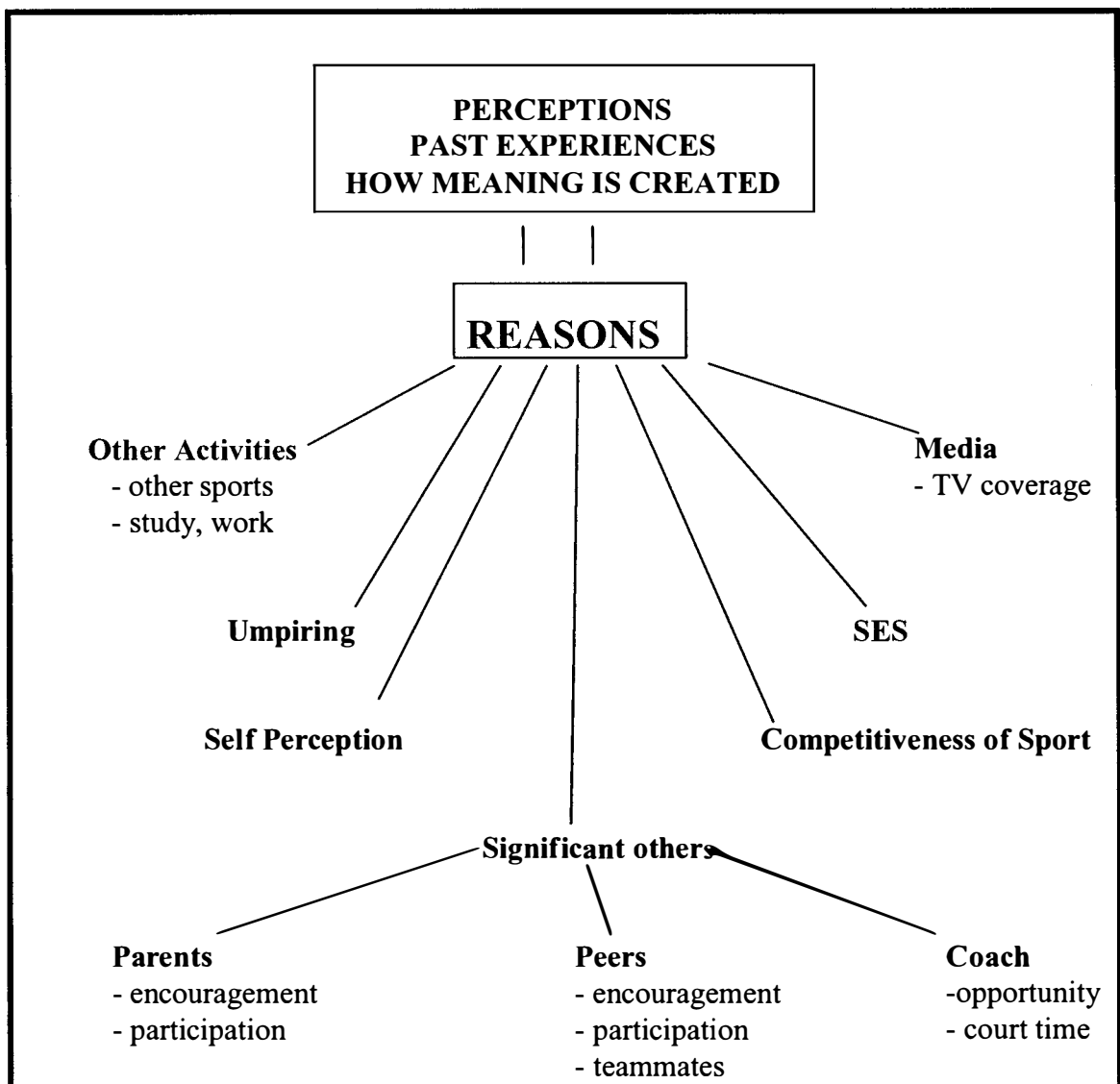
#### 2.2.10 Other Activities

Adolescents perceive, like many people, that they can only do one thing at a time. In other words, an adolescent can't work at the supermarket and play a game of basketball at the same time. Some adolescents arrive at a stage where they perceive they must choose between playing a sport, working, hanging out with friends or spending more time to study. Adolescents who perceive they must make a choice then, conceivably, must prioritize their time to determine what is more important to them. As had been found in other studies, a common reason for dropping out of a sport was that the times clashed with other activities (Embrey & Drummond, 1996; Womensport West, Malaxos & Wedgwood, 1997; Taggart & Sharp, 1997). Other activities include study, work, and other sports, leisure and recreation activities (Embrey & Drummond, 1996; Taggart & Sharp, 1997).

#### 2.3 Overview

I wanted to determine why some adolescent boys have discontinued to play basketball at Cockburn. I suspected each adolescent had his own reasons why he dropped out, but I wished to inquire into how and why their particular reasons evolved and delve into what meaning was added to whatever events occurred. As shown in figure 1, perception, past

experiences and how meaning is created are the fundamental base for reasons why adolescent boys have decided to discontinue basketball. I contend that a reason only exists for an individual when it is stated and an individual will only state it if they perceive it to exist. Figure 1 outlines how the various reasons are linked to meaning-making, perceptions and past experiences.



**Figure 1: An Overview of the Study**

### 3.0 Method

I employed the “Three-Interview Series” described in Seidman (1991) to investigate the problem. In the first interview the life history of the adolescent in relation to the topic of dropping-out from basketball was obtained. Details of the related experiences were procured in the second interview and a reflection, by the participant, on the meaning of their experiences was the focus of the third interview. Burns (1997) explains that gaining access to individual meaning can only be achieved through qualitative methods, such as participant observation and unstructured interviewing. Participant observation was not possible for this study consequently I employed semi-structured interviews. As Seidman (1991, p. 3) describes, “At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience.” The structures for the interviews are exhibited in appendices 2, 3 and 4.

Preceding the first interview, the participants supplied specific personal and basketball related details in a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to enlighten me of their then present situation and hopefully cause the interviewing and analyses to be even more incisive (Appendix 1).

I utilised the first interview to attain a context for the ensuing interviews where the participants describe their past experiences and the meanings of those experiences associated with their participating and discontinuing basketball. “The first interview establishes the context of the participants’ experience” (Seidman, 1991, p. 11). Attaining the context via investigating the life-history of the participants permitted greater accuracy when undertaking and analysing the second and third interviews. Seidman (1991) emphasises the importance of delving into a life-history when striving

to comprehend an interviewee's recent experiences and what meanings were added to them by pronouncing that "People's behaviour becomes meaningful and understandable when placed in the context of their lives and the lives of those around them" (p. 10). The first interview also served the purpose to clarify the demographics information acquired from the questionnaire.

The second and third interviews were employed to acquire awareness of not only the participants' reasons but the meaning they attached and their perception of the feelings that existed before they dropped out of basketball at Cockburn. As Seidman (1991, p. 9) described it, in the second interview I wanted to "have the participant reconstruct his ... experience" surrounding his decision to discontinue playing basketball. "The second allows participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within the context in which it occurs" (Seidman, 1991, p. 11). Once the reason/s why the adolescent boy resolved to discontinue playing basketball had been discovered the next step, the third interview, was to uncover what meaning the adolescent male attached to whatever happened and what their perception was of their circumstances at that time when their decision to cease playing was made. The third interview "encourages the participants to reflect on the meaning their experience holds for them" (Seidman, 1991, p. 11). "Even though it is in the third interview that we focus on the participants' understanding of their experience, through all three interviews participants are making meaning" (Seidman, 1991, p. 12). By simply detailing their experiences, the adolescent boys were taking part in a meaning-making process (Seidman, 1991).

Whilst attempting to find out the reasons for drop-out from CBA it was important to remember the limitations of interviewing. Schutz (cited in Seidman, 1991) said:

... it is never possible to understand another perfectly, because to do so would mean that we had entered into the other's stream of consciousness and experienced what he or she had. If we could do that, we would be that other person. Recognizing the limits on our understanding of others, we can still strive to comprehend them by understanding their actions. (p. 3)

Seidman (1991, p. 4) went on to say that, "Interviewing provides access to the context of people's behaviour and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that behaviour." At the same time as recognizing that there exist limitations to how in-depth an understanding I was able to obtain I set about the interviews with the intention of gaining at least some understanding of the meaning of each of the participant's actions.

Although the interviewer can strive to have the meaning being made in the interview as much a function of the participant's reconstruction and reflection as possible, the interviewer must nevertheless recognise that the meaning is, to some degree, a function of the participant's interaction with the interviewer. (p. 16)

By being aware of my influence on the participants, I ensured that the participants were completely comfortable to enable them to adequately divulge their experiences and meanings that were added. I also attempted to continuously remind myself of my history and passion for 'solving the problem'.

I set forth initially to use ten adolescent boys with the intention of having four or five adolescents fulfil all three interviews. The reason for starting with ten was to compensate for the possibility of withdrawal and enhance the possibility of a range of reasons from participants. Due to some difficulties experienced in obtaining interviewees I used only five adolescents, plus one for the pilot study, all of whom completed the three interviews. The 'difficulties' experienced are described in 3.2 Obtaining Interviewees. It is not my intention to make use of the data gathered to represent the entire population of adolescent boys who have dropped-out of basketball from Cockburn Stadium. I have decided to learn 'a lot about a little' rather than 'a little about a lot'.

### 3.1 Ethics

Edith Cowan University ethics procedures were followed throughout the study and approval was sought for and approved by the Committee for the Conduct of Ethical Research at Edith Cowan University (See Appendix 6).

Two strategies were considered as a means of securing access to 'drop-outs'. Former team managers were to be utilised to secure access to adolescent boys appropriate for this study. They were to be requested to contact parents of the boys to ask if I can call them with regards to the study. This method of obtaining interviewees was not utilised since the CBA did not maintain records of teams that have participated in past competitions. Therefore the second strategy of going to the schools was utilised to gain access to subjects. This involved the school Principals and Physical Education teachers in the Cockburn area. They were contacted and a request made to them to communicate

with the relevant adolescents (See '3.2 Obtaining Interviewees' below for further information).

Every adolescent boy invited to take part in the study was informed about the study and given letters of invitation to participate in the study, a statement outlining the intention and procedure of the study, and consent forms (See Appendix 5). The consent forms required parental approval shown by a signature on the form.

Throughout the study pseudonyms were used for the adolescent boys participating in the study and for anyone mentioned by the boys during the interviews. The adolescent boys were advised of the use of pseudonyms prior to the commencement of the first interview.

### 3.2 Obtaining Interviewees

Initially I intended to use the records of the CBA to get into contact with former managers of teams that have ceased to play basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium between 1996 and 1998 inclusive. Through the managers I would have obtained contact with former players appropriate for the study and attempt to obtain subjects to interview. This was not possible since the CBA does not maintain records of teams that have participated in past competitions.

To secure the adolescent boys for interviews I employed the following methods: I contacted high schools near the Cockburn Basketball Stadium. I contacted schools from various SES areas to enhance the likelihood of a range of reasons for drop-out from



basketball. I first spoke to the head of the Physical Education Department to request access to adolescent boys for the study. In all cases the Head of Department referred me to the Principal to attain permission. I then communicated with the school Principals to solicit access to the adolescent boys, then the Principals referred me back to the Physical Education Head of Department to speak to the students and organise appropriate times to do this. All school Principals granted me permission to gain access to the students. In one instance, the Head of Department wanted an outline of my intentions sent to him before he would consider whether to take further action. At another school after speaking to the Principal I was referred to the Year Coordinators to organise times to communicate with the adolescent boys. At every school the Physical Education Head of Department employed a different method for gaining access to the adolescent boys for me. One method was to place a notice in the news bulletin, another was to communicate to the boys during form time and another during physical education lessons.

At the first three high schools I attended, when communicating with the students I clarified why I was there, elucidating the purpose of the study. To all adolescent boys who showed an interest I handed out letters of invitation to participate in the study, a statement outlining the intention and a simple outline of the procedure of the study, and relevant consent forms. Of the first forty adolescent boys to whom I spoke, all appropriate subjects for the study, twenty gave verbal consent to participate in the study. To those twenty I gave a stamped, self-addressed envelope to return the consent form, none of which I received.

At this point I returned to one of the schools and asked the boys to return the forms to the Physical Education teacher. I then returned to the school to collect them. Through this method I obtained one interviewee out of ten boys whom had originally given a verbal consent. The reason for returning to only one of the previous schools was because I hadn't spoken to all the appropriate year levels there, where as at the other two high schools I had spoken to all appropriate year levels and had not received any consent forms from the adolescents I had given forms to.

The last method I used to obtain interviewees was to have the boys return the consent form on a specific day, that is a week after handing out the relevant paperwork. I personally collected the forms from the students whilst being accompanied by the Year Coordinator. I also used this method at a different high school to the ones I had been to previously and obtained my next four interviewees.

### 3.3 Interview Procedure

I intended to hold one on one interviews at Cockburn Basketball Stadium to refresh the interviewee's memory of the context and to provide a place to interview close to where they live. Interviewees were granted the option to be interviewed at school or at home. All but one of the adolescent boys had their interviews conducted in their home, the other had all three interviews at the school.

The interviewee was alerted that each interview would last no longer than ninety minutes. I gave an undertaking to stick to the allotted time to maintain the "participants'

confidence that the interviewer will do what he ... promised.” (Seidman, 1991, p. 14). I tape recorded and transcribed all the interviews.

As Seidman (1991, p. 13) indicates, “each interview serves a purpose both by itself and within the series.” I endeavoured to “maintain a sense of focus of each interview of the series” (Seidman, 1991, p. 13). In other words, I maintained focus on the life-history prior to thoughts of dropping out in the first interview, experiences whilst considering and whilst dropping out in the second interview and meaning-making of why they thought they dropped out in the third interview.

I attempted to practice the techniques described in Seidman (1991) with an emphasis on techniques for positive interaction - eye contact, paraphrasing, restating, probing for clarification and elaboration, open and friendly to every response, emphasise every response is helpful, there are no right or wrong answers. I say attempted because unless I video taped every interview and had my interviewing style analysed by professionals I do not believe it is possible to determine whether I had carried out these techniques or not. My goal was to “balance between providing enough openness for the participants to tell their stories and enough focus to allow the interview structure to work” (Seidman, 1991, p. 13).

I informed the participants that there would be three to seven days between interviews and I co-ordinated times with them and ensured that this occurred. This was to allow participants to “mull over the preceding interview but not enough time to lose the connection between the two” (Seidman, 1991, p. 14). The only subject for which this

did not occur was with subject C where there was a space of two weeks between interviews one and two due to a clash of commitments between the subject and myself.

### 3.4 Pilot interviews

I conducted one pilot interview with an adolescent boy who became part of the study. The pilot was utilised to further develop questions for the questionnaire and the three interviews and to ensure greater trustworthiness of the data. This was done by determining questions and starting points that appeared to permit more efficient interviews and information that was directly related to and was easily used for the study. I realised after the pilot study that the interviews required more direction and occasional intervention to ensure the subjects did not stray too far from the point of the interviews.

### 3.5 Analysing data

I employed a protocol for analysing the data to ensure consistency throughout the analysis process and enhance awareness of emerging themes. The following protocol was employed:

1. I listened to the entire first interview twice prior to carrying out the second interview and listened to the entire second interview twice prior to conducting the third interview.
2. I transcribed all eighteen interviews obtained from the six participants. The interviews can be viewed in the Interview Booklet.
3. I determined the context of the participant being analysed by immersing myself in the context to learn about the participant's reality. I did this by reading the context

repeatedly and doing a line-by-line analysis, that is the responses from the first interview, at least three times after all the interviews were completed.

4. I immersed myself in the experiences of the participants by performing a line-by-line analysis of the data three times, similar to Taggart and Sharp (1997), compiled from the second interview.
5. Along with knowledge of the data from the first and second interviews, I attained a comprehensive awareness and made meaning of the data of the third interview. Once again, performing a line-by-line analysis three times for the data from the third interview.
6. I generated categories from the data, as mentioned in Burns (1997) and Taggart and Sharp (1997), commencing with lower order categories then creating higher order categories.
7. The categories generated and 'stand-out' comments were presented to illustrate the causes and reasons for drop-out from basketball. I then summarised the subject's position by stating what they thought were the causes and reasons for their dropping out from basketball at Cockburn. Then stating what I believe to be the outside influences that had a major effect on each of the subjects and their decision to quit.
8. Pseudonyms were created for the pilot, subjects and for anyone mentioned in the interviews. The pseudonyms applied to each of the subjects and the pilot were chosen in alphabetical order based on the chronological order of when the interviews were conducted. The pseudonyms used for those stated in the interviews were also selected alphabetically based on the order of when they were cited in the raw data analysis then on the order they were mentioned in the actual interview itself.

## **4.0 Data Presentation and Analysis**

The data for each of the participants of the study is presented separately and in chronological order. For each subject an introduction is given followed by the presentation and analysis of each of the three interviews with a summary at the conclusion of each analysis stating my opinion as to the reasons for drop-out from basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium.

### 4.1 Andrew Lost The Passion And Found Another Sport

#### 4.1.1 Introduction

For the purpose of this study I will name Pilot A Andrew. Andrew was born in 1983 in Australia, so at the time of the interview he was sixteen. Andrew was about 180 cm tall with a lean athletic body. One of his parents was born in England and the other in Australia, one worked as a secretary, the other as a crane driver, and were still married. Andrew also has an older sister.

Whilst playing at Cockburn, Andrew lived in Spearwood and attended only one primary school and one high school. Andrew received a basketball scholarship to attend high school. A scholarship meant he did not need to live in the area to attend the high school and was provided with specialised basketball coaching during school. Andrew started playing at Cockburn at about the age of nine and continued playing until the age of fourteen, which would mean he played for six years from 1992 to 1997 at Cockburn. Each year that Andrew was at Cockburn he played in both domestic seasons at Cockburn, played twice a week (once a week domestically and once at the Western Australian Basketball League level for the Cockburn Cougars) and said he achieved the level of playing in the Australian Basketball League, he meant Western Australian

Basketball League (WABL). Whilst playing basketball at Cockburn Andrew also played football and surfed and continued to participate in those activities at the time of the interviews. All the interviews were spaced one week apart and conducted at his high school during times Andrew was scheduled to have a free period.

#### 4.1.2 Interview 1

The first interview focussed on Andrew's past experiences with sport, prior to the time when he first began to consider leaving Cockburn Basketball, and any experiences similar to what he experienced at Cockburn during the critical time when he was deciding to stop playing basketball. All quotes are obtained from interview one which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 4 - 56). The main themes that emerged from this interview were: I wanted to succeed and win; I played for fun; I sought recognition; How I saw my teammates; Parents made a difference; How I viewed my coaches; Views on elite sport; Rough and tough, the way I like it; and Quitting kanga cricket.

##### I wanted to succeed and win.

I've always wanted to be at the top, ... wanted to perform to the best and do your best. ... probably would have been from about year one when you had ... school carnival. ... you actually want to win and everyone's screaming for you to win the races, ... you even enjoy them. I think that's part of the reason. ... I can't really remember before it but I'm pretty sure those school carnivals were the ones that gave you that urge to win.

Andrew attributed the 'will to win' and the urge to succeed to his early primary school athletics' carnivals. Andrew added extra meaning to winning after he witnessed how people reacted to winning and towards winners. Andrew believed that winners were the ones who got the recognition and positive feedback. This becomes more significant when we see how Andrew was a person who sought recognition. Further quotes and stories highlight that for Andrew winning was important and often a primary motivator to continue playing and improve.

Andrew expressed the importance of success and did so in many different ways, like when he spoke about his first seasons at Cockburn. Andrew attributed success as having kept him interested with basketball when he began playing, "basically once success there that kept me into basketball. Coz for that season I got MVP of, for winter and summer seasons during that year. ... And that was the first year under tens." Andrew added, "Yeah, it's ... pretty much the will to win and success that takes you on and then you can go forward." Andrew thought that winning motivated him to improve and advance beyond the level he was playing:

When I first started, it was just for fun and then, still wanted to have fun all through it ... but still, the urge to win, once you ... win a couple of premierships ... you start wanting to go further and further. Start winning more.

After he discussed winning comfortably in the domestic competition at Cockburn Andrew commented, "to be the best ... urges you on." Andrew also enjoyed winning by a large margin, "Basically in a game I want our team to score ... hundred and absolutely flog the other team."



Andrew disliked losing so much as it drove him from side to side domestically:

Nobody really wants to be on a team that gets flogged every game. You don't really want to lose by a couple of points each time. ... you ... want that edge to on your team. ... It's pretty much the will to win that took me from side to side.

When asked why he had played for a number of different teams Andrew responded by saying, "it was pretty much success that ... will to win ... drove me from association to association." Andrew meant from team to team since he always played within the CBA up to the time of his drop-out from basketball.

Andrew talked about Donald, who was his sister's age, whom he idolised since Donald won all the sprint races and was very popular in his school. Donald attended Andrew's primary school and was the captain of his faction when Andrew was in year four. Donald would win the hundred metres "by about fifty metres. ... He's so quick. ... I ... idolled him even more ... when he was running and ... they would always try and beat him .... He was always popular." After this story Andrew resumed by saying that winning was a means to obtain friends and recognition, "once you start winning people start respecting you and want to be your friend .... Once you're good at something and you're going to become popular. You're going to become recognised, different people want to associate with you." The significance of this increases after examining how important recognition was to Andrew and how other people had a profound effect on whether Andrew liked or disliked a sport.

Even when Andrew spoke about his past teams he demonstrated how winning was important and how it was achieved. Andrew believed for a team to be successful you need to “discipline team players.” This supports the notion that Andrew valued winning.

Andrew experienced success in virtually all the sports he tried. He experienced a great deal of success early on in the Cockburn Basketball Stadium:

Coz for that season I got MVP of, for winter and summer seasons during that year. ... And that was the first year under tens. ... And from there kept winning again. ... kept winning those Allstar t-shirts. Got about a hundred of those.

Success also occurred on the State level:

I think it would have been in under twelves when we were in all those carnivals. And we used to absolutely floor everyone and win by about sixty points every carnival. In the grand final we'd have pretty much no competition.

Andrew also experienced early success in football:

I think it was in year four or year five. I got into the ... school football team. ... And ... it's only supposed to be ... year six and seven that got to play. Me and ... one of my mates were year five and we both got in. I remember that, we had a pretty good team as well. And I was playing ... in the ruck when I was a year five.

Andrew experienced early success in cricket as well, “I remember I used to play kanga cricket. I used to be pretty good at that as well.”

I played for fun.

Playing basketball for fun was a primary motivating factor for Andrew. He made reference to fun quite often. Fun is very important for Andrew in all sports and physical activities. Whilst discussing basketball Andrew said, “When I first started, it was just for fun and then, still wanted to have fun all through it ...” Also when Andrew spoke about water-skiing fun was again mentioned, “When you’re skiing you ... kick back. You want to ... be good but then when you stack it you ... have a laugh .... Having fun.”

Andrew had loads of fun during the early years of his basketball participation. All of Andrew’s early success, both individually and as a team, would undoubtedly have made basketball fun since winning was a primary motivating factor for him. With reference to a State Basketball Tournament for under twelves Andrew said, “It’s pretty much an adrenalin rush when you’re winning by that much in the grand final.” Andrew talked about an experience domestically at Cockburn:

... you’d ... score about forty, everyone would hear about it and come up to you ... going, ‘Heard about your good game,’ .... So everyone really wants to talk to you, urges you on. Really the whole stadium, get a different buzz going.

Coaches had an impact on Andrew’s fun throughout his basketball experiences. Andrew mentioned a WABL coach whom he thought made things fun:

I was pretty ... close to him, ... muckin’ around .... I would always be laughing with him, stuff like that. That’s ... what I enjoyed with him. ... Coz ... it was actually real fun whereas ... all other teams ... at that time

were really serious. ... I was in there for fun. ... winning a couple of games, losing some tough matches but ... it was fun.

In that team Andrew felt there was a lack of discipline with the team but “was really enjoying the basketball that year.” When he spoke about that team he pointed out a couple of players he enjoyed playing with, because of their personalities, and the team as a whole, “the sense of humour that was going through the whole team. Everyone was just enjoying it.”

Even when Andrew talked about the later stages of playing basketball he revealed the importance of fun:

I wasn't totally playing basketball all the time. It ... takes the fun out of it. ... if you go to something non-stop for a fair while ... you're going to start getting sick of it. But if you've got something else you can do, a different hobby or a different sport ... then ... it comes down to ... making it fun when you're playing your basketball.

When asked if winning was important in football Andrew again illustrated how much fun meant to him:

Oh, it was important but it was more have fun ... everyone is real serious when you get to the ... WABL stage. ... That's when all the parents and everyone gets serious and .... See, it started to lose it's fun .... whereas football .... this is fun, like, you get to intimidate.

When Andrew spoke about playing domestically at Cockburn with some friends he talked about the fun aspect. He mentioned the team was winning every game comfortably and how after each game he and his friends would discuss what happened during the game. These discussions were fun for Andrew and centred on who scored the most points, had the most rebounds or made the most spectacular play. Andrew really enjoyed playing with his friends at Cockburn, winning every game easily and the verbal banter that occurred after each game.

I sought recognition.

Andrew revelled when people recognized him as a good player and was affected by what other people thought and did. After telling a story about playing in a grand final against a team that went undefeated during the season, plus being a primary reason for fouling out the opposition's best player on the way to winning that grand final, Andrew said:

I'm pretty sure from then on, after that big, like, big success that everyone started taking notice of what, me as a player ... And, like, everyone respects you as a good player then you, sort of, go further and you've got the will to go further.

Andrew went on to say later in the interview, "And when people come up and, 'Oh boy, the shots you made,' sort of thing, it, sort of, stirs you up even more and you want to get going." Andrew added, "And everyone would, you'd have about, score about forty, everyone would hear about it and come up to you, like, going, 'Heard about your good game,' sort of thing." Andrew believed that, "everyone really wants to talk to you, urges

you on. Really the whole stadium, get a different buzz going.” Recognition was important to Andrew.

Andrew’s descriptions regarding the importance of image to teenagers and how it is linked to winning further emphasize the importance of recognition for him, “Pretty much when you come into a teenager and you ... you go from a child to a teenager and your image is so much important.” Andrew linked image with winning, “once you start winning people start respecting you and want to be your friend .... Once you’re good at something and you’re going to become popular. You’re going to become recognised, different people want to associate with you.”

#### How I saw my teammates.

Andrew was affected by his teammates because of the way they played and how he perceived them as people. It angered him that a Cougar’s teammate (at the WABL level) was paid for every point he scored:

I remember he used to get paid for every point that he scored. And so every time he got the ball he’d ... race in and try and score. I used to hate him for it. ... why would you pay ... kids to hog the ball?

On another occasion Andrew had some WABL teammates whose company he enjoyed:

With Henry and Isaah, ... I got to know them pretty well ... and ... they ... had the same sense of humour that Gerry [the coach] did, so on the court you get along with him. You, sort of, stuff up, you, don’t really get off on

you ... start laughing and ... mucking around and abusing him ... it ... put the fun in it.

The type of teammates Andrew had, whether he enjoyed their company or disliked them, made an impact on his enjoyment of the game.

Andrew spoke fondly of a team which comprised some friends from his high school he asked to play in the domestic competition at Cockburn. That particular team won every game comfortably and after games he and his teammates would discuss who had scored the most points or produced the most spectacular plays. Andrew revelled in success with his mates.

#### Parents made a difference.

Andrew was significantly influenced by parents, both his own and those of his teammates. He was influenced on how he viewed a game or a sport and whether he enjoyed a sport or not. After asking Andrew why he took WABL so seriously, he responded with, "It wasn't really my parents. My parents ... like it when I win but ... when I didn't they didn't really ... care as long as I had ... a good time ... playing." His parents focussed on having fun not winning.

Andrew was raised in an environment where he decided what he wanted to do and his parents would support him no matter the circumstances:

They told me to do whatever I wanted to do. ... they pretty much just say whatever I wanted to do, I could do. ... you see most parents ... tell their kids what subjects to choose at school. ... But my parents just say, 'Do

whatever you want.' ... one of my mates got made to do Accounting. ... And didn't really want to do it. ... I went home and I told my mum about it and I said, 'If you say, told me that I had to do Accounting or something like that,' I said, 'I'd tell you where to go.' She was, 'Yeah. I know you would.'

Andrew viewed it as wrong when the parents of his teammates acted differently toward their children and the team in comparison to how his parents acted towards him, specifically when the other parents would berate their children after a loss.

Other parents did have an effect on Andrew. When Andrew first started playing basketball the way the parents reacted to his team winning the grand final made an impact:

... under tens you're not really .... When you're winning umm championships ... it's not really that big a deal, oh but ... all your parents are getting emotional. ... You're not really worried, ... you're happy and everything but .... It's not a big deal because it's only a smaller league.

Later Andrew added:

When I first started, it was just for fun and then, still wanted to have fun all through it ... but still, the urge to win, once you win, win a couple of premierships ... you start wanting to go further and further. Start winning more.

Though he never directly attributed the parents as having influenced him towards aspiring to win, the way the parents reacted to his team winning championships in under tens would have fuelled or created a desire to win.



The parents of Andrew's WABL teammates had a profound effect on Andrew and his enjoyment of basketball. After Andrew said how his parents weren't the reason he took WABL seriously he added, "It was ... other parents that ... wanted their son to win. ... Frank's parents ... only wanted him to win. ... If they didn't win ... she'd start going off at him and stuff like that." He added how the coaches took it seriously and the competition wanted to find out who was the best which led to him saying, "can't really have fun when you lose ... . That's ... the image everyone gets." The parents did have some influence over him taking the WABL competition seriously even though it wasn't the only factor. This is supported by Andrew's statements, "everyone is real serious when you get to the ... WABL stage. ... That's when all the parents and everyone gets serious and .... it started to lose it's fun."

#### How I viewed my coaches.

Coaches had an impact on Andrew's enjoyment of the game both directly and indirectly. Andrew pointed out one of his earlier domestic coaches at Cockburn:

Brad was a pretty good coach, ... he allowed the game to flow .... heaps of coaches ... stop the game with quick subs ... just when you ... getting ... into the groove. ... So every time they subbed ... the scoring flow would stop coz you're not ... together anymore. ... Brad didn't really do that and that's pretty good.

Coaches had an impact on Andrew and he liked it when coaches permitted him to play a large part of the game and minimised the substitutions.

Andrew was aware of the different coaching styles he had experienced and the benefits of having experienced that:

There's a lot of difference in each coach with different coaching styles. ... it helps you to ... see what you want .... When Evan was coaching us ... he would ... actually discipline. The whole team is disciplined. I remember one example was when Norman ... kicked the ball or something. Evan ... made him sit on that wall ... for about an hour. And his legs were absolutely dying. I remember that. After that no one ... really want to mess up and the whole team was disciplined. And that's pretty much what makes a good team is when you discipline team players. ... And every coach, sort of, different disciplinary actions .... And you can see which ones are the most accepting and bigger umm winners.

Andrew appreciated coaches that were successful and wanted to win. One of the methods Andrew liked to see used by a coach was to discipline the team since that led to success.

After being asked about Gerry, another WABL coach Andrew had, he expressed how enjoyable it was to play for Gerry:

He's a pretty good coach as well. ... I was pretty ... close to him, ... muckin' around .... I would always be laughing with him, stuff like that. That's ... what I enjoyed with him. ... Coz ... it was actually real fun .... winning a couple of games, losing some tough matches but ... it was fun.

A coaching attribute Andrew liked was when they make it fun to play basketball rather than focussing on winning. Andrew appreciates it when a coach is light-hearted and jokes around to create a casual, fun-loving atmosphere.

#### Views on elite sport.

Andrew was affected by society and was aware of that effect, “I picked up along the way that people don’t like losing.” I responded by saying, “... it’s not just the parents that you get that from, it’s ... a lot of sources.” He then continued:

Yeah. Even the government looking for the best to ... send to the Olympics and stuff like that. It’s pretty much ... the AIS ... want to develop people, but they’re already picking the best coz it’s got the best talent .... The winners get what they want and losers ... drop off and no one even cares about ‘em .... That’s pretty much what I’ve picked up along the way that it’s good to win, bad to lose, so you shouldn’t be losing.

Andrew gained the value of success and desire for winning partly from society and the media as well as the school athletic carnivals and parents at the Cockburn Basketball Stadium.

#### Rough and tough, the way I like it.

Andrew has expressed his liking for a physically rough and tough game and any game that has restrictions preventing roughness from occurring, in any form, he disliked. When he talked about Minkey he said, “I remember it was pretty ... pussy, I think, because you couldn’t raise your stick in the air. ... you had to just ... push it. ... It was all too restricted. ... I like a more physical game.”

Andrew's liking for the rough and tough side of sport is highlighted when Andrew talked about a game called "Rampage" he used to play in Primary School. He spoke about it in great detail and enthusiasm, like it was a fond memory. Apparently this game had no rules, "anything goes," including tackling, which Andrew appreciated since when football was played there was no tackling at the time, which "Really sucked!" There were two teams for this game and two sets of goals. He said, "You have a goalie if you want. That's mostly ... one of the sooks that didn't want to get hurt." He also used to play Gridiron in primary school with tackling and spoke about it with fondness.

When asked at what point he thought he began to enjoy the physical (rough and tough) side of the game Andrew referred to playing at the WABL level and watching the Wildcats, Gridiron and Ice Hockey:

Probably only about a year after I started umm SBL [meaning WABL] .... all of a sudden it started getting more serious and the umpires ... let more go, let more of the bumping ... go .... you always see umm Wildcats knocking the people out. ... You see, see older people and you, you think, 'Oh, they ... are doing it.' And you want to get out there and do it yourself and try and be like them .... the real reason ... is you want to ... be macho and knock people down .... You knock 'em down and show 'em how strong you are.

Later he added:

I think it's football but it was also Gridiron. ... Gridiron and Ice Hockey. ... And you see how they're making real hard hits ... and people getting back up and starting to have huge ... brawls .... Yeah and they go crazy there. ...

you spin out when someone makes a big hit, the whole ... crowd goes crazy ... Makes you think that that's what people want. ... Probably ... the guys who were doing it, like, knocking guys down actually looked like they were enjoying it.

The detail that Andrew used to describe these situations strongly suggest that they had quite an impact and illustrate how he developed a liking for the rough and tough side of sport.

#### Quitting kanga cricket.

Prior to playing basketball Andrew had played cricket for a number of years but quit around the time when he was beginning to play basketball. There were a number of factors that affected his decision to quit Kanga Cricket, including having played Kanga Cricket for such a long time, finding it more difficult over time and experiencing success in other sports:

the only reason for doing that was when I got into the WABL team .... Conflict of time and I wasn't really interested .... I'd been playing it for ... probably about six years or something. ... started getting sick of it .... Just wasn't enjoying it anymore. ... it started getting pretty hard .... pretty much got bored of it .... I started ... getting ... more and more into the basketball and into ahh footy. ... once the interest is gone you, sort of, drop off. And that's pretty much what happened with the cricket.

### 4.1.3 Interview 2

The second interview focussed on Andrew's experiences during the critical time when he was considering leaving Cockburn Basketball. All quotes are obtained from interview two which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 57 - 93). The main themes that emerged from the second interview were: I lost interest and found something else; The WABL parents sucked; The coach wasn't such a big deal; I didn't like my WABL teammates; The WABL team wasn't winning as much; and The media made no difference.

#### I lost interest and found something else.

Andrew attributed losing interest in basketball and playing too much basketball as the key reasons for discontinuing his participation at Cockburn Basketball Stadium, "I was playing ... state, ... playing domestic and then school as well. It was ... all ... a bit too much. ... I was just losing interest in it. Getting bored with it coz I was playing it so much." This was not the first time Andrew had lost interest in a sport as Andrew had ascribed losing interest as the major reason for quitting Kanga Cricket.

Just prior to Andrew's last season in the CBA he had taken a year off to play football with some basketball friends. He enjoyed his time playing football but decided to give basketball another go. Upon returning to basketball Andrew wanted to muck around in the WBAL team, he did not want to take it seriously. He then gave up basketball entirely to play football. Through telling this little story Andrew compares basketball with football:

on the weekend, I ... couldn't see, ... my eyes were ... a bit blurry, ... but I still jumped up on this guy's back so I could take the screamer. ... it changed the whole game ... even though I didn't take the mark, everyone was real stoked about it and ... geared them up more. ... But ... in basketball, hands in everywhere, dribble down, pass it around, shoot. ... no one ... could dunk it then so there was no excitement .... Such a little space and ... there's only so much you can do that is different. ... doing the same thing over and over again.

This again seems somewhat similar to what occurred with kanga cricket where he had played the sport for a long time then became bored and had something more interesting to play.

Andrew noticed he enjoyed football more so than basketball during the critical time when he was losing interest with basketball. This seems to have contributed to his decision to quit playing basketball at Cockburn. Previously when Andrew quit cricket to play basketball his immediate experiences were positive ones. It is quite possible that Andrew may have added the meaning, to his decision to quit cricket, as one that worked. This is because he stopped playing a sport, cricket, he wasn't enjoying nor experiencing the same level of success as when he started then began a sport, basketball, he found less restrictive, more fun and importantly experienced a great deal of success. Since this decision to quit one sport for another worked before why wouldn't it work for him again going from basketball to football?

The WABL parents sucked.

Andrew was strongly influenced by parents both in playing basketball and football. Andrew took a year off basketball, played football then returned to basketball for one season. He had this to say about the parents of his WABL teammates:

It was really mostly that everyone was taking it too seriously and I wanted to just have a good time .... it's ... parents ... putting pressure on, sort of thing. ... Some of the parents wanted their kids to win more than the kids wanted to win. ... after the game ... if the players had done something that the parents didn't approve of then ... they'd start ... abusing their kids. ... go off on 'em ... verbally .... I just thought, 'No. The kids are just there to have fun.' Parents are yelling at 'em if they're doing something wrong or ... not winning ... it's not right.

Andrew's enjoyment of basketball was substantially reduced by the actions of these parents and how they treated their children.

The parents of Andrew's teammates in football were positive, a direct contrast to the negative experiences Andrew had with the WABL parents. When I asked if the parents were the same in football Andrew said:

So far I haven't seen any of that in football yet. ... In football, ... no matter what you've done they'd always ... find your good points and complement ... you on it. ... in basketball they used to find ... the bad points ... and put you ... down more. They'd be trying to say, 'You should've done this,' but unless you've done something wrong, you learn what you should've done straight away but you don't need to learn further on down the track. ...



reliving how ... bad the moment was .... Putting you down a bit more. ... In football ... they go, 'You played a good game.' And then they're, 'Oh, you shouldn't have done that, you stuffed up,' .... they only remembering the good parts of the game.

Clearly parents affected Andrew's enjoyment of the game both in a positive and negative way. He appreciated the way the parents at football were supportive and this had a positive influence on him.

The coach wasn't such a big deal.

Judging from both the first and second interviews, Andrew was clearly affected by his coaches both directly and indirectly. Andrew spoke about the repetitiveness in his basketball team during the time when he was considering giving up basketball, "we'd do the same thing pretty much every training session, ... the same warm-up. We never did ... a variety of different things." This was a negative experience for him. Later he said:

I always thought that ... SBL [WABL] training would be ... real tough and then doing lots of running .... But ... I never thought we did that much running. We did a couple of suicides every now and again but ... suicides aren't really that much.

Andrew then compared the basketball practice sessions to the football training sessions where he felt that the pressure was put onto the team to perform. If the team didn't perform during football training they were punished by doing laps of the oval. Andrew then went back to basketball saying, "in basketball there never is that sort of thing. You'd ... have a couple of games of bump ... trying to put the fun back in it but ... the

discipline wasn't there." This was an indirect way the coach had an effect on Andrew as he felt there wasn't enough discipline in his WABL team and the practice sessions were repetitive.

I didn't like my WABL teammates.

When I asked Andrew about his teammates, during the time when he was considering giving up basketball at Cockburn, I sensed that he found his WABL teammates frustrating, annoying and had a disliking for many of them:

I don't really like most of them. I only like ... half the team. ... I didn't like Aaron. ... he started getting on my nerves. And I didn't like Melvin. ... And a couple of other people. ... It was the way they were acting .... usually the personality of someone coming out on the basketball court and the way they played .... I used to be friends with ... both of them and then gradually ... started getting on my nerves. ... I mean ... you're wide open, it's an easy pass to get there and they'd try and do something fancy .... And so they're trying to showboat and ... that's what I found annoying. Just walk around, thinking they're hot shit.

This was in reference to his WABL teammates. These statements are quite explicit in the way they express Andrew's displeasure in his teammates. Andrew was effected by his teammates, which is clearly shown by this statement, "takes the fun out of it a bit ... you know you could score if they just get you the ball but ... they never do." As fun was important for Andrew this statement becomes quite significant by showing how his teammates had a profound influence on Andrew's decision to quit basketball. He later continued to talk, in disgust, about how his teammates were showboating at the wrong

time in the game, when it wasn't certain that his team would win, and how that frustrated him. Andrew deemed his teammates poor defenders, thought they gave up easy baskets to their opponents and rested in defence, whereas Andrew would rest in offence when he needed to. His WABL teammates used to give up in tight situations, when scores were close and little time left and put their desire to look good, by scoring all the points, ahead of the team. In contrast Andrew's football teammates played with high intensity and effort right to the end of a game, even if they were losing. This all points to an unhappy time experienced by Andrew with his WABL team at the time during the time he was considering stopping his participation in all forms at Cockburn Basketball Stadium.

The WABL team wasn't winning as much.

Andrew spoke about success and winning again in the second interview and their importance to him. When I asked Andrew about his teammates he said:

I mean ... you're wide open, it's an easy pass to get there and they'd try and do something fancy ... And so they're trying to showboat and try and ... that's what I found annoying. ... takes the fun out of it a bit if you ... know you could score if they just get you the ball but they never ... do.

If winning wasn't important to Andrew he wouldn't have been annoyed by the actions of Aaron and Melvin. This is highlighted further by another statement Andrew made:

After ... we started playing in the league, started getting a bit tighter. Once it gets tighter you get more angry when someone stuffs up. ... If ... you're winning by ... thirty ... if someone makes a bad pass you, it doesn't really bother you. But when it comes down to a real close game ... or you're a

couple of points behind, ... you need those passes to go and you ... know that the team needs those points to keep you in the game. ... And then someone tries something fancy and ... it pretty much gets on your nerves. Thinking ... for themselves above the team. ... And they showboat before the team wins.

Andrew then expanded on this by expressing what he believed were appropriate actions to be successful. Andrew also continued to convey how he become frustrated by some of the actions of his teammates. This further highlights that winning and success were very important to Andrew.

Andrew spoke about a game when his WABL team was playing Willetton, the top team of the competition. During this particular game his team was losing by only a couple of points, quite significant against the might of this Willetton team. He thought his teammates began to take the game lightly after half time whereas the Willetton team appeared to re-focus and step up their play. Then Andrew added:

That's where you ... have ... got to get your mind focused and be serious about trying to win. Coz ... you always have ... fun when you win. ... Even if you win by a point. ... you get real amped after the game coz you won by a point.

Once again the importance of winning and how this led to experiencing fun was a theme that continued to arise in these interviews. Even when Andrew spoke about the lack of discipline in his WABL team and the way practice sessions were run one gets the impression these comments come from someone who is highly motivated to win.

### The media made no difference.

When asked if the media, more specifically how the television coverage of basketball had decreased during the time he was considering quitting basketball, had an effect on his decision Andrew replied that he didn't think so. He stated he had already made up his mind when the basketball television coverage was on the wane.

#### 4.1.4 Interview 3

The third interview focussed on why Andrew made the decision to discontinue his participation in basketball at Cockburn. All quotes are obtained from interview three which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 94 - 123). The following themes arose: I lost the passion; The wins drying up didn't help; My teammates didn't want to win; I really didn't like the parents; The coach had nothing to do with it; and Choosing another sport that's rough and tough.

### I lost the passion.

Andrew believed that the passion for the game was lost first then all the other influences came into effect. He finished by accepting that there existed some outside influences on his decision, especially his teammates:

you see the passion to ... play the game ... went down and once that was down all the outside influences ... came at once. ... I just felt like I needed a break ... and get out ... while I was still young I could get out, try something different and if I could I'd come back in and I ... wouldn't have missed much. I guess that's why when I had a year off and played football ... and get a feel and now I come back umm thought, 'Nah, I didn't really

want to be there.’ But I played ... all through the season. ... passion wasn’t there. I didn’t feel that I wanted to play. ... It was coz ... my heart wasn’t into it. I thought, ‘Oh. I don’t really want to be there’ then I shouldn’t be here. ... It wasn’t really, there was a couple of outside influences, like ... teammates, when they stuff up ... it would take the fun out of it. ... you get frustrated and once you start getting frustrated you’re not ... enjoying the game.

Later Andrew brought up that when his Cougar team first started playing in the WABL competition they used to win most of their games and over the years they were won less and less, “And then gradually you start losing more and more games ... start not really feeling passionate about a game.” As Andrew highly valued winning his team experiencing less success over the years had an impact on Andrew, his passion for the game and ultimately his decision to quit basketball.

Andrew re-emphasized later that it was a feeling within himself that led to his decision to quit basketball, “Mostly my own gut feeling that I didn’t really enjoy it any more.” He followed this by saying, “I thought eventually I had nothing left in basketball to give.” And “I don’t really think there could have been anything really because ... it was actually what ... what I was feeling. ... I didn’t really want to play basketball anymore. That’s what ... started off.” Andrew was adamant that what occurred first was his loss of passion for basketball and this was the main reason for his decision.

The wins drying up didn't help.

“You get down to it everyone wants to win.” The theme that Andrew valued winning and success continued to be strong throughout the third interview. At the beginning of the interview when he spoke about his teammates the importance of winning was re-emphasized, “They don't really want to win they want to look good. ... You just ... get frustrated with that coz they want to look good before the team wins.” It frustrated Andrew that his teammates did not share the same desire to win.

When Andrew was asked if there were influences that may have led to his passion for basketball to fade he once again revealed the importance of winning:

when we were young and started winning ... and gradually as we got higher and higher we started losing more games .... you can enjoy something when you're not winning but when you started out winning that ... gets you ... into the games. ... then gradually you start losing more and more games ... start not really feeling passionate about a game .... I think that was part of it as well. That we weren't winning. Because of too much ... victory when I first started. ... the winning just started gradually drying up. ... I started losing interest .... then as the competition gets tougher and tougher.

This was similar to what Andrew faced with cricket. When he started out in cricket he experienced a lot of success and over the years the competition got “tougher.” Later Andrew added, “It's probably through the losses I couldn't see myself going any further. I thought, ‘This is a dead end.’ ... And ... I ... started enjoying football.” This too appears remarkably similar to what occurred with kanga cricket since when he quit

cricket he had basketball and football to play for sport and when he stopped playing basketball he had football to go to.

When asked if he had played on the Willetton team instead of playing for Cockburn, as they experienced so much success, if that would have made a difference to his decision to discontinue basketball, Andrew was hesitant and uncertain. He came to the conclusion that it wouldn't have made a difference to his decision if he had played for Willetton.

My teammates didn't want to win.

Andrew thought his WABL teammates didn't play with desperation, conceded defeat when the going got tough and weren't doing their best to win. He added that the discipline required to be successful did not exist in his team. Andrew felt his teammates tried to win the game by themselves rather than as a team, which was something he couldn't comprehend. Andrew believed his WABL teammates valued looking good ahead as more important than the team winning:

They don't really want to win they want to look good. ... You just ... frustrated with that coz they want to look good before the team wins. ... They're there for an individual effort, not a team effort. That's why I don't think we were that successful in the latter stages. ... when I was playing in the last couple of years. ... Coz everyone was starting to want to look good before the team. I just can't see people wanting to do that. You got to look good ... as a team.



I really didn't like the parents.

The theme that the parents affected Andrew and his enjoyment for a sport continued through this interview. The WABL parents had a considerable negative impact on Andrew. When asked to describe the parents of his Cougar team Andrew replied with:

Discouraging. The kids are there having a good time and the parents are blowing out of the sky .... They're comin' ... off the court and having a good time together, even though they lost, and the parents put 'em down in the dumps, deflate the egos. Not that they had big egos but ... some of them ... come off and they're really happy about what they've done and ... some of them started criticizing about what they've done. ... I don't reckon that's right. ... when you come off the court and people start abusing you, not really abusing you but criticizing you ... the high that ... you're on from having fun on the court drops straight back down again. ... You're only want to not play if you didn't get any enjoyment out of it. ... But you did get enjoyment out of it, everyone's taking it away from you straight after the game.

The difference between how Andrew perceived the parents of his Cougar teammates and how Andrew would like them to act is highlighted when he was asked what would he change about Cockburn; he said the WABL parents "would be easy going."

The coach had nothing to do with it.

Andrew spoke about the coach indirectly but also said that he was of the opinion the coach had nothing to do with his decision to quit basketball. These statements demonstrate how the coach affected Andrew indirectly:

If you do something over and over again, you don't really want to learn.

Although it's ... sinking into your head. If you're doing something over and over again, it just becomes really boring ... you don't put your effort into it.

Here Andrew was referring to the repetitiveness of practice sessions, which was somewhat similar to some statements he produced in the second interview. At a later stage Andrew said, "you could feel that there is no discipline in the team" and since discipline is the coach's responsibility this is another way the coach indirectly affected Andrew's enjoyment. Nevertheless, Andrew believed the coach had nothing to do with his decision to stop playing basketball, "The coaches didn't really have an impact on it."

#### Choosing another sport that's rough and tough.

Andrew continued to refer to the rough and tough stuff in sport in the third interview, "I wanted to do was play football, so I think that also contributed to me not liking basketball anymore. ... Is getting out there and tackling people and stuff." This situation appears similar to what happened to Andrew with Minkey. In Minkey he felt the game was too restrictive and not tough enough compared to basketball or football. In this case football had tackling where as basketball didn't.

#### 4.1.5 Summary

Andrew played a heavy concentration of basketball for six years. He reached a high level in basketball, in fact in all sports, but dropped out of basketball at the age of fourteen. Andrew received a basketball scholarship to attend high school. A scholarship meant the student did not need to live in the area to attend the high school and was given specialised basketball coaching during school. Andrew wanted to have fun,

craved success and loved to win but over the years his WABL team experienced less success. This along with teammates, parents and coaches all had an impact on Andrew's enjoyment of the game. He enjoyed rough and tough sports and physical activities, recognition was important but by the age of fourteen he had lost the passion for basketball.

Success and winning is something that Andrew valued and he revealed that over time his WABL team experienced less and less success. This reduction in winning clearly influenced his decision. In contrast to this he had mentioned before that winning wasn't enough to keep him interested in Minkey.

Andrew was raised by his parents to focus on having fun and also to make his own decisions, which Andrew took on as part of his beliefs. When you combine this upbringing with the scathing descriptions of the WABL parents then it is easy to come to the conclusion that these parents had a negative impact on Andrew's enjoyment of basketball.

Fun is something Andrew spoke about frequently in the first and second interviews and was obviously very important to him. Any time he referred to someone or some action creating a negative impact on his fun one could easily conclude that someone or action was significant and should be considered in contributing to Andrew's decision.

Andrew's teammates had a considerable impact on his enjoyment of sport, both for football and basketball. The descriptions Andrew utilised to describe his WABL

teammates, in his last season, were not positive and clearly point to these teammates producing a negative impact on his fun whilst playing basketball.

Andrew was influenced by his various coaches over the years in all the sports he played. There were some coaches who had a very positive impact on him and appeared to have added to Andrew's enjoyment of basketball. Near the end of his participation at Cockburn Andrew spoke about some negative aspects of the team, which were the coach's responsibility. Even though coaches were not directly mentioned as a source for his decision to quit basketball, the coaches did have some influence on his decision. It is important to note that Andrew clearly stated his belief that his last WABL coach had nothing to do with his decision to stop playing basketball. Andrew gave mixed messages with regard to his coaches.

Andrew really enjoyed the rough and tough side of sports. Football is a more aggressive sport than basketball so perhaps football was always going to win out as a preferred sport, in Andrew's eyes. Obviously this had some influence over Andrew's decision.

Andrew was a very physically active person trying many different sports – water-skiing, cricket, football, basketball, minkey and games at school like rampage and grid iron. Through these numerous experiences Andrew was able to clarify to himself the type of sport he preferred. Thus he made an educated decision as to which sport was the most appropriate for him to obtain happiness. Others who haven't experienced a variety of sporting experiences may decide to continue with a sport even when they have negative

experiences. Andrew's decision to quit basketball was related to his preference for another sport.

It is important to note that some of the predominant features and reasons Andrew had given for giving up basketball are remarkably similar to those he gave for quitting cricket. That is, he had played cricket for a long time, had experienced early success, over the years the success waned, and he had found another sport which was more fun and he experienced more success.

Andrew maintained that it was from within himself that he made the decision to quit basketball. He believed he lost the passion and found something more enjoyable to play. He maintained that it wasn't the outside influences that were the primary cause for his decision.

## 4.2 Ben, His Dad And His Friends

### 4.2.1 Introduction

For the purpose of the study Subject B is named Ben. Ben was born in 1983 in the United States of America, which means Ben was sixteen at the time of the interviews. He is about 178 cm with a strong athletic body. His father was born in Australia and was a managing director whilst his mother was born in the United States of America and was a financial controller. His parents were still married and Ben had two brothers and one sister.

Whilst playing basketball at Cockburn Ben lived in Bibra Lake and attended only one primary school. Ben played basketball at Cockburn from the age of ten through to the

age of thirteen. Ben played in five or six seasons over three years, played once a week and played at the domestic level within the CBA. Whilst playing basketball at Cockburn Ben also played hockey, baseball and played basketball for one season at Bluegum Recreation Centre. At the time of the interviews Ben played hockey, cricket, waterpolo, ice hockey and rugby, he only played rugby at school. All the interviews were conducted in Ben's home. The second interview was conducted five days after the first and the third two days after the second.

#### 4.2.2 Interview 1

The first interview focussed on Ben's past experiences with sport prior to the time when he first began to consider leaving Cockburn Basketball, and any experiences similar to what he experienced at Cockburn during the critical time when he was deciding on whether to continue playing basketball. All quotes are obtained from interview one which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 124 - 145). The main themes that have emerged from this interview were: My parents had an impact on what sports I played; I liked playing with my friends and some became my basketball teammates; and I liked trying new physical activities.

#### My parents had an impact on what sports I played.

Ben was first introduced to hockey at the age of seven when he watched his brother play in a carnival in an under elevens team. Whilst there his brother's team was short a player and someone asked him to play. His introduction to hockey was whilst being with his family.

Ben was heavily influenced by his parents when it came to the sports he played. This is highlighted by his early experiences with hockey, which he'd been playing since around the age of seven. When Ben first began playing hockey he recalled, "I'd be calling and I'd be open but they wouldn't pass to me because they knew I'd stuff up or I'm not very strong, so." Ben's dad was the coach at the time and would tell the team to pass to him when he was open but that the team would just laugh at him which really "annoyed" Ben. He never wanted to go to training but since his dad was the coach Ben said he never had an excuse not to go. Ben wanted to quit hockey but since his dad "always loved playing hockey" he felt obligated to continue playing. Clearly Ben's dad was influential in Ben's continued participation in hockey.

Ben's mum influenced his participation in swimming, "I think the reason I'm such a good is coz my mum's always had this fear of swimming coz we had a pool but, you know, kids muck around." Ben went swimming training once a week at Kevin Duff's during each summer. Again strong parental influence.

I liked playing with my friends and some became my basketball teammates.

Ben was powerfully influenced by his friends when he made decisions on what sporting activities he played and continued to play. An indirect way his friends influenced him was when they played kick-to-kick football. At first he just watched his friends play. After a short amount of time he joined in, which was probably due to his friends playing and his preference to be active rather than to sit around, "Even though I'm not that good at it, I'd rather, you know, doing something, running around than sitting down."

Ben first played basketball, the pick up form, at school with his friends at the age of ten. “We’d play until the siren went and even til then, when the siren went we’d, like, say next shot wins and then, like, everything missed so we’d be out there for, like, an extra ten, fifteen minutes.” Ben said this went on from year five through to year seven. It didn’t matter if it was hot or raining Ben and his friends would still play basketball. They would go to school early to play basketball and play after school past four o’clock in the afternoon.

Friends then influenced his choice to play basketball at Cockburn. Ben played with a team made up of boys from his primary school. Ben recounted the story that the team was short a player and his friends encouraged him to play. He indicated that he’d never played basketball “properly” but nevertheless gave club basketball a go. Ben felt “really good” having been asked to play, felt a part of the team and was given compliments on how he played. In contrast with hockey he didn’t feel a part of the team and said no one “really” talked to him at hockey.

The main reason Ben joined the basketball team was because his best friend was playing. When he described his friends as teammates he revealed that no one yelled at the others. Ben added when his team was losing there would be some negative comments from his teammates but when the team was winning everyone was laughing and cheering.

Ben also pursued rollerblading. Ben said that it started when one person acquired rollerblades then a couple of others had them then “everyone” had a pair of rollerblades.



He said, “all my friends used to go to the car parks outside the school and there we used to all rollerblade around there and we made ... little jumps .... Sometimes after school ... we had ... roller hockey games.” Ben indicated that he was quite skilful at roller hockey and for the games everyone wanted to be on his team. Friends greatly influenced what physical activities Ben did.

#### I Liked Trying New Physical Activities.

Throughout the first interview Ben gave many examples of how he would try new sports and physical activities. This began when, at the age of seven, he went to watch his brother play in an under elevens team in a carnival. The team was short of players and someone asked him to play, which he did. In this story there was no mention of his dad encouraging him to play, just the fact that he gave hockey a go. From that time on Ben played hockey. He revealed that when he began hockey he wasn't too capable but after a couple of years he became the best player on the team.

Ben's friends used to played kick-to-kick football at school. Ben described this as, “You'd have one pack of people on one side ... and then ... ten, fifteen metres you'd have another pack of people.” Ben desired to learn how to play and so he got in there and had a go. Even Ben's personal perception that he wasn't that good didn't deter him from attempting football.

There were many other physical activities Ben tried. He played cricket occasionally during school and was more than capable at it. Ben went to swimming training during each summer at a local swimming school, went swimming at the beach often and went

to friend's places to swim. He said there was a yo-yo craze at school during year seven and tried that as well. Ben began rollerblading and roller hockey when other people were experimenting with them at his school. This led him to take out a video game about ice hockey from the local video shop. Ben became excited about ice hockey from playing this video game and so he saved up enough money to obtain ice skates and began playing ice hockey.

Ben's stories about basketball demonstrate how he tried basketball at school then gave club basketball a go after being encouraged by his friends, again even though his personal perception of his skill level was low.

Throughout his time in Primary School Ben sampled a variety of sports and physical activities. Just the act of giving a sport a go appealed to him. He much preferred to be active and give a sport a go than to sit around.

#### 4.2.3 Interview 2

The second interview focussed on Ben's experiences during the critical time when he was considering leaving Cockburn Basketball. All quotes are obtained from interview two which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 146 - 162). The main themes that emerged from the second interview were: My friends went to different high schools; My parents didn't know much about basketball, They loved hockey; I lost interest and wanted to try something new; Success wasn't a factor; and My basketball coach was cool and some referees sucked whilst some were helpful.

My friends went to different high schools.

Ben's friends had a major impact on his decision to stop playing basketball at Cockburn. Upon completing year seven he and his friends were "all going to different schools." Therefore he "wasn't with the same group of guys anymore" plus he didn't know anyone else that played basketball at Cockburn. He was placed in a dilemma whether or not to look for another basketball team at Cockburn. Later Ben added, "It wasn't, like, why, like, I wanted to quit but there was just no team to play for so it didn't bother me. ... Well it did bother me but I just, I didn't go around looking for another team." If his friends had decided to stay in the same team Ben may have continued playing at Cockburn.

Ben felt frustrated with his teammates at times as he believed he wasn't one of the better players and often didn't receive passes in the games. He emphasised that he and his teammates were all good friends:

Oh sometimes, coz I wasn't the strongest player on the team there'd be the be the two or three guys that were strong and they'd bring the ball down and I'd be open and, but they'd give the hard pass. Like, I'd be open, say on the three point line, but someone else who had more skill was, had two men on him but they'd still give him the ball. ... And yeah, it wasn't really ... fair. Like, it was acting more of the age where you makes you want to pass to your friends. Like, you don't want to give it to someone who will probably, there's going to be a chance that they're going to stuff up or ... We were all friends.

Ben added later that before games it was a casual affair where he and his teammates/friends would talk about what they were going to do on the weekend. From time to time after games they would all go out to Hungry Jack's or Pizza Hut. The friendships inside the team were very important for Ben.

Ben played basketball on Wednesday nights at Bluegum with a friend during the same time frame as when he played basketball at Cockburn. Every Wednesday he would go to his "best" friend's house then play at Bluegum. Ben was involved in this team purely because his "best friend" was in the team and asked to him to play. This, along with the other stories, demonstrates how strong the role of friendship is with regards to Ben playing basketball and enjoying it.

My parents didn't know much about basketball, they loved hockey.

Ben's parents had a deceptive yet considerable influence on Ben's dropout from basketball. When he said he was quitting basketball their response was, "Yeah. If you didn't want to do it then that's one less sport we have to drive you to." Ben's parents didn't "really know anything about basketball." His dad liked to go to Ben's and his siblings' games and help but "with basketball he doesn't really know much." Ben said, referring to his father, that "when it comes to hockey he knows ... what I'm doing right or doing wrong and helps me." For basketball:

I guess I didn't really have that someone ... pushing me to play, whereas ... the one reason I haven't quit hockey is coz my whole family plays .... My dad's always helping me .... There's no real reason to quit. ... Always got someone helping me.

Ben's father was heavily involved with hockey and enjoyed that game whereas he didn't have much knowledge when it came to basketball. Ben's parents had an impact on Ben stopping basketball at Cockburn.

I lost interest and wanted to try something new.

Not only were his friends going to different schools and playing for different teams but Ben believed he was losing interest in basketball. He said that he didn't look forward to playing anymore, never felt like ringing a friend to play basketball during the summer holidays and thought he was never really serious about basketball. Later he would say, "It wasn't, like, why, like, I wanted to quit but there was just no team to play for so it didn't bother me. ... Well it did bother me but ... I didn't go around looking for another team." This appears contradictory to what Ben said about losing interest in basketball. Whether he lost interest in basketball or not is a little unclear however he thought he would "try another sport."

Success wasn't a factor.

Ben spoke fondly of playing in the Grand Final in his last season at Cockburn, "And, like, that was, like, one of the greatest days I've had in year seven was playing on court one in the Grand Final with everyone watching and ... Yeah, it was really great." When asked if there were lots of people watching the game Ben said:

Yeah. ... Coz they were .... I think it was coz the A Division game was after our's. ... they were all up the sideline .... The whole ... carpet area on the stands, stuff like that, that was all packed and the other side, the seats were packed and ... Yeah. ... people running around everywhere. ... that

was good. ... Oh we're all nervous. ... Like, we didn't want to stuff up. We ... really wanted to win. And ... everyone was ... probably going a bit harder. .... We ended up losing the game. ... Ended up losing by a couple of points. ... I think it was four or five. So yeah, we're all a bit upset and we got ... free ice creams afterwards ... the coach comes up to us with this massive box of ice creams ...and ahh, kind of, cheered up then.

Although his team lost the Grand Final Ben still called it one of his greatest days. He spoke about it with joy and seemed to have enjoyed that last game. Success wasn't so important to Ben. He remarked that he wasn't one of the best players on the team but felt a part of the team whereas in hockey, at the time when he started basketball, he didn't feel a part of the team but was one of the best players on the team. Again this demonstrates that success didn't always mean that Ben would enjoy himself in a sporting activity. He really wanted to be with his friends and enjoy their company.

My basketball coach was cool and some referees sucked whilst some were helpful.

When Ben was asked about his coach, he spoke fondly of him, "my coach was my best friend's mate. ... always ... joked around with him and talked to him and ... he was never negative. ... helping us, ... never really used to swear at us. ... So ... basically ... the best coach." Ben liked his coach and the coach was not a contributing factor for him giving up basketball.

Ben said that some referees annoyed him while there was one referee in particular that was very helpful. Even though he said there were times when he was "pretty pissed off"

at how some of the referees acted during the games, it had little impact on his decision to quit basketball at Cockburn.

#### 4.2.4 Interview 3

The third interview focussed on why Ben made the decision to discontinue his participation in basketball at Cockburn. All quotes are obtained from interview three which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 162 - 169). The following themes arose: It was because my friends went to different high schools; I was curious to try other sports; I guess my parents had an impact; and How my teammates played and the referees had no impact on my decision to quit basketball.

##### It was because my friends went to different high schools.

When asked why he thought he stopped playing basketball at Cockburn Ben said:

we all moved away to different schools and we basically didn't see each other all the time. ... From the same school are on the same team. ... half the year went by and then it was time to join up again ... other people have already found other teams to go to .... I rang up the guy ... saying, 'Oh, are we going to go as a team again?' And he goes, 'Oh, half of them have got, already joined other teams and I'm joining a different team myself.'

The guy Ben was referring to was Adam, the former captain and one of his best friends.

Then later Ben added:

I just thought to myself, 'Do I really want to play?' And ... I didn't find it interesting anymore because ... one reason I started because of all my

friends were playing and now ... no one else is playing I just thought, 'Oh, can't be bothered.'

Ben attributed giving up basketball to all his friends having gone to different high schools and joining different teams. One of the primary reasons Ben began playing basketball was because his friends played. After some deliberation during the summer holidays following the end of primary school Ben came to the conclusion that he couldn't be bothered looking for another basketball team.

I was curious to try other sports.

Ben was "curious to try different sports" when it came time to decide whether to look for another team at Cockburn or to give up basketball. This curiosity may have been fostered during Ben's latter primary school years when everyone at the school went through different crazes trying different activities, which he enjoyed.

I guess my parents had an impact.

His parents had a significant influence on the sports Ben played and contributed to Ben's discontinuation of playing basketball at Cockburn. When prompted about his parents Ben said:

Yeah. I think they all come into each little part of everything and that comes into ... the big reason. ... I'd get home and ... my dad wouldn't know anything about basketball so he wouldn't be helping me or teaching me how to do it proper way or showing me stuff .... He'd actually watch it on TV sometimes. ... my mum and dad didn't know anything about basketball. ... they just didn't help me on. ... tried to get them interested in, my dad came



to a few games. He watched and kinda got it after a while but, I guess he just ...

After having pointed out to Ben about the difference between the support he received from his parents for hockey compared to basketball I then asked if he thought it contributed to him discontinuing basketball he responded with:

Yeah. I guess it did coz ... like I said, everyone, even, like, my little brother and my little sister play, outside my older brother plays. My dad plays plus me and my brother umpire plus my dad coaches, ...my mum's the treasurer of the club ...So everyone's involved in some way every weekend there's some hockey function and it was ... it was always hockey ... and I didn't really have time to muck around with basketball.

Ben accepted that his parents, more specifically his father, were a contributing factor in his decision to quit basketball.

How my teammates played and the referees had no impact on my decision to quit basketball.

When asked whether not receiving passes during basketball games at Cockburn contributed to his decision, Ben said, “No,” he did receive passes from his teammates. This contradicted earlier interview data. This, in combination with how Ben enjoyed spending time with his friends, illustrates that his teammates’ actions on the court had no impact on his decision to quit basketball. Ben also did not believe the referees had any impact on his decision.

4.2.5 Summary

Ben began playing basketball at the age of ten and played for three years, always with his friends from primary school. He never thought of himself as a good basketball player. He doubted his abilities before he started playing at Cockburn and when he spoke about his teammates in the second interview he indicated that he sometimes didn’t receive passes from them, which he attributed to his lack of ability. Whereas in hockey Ben considered himself one of the best players in the team plus his whole family was heavily involved with hockey. It was during the transition from primary school to high school that Ben decided to drop out of basketball at Cockburn.

Ben’s father didn’t know much about basketball and consequently wasn’t able to help Ben improve though he did support Ben in a general sense when he played basketball. In contrast to basketball his whole family was heavily involved with hockey and his dad would help Ben with his hockey skills on a regular basis.

Not only did Ben's friends go to different high schools but most of his teammates went to other teams. This meant that Ben was no longer able to play basketball with his friends. Ben attributed his friends going to different schools as the main reason behind his decision to quit basketball. He also ascribed having lost interest in basketball, wanting to try another sport and his parents' passion for hockey as having had an impact on his decision.

### 4.3 Charlie, The Coaches And His Uniform

#### 4.3.1 Introduction

For the purpose of the study I will call Subject C Charlie. Charlie is a single child who was born in 1985 in Australia, which means he was fourteen at the time of the interviews. He was of average height for his age with a slightly heavy build. Charlie's mum was born in Queensland, had no paid occupation at the time of the interviews and had "split" with her partner.

Charlie began playing basketball at Cockburn just before he turned nine and continued playing through to the age of twelve. Each year Charlie played once or twice a week at the domestic level. Whilst playing at Cockburn Charlie lived in Hilton, attended only one primary school and also played soccer and rugby league at the time of the interviews. All the interviews were conducted in Charlie's home. The first interview had to be redone five days after the original since the original recording failed. The second interview was conducted nine days after the first and the third ten days after the second. This large gap in between interviews was due to an inability for Charlie and myself to coordinate more appropriate times.

### 4.3.2 Interview 1

The first interview focussed on Charlie's past experiences with sport, prior to the time when he first began to consider leaving Cockburn Basketball, and any experiences similar to those he experienced at Cockburn during the critical time when he was deciding to stop playing basketball. All quotes are obtained from interview one which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 170 - 207). The main themes that emerged from this interview were: I loved playing sport; I liked it when there was sharing, I hated hogs; I didn't care who won; I liked the parents at basketball; I liked mucking around with my mates; I liked my teammates right through to the end of under twelves; and As long as the coaches were fair I liked them.

#### I loved playing sport.

Charlie enjoyed sport and being physically active even when things weren't always perfect. The first club sport Charlie played was soccer at the age of eight. When he talked about his soccer coach, "He favoured his kid, I thought. ... it was alright, ... I didn't mind. As long as you got to play. ... Which I did. That was all that I was happy about .... I just got to play and that was fun."

Charlie was already playing basketball by the time soccer had finished but "at school I still played interschool soccer, on the teams. I played every year on the teams. It was alright, it was fun. But my main aim was basketball. ... And sometimes played on the interschool basketball team." Charlie enjoyed soccer enough to play on the interschool soccer team but his first love was basketball.

At school Charlie was always playing something:

every lunch time ... if there was cricket, we'd all go down to cricket coz it was fun and everybody, all ages played. And if we played soccer we'd all go down to soccer, but if everybody else was doing their own individual thing, we'd just play basketball. ... me and my teammates coz we were all at the same school. ... five of us were in the same school.

Charlie indicated that he and his mother organised community baseball during one summer:

My mum and me, ... later in ninety-five I think it was, ... started up ... baseball after school, which would join in the whole community. ... parents and kids of all ages. ... During summer. After school. ... At about ... four o'clock, every day. ... Only did it in summer because the sun's up for longer. ... So we could stay out for longer ... if we left at four.

Charlie said that nearly the whole community joined in, "Everyone that had a kid came down. ... About fifty. ... twenty-five a team. ... we'd have to do it in summer coz you have to try and get through every single kid." Charlie revealed that every kid got to bat, "twenty-five a team, twenty-five out in the field and twenty-five in. So it makes it really hard to play. ... we used that oval next to my house." Charlie said the parents enjoyed themselves, "They played as well, ... they didn't sit down and watch ... they played. ... if they sat down and watched, we'd get 'em up and make 'em play." Charlie knew they were having a good time because "you see them smiling, laughing, running 'round .... Everybody got along. ... if they didn't get along we'd send 'em home. ... Coz we didn't

want fighting while we were playing.” Charlie said this lasted for “Just one summer. ... the next summer everybody else had other commitments.”

I liked it when there was sharing, I hated hogs.

Charlie mentioned hogs on a consistent basis in this interview and I got the impression that Charlie disliked hogs, that is someone who doesn't pass the ball and just looks to score by themselves. The first mention of hogs was when he talked about his soccer teammates, “They were alright yeah. ... There was only one kid, ... the coach's son, ... he was ... a hog. Never passed around.”

Charlie liked it when everyone was given a fair go. When asked what made basketball fun he said, “We'd play street basketball and pass it around so everybody can go, ... handle the ball.” Charlie just did not like situations where it wasn't fair like his first basketball coach:

he went through a stage where he only favour his son but he got over that ... we got the ball, we had to pass it to him, no matter what. ... I'd only take two bounces ... basically have to pass it back to him. ... he wasn't giving anybody else a chance to see if they were good or not. ... He didn't do that anymore after a while he, you know, he started thinking, you know, 'If I don't give anybody else a chance.'

When I asked how long this lasted Charlie said, “I don't know, about oh two months.”

On another occasion Charlie had a teammate in one of the first under twelves teams he played in at Cockburn Basketball Stadium who was a hog. When describing his teammates he said:

Oh, great. ... only one of them was a hog. His name was Callum. ... he didn't get onto the court so much coz he was a hog and the coach believed ... everybody should have a try with the ball. And he was the one who used to take the ball all the way coz as soon as you get up to under twelves you can bounce it as much as you want. ... There's no three bounces, stop.

Even when he went to another basketball team, the South Lake Steelers, he spoke about sharing, "we all had our fair share." Charlie was a fan of sharing and giving everyone a fair go and really disliked hogs.

I didn't care who won.

Charlie was not one to be overly competitive. When commenting on interschool basketball:

It was fun, but ... our coach ... was too competitive. ... Everything had to be a competition. ... we'd start shooting hoops, just muck around, passing to each person ... then he'd go, 'Oh, let's see how many shots you can get in a row.' ... I just didn't want to do that, I want to muck around and play with my mates. ... Too competitive, that's what I thought anyway.

Charlie much preferred to muck around with his mates than to compete and find out who is the best.

Charlie talked fondly about a game he played at Cockburn where his team lost:

It was lots of fun. ... one game ... me and this little kid Alan, ... and my friend Bob, he got me started, there was only us three left on the court coz everybody else got fouled off. ... we were versing the Cougar girls and they were ... massive, tall girls .... It was really weird coz ... it was boys against girls ... and ... we hadn't played a game like that before. ... there was only us three and it was, like, small compared to them. ... to try and shoot .... my friend ... to get a shot in he tapped it in .... It was really funny, hey. ... Just playing like that was really funny. ... There was only three of us and they had to get told to keep going back because they weren't giving us a chance, we wouldn't even get over half court .... that was fun.

Even though his team lost Charlie still enjoyed himself, winning wasn't so important to him. Later he said, "if we lost a game it didn't matter either, it was the same as under twelves, it didn't really matter."

#### I liked the parents at basketball.

Parents had an impact on Charlie's enjoyment of a sport and his mother had a positive impact on his participation. When, at the age of eight, he was encouraged by a friend to play soccer he added, "And my mum encouraged me and everything ...so I got encouraged to do a sport." His mother and nanna used to watch Charlie play soccer and "They would just go for me and they said, 'Try your best,' and, 'Just have fun.'"

Unfortunately he could not say the same about the other parents at soccer:

It was fun. Except for the adults coz they made it worse coz they would always, you know, yelled at their kids, put 'em down when they didn't score



a goal. So the atmosphere wasn't that good. ... But we still had fun. ... We normally ignored them when we played. ... We tried to anyway. .

Other parents limited Charlie's enjoyment of the game:

I think it only lasted for a year. ... Coz ... it wasn't really fun after a while coz all the parents were just yelling at ya. ... You never had fun. Each week they'd get, they'd pressure you harder and harder. ... these guys are trashin'

When Charlie played basketball the parents were quite different to those at the soccer.

Commenting on the parents during under tens basketball he said:

They ... supported them all the way. They didn't mind if they didn't score a goal, ... they wanted you to have fun and we tried our hardest, that was all that mattered. ... whenever they went home either we won or lost they were happy. The parents were happy. ... More like smiling and talking to the kids saying, 'Good game,' and stuff.

And during the game "they were cheering, ... they wouldn't go, 'Oh, what did you do that for you idiot,' or anything." Charlie indicated that the parents throughout under twelves acted the same as those in under tens. The way other parents conducted themselves did impact on Charlie's enjoyment of a game.

During under twelves Charlie changed clubs and went to the South Lake Steelers. Charlie said the reason he went to the South Lake Steelers, and not any other club, was because, "my mum met ... the head ... person of the South Lake Steelers. ... she said if I wanted a spot on a team ... she could get me one." His mother did have some

influence over Charlie when it came to sport. In this case his mother influenced Charlie when he chose a club to go to.

I liked mucking around with my mates.

“I want to muck around and play with my mates.” This sums up Charlie’s views on junior sport. “My first real experience ... with a sport ... would be ... when I played soccer. ... I was eight.” He began club soccer when his:

friend ... played in a team but ... he quit. ... He said to me, ‘Oh you should try out.’ ‘Yeah, alright.’ ... so I went around and tried out and got into a team. ... that’s how I started playing .... And my mum encouraged me ... so I got encouraged to do a sport.

Friends influenced Charlie when he made decisions on what sport to play. Charlie enjoyed playing games and doing physical activities with his friends like during every lunchtime when he played cricket, soccer or basketball with his friends.

A friend also encouraged Charlie to play at Cockburn:

coz my best friend, he got me started. ... I went with him one day ... to his training session. ... I liked it and he said, ‘I’ll ask the coach,’ and he asked the coach and asked my mum and she says, ‘Fine,’ and the coach said it was alright, so I played in the team.

A friend also introduced Charlie to Rugby League during the time when he was playing soccer. Charlie and some of his friends used to play Rugby League at a local park after school a couple of times a week but when his friend who played club rugby moved to another school they stopped playing.

I liked my teammates right through to the end of under twelves.

In soccer and basketball teammates had an impact on Charlie's enjoyment of the game. When asked about his teammates at soccer Charlie said, "They were alright yeah. ... There was only one kid, ... the coach's son, ... he was ... a hog. Never passed around." Charlie liked his teammates if they weren't hogs.

Charlie liked his teammates during under tens and under twelves but made a special note of the hogs. When asked about his basketball teammates in under tens Charlie said, "They were good. ... Everyone got along with each other." When asked about his teammates in under twelves, Charlie said that only one of them was a hog, Callum, whereas the other teammates in that team were:

alright. They were cool .... There was only this one kid ... he had ADD. he ... would ... swear at the team and try and swing at them, [laugh] it was really fun. ... then his mum would come onto the court, grab him by the ear and pull him off. It was really fun.

Then Charlie added, "we all got along. ... No matter what happened we were all good mates." When he talked about the players at South Lakes in under twelves Charlie said, "we all got along, we all had our fair share." Charlie often spoke fondly about his time whilst playing under tens and under twelves at Cockburn and really liked his teammates during that time.

As long as the coaches were fair I liked them.

Charlie was affected by the coaches and how they managed the teams. When asked about his first coach at basketball Charlie said, “he went through a stage where he only favour his son but he got over that.” By favouring his son Charlie meant:

we had to pass it to him, no matter what. ... he wasn't giving anybody else a chance to see if they were good or not. ... He didn't do that anymore after a while he, you know, he started thinking, you know, 'If I don't give anybody else a chance.'

The coach favouring his son only lasted two months.

In under twelves at Cockburn Charlie had a coach he really liked. After describing one of his teammates as a hog Charlie indicated that, “he didn't get onto the court so much coz he was a hog and the coach believed ... everybody should have a try with the ball.” The coach ensuring everyone had a fair go made a great impression on Charlie since he liked sharing and hated hogs.

When Charlie changed teams before the last under twelves season at Cockburn Basketball Stadium he mentioned the coach as a major reason for changing teams:

I stayed in the same team until I got to under ... near the end of under twelves. ... That's when I jumped up to South Lake Steelers. ... I stopped Timbertigers because ... Darren ... was having a training session, all the A's, B's and everything. ... And if you didn't do the moves that he told you to do ... you got put down another division. ... they put me down in a lower

division. ... I knew I could do better than this. ... So I went to another team and ... we were in B division. ... And we played and were happy.

The coaches had an impact on Charlie's enjoyment of the game in both positive and negative ways.

### 4.3.3 Interview 2

The second interview focussed on Charlie's experiences during the critical time when he was considering leaving Cockburn Basketball. This time was "between under twelves and getting into under fourteens is when I felt that I wanted to leave." Charlie said he only played one season of under fourteens and "I didn't even hardly make it through the one season." All quotes are obtained from interview two which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 208 - 231). The main themes that emerged from the second interview were: I didn't like the coaches in under fourteens; There were too many hogs in the team; I was given a scabby singlet; Everything about that under fourteens season was unfair; I think sport is about having fun not winning; and The parents had nothing to do with my decision.

#### I didn't like the coaches in under fourteens.

The coach had a considerable impact on Charlie's decision to leave Cockburn predominantly because Charlie thought they were unfair. When asked about that first season in under fourteens Charlie said:

I felt that not many people got to have a try on the court. It's, like, only the good guys could go on. ... I'd be put on starting five and ... we'd start playing ... then as soon as I got the ball and I had have a perfect shot, they'd

tell me to pass it off and give someone else a shot. ... I didn't get a shot .... Which I felt was unfair. ... I'm not trying to be racist or anything, but mainly the Aboriginals were the ones who ... got all the time. ... And they would ... get all the passes, all the shots, they were the ones we were told to pass the ball to.

From my experience in coaching basketball, the coaches made the decisions as to how much playing time players received and how the team played. Charlie said that in under fourteens, "we didn't have our coach, our proper coach Bruce, he left, he had other things to do." Charlie was referring to the coach he had from the previous season in under twelves when he played for the South Lake Steelers.

Charlie spoke about the first coach he had in under fourteens, whom he did not like. Charlie thought the coach was unfair, exhibited poor knowledge of the game and coaching and let the good players hog the ball:

we got stuck with a ... coach that I really didn't feel knew what ... he was doing. ... he didn't know how good we were ... and our skills, so he would just start, starting five: two taller guys and the rest were Aboriginals. Which, they were good players, ... but they were hogs. ... Before ... with the other coach ... they weren't hogs because ... if they did they would just get pulled off. ... But because this coach didn't know what he was doing, ... he just didn't bother and play them the whole game. ... if we got it and we used to shot they would all jump on us and the coach wouldn't do anything about it, because the coach would be jumping on us as well. ... Get angry at us. ... It just got declining, it went down from when the coach left us, our proper

coach. ... Coz he's the only one that could probably keep them under control. From going ... down on other people and stuff. And putting you down .... he knew how to, ... they would hog the ball, he would swap 'em 'round ... and tell them off the side of the court ... not to do it again, otherwise they'd be put out for the rest of the game.

Charlie also made reference to another coach who took over the team during that season. Charlie wasn't happy with this coach for similar reasons as the previous one:

And then he left and we got a lady coach. ... And she was one of the guy's girlfriend. ... an older player in under eighteens, I think. ... she didn't know nothing. ... we'd be on the court and she ... wouldn't know how to call subs. So someone else had to get up and yell to the ref, 'Subs, subs.' ... She was too scared to call out and everything. She didn't know what a foul was and ... if there was a foul, it wasn't, it still wasn't a foul and she thought it was a foul, she'd get up, 'That's a foul,' and all this ... and coz they, they can give the teams tech, can't they? Tech fouls.

I clarified that a coach can receive technical foul in a game then Charlie continued, "she was getting close to getting us one. ... Coz she didn't know what she was talking about. ... Warning her to shut her mouth because she didn't know what she was talking about." Later Charlie added, "we didn't have really a coach .... no one I thought were qualified."

Charlie was profoundly affected by the coaches and their actions during the under fourteens season that he played in at Cockburn. Charlie felt the coaches weren't being

fair in how they were giving out court time, what they allowed players to do and what players were told not to do.

There were too many hogs in the team.

Charlie's teammates profoundly influenced Charlie's enjoyment for the game, especially in the way that they hogged the ball and yelled at each other. Hogging was a common description for some of his teammates. He said the "starting five: two taller guys and the rest were Aboriginals. Which, they were good players, ... but they were hogs." His teammates weren't permitted to be hogs in under twelves as the coach punished players when they were greedy with the ball. Since the coaches in under fourteens did not punish hogging his teammates would hog the ball. Charlie said some of his teammates would get angry at him if he took any shots since they were the ones supposed to take the shots. Later Charlie added, "I wasn't enjoying it ... because of the way the team yelling at each other, ... basically the team was just breaking down, it wasn't going too good." I asked what breaking down meant he then continued:

we'd gone from really good, everybody happy to everybody's angry, yelling at each other when they score a goal. Every time we'd lose everybody would be upset, hanging their heads down, I'd be, ... 'there's no point to be upset ... just as long as we tried our best.' .... But no one else listened to me

I then asked if those players not getting much court time would yell to which he responded:

Oh no, no. If they didn't get enough court time ... they'd be angry because of no court time. ... They ... wouldn't yell at each other ... coz they ... wouldn't know how to play basketball coz no one would give 'em a chance



on the court. ... every time they did get a chance, like me, they'd have to pass the ball and that, they wouldn't get to dribble it or anything, they just have to pass it. ... Get the ball, pass it.

Charlie wasn't the only one who had to pass it to the better players all the time.

Even when asked about the parents Charlie said, "Nah. ... They were the same as under twelves, they were happy, ... supportive but the kids, they're the ones that had changed. ... Not the parents." Later Charlie talked further about the attitude of the teammates, "if we lost ... everybody's in the dumps, ... swearing and ... stuff like that. ... I'd leave as soon as it finished coz I couldn't stand watching 'em go, 'Oh, you [grumble, grumble]." Quite obviously, teammates had an affect on Charlie's enjoyment whilst playing at Cockburn.

#### I was given a scabby singlet.

And then it got to the stage when we hit from the under twelves when we went to the next season, ... someone nicked my number. ... Oh, my jersey. ... Someone nicked my number. So I had to wear a crappy, old jersey. ... Coz someone nicked my number. ... In the team. And then they were using it. I'm like, 'That's my number. I had that number from the start of the year.' ... 'Give it back.' And he's like, 'No. This is my number, I found it.' ... coz we ... gave our singlets in and we're going to get it back at the next start, after we'd payed our fees. ... I wasn't there on that training session coz I hurt my ankle. And then the next training session ... I asked Karen, 'Can I get my ... singlet now?' She goes, 'Oh, umm it's not there.' ... So

the number I had to wear is ... this old raggedy one that was falling apart. ... That ... really ticked me off, ... I was angry. And that ... was near the point where I was going to leave. ... Coz that plus really the teammates and how they were ...

Charlie was very upset about having to wear a “crappy” singlet compared to the one he wore the previous season and compared to the uniforms his teammates wore. This had a large effect on Charlie, especially since he talked about it quite extensively, and contributed to his decision to leave the CBA.

I think sport is about having fun not winning.

“We were winning. ... But it wasn’t ... fun.” Referring to the under fourteen season.

Winning wasn’t important for Charlie, mucking around with friends was:

after school hours they had a thing called ‘Sports fun’ or something like that. ... And ... a couple of us would practice for the interschool and stuff like that. ... But I’d asked that they put up the rings and they usually did, sometimes. ... They put up the rings most people would come down and they’d just have a game with me and stuff. ... But it wasn’t anything big, it was just muck around. ... That was fun. ... Coz none of the kids were from my team. ... none of them came with a bad attitude. ... we just ... played.

I asked if everyone got a free go to which he responded, “Yeah. ... it was just muck around, you know, the teams could have been seven-on-seven, eight-on-eight, ... ten-on-ten. It really didn’t matter. ... it was great.” For Charlie playing sport was about having fun, not about winning or competing.

The parents had nothing to do with my decision.

The parents continued to have a positive impact on Charlie though this impact had diminished due to the effect his coaches and teammates. When asked about the parents Charlie said, “Nah. ... They were the same as under twelves, they were happy, ... supportive but the kids, they’re the ones that had changed. ... Not the parents.” Nothing else needs to be said on the matter.

Everything about that under fourteens season was unfair.

I felt that not many people got to have a try on the court. It’s, like, only the good guys could go on. ... as soon as I got the ball and I had have a perfect shot, they’d tell me to pass it off and give someone else a shot. ... I didn’t get a shot .... Which I felt was unfair. ... I’m not trying to be racist or anything, but mainly the Aboriginals were the ones who ... got all the time. ... And they would ... get all the passes, all the shots, they were the ones we were told to pass the ball to.

This is indicative of how Charlie viewed that season. The coaches were unfair and some teammates were hogs. Coupled with the singlet saga and Charlie’s views on the value of fairness, sharing, good teammates and good coaches then it is little wonder Charlie quit playing at Cockburn.

4.3.4 Interview 3

The third interview focussed on why Charlie made the decision to discontinue his participation in basketball at Cockburn.

I stopped playing because the coaches and ... I had other things to do. ... the coaches help, because there wasn't any people that were proper coaches. ... the players were alright but, ... I didn't have a proper uniform either. ... We didn't have proper coaches, my uniform, I had a scabby uniform and ... it was pathetic that I got no time on the court any more. ... it really sucks to sit down so ... that's probably why I probably left.

All quotes are obtained from interview three which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 232 - 241). The following themes arose: We didn't have proper coaches; I got a scabby uniform; I had other things to do; and I prefer to just muck around.

We didn't have proper coaches.

Charlie was adamant that the coaches he had during that final season contributed to his decision to quit playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium:

I wasn't happy because we didn't have a proper coach. ... It didn't feel good because ... you never get to know the coach so you wouldn't know how he felt about you playing on a team and how, if you're good or not .... you'd have one coach for, like, two days then we'd have another coach. ... the coach wouldn't know your abilities, playing and everything. ... I think ... the coach ... didn't think we could play. Because ... the lady coach ... knew some of the people in the team. ... but she only knew them. She only knew they could play, she didn't know the rest of them could. ... The rest of us could. So she didn't give us much court time coz she gave them court time. ... I reckon the coach should know what they are especially doing. ... But

she wasn't a proper coach, she was just someone brought in to make sure the team didn't get umm split apart and everything ... and forfeit a match.

Charlie felt the coaches were unfair and favoured a few players which rubbed Charlie the wrong way.

I got a scabby uniform.

Charlie used getting a scabby uniform as another reason for quitting, "So I get the scabby t-shirt, it was really annoying. ... Yeah. It's ... the only reason." While not the only reason it was a significant factor.

I had other things to do.

Charlie discovered scouts whilst still playing basketball at Cockburn and eventually found it more enjoyable than basketball. When I asked what were the other things Charlie had to do he said:

Oh, I did scouts and ... since I'd just started them ... I was more interested in that and our playing days were exactly the same as the time I go to scouts. ... So I ... chose ... scouts. ... Coz it was more fun. ... And ... more people there. ... the atmosphere was great.

When I asked what he thought made the atmosphere great in scouts Charlie said:

just everybody being happy and everything. ... And ... you didn't have any things you had to do but ... you could do what you want. ... you're meeting people and if you wanted to be with someone you could go talk to them and muck around with them but if you don't want to talk with them you can go

with another person. But with your teammates, ... you have that limited amount of people to talk to. ... But with scouts you had heaps of people.

Charlie had a choice between one activity he found fun and another he didn't enjoy plus the times conflicted. Combine this with Charlie's emphasis on fun, sharing and mucking around as opposed to competing and the choice to quit basketball is understandable.

I prefer to just muck around.

Charlie didn't care about winning and preferred to muck around than take sport seriously. When asked if he preferred to muck around rather than play serious Charlie said:

Ahh yeah. Probably prefer to play it that way. ... I'd rather play like we did after school than play full-on. If you didn't win ... it's so bad. It's, like, children don't give a crap about who wins or who loses. ... when we played after school we didn't care who won or lost. ... We just did it for fun.

#### 4.3.5 Summary

Charlie enjoyed being physically active and mucking around with his friends. Charlie wasn't one to compete, he preferred for things to be fair and for there to be lots of sharing. Charlie's favourite sport was basketball when he played at Cockburn and was still his favourite sport at the time of the interviews. Charlie always considered himself a good basketball player, contrary to the way many of his coaches viewed him.

Charlie was always affected by how the parents, teammates and coaches acted in all the sports he played. Right up through under twelves at Cockburn Charlie appreciated his basketball teammates and coaches but when he got into under fourteens this changed dramatically with the coaches being the instigators of his unhappiness. Even though at times Charlie didn't attribute drop-out to his teammates his comments were contradictory. During the second interview, Charlie spoke about the after school "Sports fun" where it was "just muck around. ... That was fun. ... Coz none of the kids were from my team. ... none of them came with a bad attitude. ... we just ... played." Even though the coach controlled how the team played, to a certain extent since the players are the ones playing, and determined the court time Charlie shows many signs of disliking his teammates during that last season at Cockburn in under fourteens. Charlie getting a "scabby uniform" also contributed to his decision to quit as did starting and enjoying scouts during the critical time when he was considering leaving Cockburn. The parents, in contrast to what happened to Andrew, were always supportive and had no impact at all on Charlie's decision to quit playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium.

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## 4.4 David, His Family And His Friends

### 4.4.1 Introduction

For the purpose of the study I will name Subject D David. David was born in 1984 in Australia, which makes him fifteen at the time of the interviews. He was just over 183 cm with a solid, strong build. His parents were born in Australia and were still married, one worked as a secretary and the other as a Telstra technician. David also had an older brother.

David started playing basketball at the age of nine and continued playing through to the age of twelve. Each year David played two seasons in the CBA, he played once a week and said he made the cut to play for the Cockburn Cougars but decided not to play at that level. Whilst playing at Cockburn David lived in Hamilton Hill, attended only one primary school and didn't play any other sports. At the time of the interviews David was playing cricket. All the interviews were conducted in David's high school during recess and lunch times and were spread over a two week period. The first interview was conducted in three sittings and the second in two as the breaks at David's high school did not allow for the interviews to be completed in one sitting. The third interview was completed in one sitting.

### 4.4.2 Interview 1

The first interview focussed on David's past experiences with sport, prior to the time when he first considered leaving Cockburn Basketball, and any experiences similar to what he experienced at Cockburn during the critical time when he was deciding to stop playing basketball at Cockburn. All quotes are obtained from interview one which can



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The first interview focussed on David's past experiences with sport, prior to the time when he first considered leaving Cockburn Basketball, and any experiences similar to what he experienced at Cockburn during the critical time when he was deciding to stop playing basketball at Cockburn. All quotes are obtained from interview one which can

be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 242 - 266). The main themes that emerged from this interview were: My dad and brother introduced me to sport; My friends were my teammates; I was always pretty good at sport; I won a lot but ...; The parents were always supportive; and This One referee really sucked.

My dad and brother introduced me to sport.

David's father and brother, who is five years older than him, figured prominently in this interview in having introduced him to cricket, football and basketball and having coached him. David's first sporting experiences were playing cricket, basketball and football in the backyard with his father and brother. He said he struggled against them but added, "My brother was really supportive. He ended up being my coach at Cockburn."

David played one season of club football in under nines, which he enjoyed. During that season his father was a co-coach along with another parent. But he only played one season:

because my dad got out of it and ... my brother got into cricket .... So I went along and played cricket. ... My brother ... went from we were in the South Fremantle comp. ... And then my brother went over to the East Fremantle comp. ... so I just stopped playing because it was at the same time.

When asked if he wanted to continue playing football David said, "I didn't really care." In this situation David's participation was stopped because of a decision made by his

father based on the situation with his brother playing football at the same time at a different venue.

In under twelves David's brother was a co-coach with a friend:

he and my brother were pretty good with basketball and that and they knew each other, so they started taking us. ... it was pretty good. They shared it around, they always made it pretty competitive. ... still had a chance to get it into the grand final and that, but still give people a go.

They would again coach his team in under fourteens. Not only did David's father and brother introduce David to football, basketball and cricket but they also coached David at the club level.

My friends were my teammates.

Whilst playing basketball at Cockburn David always had friends on his team. When asked about his teammates in under twelves David said, "They were a pretty good team." When asked if his teammates were talented he said:

Yeah. About four, five of us ... were in Cougars. ... or that made the cut for Cougars. And one guy is now ... the captain of Cougars, I think, or vice captain. ... He's ... doin' pretty good. ... we had about two people that were just to have fun ... and err to muck around and that. ... they were alright, they didn't ... stuff up, stuff around or anything.

David got along with his teammates and hung out with two or three of them "because I'd known them before. ... that year we ... only had about three people from the same team that started in under tens. I knew them for a long time." David played for the same

club throughout his time at Cockburn and the team in under fourteens was the same as the team in under twelves. David liked the teams he played on especially because he had friends on those teams.

I was always pretty good at sport.

David's descriptions in his stories indicate that he was always one of the better players in any form of sport that he played in, "I wasn't bad. ... playing football .... I played a lot of that at school and me and this other guy were really good and ... we used to always take on about six people." David played interschool football, which he started in "year three. ... Most don't start 'til year five but I played in year three." When asked if he played in year three because he was good David said, "Yeah. And they needed one more player .... They just asked me to play, so I did. ... It wasn't bad." David was quite an exceptional football player at his primary school.

Even in basketball David was one of the better players. For instance when talking about under tens he said about his coach:

He was pretty good. ... You weren't allowed to really score more than ten points in a game. ... you had to share it around. ... that wasn't that good because ... when he wasn't coaching his sister came and coached ... and didn't use that rule. ... so we got ... eighteen to twenty-odd points when she was coaching. ... we would rather get it when we were scoring more.

The fact that David scored more when he was allowed to shows that he was one of the better players in his team. Later in the interview he revealed that he made the cut to play for the Cougars but decided against playing at that level.

I won a lot but ....

David enjoyed competing but it wasn't an overriding theme in this interview. When he spoke about his brother and friend coaching his under twelves team he said, "it was pretty good. They shared it around, they always made it pretty competitive. ... still had a chance to get it into the grand final and that, but still give people a go." David's story of a grand final he played in during the first season in under twelves at Cockburn illustrates his competitiveness, "we lost it in overtime. That was pretty shocking. It was bad. Everyone ... finished their grand final. We had ... a crowd all around the court and I wasn't able to get on. I wasn't allowed to play in overtime." There was a big crowd watching and "they saw me get fouled off. ... that was pretty tragic. ... But that's what the umpire did." David didn't like losing too much, especially in grand finals. On another occasion David talked about another player he used to go to primary school with:

one guy ... that I had a real thing with from primary school, ... he changed nights and came onto our night and then we kept on beating him and we kept on bragging that we win ... and he didn't. ... So it was bragging rights ... because we knew then we could beat them we had bragging rights.

David liked winning and won consistently whilst playing at Cockburn but it wasn't as important to him as playing with his friends.

The parents were always supportive.

When David spoke about the parents he always said they were, "pretty good. They were all supportive and stuff." This was at football and throughout his time playing basketball at Cockburn.

This one referee really sucked.

There was one referee that really annoyed David:

I remember Adrian's son ... one of the parents complained about him because he called a tech foul against me ... and he was talking to guys on the other court and he was still eating chocolates and stuff and when he was umpiring. ... he just turned around and just blew the whistle. Like, he had the whistle in his mouth but talking at the same time and the whistle went off and he went, 'Oh, tech foul.' And against me and I'm just about went off at him.

When asked if he had done anything before being called for a technical foul David said, "Nah, I was going up for a lay-up and he called a tech foul against me. But he wasn't watching the game." This frustrated David. When asked if he thought about it after the game he said, "it would just about happened every game .... It was ... a constant thing, we were ... hoping it weren't going to happen ... week." Later when David spoke about a grand final his team lost in his first season of under twelves he mentioned the same referee again, "first year of under twelves we lost the grand final in overtime. ... And just before overtime I was fouled out. I was spewin'. By Adrian's son again. ... That umpire. ... that wasn't very good." There was a big crowd watching and "they saw me get fouled off. ... that was pretty tragic. ... But that's what the umpire did." This one referee had quite an impact on David's enjoyment of playing basketball but only for the games when that referee was involved.

### 4.4.3 Interview 2

The second interview focussed on David's experiences during the critical time when he was considering leaving Cockburn Basketball. David thought the first time he deliberated over whether to stop playing basketball wasn't until after his last season but it may have been during the last season that he knew he wasn't going to continue playing at Cockburn Basketball Stadium. All quotes are obtained from interview two which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 267 - 273). The main themes that emerged from the second interview were: My team split up; The refs were getting younger and worse; and Still played with my dad and brother.

#### My team split up.

When asked at what stage David first began thinking about quitting basketball at Cockburn David said:

Probably after ... the last season .... It wasn't really that I didn't want to play, it was that ... my team was splitting up. ... I really couldn't be bothered getting into another team. ... knew a lot of people playing cricket ... so I was ... deciding ... whether to go to cricket or to join another basketball team.

When asked if David talked to his teammates about playing again he said:

not really because I already knew ... halfway through the season that ... a few people had been approached to go other teams. ... two people asked to go to Timbertigers and another one umm decided on going to Fremantle ... Falcons because his brother went there.

I asked David if it was during his last season that he first thought this would be his last season at Cockburn:

I was thinking that ... because I didn't really ... want to play with anyone else. Coz ... I'd rather play with mates instead of playing with a bad team or something. ... if I really wanted to play ... to win and that I'd probably kept on going with Cougars, but I just ... wanted to muck around with my friends and that.

David realised that he may have begun considering quitting basketball during the last season at Cockburn as he knew some of his friends were going to other teams in the following season. A major motivator for David playing at Cockburn was to play with his friends and he wasn't able to do that anymore. Everything else with the team was the same during this last season as they were in under twelves with regards the coach, parents and teammates.

The refs were getting younger and worse.

Referees had an impact on David's enjoyment of the game:

they started to get younger ... umpires, ... our age. ... that wasn't that good because ... some of them didn't know ... anything. ... Basically not much about the game. ... they just made ... simple errors .... even ... made errors ... for our team ... against the other team. But we still thought that it should have gone to the other team .... see fouls that were called when someone wasn't even anywhere near the player. ... sometimes kids used to clap when they went up for a lay-up to try and put 'em off. ... And they'd call it as a foul. Coz they think they slapped the wrist. ... And they didn't.



David was frustrated and disappointed “because ... it had lost us a few games as well. ... coz ... the competition was fairly tight. ... So ... if this ... umpire ... went against ya ... it could ... do something against the result.” Referees clearly impacted on David’s enjoyment for the game even though his teams were still successful and he played basketball with his friends.

Still played with my dad and brother.

When asked if he still played games with his brother and father during his last season at Cockburn David said, “Yeah. We always still play. We probably play basketball more than anything .... we ... played whatever we felt like. ... There was always cricket and there was always ... basketball that we would play.” David continued to play with his father and brother at the time of the interviews and his father and brother continued to influence him in sport.

4.4.4 Interview 3

The third interview focussed on why David made the decision to discontinue his participation in basketball at Cockburn. All quotes are obtained from interview three which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 274 - 277). The following themes arose: The only reason was because my team broke up; and Referees had nothing to do with it.

The only reason was because my team broke up.

When asked why he thought he stopped playing basketball at Cockburn David said, “only because umm my team was breaking up. That was the only reason.” This is quite a profound statement when one considers that David enjoyed playing with his friends.

David would have continued to play if some other friends said they wanted to play basketball but he didn’t ask anyone else if they wanted to play and no friends expressed interest to him in playing basketball at Cockburn.

Referees had nothing to do with it.

David specifically stated that referees had nothing to do with his decision to quit playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium.

4.4.5 Summary

David began playing basketball at the age of nine and continued through to the age of twelve. Each year David played two seasons at Cockburn, he played once a week and said he made the cut to play for the Cockburn Cougars but decided not to play at that level. Whilst playing basketball at Cockburn David didn’t play any other sports.

David was introduced to sport and supported in his sporting endeavours by both his father and brother. David enjoyed the dual support of his father and brother, especially in his sporting endeavours. David was successful in football and basketball both on an individual basis and for the teams he played. David was competitive, won often and disliked losing. Throughout his sporting experiences he always found the parents to be

supportive, respected and appreciated his coaches however he disliked some of the referees at Cockburn. These factors had little impact on his decision to quit basketball. Rather the factor that was most important to him, when playing sport, was playing with and having fun with friends. His teams always comprised of predominantly friends and since his team broke up after his last season he found no reason good enough to continue playing basketball at Cockburn and this was the sole reason for his decision to quit. As David said, “my team was breaking up. That was the only reason.”

#### 4.5 Edward Wanted A Football Career

##### 4.5.1 Introduction

For the purpose of the study Subject E will be named Edward. Edward was born in 1984 in Western Australia, which means he was fifteen at the time of the interviews. He was quite tall for his age, over 180 cm, and possessed an athletic build. His parents were also born in Western Australia, were still married and his dad was an Engineer whilst his mother worked at a café. Edward also had two brothers and two sisters.

Whilst playing at Cockburn Edward lived in Willagee and attended one high school. Edward only played basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium in 1998 at the age of thirteen, turning fourteen. He played once a week over two seasons at Cockburn. He achieved the level of playing under eighteens in the CBA. Whilst playing basketball at Cockburn Edward also played football, baseball and soccer, though soccer was only played at school and was still playing football and baseball at the time of the interviews. All the interviews were conducted in Edward’s home over a period of eleven days with

the second interview conducted four days after the first and the third conducted a week after the second.

#### 4.5.2 Interview 1

The first interview focussed on Edward's past experiences with sport, prior to the time when he first began to consider leaving Cockburn Basketball, and any experiences similar to what he experienced at Cockburn during the critical time when he was deciding to stop playing basketball. All quotes are obtained from interview one which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 278 - 300). The main themes that emerged from this interview were: I loved team sports; I loved learning; I was always pretty good at sport; I always had good coaches; I had supportive teammates for basketball; The parents were always supportive; I liked being competitive; Referees were good as long as they weren't intimidated; and Football was my first sport.

##### I loved team sports.

Edward had played a variety of team sports, as well as football, and enjoyed playing most of them. Edward described basketball as, "a fun game and it was good fun handling the ball. ... It was a team sport so it was fun. It was a good game."

Edward loved playing games and being active during the breaks in primary school.

Edward said the first thing he remembered doing during recess and lunch at school was:

Used to go for goals playing footy on the oval. We used to shoot hoops, ... everyday we'd switch sports at recess and lunch. Like, at recess one day we'd play basketball and lunchtime we'd play football. And the next day

we'd play ... football at recess and basketball at lunch. ... we all used to look forward to recess and lunch. ... Because everyone used to play. ... all the year sevens and then sometimes we have this all year six/sevens and in year four played. It was pretty good. Because it was big.

Recess and lunch times were used to practise and learn, which was helped by the Sports Teacher. Edward said that at a later stage during recess and lunch:

That's the only practise we've got, except playing with teachers and that during sport's class. ... So practise mostly during lunch time and recess. ... we didn't do drills. We played games with each other. And teach each other new styles. ... There was our Sports Teacher who made us keep going and that.

Edward said the Sports Teacher was on the play grounds every recess and lunch:

He used to umpire for us and like be our coach. ... It was a good experience. ... Because he was older and he would have all these, kind of, good tricks and he knew what to do when someone came onto you. ... And teach you new stuff.

More than just enjoying team sports Edward liked getting better at them.

Edward played hockey for his primary school from year five through to year seven and described it as, "It was alright. Hurt a bit. Get hit by a stick. ... In the ankles." Compared to other sports it was "real competitive. With a smaller ball. ... You have to keep going at it in case you get hit in the foot if someone hits it hard. ... It's a lot harder coz imagine that people's sticks getting swung everywhere." When asked if he liked it

more than other sports he replied, “yeah because it was a lot more competitive with other players. And there was a lot more players so you had to get the ball off quick. ... And it was more so it was harder.” Edward enjoyed playing hockey and found it challenging.

Edward played soccer for the primary school during year six and whilst playing he described it as:

alright. ... Pretty hard. ... I'd been playing football. ... in soccer a couple of times I'd get penalised for, in football you're allowed to tackle and all that and side bump, and in soccer you're not allowed to ... side bump someone when you're trying to get the ball. ... I used to be goalie most of the time.

He liked being goalie because “you got to touch the ball a lot more.” Edward remembers trying lacrosse during sports class at school but found it quite difficult. Edward was one to attempt many different team sports and enjoyed them for their various qualities, specifically the teamwork required.

Edward was encouraged to play basketball by his cousins and his mother:

I started playing at home first. When I was about eight. Then I was playing against all my cousins and that at parks near home. They said to me you should play basketball and my mum said I should play basketball because of my height so ... I joined the Hawks.

Edward played sport at home and with his cousins which one wouldn't do unless they enjoyed it. Edward did enjoy playing basketball.

### I loved learning.

Edward loved to learn, especially when it came to sport. One could see this just by his statements about playing during recess and lunch where he and his friends would teach each other “new styles”. During this time the Sports Teacher would umpire, coach and teach the students “good tricks” and “new stuff”.

Whilst playing basketball at Cockburn, the year he turned fourteen, he played against players who were “sixteen and I was only thirteen. I was just watching them how were they playing. Learning more stuff.” When asked if he liked learning off his teammates Edward said, “Yeah. It was just like older brothers because they would teach you how to do new tricks.” Edward really enjoyed learning and improving and appreciated anyone who helped him.

### I was always pretty good at sport.

Edward was a skilful sportsman in football and basketball and was alright in hockey and soccer. When playing for his primary school Edward was often an integral part of those teams, “Because I was the ruckman, I was playing most of the game. ... And in basketball I was in the centre most of the day.” Edward liked basketball since the players handle the ball a lot. Edward was vital to his school football team, “I touched the ball most of the game coz ... Nearly every game except two games in football I played the whole game. ... In the centre. I was there quite often. ... I played there most of the game. ... I felt like I was one of the better players. I got eight best player for the South Freo District in football. ... With nine votes from umpires and the crowd.”

Edward demonstrates confidence in himself as a football player and considered himself more skilful than most of his peers.

Edward described his first season playing basketball at Cockburn as, “fun, energetic and just a competition. ... I played against older players when I was thirteen.” Playing against older players was “Pretty hard. ... Coz they were ... sixteen and I was only thirteen. I was just watching them how were they playing. Learning more stuff.” He considered it a bit unfair that he played in under eighteens “but since the height I had and how big I was, because I was bigger than some sixteen year olds.” Edward must have possessed more than just good height to be placed in a higher age group for basketball since an unwritten CBA policy is to have all players play within their own age group competition. Edward must have exhibited good skills for him to have played in the higher age group at Cockburn.

I always had good coaches.

Edward was always very positive in describing his coaches in the various sports he played. Even when describing the Sports Teacher helping during recess and lunch Edward gave high praise by stating how the Sports teacher would teach him and his friends new skills. The Sports Teacher was Edward’s coach for soccer and hockey. He gave the following description of his Sports Teacher:

after the game he’d tell me all the bad things you’d done then he’d tell you all the positives that you done. ... So he’d cheer you up in the end. ... he was a person who didn’t like to shout at the whole team and that if they’d done something wrong. He’d just talk to them and say what they’d done



wrong and not shout at them and talk like a person. Then we say the good things that he'd done.

Edward specified that the Sports Teacher didn't provide suggestions to the players, "He'd just say, 'play your own game.' As you get better."

Edward described his first basketball coach at Cockburn as, "good coz ... he'd do the same as other coaches, he'd tell you your negatives and positives. ... he wouldn't shout like some coaches did." Edward liked all his coaches as they would help him improve and develop his skills.

I had supportive teammates for basketball.

Edward described his basketball teammates as "older brothers" and they would teach him "new tricks". He explained that before he started playing basketball at Cockburn he "knew about five of them. ... Through primary school playing basketball. Against their schools. ... they were just really supportive because they knew how old I was." Edward liked it when people around him were supportive thus appreciated his teammates.

The parents were always supportive.

When asked about the parents when he began playing club football, at age six, Edward said, "They were supportive. ... cheering. ... And if someone got hurt most of the parents would help him from the field ... and look after him. ... And just shaking hands with them after the game." He said the parents would never yell, scream or say anything bad to him or his teammates.

Parents used to come down to watch his school play hockey and soccer on Friday afternoons. He described the parents as, “Alright. ... They were cheering and shouting for their school and that. ... some of other teams’ parents were pretty negative and that but most of ours were alright.” Edward recognised that the parents supporting his team were positive, especially in comparison to the parents of opposition teams.

Edward described the parents during the first basketball season at Cockburn Edward as, “good. ... Because during the basketball game they were hardly shouting, except cheering.” If he or his teammates made a mistake the parents would respond by saying, “Try better next time,” or “You’re pretty good,” but they would never yell or get angry at them.

Edward appreciated that the parents were supportive and positive when watching his teams play, in all sports. Both his parents influenced Edward in sport as his father introduced him to football, when he was four, and his mother encouraged him to play basketball.

I liked being competitive.

Edward was competitive but it was not his strongest attribute. Edward’s love for learning, enjoyment of playing team sports, and appreciation for support were attributes Edward spoke about more often and in greater detail than competing. Edward used to play football and basketball for his school, “The games we had were during lessons, because we were versing other schools. ... And we won most of them games.” Winning was the first thing Edward stated when describing playing for his school.

When describing the games he played during recess and lunch Edward said, “it was mostly competitive. ... It was good because there was other players like me.” Edward did like to compete and enjoyed it when there were others who liked competing.

Referees were good as long as they weren't intimidated.

Edward describing the referees at Cockburn he said, “some who were good and some who didn't know what they were doing.” He knew a referee was good when “they watched every bit of the game and tell you what you've done wrong. ... if you done a foul or something you walk up to them and some players start swearing and that and just walk up and say, ‘What happened?’ and they just tell you what happened. ... And you just walk away.” Edward appreciated it when referees would explain why they made a decision and tell you what you've done wrong.

Edward thought some referees were bad “Because ... there were heaps of times when you used to put up shots and players try to block the ball. And they used to punch me in the jaw.” Edward said the reason nothing was called was “probably because they were Aboriginal,” referring to the player, and the referees were intimidated by the Aboriginal players. Edward clearly had some bad experiences with Aboriginal players and prejudices towards Aboriginals.

When asked what the standard of umpiring in football Edward said, “some were good but the ones that were scared of Aboriginals weren't very good.” He said he knew the umpires were scared because he could see it in:

their face, like, if I got hit or something, when I was down, ... they'd just say, 'What happened?' and then they would send the ball up. ... Because they were scared of ... that Aboriginal boy. What he was going to do to that umpire after the game.

Edward appreciated it when referees and umpires were fair and would explain why they made their decision, in both basketball and football.

Football was my first sport.

I used to start mucking around as soon as ... I was four. ... Nearly four with my dad. ... Used to go down the park kick the football, you know. With all my cousins coz they're the same age. ... It was good because the longer you play the better you get. ... there were mini games with ropes that we used to play at the club. I started playing football for a little while with my friend down the road.

Edward's father introduced him to football at a very early age. The fact that he was happy to have begun football so early, as it meant he would become quite skilful, means that Edward took football quite seriously and had footballing ambitions.

Edward began playing club football at the age of six and whilst describing the restrictions placed on that age group for football he said, "Everyone had a fair chance of getting the ball. ... It was better because you'd know your teammates a lot better because if you were in one section you learn more and then you'd have to pass the ball each time." Edward liked the restrictions because of what he and his teammates learned.

Even when Edward spoke about why he liked trying new sports he referred to football, “Coz ... if I played soccer and be goalie it would help me in football for my handling of the ball being a goalie and catching it and keep my hands on it. And in football it could help me with my marking. So it was interesting.” Football was Edward’s favourite sport and everything else was looked at as how it would help his football skills.

At one stage Edward played hockey and soccer and at another time he played lacrosse and he had the same reason for quitting each of them, “Because I was concentrating on football.” Even though Edward played a number of other sports, football always was the sport he loved most, wanted to experience success in the most and where he wanted to focus his attentions.

#### 4.5.3 Interview 2

The second interview focussed on Edward’s experiences during the critical time when he was considering leaving Cockburn Basketball. All quotes are obtained from interview two which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 301 - 313). The main themes that emerged from the second interview were: Football was the only sport for me; I still liked playing other sports; I had great coaches, teammates and parents in every sport; I still liked learning and I was competitive; I was really good at football and pretty good at other sports too; and The referees were good as long as they weren’t intimidated by the Aboriginal players.

Football was the only sport for me.

Football was Edward's first sport, the sport he loved the most and the sport he wants to make use of as a career. When asked when he first began thinking about quitting basketball Edward said, "the second season of basketball. I started ... thinking about football and career." This is remarkably similar to what occurred with soccer and hockey. With those sports he chose to quit so he could concentrate his efforts on football.

Edward said that football was his favourite sport:

Football last year, I was playing for the same team and we lost ... two games the whole season. We got into the Grand Final and got beaten by the same team we beat this year by the exact same amount of points. ... It was my favourite sport ... coz you get to push people around and bump 'em and ... get to mark the ball and tackles, you get to run up and down the field ...

Albeit Edward detested fighting and was loathe to other people being overly aggressive and physical towards him Edward enjoyed the thump and bump of football.

Edward was a highly skilful football player during 1998, "I got runner-up in the junior football WAFL. With all the clubs, East Fremantle and South Fremantle. ... Doing the ruck." Edward was an impressive football player as a junior. This is highlighted when he spoke about coaches approaching him to play football for their club, "Yeah ... I've got heaps of ... press now ... since I've been playing football ... that many want me to play for them. ... I just have to figure out who I want to play for." When asked if these people came from East Fremantle, West Perth et cetera Edward said, "Yeah. ... Except

for South Fremantle.” Edward said the people that spoke to him about going to their club expressed that:

they need someone like me and to win games and play for top grade like South Fremantle Colts and East Fremantle and all that. ... They ring me up. ... They just want me to be in the middle all day and ... win the ball.

When asked how this made him feel Edward said, “It was good because it gives me a boost in my career in football.” As mentioned previously, Edward had ambitions to make use of football as a career and he thought his chances were very good of doing so.

When asked what he remembered most about football in 1998 Edward said:

Just the fights people used to have on the field .... It was just bad because it isn't a boxing ring, ... it's a footy field to play sport. ... It isn't a big boxing match where everyone's trying to kill each other.

Even though there was a lot of fighting in football, which Edward detested, it didn't detract from Edward's love of football and his determination to use it as a career.

The seriousness in which Edward took football is illustrated when he said:

now I've started football and should I keep going or shouldn't I. ... Because you'd have to choose a career, ... stay at school, ... go out to Tafe finish courses or stay at football or do them both at the same time.

Edward's only consideration, when it came to sport, was to play football.

I still liked playing other sports.

When asked how he felt about basketball during his final season at Cockburn in 1998 Edward said, “Yeah it felt good because you knew how old you were and the opposition

you're playing against and how old they were. And you wanted to try and beat them because how old they were." Edward enjoyed playing basketball at Cockburn and found it challenging too play against older players. Edward played baseball whilst playing his final season of basketball at Cockburn and said he enjoyed that also.

I had great coaches, teammates and parents in every sport.

Whenever Edward was asked to describe his coach, no matter what sport was being discussed, he described them as supportive and that they used to "tell you bad things then your good things. And you feel real good about yourself because they left all the good things at the end."

Edward always described his teammates as supportive in every sport he played. When he played basketball at Cockburn his teammates taught him "more tricks and what to do when someone's coming on to you." His basketball teammates never yelled at him and offered their support, especially after games when they would say, "'Well done,' 'For how old you are, don't worry about it.' 'Don't care about what people say about you, you played a good game.'"

Edward's teammates in football were, "alright coz I knew everyone from school .... Coz everyone done teamwork and played every little bit of the game and they won the game. ... they pass the ball around and if you missed the goal ... most of the team in that area run up and tap them on the back and say, 'Better luck next time.'" Edward saw a lot of positive traits in his football teammates and who were, once again, supportive.

Even in baseball Edward had supportive teammates:



They were all supportive because one time I was playing on first base and I was watching second base and our pitcher pitched it ... at me, a pick off, and I was watching second base and I turned around to watch the ball again and it hit me in the head. ... And I was knocked out. ... everyone ran over and that's when they were real supportive and said don't worry about it. ... But they still got the bloke out anyway. ... Because he just stopped there.

When asked what aspect of his teammates was more important Edward said:

It has to be ... supportive. ... So that builds you up to work hard. ... coz the more people cheer the more you want to get that person out or catch a ball. ... And they'd chew 'em out. So more supportive and this builds you up to work hard.

Edward liked and had supportive teammates in every sport he played.

Edward described the parents at football as supportive:

Everyone's parents, err ... sometimes they would ... put the other team down but if it's your team they were really supportive. ... cheer. ... And when you get goals ... they'd cheer and say, 'Well done.' ... And if you missed they'd say, 'Better luck next time,' ... and, 'Keep trying.'

In the previous interview Edward described the parents as supportive in every sport he played. This was the case again in football during the critical time when he was considering quitting basketball.

I still liked learning and I was competitive.

Edward continued to demonstrate his love of learning in the second interview. He described his basketball team during his last season at Cockburn as, “a good team because they were older and they knew more stuff. So more stuff to do playing basketball and more tricks and what to do when someone’s coming on to you.” During practice sessions and games his teammates offer advice on appropriate actions for a variety of situations. Although basketball wasn’t his number one sport he still enjoyed learning more and more about it and strived to improve as a basketball player.

Edward continued to be competitive during his final season of basketball. Edward expressed his desire to beat other teams in basketball as they were older than him. Winning in basketball meant more to Edward since he was younger than his fellow players. The first thing touched on when discussing his football team was the fact they had only “lost two games the whole season. We got into the Grand Final and got beaten by the same team we beat this year by the exact same amount of points.” Edward was aware of the number games his team won and lost which indicates it must have held some special meaning for him.

I was really good at football and pretty good at other sports too.

Edward was an exceptional football player in 1998 since he was the runner-up in junior Western Australian Football League (WAFL) and was approached by numerous coaches from other WAFL clubs requesting him to play for them. Being approached by coaches from different WAFL clubs was particularly pleasing to Edward as he hoped to have a career with football.

In basketball Edward played his second season in under eighteens again which he said was, “Coz of my height.” During his second basketball season in the CBA Edward played hard and always did his best to beat opposition teams. Edward’s determination to win in basketball is often found to be a characteristic of those who have a high self-esteem. This means Edward was either possessed good skills for basketball or he transferred his confidence from football into basketball.

When asked how he thought of himself as a baseball player Edward said:

In baseball my percent was six hundred. [For] Hitting the ball. ... the highest it is ... eight hundred. Eight hundred percent and mine was six. And I hit thirteen homeruns, that’s during the whole season, thirteen homeruns, about eighteen first base hits, about ten outs.

When asked how he rated himself during 1998 as a baseball player Edward said, “Good.” Edward experienced success in most sports he played both on an individual and team basis.

The referees were good as long as they weren’t intimidated by the Aboriginals players.

Edward liked it when referees and umpires were fair, which for Edward meant they couldn’t be intimidated by anyone. When asked about referees he said:

There were some referees were ... picking up every foul and just the others don’t worry about it. ... Aboriginal kids, some referees were ... scared of them. Like, in football they were scared of them and they don’t want to

know about it. ... You could tell because ... sometimes you'd get hit by an Aboriginal player and the umpire steps in and then he'd say he didn't see it.

Edward continued to show prejudice toward Aboriginals.

#### 4.5.4 Interview 3

The third interview focussed on why Edward made the decision to discontinue his participation in basketball at Cockburn. "I stopped playing basketball coz I have a career in football playing for colts. ... [for] South Fremantle." All quotes are obtained from interview three which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 314 - 318). The following themes arose: I quit basketball to concentrate on football; Basketball was only a fun thing; and Playing under eighteens at Cockburn may have had an effect.

##### I quit basketball to concentrate on football.

"I stopped playing basketball because .... If I play basketball it's ... more time that I could be spending for my career in football." Edward believed he had a career in football and quit basketball so he could concentrate on his career in football. When asked on what occasion he thought he had a career in football Edward said, "I had a career in football as soon as I started ... getting told by other coaches that they needed me." That is coaches from "Other teams like East Fremantle, Subi and South Fremantle and Peel Thunder."

Edward did not think he had the same prospects in basketball as he did in football, "Coz I started playing football, because I started young ... so I knew more about football than

basketball.” Even if Edward was approached by someone from the Wildcats he would have chosen football:

because football I know a lot more about and ... I was big. Being in the ruck all the time made a player, kind of, play the ball and ... in basketball, like, you can get umm .... Basketball is a lot harder than football in handling the ball. ... Skills and .... In football you can run ten metres and you bounce it once ... and kick it and in basketball you have bounce it and not double dribble or anything.

Edward felt more comfortable with football than basketball since he had played it longer, found it easier and was surrounded by a football culture. Edward’s statements about football coaches show the football culture that surrounded him:

Some of them might been brought up with the school and outside of school like coaches, like my dad used to get coached by, he used to coach him. And I knew him so that was a lot better coz I knew him and they, they’d do anything to help me.

Compared to basketball, “because in basketball ... you didn’t play for them for, you hardly knew anyone and most of my mates played football.” The football culture Edward was brought up in also included most of his friends playing football.

Basketball was only a fun thing.

Edward did not take basketball nearly as seriously as he did football. When asked what he would change at Cockburn Edward said:

I’d change some team’s, their attitudes in the coaches and the teammates of, like if we’re losing they don’t care because they’re the better team ... And

change that because it's just a game of basketball. You try your hardest every four quarters instead of giving up ... every second ... if you're losing.

Edward said losing wasn't such a big deal because it was only a basketball game. Edward took football more seriously, though one could easily argue that Edward's response to losses in basketball illustrates his ability to see the big picture when playing sports. Thus Edward would respond in the same manner to losses in football.

#### Playing under eighteens at Cockburn may have had an effect.

When asked if he thought whether playing in under eighteens at the age of fourteen had an effect Edward responded, "Yeah. It was a big effect because of how old they were ... and how young I was, ball skills and handling and all that." When comparing himself as a basketball player to others his age Edward said, "I was alright, like, to them they give me the ball and all that and not got it stolen off me." Edward clearly thought playing in a higher age group had some impact on his decision to quit basketball.

#### 4.5.5 Summary

Edward only played basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium in 1998 at the age of thirteen, turning fourteen. He played once a week over two seasons at Cockburn. He achieved the level of playing under eighteens in the CBA. Whilst playing basketball at Cockburn Edward also played football, baseball and soccer. Edward's first sporting love was football, which was the sport he wanted to play the most and pursue as a possible career.

Edward thoroughly enjoyed playing and learning about other sports and was good at any sport he chose. In basketball Edward was of a good size and well skilled and so played in the higher age group. In every sport he played all the parents were supportive, he also had supportive teammates and Edward had many positive experiences with coaches. His own parents had some influence over which sports he attempted but did not push him to look at football as a future career. Edward made no mention that his parents pushed him in any way in football. He experienced good and bad referees and umpires in both football and basketball. Edward also had some bad experiences with Aboriginal players in both football and basketball. These factors had no impact on Edward's decision to quit basketball. Edward's decision to quit basketball involved a conflict of time, in other words he wanted to spend all his spare time playing and practicing football. Edward said in the third interview, "I stopped playing basketball coz I have a career in football playing for colts. ... [for] South Fremantle."

#### 4.6 Fred Developed Osgood Schlatter's Disease

##### 4.6.1 Introduction

For the purpose of the study I will call Subject F Fred. Fred was born in 1984 in Australia, which made him fifteen at the time of the interviews. Fred was of below average height for his age at about 165 cm tall with a lean body and blonde hair. His parents were born in the United Kingdom, have "split" and worked as a school secretary and photo journalist. Fred also had a sister.

Whilst playing at Cockburn Fred lived in South Fremantle and attended only one primary school and one high school. Fred started playing basketball at Cockburn

Basketball Stadium at the age of nine and played through to the age of thirteen. Fred played once a week for nine seasons at the domestic level at Cockburn. Whilst playing basketball at Cockburn Fred started skate boarding with his friends and was surfing, skating and playing basketball at the time of the interviews. All the interviews were conducted in Fred's home. The second and third interviews were conducted on the same day a week after the first interview. The reason for the second and third interviews being conducted on the same day was because the second interview indicated quite clearly, and it was proven in the third interview, the reason for Fred's decision to quit playing basketball at Cockburn was due to an injury.

#### 4.6.2 Interview 1

The first interview focussed on Fred's past experiences with sport, prior to the time when he first began to consider leaving Cockburn Basketball, and any experiences similar to what he experienced at Cockburn during the critical time when he was deciding to stop playing basketball. All quotes are obtained from interview one which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 319 - 334). The main themes that emerged from this interview were: I liked playing with my friends; My teammates were pretty cool; Most of the time I had good coaches; The parents were always supportive; I like a bit of competition; and I don't remember much about referees or opposition teams.

##### I liked playing with my friends.

Fred played basketball at Cockburn since his friends were playing and it was close to where he lived. "The first game I remember playing .... It would probably be basketball.



... It was at Cockburn. I always played ... at Cockburn because it was just the closest and plus my mates would play there.” Playing with friends close to where he lived was also the reason he played pick-up basketball on the street:

Actually I remember playing basketball on the street a bit. It wasn't until after I was playing at Cockburn that we played on the street. ... we were just messing around. We just had a board up on someone's driveway and were just shooting around. No full-on game. ... I played on the street because all my friends would play on the street near me. It was a good fun thing, but then different blokes from school started playing at Cockburn and playing in this team and I ended up going in a different team with this kid from school. ... Yeah so I just wanted to play.

Not only did Fred like playing with his friends but he also enjoyed playing sport.

Fred played basketball during recess and lunch in primary school along with fifteen or twenty others. This was “pretty fun. ... Just coz there was heaps of people. It made it more a challenge.” These descriptions were about the time when Fred was in years six and seven. During these games Fred and two of his friends were the more skilful players. When Fred’s friend George was on his team, “it would be ... fun but we’d just ... play ... coz usually we’d beat other people that was just a bunch of little kids.” When George was on the other team, “it would be a bit more competitive. I would be able to try and beat him and he would try and beat me. ... I liked both.” Fred really enjoyed these games and liked playing with his friends. Some other games Fred played in primary school were, “chasey and kick the footy a bit. ... That was about it.”

Friends influenced Fred indirectly when it came to skate boarding also:

it was just what everyone was doing. ... I like ... skateboarding and that's what I do now. ... I'm pretty keen. ... Mum gave me a skateboard and my friends from school could skate and I thought 'Oh yeah!' ... Yeah sometimes I'd take it to school. ... I always wanted to do it from there on. ... It was just what everyone did.

Fred began skateboarding at the age of thirteen and was often physically active with his friends.

My teammates were pretty cool.

When asked about his teammates in under twelves at Cockburn Fred said:

I think we had this one player called Barry and he was probably the best in the team. He was told to be point guard a bit. ... But it wasn't always based around the one player. ... He was still he was a good player. ... I knew most of the players pretty well. That was pretty good.

Though Fred knew his teammates quite well he didn't hang out with any of his teammates after games during under twelves.

Most of the time I had good coaches.

A big factor for Fred liking his coaches was whether they gave out equal court time or not. Whilst talking about his under tens team at Cockburn Fred made special mention of the coach whom he thought was "pretty cool":

I remember the guy that was coaching, I think his name was Aidan. ... he was a pretty cool coach. ... It was just the way he treated you. Pretty relaxed, he would stick close to what we would do. He was just good at it.

Fred liked his coach in under tens as he did the coach in under twelves:

We had a tall lanky coach named Cameron. ... I liked him. ... He was pretty cool. He made us do a lot of running. ... He was just cool. He gave everyone about the same amount of court time which was good. ... coz you knew you were going to go on.

The fact that Fred emphasised that he appreciated Cameron giving everyone equal court time suggests that Fred may not have been one of the better players in the team. When asked about the running Cameron made his team do Fred said, "I didn't care too much but with some other people it did. ... We had around the oval then come back into the stadium. ... he was pretty positive."

When Fred spoke about his first season in under fourteens he highlighted the difference between the two coaches, specifically how much court time he was given:

I'd gone to Timbertigers. I was playing with a bunch of guys that already had ... I still had one guy, Dean. I got into his team ... I was always on his team. We played with a whole bunch of guys that already .... Yeah, well we hardly got any court time, he got more than I did ... coz that, you know Elliot. Well you know that Frasier. ... His son Elliot. ... He ... was supposed to give everyone equal court time but he didn't. That was the reason Frasier was good because he gave everyone equal court time. ... If didn't think you were one of the good players on the team, he'd be spewing if there was a travel and take you off. ... But it doesn't really matter ... because Elliot didn't give you any court time at all because if you were,

because all the other guys were older and much better ... and bigger and they got heaps more court time than us.

Fred did not like the fact that Elliot didn't give out equal court time, again suggesting that Fred wasn't as skilled as his teammates. When asked further about Elliot as a coach Fred said:

He didn't really care. ... He didn't really care that much. ... He would just put the good players on, maybe yell a bit. ... He came across as someone who had a lot to do with the game but I don't think he knew what it was about. ... He didn't ... didn't know type of skills or anything .... Oh I just didn't get anything out of it. ... He never really paid much attention to the game.

When asked how he felt about Elliot not paying too much attention during games Fred said, "I didn't really care that much." Fred really didn't like Elliot as a coach, which combined with not getting too much court time, impacted on Fred's enjoyment of the game.

#### The parents were always supportive.

Fred had supportive parents throughout his time at Cockburn Basketball Stadium. When asked about the parents at basketball Fred said:

In under tens they were really ... positive and that's not really the right ... ahh ... pushing us to do well and stuff like that. Umm give us heaps of confidence .... In under twelves they would be the same but they didn't care much about the running. ... He stopped that after a while. ... there were ... barracking dads. There would be some dads that would come to the game

and we would have them saying, 'Come on the Hawks!' They would be the loudest so everyone could hear them, they used to shout. ... That was pretty cool. ... And after the games they would say, 'yeah you played really well.' ... He would ... give you complements on what you did.

Fred stated that none of the parents were negative, just positive, supportive and did lots of cheering.

When asked about the parents in under fourteens Fred said, "Oh they all thought he was a bit of a dickhead that he didn't give me much time. ... That was only me and Dean's parents. ... mine and Dean's parents were supportive all the time." Fred was referring to the parents thinking Elliot was not a good coach. When asked if he remembered the other parents of the team Fred said, "Nah coz ... this was the first season I played with all those guys so I didn't know whose parents they were"

#### I like a bit of competition.

Fred was competitive but didn't always compete in everything he did, rather he preferred to have fun and be in the action. When talking about playing under tens basketball Fred said, "we made it to the grand ... finals. We versed against the Timbertigers and we lost by, oh I was on the Hawks." Then when discussing the playing in under twelves, "I remember ... there was this other team called the Rookies, they were number one and we were number two. In the semi-finals ... we played well. I think ... we beat them in the semi-finals or the finals and we went to McDonalds. That was pretty cool." Fred never mentioned individual games other than finals and whether his team won those or not, which points to Fred exhibiting some competitiveness. The

theme that Fred appreciated it when his coach gave out equal court time illustrates that playing was more important than winning.

When Fred was asked whether he took the basketball games played at school seriously he responded with, “Depends on how many people were playing and who was playing.” If he was on his friend George’s team, he and George would just have fun whereas if George was on the opposition team they would compete against each other. In this situation playing time was not an issue since anyone who wanted to play played.

I don’t remember much about referees or opposition teams.

The only time Fred ever discussed referees at Cockburn Stadium was to say, ““I think there was a guy who was short. ... He would talk to you sometimes. ... He was just always around the stadium. ... Cameron was a referee.” Referees clearly had no impact on Fred whilst playing at Cockburn.

Whenever Fred was asked about opposition basketball teams he only mentioned the top team in the competition. In under twelves there was the Rookies who:

had one really good player and average players on the rest of the team but they were a good team. ... This one guy I knew ... He was good. There were a few others as well but I think he stood out.

They were a good team “probably because they clicked as a team.”

When asked about opposition teams during under fourteens Fred spoke about the best team in the competition:

there was in the second under fourteens season. There was one team, another Timbertigers team, they were the top team, ... practically every one of them was a Cougars player. ... I think they wanted to play as that team. That was the team that took all the good players. ... That Frasier guy was their coach.

Fred was aware that the good players in the competition went to play for the Timbertigers.

#### 4.6.3 Interview 2

The second interview focussed on Fred's experiences during the critical time when he was considering leaving Cockburn Basketball. All quotes are obtained from interview two which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (pp. 335 - 338). The main themes that emerged from the second interview were: I was told I had Osgood Schlatter's Disease; I was doing heaps of skating; My teammates were cool and so were the parents; and I'm glad I got a different coach in my last season.

##### I was told I had Osgood Schlatter's Disease.

When asked on what occasion Fred first considered quitting basketball at Cockburn he said:

Well during games and after games my knees hurted a lot and I used to think, 'That's a bit crap'. ... I had to get it checked out by a doctor and she said I had Osgood Schlatter's Disease. Umm ... that's from the repetitive ... impact.

When asked when these pains started he said, “probably before the first season of under fourteens. ... she just said it probably was a good idea if I didn’t keep playing.” After being given this information by the doctor Fred was, “A bit spewing. Coz ... I wasn’t just stop playing basketball, it was more like I couldn’t skate on it, do jumps and stuff like that. I couldn’t jump or anything like that.” Fred was very disappointed about the news since it inhibited his chances to play basketball and skate. Fred was unable to complete his last season of under fourteens at Cockburn, which was during the second semester of 1997, plus Fred wasn’t able to participate in Physical Education at school or play anything during recess or lunch.

I was doing heaps of skating.

Fred said he started skating the Christmas before his last season at Cockburn and, “I was just starting to stand up and yeah the doctor said I probably had to stop that. ... I remember I used to skate almost everyday after school.”

My teammates were cool and so were the parents.

Fred enjoyed playing in his last team and a major reason for that were his teammates. When asked what his teammates on the Timbertigers were like in his last season Fred said:

They were pretty cool. ... I really liked the team I was on, it was a good team for once. ... I was still on that other team when Elliot was the coach, with him I didn’t care as much. We had a good team and I had been there and in the end we had a decent coach. That was Frasier. ... they were a pretty good team. Heath, our best forward was on the team, I’d never been



on his team before. ... And Dean was on it, I hadn't been on his team since under tens. ... I like being on Dean's team.

When asked about parents during his last season Fred said, "They were pretty much the same. Dean's dad was still loud I reckon. They were heaps positive. ... Yeah all the parents would sit with each other." Once again Fred had supportive parents when playing basketball at Cockburn.

I'm glad I got a different coach in my last season.

Fred stating that he didn't care as much when Elliot was the coach, along with previous descriptions of Elliot, clearly illustrates Fred's abhorrence for Elliot as a coach.

Whereas Fred liked Elliot's dad Frasier because:

Got a lot of equal court time and ... he treated everyone exactly the same.

He didn't care who was who. It was always the same at training and the same warm-ups and everything like that, you know. Good warm-ups and ... good ... drills at training and everyone got equal court time.

Fred said Frasier's drills were good because they were fun, he learned something and he improved. He described Frasier as:

fair. He wasn't really positive or negative. He would just say, 'Do that,' sort of thing. Like, 'This is what you should be doing, this is what you shouldn't do.' 'This is what this team is like, this is what you have to do to beat them.'

Fred much preferred Frasier as the coach since he was able to get into the action more so than when playing for Elliot. Fred appreciated other aspects of Frasier as a coach but the fact that Fred made special mention of equal court time suggests that he may not

have been a good player compared to his teammates. The fact remains that Fred enjoyed playing with his last team both because of impact of his teammates and the coach.

Frasier also coached another team in the same competition, “I remember the other Timbertigers team. They were the top team and Frasier was their coach. Yeah they were the team I was saying before they ... had all the good players.”

#### 4.6.4 Interview 3

The third interview focussed on why Fred made the decision to discontinue his participation in basketball at Cockburn. The quote used was obtained from interview three which can be viewed in full in the Interview Booklet (p. 339). When asked why he stopped playing basketball at Cockburn Fred said:

the doctor said wait until my knees got better. So I thought ‘Oh yeah, that’s one or two seasons’ obviously to try go back about now. Yeah it’s been ages since then in the end. Yeah I stopped to try and get my knees better.

That was the only reason Fred gave for his discontinuing playing basketball. Fred said there was nothing else that contributed to his decision.

#### 4.6.5 Summary

Basketball was the first and only club sport Fred played up to the time of the interviews. Fred began playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium at the age of nine and played through to the age of thirteen. Whilst playing basketball at Cockburn Fred started skate boarding with his friends and was surfing, skating and playing basketball at the time of the interviews.

Fred enjoyed playing with his friends, which is how he got started with skating and basketball, both socially and at Cockburn Basketball Stadium. Throughout his time playing basketball at Cockburn Fred liked his teammates and the parents were very supportive and encouraging. Fred only disliked one of his coaches but only played for him for less than a season, he enjoyed playing for the other coaches. The last coach Fred had at Cockburn was one he liked since he was given the same amount of court time as his teammates.

Fred enjoyed being active, especially with basketball and skating, so when he was advised by the doctor to stop playing sport to rehabilitate his knees he was understandably disappointed. The sole reason for his decision to quit playing basketball at Cockburn was purely to enhance his recovery from Osgood Schlatter's Disease. One could say that because he wasn't one of the better players contributed to the decision but he enjoyed his time playing basketball and being with his mates too much for that to be a factor. Like Fred said, "Yeah I stopped to try and get my knees better."

## 5.0 Discussion

Before discussing the reasons for drop-out for each of the six participants, I think it is important to describe the context of what happened, basketball-wise, during the years when the participants of this study played basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium. The reasons for drop-out from basketball for each of the participants are discussed individually then comparisons are made to show the uniqueness of each of the participants and their reasons. Finally issues that arose in the literature review but not in the study are also highlighted.

### 5.1 Contemporary Context of Basketball

Each of the years that the participants of this study played basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium is shown below with information regarding men's basketball discussed at four levels: the world, national level, Cockburn representative sides, and Cockburn juniors. It is important to highlight what happened each year in basketball as it provides a context for when each of the study's participants played their basketball.

**1992 – Andrew**

<b>World</b>	<p>The Australian Boomers finished sixth in the Olympic Games.</p> <p>The first year NBA players were permitted to play in the Olympics.</p> <p>Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls won their second NBA Championship.</p> <p>Michael Jordan was becoming a world figure.</p> <p>NBA games were shown on free to air television during the day on Saturdays.</p>
<b>National</b>	<p>The Perth Wildcats finished sixth at the end of the season and lost the grand final. The previous two years the Wildcats won back-to-back titles. NBL</p>

	games shown live on television as well as there being a couple of other basketball shows about NBA and NBL.
<b>Cougars</b>	The Cockburn Cougars Men's team won the SBL title.  One junior Cougar team won a WABL title and a couple of other teams made the finals.
<b>Cockburn Juniors</b>	There were over one hundred junior teams at Cockburn coming up from around sixty teams in the mid-1980s.

1993 – Andrew, Ben, David, Fred

<b>World</b>	Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls won their third NBA Championship.  Michael Jordan announced his retirement from basketball.  NBA games were shown on free to air television during the day on Saturdays.
<b>National</b>	The Perth Wildcats finished first at the end of the season and lost in the semi-finals. NBL games shown live on television as well as there being a couple of other basketball shows about NBA and NBL.
<b>Cougars</b>	The Cockburn Cougars Men's team got into the SBL grand final after finishing first at the end of the season.  Some of the junior boy's teams made the WABL finals but none won the whole competition for their age group.
<b>Cockburn Juniors</b>	The number of junior teams playing domestically at Cockburn continued to increase.

1994 – Andrew, Ben, Charlie, David, Fred

<b>World</b>	NBA games were shown on free to air television during the day on Saturdays.
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<b>National</b>	The Perth Wildcats finished sixth at the end of the season and lost the grand final. NBL games shown live on television as well as there being a couple of other basketball shows about NBA and NBL.
<b>Cougars</b>	The Cockburn Cougars Men's team lost in the quarter-finals, had three different head coaches during the season.  The under fourteens won the right to go to Tasmania as one of the two touring teams to represent WA. The under twelves won the mid-year carnival at Perry Lakes. Most of the junior boys teams made the WABL finals with a couple winning the whole competition.
<b>Cockburn Juniors</b>	The number of junior teams continued to increase.

1995 – Andrew, Ben, Charlie, David, Fred

<b>World</b>	Michael Jordan came back to basketball. NBA games were shown on free to air television during the day on Saturdays.
<b>National</b>	The Perth Wildcats finished first at the end of the season and won the NBL championship in front of a home crowd. NBL games shown live on television as well as there being a couple of other basketball shows about NBA and NBL.
<b>Cougars</b>	The Cockburn Cougars Men's team lost in the semi-finals.  All the junior boys teams made the WABL finals with a couple winning the whole competition.
<b>Cockburn Juniors</b>	The number of junior teams playing domestically at Cockburn continued to increase.

## 1996 – Andrew, Charlie, David, Fred

<b>World</b>	<p>The Boomers finished fourth in the Olympic Games. The team had two players from the Perth Wildcats.</p> <p>Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls won their fourth NBA Championship in six years with the help of Dennis Rodman and Fremantle's Luc Longley.</p> <p>NBA games continued to be shown on free to air television.</p>
<b>National</b>	<p>The Perth Wildcats finished third at the end of the season and lost in the semi-finals. NBL games shown live on television as well as there being a couple of other basketball shows about NBA and NBL.</p>
<b>Cougars</b>	<p>The Cockburn Cougars Men's team lost in the quarter-finals after finishing second at the end of the season.</p> <p>All the junior boys teams made the WABL finals with a couple winning the whole competition.</p>
<b>Cockburn Juniors</b>	<p>Number junior teams rose to just under 200.</p>

## 1997 – Andrew, Charlie, Fred

<b>World</b>	<p>Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls won their fifth NBA Championship with the help of Dennis Rodman and Fremantle's Luc Longley.</p> <p>NBA games were shown on Foxtel and one game a week was shown late on Friday nights on free to air television.</p>
<b>National</b>	<p>The Perth Wildcats finished fourth at the end of the season and lost in the semi-finals. NBL still shown on free to air but live not as often some games shown at 10:30 pm in the evenings on free to air television.</p>

<b>Cougars</b>	<p>The Cockburn Cougars Men's team lost in the semi-finals after finishing fourth at the end of the season.</p> <p>All the junior boys teams made the WABL finals with a couple winning the whole competition.</p>
<b>Cockburn Juniors</b>	<p>The number of junior teams playing domestically at Cockburn was slowly decreasing.</p>

## 1998 – Edward

<b>World</b>	<p>Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls won their sixth NBA Championship with the help of Dennis Rodman and Fremantle's Luc Longley.</p> <p>NBA games were shown in Foxtel and one game a week was shown late on Friday nights.</p>
<b>National</b>	<p>The Perth Wildcats finished third at the end of the season and lost in the semi-finals. NBL games were shown live on Foxtel and some games shown at 10:30 pm in the evenings on free to air television.</p>
<b>Cougars</b>	<p>The Cockburn Cougars Men's team played in the SBL grand final after finishing first at the end of the season.</p> <p>All the junior boys teams made the WABL finals with a couple winning the whole competition.</p>
<b>Cockburn Juniors</b>	<p>Number of junior teams playing domestically at Cockburn dropped to just above 110.</p>



## 5.2 Reasons For Drop Out

From this study I have found that the reasons given by each of the participants for dropping out from basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium were distinctly different and idiosyncratic. I believe this clearly implies that one cannot obtain reasons for drop-out from one person and use that to generalise across any population of drop-outs as being the sole reason or reasons.

### 5.2.1 Andrew (14)

Andrew played basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium for six years from 1992 to 1997. He reached a high level in basketball, in fact in all sports, but dropped out of basketball at the age of fourteen. Andrew received a basketball scholarship to attend high school. A scholarship meant the student did not need to live in the area to attend the high school and was given specialised basketball coaching during school hours. Andrew valued success and winning and wanted to have fun but over the years he experienced less and less fun and success whilst playing basketball for the Cougars. This along with teammates, parents and coaches all had an impact on Andrew's enjoyment of the game. He enjoyed rough and tough sports and physical activities and by the age of fourteen he had lost the passion for basketball.

Andrew craved success and loved to win. Andrew thought the desire to win and succeed began when he participated in his primary school's athletics carnival. His desire to win and succeed stemmed from when he added the meaning of 'people want you to win and people like winners' to winning. This meaning would have arisen during his experiences during the school athletics carnivals, watching the popular Donald win his

aces and receiving loads of recognition and furthermore the responses from the parents when Andrew's under tens basketball team won the grand final. In contrast to this Andrew did mention in the first interview that winning wasn't enough to keep him interested in Minkey. The WA Ministry of Sport and Recreation (1996) and Sale (1991) found some young people enjoy the competitive aspect of sport. Over the years Andrew's WABL team experienced less and less success. This reduction in winning and Andrew's value for winning clearly influenced his decision to quit basketball at Cockburn.

Andrew's parents raised him with a focus on having fun and also to make his own decisions, which Andrew took on as part of his beliefs. Muuss (1996) explained that interpersonal relationships influence a person's development and what they are and "the self-system organises these experiences and integrates them into a screening filter through which the individual perceives and evaluates these events" (p. 88). Andrew would have viewed the parents of his Cougar teammates through a filter of "parents are supposed to be supportive and let the children decide for themselves what they want to do." When you combine his upbringing with his descriptions of the WABL parents one could easily conclude that these parents had a negative impact on Andrew's enjoyment of basketball. He used descriptions for the WABL parents such as 'they wanted to win more than the players' and 'putting the players down after a game.' The WA Ministry of Sport and Recreation (1996) found that whilst some adolescents didn't like competition, "Others didn't mind competition, but felt uncomfortable when the outcome or result was highlighted by parents, teachers and coaches" (p. 10). Bandura's social cognitive theory (cited in Anderssen & Wold, 1992, p. 341) "points to the importance of a

supportive environment to performing, establishing, and maintaining a pattern or regular physical activity.” The parents of his Cougar teammates noticeably influenced Andrew’s decision to quit basketball. Andrew’s comments clearly illustrate that he felt pressure from the WABL parents rather than support. Ryckman and Hamel (1995) found that:

Hypercompetitive parents may also hinder the personal development of their sports-active children. ... there are parents who show little concern for the views of officials, for other children involved, or for their own children for that matter. ... Such parents ... do themselves, their children, and the sport a great disservice. (p. 392)

Andrew’s descriptions undoubtedly suggest that some parents were hypercompetitive which also point to these parents having a negative impact on Andrew. Harry Stack Sullivan’s Theory (cited in Muuss, 1996, p. 87) supports this, “The effects of interpersonal relationships can, of course, be both constructive and destructive.”

Hypercompetitiveness is defined by Ryckman and Hamel (1995) as that which:

involves an indiscriminate and excessive need to compete and win (and to avoid losing) at any cost as a means of maintaining or enhancing feelings of personal worth and superiority, with an attendant orientation of aggressiveness, exploitation, and denigration of others. (p. 387)

In the fundamental basis for this study I had stated that the experiences that have the greatest influences on a human’s perception and behaviour almost always involve other human beings. This certainly was the case with the different types of relationships

Andrew had with his own and other parents. It has been found that “Programmes that emphasize competition and outcome over having fun, learning skills and individual improvement are the ones that usually create negative experiences” (Taggart & Sharp, 1997, p. 6). This is supported by the WA Ministry of Sport and Recreation (1996) who found that, “emphasis on and reward for winning decreased their enjoyment of sport” (p. 10). Andrew expressed his dislike that the parents and coaches focussed too much on winning and their motivation for winning led to undesirable actions, such as degrading the players after a loss.

Fun is something Andrew spoke about frequently in the first and second interviews and was obviously very important to him. Taggart and Sharp, (1997, p. 6) found “The literature overwhelmingly supports the notion that children’s motivation to participate in sport is to have fun and to be involved with their friends.” There were times when Andrew expressed his opinion that basketball wasn’t fun anymore, especially after his passion for basketball had faded. Andrew’s descriptions of his WABL teammates and their parents illustrate that they had an impact on his perception of basketball and hindered his fun. One could argue that Andrew expressed the belief that he lost the passion first and that contributed to the negative perceptions of events during his final season.

Andrew’s teammates had an impact on his enjoyment of the game. Andrew really enjoyed the company of his teammates in some of his teams, which is when he liked playing basketball. Andrew used scathing remarks for some of his Cougar teammates in the last season he played, which demonstrate that his teammates had a negative effect

on his fun. Andrew's experiences were influenced by his teammates. There exists a substantial amount of research which reveals that significant others do have an impact on the participation in physical activity by young adolescents (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Brown, et al., 1989; Embrey & Drummond, 1996; Sale, 1991; Kirk, 1996; Ryckman & Hamel, 1995; Taggart & Sharp, 1997; WA Ministry of Sport and Recreation, 1996; Weiss et al., 1996).

Andrew was influenced by his various coaches in all the sports that he's played. There were some basketball coaches who had a very positive impact on him and added to Andrew's fun when playing basketball. Andrew discussed some negative aspects of his last Cougar team, such as the constant repetitiveness in practice sessions and lack of discipline within the team, which would be seen as the coach's responsibility. "Coaches and their effectiveness in coaching have a strong impact on young people's perception of and involvement in sport" (Taggart & Sharp, 1997, p. 6). Andrew gave mixed messages with regard to his coaches because at one stage Andrew stated that he believed the coach had nothing to do with his decision to quit basketball.

Andrew enjoyed the rough and tough side of sports. Football is a more aggressive sport than basketball so perhaps, in Andrew's eyes, football was always going to win out as a preference over basketball. Taggart and Sharp (1997) found that 51% of drop-outs were because they found "other activities were more fun than this sport" (p. 27). Andrew's appreciation for the rough and tough side of sports began when he added meaning to the physical aspects of 'Rampage' played in primary school, the reactions he received when he was rough with others during games and from watching professional sports and

observing how the crowds reacted to aggressive, physical plays. Andrew held the belief that the rough and tough stuff was fun.

Andrew was a very active person trying many different sports – water-skiing, cricket, football, basketball, minkey and games at school like rampage and grid iron. Through these numerous experiences Andrew was able to clarify the sort of sport he preferred and thus made a relatively educated decision as to which sport was most appropriate for him. Other players who haven't experienced a variety of sporting experiences may decide to continue with a sport, not knowing any better, even if they experienced some negative feelings when playing that sport. Andrew's decision to quit basketball was related to his preference for another sport.

Andrew maintained that it was from within himself that he made the decision to quit basketball. He believed he lost the passion and found something more enjoyable to play. He was adamant that it wasn't the outside influences that were the primary cause. These were strikingly similar to the reasons Andrew gave for giving up cricket. He had played kanga cricket for six years, began losing interest in it and at that time had found something else, basketball, which was more interesting and fun:

you see the passion to ... play the game ... went down and once that was down all the outside influences ... came at once. ... I just felt like I needed a break ... and get out ... while I was still young I could get out, try something different and if I could I'd come back in and I ... wouldn't have missed much. I guess that's why when I had a year off and played football ... and get a feel and now I come back umm thought, 'Nah, I didn't really

want to be there.’ But I played ... all through the season. ... passion wasn’t there. I didn’t feel that I wanted to play. ... It was coz ... my heart wasn’t into it. I thought, ‘Oh. I don’t really want to be there’ then I shouldn’t be here. ... It wasn’t really, there was a couple of outside influences, like ... teammates, when they stuff up ... it would take the fun out of it. ... you get frustrated and once you start getting frustrated you’re not ... enjoying the game.

While he valued success and competition, Andrew lost the passion for basketball and the fun diminished as a result of less success, negative influences of other parents, teammates and to a lesser extent coaches, and having a preference for the more physical and aggressive sport of football.

### 5.2.2 Ben (12)

Ben began playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium at the age of ten and played for three years from 1993 to 1995, always with his friends from primary school. He never considered himself a good basketball player. Ben’s parents supported him but didn’t know much about basketball. Ben said the major influence on his decision was when he went from primary school to high school and he and his friends set off to different schools.

Ben doubted his abilities before he started playing at Cockburn. When he spoke about his teammates in the second interview he indicated that he sometimes didn’t receive passes from them, which he attributed to his lack of ability. There were many different

situations that would have contributed to Ben's perception of himself as 'not so good' a basketball player but the fact remains that Ben added that meaning to his situation in basketball. Peers influence adolescent participation in sport indirectly through "peer comparison and evaluation", since they are used to determine physical competence (Weiss et al., 1996). This "peer comparison and evaluation ... increase markedly between the ages of 8 and 14 years" (Weiss et al., 1996, p. 348). Ben's perception of his ability did not have an impact on his decision to quit basketball. In hockey Ben thought himself one of the best players on the team.

Ben's father did not have much knowledge when it came to basketball and consequently wasn't able to help Ben improve whereas he often helped Ben with his hockey skills. Ben's father did support him in a general sense when he played basketball. In contrast to basketball his whole family was heavily involved with hockey and that was the sport his father had a large knowledge base. Parents can be perceived to be important sources of reinforcement and role models for young adolescents in sport, but direct help and active support in exercising vigorously were found to relate strongly to an adolescents' participation in leisure-time physical activity (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Kirk, 1996). Ben did acknowledge that his parents' passion for hockey and lack of knowledge of basketball had an impact on his decision to leave basketball. There exists a substantial amount of research which reveals that significant others do have an impact on the participation in physical activity by young adolescents (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Brown, et al., 1989; Embrey & Drummond, 1996; Sale, 1991; Kirk, 1996; Ryckman & Hamel, 1995; Taggart & Sharp, 1997; WA Ministry of Sport and Recreation, 1996;



Weiss et al., 1996). Ben also attributed having lost interest in basketball and wanting to try another sport after the completion of his final basketball season.

It was during the transition from primary school to high school that Ben decided to drop out of basketball at Cockburn. Taggart and Sharp (1997, p. 57) found that “Of the potential drop-outs 42% leave between years 7 and 8. There are many variables that impact on this phenomenon with the shift from primary school to high school clearly being of prime importance.” Ben attributed his friends going to different schools as the main reason behind his decision to quit basketball at Cockburn. Peers are “important socialising agents with respect to sports involvement” and “important sources of reinforcement of physical activity” (Anderssen & Wold, 1992, pp. 342, 345). Not only did Ben’s friends go to different high schools but the majority of the team left to play for other teams. This meant that Ben was unable to continue playing basketball with his friends. This is significant since it has been found that many children are motivated to play a sport when it involves their friends (Taggart & Sharp, 1997).

Burns (1997) contends that the basis of people’s behaviour is how they attach meaning and what meanings they attach to everything in their lives. This is supported by Muuss (1996) who explains that human beings are “meaning-making creatures” (p. 265). Ben added the meaning of ‘basketball won’t be fun if I’m not playing with my friends’ to his friends attending different high schools and changing teams thus causing his drop-out from basketball. “It wasn’t, like, why, like, I wanted to quit but there was just no team to play for so it didn’t bother me. ... Well it did bother me but I just, I didn’t go around looking for another team.”

### 5.2.3 Charlie (12)

Charlie started playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium just before he turned nine and continued playing through to the age of twelve, from 1994 to 1997. Each year he played once or twice a week at CBA's domestic level. Charlie enjoyed being physically active and "mucking around" with his friends. He always considered himself a good basketball player, contrary to the way many of his coaches viewed him. Charlie's favourite sport was basketball when he played at Cockburn and it was still his favourite sport at the time of the interviews. During his first season in under fourteens Charlie felt mistreated by his coaches, thought his teammates were hogs, was given a "scabby uniform," and scouts was more enjoyable so Charlie decided to quit playing basketball at Cockburn.

Charlie wasn't one to compete, he preferred for things to be fair and for there to be lots of sharing. He preferred to just "muck around" and have fun with his friends, which is supported by the literature (Taggart & Sharp, 1997). Some studies found that some young people enjoy the competitive aspect of sport whilst others felt uncomfortable and suggested the emphasis on winning reduces the enjoyment of sport (WA Ministry of Sport and Recreation, 1996; & Sale, 1991).

Charlie was influenced by how the parents, teammates and coaches acted in all sports. Right up through under twelves at Cockburn Basketball Stadium Charlie appreciated his teammates and coaches. When he started under fourteens this changed dramatically with the coaches being the instigators of his unhappiness. Charlie's comments are not uncommon in the world of junior sport. When discussing Sullivan's Theory, Muuss

(1996, p. 87) found that “The effects of interpersonal relationships can, of course, be both constructive and destructive.” This is demonstrated by the different effects Charlie’s coaches and teammates had on him over the different seasons he played basketball at Cockburn. It has been found that “coaches and their effectiveness in coaching have a strong impact on young people’s perception of and involvement in sport” (Taggart & Sharp, 1997, p. 6).

In their study, Taggart and Sharp (1997) found that 47% of year 8 boys and 44% of year 10 boys stopped playing a sport because they didn’t like the coach. This notion is supported by Sale (1991) who discovered that a small but significant number of young people mentioned the coach as a turn-off from sport. Charlie was adamant that his coaches in under fourteens were of a low standard and lacked the knowledge to coach basketball effectively. Charlie was very upset with the lack of court time, an issue which has been found in other studies. The WA Ministry of Sport and Recreation (1996, p. 27) found, “A major turn-off to participation were the coaches who ... discriminated against some players in favour of others.” Coaches have an enormous influence over how much game time each player obtains. Lack of opportunity for game time was a common reason provided by adolescents for dropping out of sport in a study by Taggart and Sharp (1997).

Although at times Charlie did not attribute drop-out to his teammates his comments were contradictory. During the second interview, Charlie spoke about the after school “Sports fun” that was organised during his time in primary school. This was “just muck around. ... That was fun. ... Coz none of the kids were from my team. ... none of them

came with a bad attitude. ... we just ... played.” This illustrates that Charlie’s teammates did have a negative impact on him. Charlie demonstrates many signs of disliking his teammates during his last season playing basketball at Cockburn. Charlie disliked that his more talented teammates hogged the ball, yelled at each other during games, yelled at him if he shot the ball when he should have passed and reacted so dejectedly after losses. It is clear that significant others do have an impact on the participation in physical activity by young adolescents (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Brown, et al., 1989; Embrey & Drummond, 1996; Sale, 1991; Kirk, 1996; Ryckman & Hamel, 1995; Taggart & Sharp, 1997; WA Ministry of Sport and Recreation, 1996; Weiss et al., 1996).

Bandura’s social cognitive theory (cited in Anderssen & Wold, 1992, p. 341) “points to the importance of a supportive environment to performing, establishing, and maintaining a pattern or regular physical activity.” Charlie’s descriptions of his final season illustrate that neither his teammates nor his coaches provided Charlie with the kind of support he needed. The parents, in contrast to what occurred with the players and coaches, were always supportive and had no impact at all on Charlie’s decision to quit playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium.

Charlie getting a “scabby uniform” during his final season at Cockburn also contributed to his decision to quit basketball at Cockburn. Burns (1997) contends that the basis of people’s behaviour is how they attach meaning and what meanings they attach to everything in their lives. Charlie, being a “meaning-making creature” (Muuss, 1996, p.

265), obviously attached some strong meanings to his situation involving the “scabby uniform.”

Charlie began and enjoyed scouts during the critical time when he was considering leaving Cockburn. He explained that scouts was more fun than basketball at that time, scouts was on at the same time as basketball and it had contributed to his decision to discontinue playing basketball at Cockburn. A common reason for dropping out of a sport was that the times clashed with other activities (Embrey & Drummond, 1996; Womensport West, Malaxos & Wedgwood, 1997; Taggart & Sharp, 1997).

I stopped playing because the coaches and ... I had other things to do. ... the coaches help, because there wasn't any people that were proper coaches. ... the players were alright but, ... I didn't have a proper uniform either. ... We didn't have proper coaches, my uniform, I had a scabby uniform and ... it was pathetic that I got no time on the court any more. ... it really sucks to sit down so ... that's probably why I probably left.

Charlie enjoyed playing basketball for a major portion of the time he played at Cockburn and still enjoyed playing pick-up basketball with his friends at the time of the interviews. Charlie's bad experiences with the coaches, teammates and a “scabby uniform” combined with him having discovered and enjoying scouts influenced him to quit playing basketball at Cockburn.

#### 5.2.4 David (12)

David began playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium at the age of nine and played through to the age of twelve, from 1993 to 1996. Each year David played two seasons at Cockburn, played once a week and said he made the cut to play for the Cockburn Cougars but decided not to play for them. Whilst playing at Cockburn David didn't play any other sports. David enjoyed playing with his friends at Cockburn and when some of his teammates decided to go to other teams he chose to stop playing basketball at Cockburn.

David was introduced to sport and supported in his sporting endeavours by both his father and brother. Significant others do have an impact on the participation in physical activity by young adolescents (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Brown, et al., 1989; Embrey & Drummond, 1996; Sale, 1991; Kirk, 1996; Ryckman & Hamel, 1995; Taggart & Sharp, 1997; WA Ministry of Sport and Recreation, 1996; Weiss et al., 1996). Anderssen and Wold (1992) found that having significant others physically active and/or encouraging had a significant impact on adolescents' participation in physical activity. Parents have been found to influence the participation of adolescents in sport (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Brown, et al., 1989; Kirk, 1996; Taggart & Sharp, 1997). Anderssen and Wold (1992, p. 342) found fathers to be one of the "most important socialising agents with respect to sports involvement." David enjoyed the dual support of his father and brother, especially in his sporting endeavours.

David was successful in both football and basketball both on an individual basis and with the teams he played. David was competitive, winning often and he disliked losing.

Throughout his sporting experiences he always had supportive parents, respected and appreciated his coaches however he disliked some of the referees. These factors had little impact on his decision to quit basketball at Cockburn. Rather the thing that was most important to him, when playing sport, was playing with and having fun with his friends.

David's teams always comprised of mostly friends and since his team disbanded after his last season he found no reason to continue playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium. This was clearly the major reason for his decision and is supported by the literature (Taggart & Sharp, 1997). The influence peers have on the participation of adolescents in sport is well documented (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Brown, et al., 1989; Taggart & Sharp, 1997). Brown, et al. (1989, p. 400) found that "during adolescence, the peer group emerges as a powerful socialising influence." It follows naturally that peers are "important socialising agents with respect to sports involvement" and "important sources of reinforcement of physical activity" (Anderssen & Wold, 1992, pp. 342, 345). It was of no consequence that during David's last seasons at Cockburn Basketball Stadium he began to know more people from other teams. As David said, "my team was breaking up. That was the only reason." The friendship group was paramount for David.

As David is a "meaning-making creature" (Muuss, 1996, p. 265) and his behaviour was based on the meaning he attached to what happened in his life (Burns, 1997). David would have added the meaning of 'basketball would be no fun if I wasn't playing with my friends.' He saw this as the reason which led to him quitting basketball at Cockburn.

### 5.2.5 Edward (14)

Edward only played basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium in 1998, when he was thirteen turning fourteen. He played once a week over two seasons at Cockburn. He achieved the level of playing under eighteens in CBA's domestic competition. Whilst playing basketball at Cockburn Edward also played football, baseball and soccer. Edward's greatest sporting love was football and that was the sport he wanted to play the most and pursue as a possible career. This ultimately led to his decision to quit playing basketball at Cockburn.

Edward loved playing and learning about other sports and was good at any sport he chose. In basketball Edward was of a good size and well skilled and thus played in the higher age group. Regardless of what sport he played Edward had found all the parents to be supportive. He also had supportive teammates and Edward had many positive experiences with coaches. Coaches have been found to influence an adolescent's enjoyment of a sport (Sale, 1991; Taggart & Sharp, 1997). Edward's own parents had some influence over which sports he attempted but they didn't push him towards using football as a career. Edward never mentioned his parents influencing him towards thinking about football as a career contrary to findings in the literature review where parents have been found to influence the participation of adolescents in sport (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Brown, et al., 1989; Kirk, 1996; Taggart & Sharp, 1997). None of these had any impact on Edward's decision to discontinue playing basketball at Cockburn.



Edward had good and bad referees and umpires in both football and basketball. Poor levels of umpiring have been found to decrease the enjoyment of sport (WA Ministry of Sport and Recreation, 1996). Edward also had some bad experiences with Aboriginals players in both football and basketball. Although stressing these subjects neither of these experiences had any impact on Edward's decision to quit basketball.

Edward's decision to quit basketball involved a conflict of time and interest with football. Edward said in the third interview, "I stopped playing basketball coz I have a career in football playing for colts. ... [for] South Fremantle." Here dropping out of a sport resulted from the times clashing with other activities (Embrey & Drummond, 1996; Womensport West, Malaxos & Wedgwood, 1997; Taggart & Sharp, 1997). In Edward's case the other activity was football to which he wanted to devote more time.

Being a "meaning-making creature" (Muuss, 1996, p. 265) Edward added the meaning that referees or umpires were bad if they were 'intimidated by the aboriginals.' This meaning of intimidation was based on some experiences that Edward had where he saw a rough act during a game, thought the referee or umpire saw it and that the official didn't punish the offence. Edward had coaches approach him and express their opinion to him that they considered him a great football player, which would have fuelled Edward to add the meaning that he was a great player and had a future playing professional football. Burns (1997) contends that the basis of people's behaviour is how they attach meaning and what meanings they attach to everything in their lives. As it is clear that Edward believed he was a very good football player and that he thought he

had a future using football as a profession he felt that any time playing other sports could be better utilized towards working on his football skills.

#### 5.2.6 Fred (13)

Basketball was the first and only club sport Fred played up to the time of the interviews. Fred began playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium at the age of nine and played until the age of thirteen, from 1993 to 1997. Whilst playing basketball at Cockburn Fred started skate boarding with his friends and was surfing, skating and playing basketball at the time of the interviews. Fred enjoyed being physically active so when Fred was diagnosed with Osgood Schlatter's Disease he reluctantly decided to quit basketball.

Fred enjoyed playing with his friends, which is how he started basketball, both socially and at Cockburn, and how he started skating. It is clear that Fred was heavily influenced by his peers when it came to participation in sport. Peer influence on participation in and enjoyment of a sport is well supported in the literature review (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Brown, et al., 1989; Taggart & Sharp, 1997). Fred always had at least one friend on his basketball teams and always liked his teammates.

Throughout his time playing basketball at Cockburn Fred liked his teammates and the parents were very supportive and encouraging. It is apparent that significant others do have an impact on the participation in physical activity by young adolescents (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Brown, et al., 1989; Embrey & Drummond, 1996; Sale, 1991; Kirk, 1996; Ryckman & Hamel, 1995; Taggart & Sharp, 1997; WA Ministry of

Sport and Recreation, 1996; Weiss et al., 1996). Parents have been found to influence the participation of adolescents in sport (Anderssen & Wold, 1992; Brown, et al., 1989; Kirk, 1996; Taggart & Sharp, 1997).

Fred detested one of his coaches but only played under him for less than a season, the rest Fred enjoyed playing for. The last coach Fred had at Cockburn was one he liked since he was given the same amount of court time as his teammates. As mentioned previously, coaches have been found to influence an adolescent's enjoyment of a sport (Sale, 1991; Taggart & Sharp, 1997). The coach wasn't a factor for Fred's decision to quit basketball nor would it have been if he hadn't developed Osgood Schlatter's Disease.

Fred enjoyed being active, especially with basketball and skating, so when he was advised by the doctor to stop playing sport to rehabilitate his knees he was understandably disappointed. The sole reason for his decision to quit basketball at Cockburn was purely to enhance his recovery from Osgood Schlatter's Disease. One could say that not being one of the better players contributed to the decision to quit basketball but he enjoyed his time playing basketball and being with his mates too much for that to be a factor. Like Fred said, "Yeah I stopped to try and get my knees better."

### 5.3 Cross-Case Analysis – Themes and Findings

When comparing the themes and findings for the participants there were seven themes that have emerged. Some of the themes applied to all of the participants, some themes applied to a few whilst one theme was applicable to only one of the participants of the study. The themes that emerged from this study were: Being Active: Having Fun Regardless of Ability Level, Peers: Friends and Teammates, Adults: Parents and Coaches, The CBA: Referees and Uniforms, Feelings: Losing the Passion and the Importance of Winning, Other Activities: Past and Future and, and Personal Injury.

#### 5.3.1 Being Active: Having Fun Regardless of Ability Level

All six participants of this study enjoyed being physically active and playing sport even though the abilities of the participants varied in this group. Andrew was a special talent, one of the best players in his Cougar's team and received a basketball scholarship to attend high school. His great ability was not sufficient to keep him interested in basketball. When Andrew began basketball he experienced a great deal of success and fun. Over the years the fun dried up when the WABL parents were exhibiting hypercompetitiveness, his Cougar teammates played selfishly and didn't have the urge to win, his Cougar's coach used repetitive drills at practice and did not discipline the team, and his team wasn't experiencing the same height of success as when he began playing for the Cougars. At the critical time when Andrew was considering quitting basketball football was more fun than basketball.

Ben did not rate himself too highly as a basketball player whereas in hockey he considered himself a very good player. Nevertheless this had no bearing on his decision

to quit basketball at Cockburn. Ben always had fun playing basketball with his mates but when his friends went from primary school to different high schools and some to other teams he thought basketball would no longer be fun.

Charlie considered himself a good basketball player contrary to how many of his coaches viewed him. This had no effect on his decision to stop playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium as he continued to play pickup basketball with friends at a local park at the time of the interviews. Charlie enjoyed playing basketball but in his final basketball season it was not fun. In Charlie's last season he thought that the coaches were unfair and lacked the ability to coach effectively, his teammates hogged the ball and he was given a "scabby uniform." During the crucial time when Charlie was deliberating whether to continue basketball or not scouts was more fun than basketball at Cockburn.

David had the skills to play for the Cougars but decided not to play at that level. He was always one of the better players on his teams but it was insufficient in keeping him interested in basketball at Cockburn. David enjoyed playing basketball with his friends at Cockburn but when some of his friends decided to go to other teams he thought basketball wouldn't be as much fun.

Edward was tall and well skilled and thus played in under eighteens in the CBA competition at the age of fourteen however his ability compared to those of his age was unknown. Edward always had fun whilst playing basketball at Cockburn. Nevertheless,

no matter how good he nor how much fun he had playing basketball, it would not have impacted on his decision to quit basketball so he could devote more time to football.

Fred wasn't a good player compared to many of his teammates but that did not hamper his enjoyment of the game and had no impact on his decision to quit playing basketball.

Fred had fun playing basketball at Cockburn except during the short time when he had a coach who didn't give out equal court time.

### 5.3.2 Peers: Friends and Teammates

Peers played different roles for each of the participants. Some were introduced to basketball by their peers, two stopped basketball because their friends joined other teams, two quit partly because they despised their teammates, whilst for the other two participants their peers had no impact on their decision to stop playing basketball.

Friends introduced Andrew, Ben, Charlie and Fred to basketball and influenced Ben and David indirectly to quit basketball. For both Ben and David their friends were their teammates. Ben explained that it was when his friends went from primary school to different high schools, some also joined other teams, that led him to quit basketball. Whereas David elucidated that it was simply his friends joining other teams that directed him to make the decision to quit basketball at Cockburn.

Teammates influenced both Andrew and Charlie to quit basketball. Andrew was influenced somewhat by friends since it was a friend who introduced him to basketball but friends had no impact on his decision to quit. What did impact Andrew's decision to

quit basketball were his Cougar teammates. During his last WABL season Andrew despised some of his teammates as individuals and how they played. He disliked that his teammates' desire to look good was greater than the importance of the team. His teammates did not have the urge to win and when they tried to win they did so in a selfish fashion. Charlie had friends in his first few teams and made some friends with teammates afterwards but that wasn't why he quit basketball. During his last season in the CBA Charlie hated how his teammates hogged the ball, yelled at each other during games, yelled at him if he shot the ball when he should have passed and reacted so disconsolately after losses.

Neither friends nor teammates had any impact on Edward or Fred's decision to stop basketball. Edward said most of his friends played football, not basketball, but that wasn't why he quit basketball. Edward said he appreciated how his teammates supported him and taught him how to play basketball. Fred always liked his teammates and many of them were his friends. For all the participants their peers influenced their participation and enjoyment of basketball.

### 5.3.3 Adults: Parents and Coaches

The adult community influenced all six participants in a largely idiosyncratic fashion. One participant was scathing in his descriptions of the parents of some teammates in direct contrast to the support experienced by all other participants. One participant detested the coaches he had in his last season playing basketball, another disliked some of the coach's actions whereas the other four participants largely appreciated their coaches.

Everyone of the participants except Andrew found the parents at basketball to be supportive and positive. Andrew noticed that when he played locally at Cockburn the parents were supportive but he was scornful in his descriptions of some of the parents of his Cougar teammates. Andrew explained that some WABL parents would say negative things to their children after losses and often wanted to win more than their children did, which Andrew found a put off. Parents had some impact on his decision. The only other participant who was affected by parents was Ben and this was indirectly. His family was, and continued to be at the time of the interviews, heavily involved with hockey. His father used to help Ben with hockey by teaching him different skills whereas in basketball his father did not possess that same knowledge base and thus wasn't able to help Ben improve his basketball skills. His father did attend his basketball games to provide support when he played at Cockburn.

Ben, David and Edward all liked and appreciated their coaches and Fred liked most of his coaches. The coaches had nothing to do with their decision to quit basketball. Fred did not like one of his coaches, whom he had for less than a season, as he didn't give out equal court time and often exhibited a lack of interest in their game. Importantly, for this study, Fred appreciated the last coach he played for and ultimately the coach had nothing to do with his decision to quit playing basketball. Andrew was adamant that his coach had nothing to do with his decision, which is contradictory to some of his statements. Andrew provided descriptions of the repetitiveness of the Cougar practice sessions and lack of discipline within his Cougar team in his final season. These are both the coach's responsibility and therefore the coach had an indirect impact on Andrew's decision to quit basketball. Charlie truly disliked the coaches he had in his



last season since he felt they were unfair in how they treated him and the team and displayed a lack of knowledge for the game of basketball. Charlie hated that he didn't get as much court time as the better players, disliked not getting the same opportunities to score as the better players and thought the coaches in his final season had no idea how to coach the game of basketball. The coaches were one of the main reasons for Charlie quitting basketball.

#### 5.3.4 The CBA: Referees and Uniforms

Andrew, Ben, David and Edward all had some good and bad experiences with referees. The bad experiences were discussed in the greatest detail and illustrate how they impacted on the fun of the game at the time of the incidents. Referees had no impact on the decision to quit basketball for any of the participants in this study.

Charlie was the only one who cited uniforms as having influenced his decision to quit basketball. He was also the only one who said anything relating to uniforms. The fact that Charlie had a "scabby uniform" compared to the one he wore the previous season and compared to the uniforms his teammates possessed was a contributing factor towards his decision to leave the CBA.

#### 5.3.5 Feelings: Losing the Passion and the Importance of Winning

Andrew had stated that he had lost the passion for basketball first then all the outside influences came into effect. There were other factors that influenced Andrew's decision but his loss of passion was a dominating one for him. Andrew was the only participant in the study who placed a high value on success and winning. He craved success and his

Cougar team's slide in the win column effected him and his decision to quit basketball. Regardless of his own craving for success Andrew disliked it when coaches and parents focussed on winning, he much preferred them to be supportive and positive. At one point Ben explained that he lost interest in basketball after the last season. This was contradictory to Ben's other statements, which demonstrate that he enjoyed playing basketball throughout his time at Cockburn. None of the other participants expressed or exhibited any loss of passion for basketball. Ben, David and Edward enjoyed winning and had a dislike for losing but there were other things more important than winning for each of them. For Ben and David it was playing with their friends whereas for Edward it was learning, improving, trying his best and pursuing his football career. Charlie and Fred were not competitive; their focus was on fairness and equal court time.

#### 5.3.6 Other Activities: Past and Future

Other activities played a part on the decision to quit basketball at Cockburn for four of the participants. Past experiences clearly played a part in making the decision to quit basketball for Andrew, Ben and Charlie. Before basketball Andrew used to play cricket. Andrew explained that he lost the passion for cricket after playing it for a number of years. He experienced success early on with cricket but over the years he was experiencing less and less success. When he quit cricket he was beginning to enjoy and experience a great deal of success with basketball. This is almost an identical situation to what occurred in basketball. Andrew may have reacted subconsciously the same way to basketball as he did with cricket since his decision to quit cricket in favour of basketball had worked for him and brought him happiness.

Ben enjoyed trying new sports and activities having sampled cricket, football, rollerblading, roller hockey, and ice hockey. At the age of seven he gave hockey a go and has played ever since. Basketball was also a sport Ben enjoyed attempting and playing. At the time of his decision to quit basketball he chose to take the opportunity to try another sport, which was baseball.

Charlie experienced unhappiness playing a sport prior to basketball when he played soccer. Although he enjoyed the game of soccer the way the parents acted during games had a profoundly negative affect on him. Charlie's first years in basketball were happy ones, which means his choice to play another sport around the time of his negative experiences with soccer proved a good decision. In his final season when Charlie wasn't having fun with basketball he was enjoying scouts thus a decision to quit basketball in favour of scouts appeared a simple one.

David had no past experiences to relate to for his situation with his team breaking up. Playing on a team that didn't comprise any friends meant David would have entered uncharted territory. He did not have sufficient motivation to continue playing basketball at Cockburn for another team. Past experiences did not play a part for Edward in his decision to quit basketball as he was in pursuit of a football career. Fred's situation was simply to follow the doctor's orders.

For some of the participants finding another activity more attractive than basketball was one of the reasons given for quitting basketball. Andrew enjoyed the rough and tough side of sport so when making a decision between football and basketball chose to play

football. When Andrew played football he viewed the parents as very supportive, he appreciated his teammates and respected the coach. All of this combined to make football more attractive and more fun to play than basketball. Ben decided to give baseball a go after he had quit basketball. This wasn't a major influence on his decision to quit basketball. Charlie explained that he began scouts before he stopped playing basketball and found scouts to be more fun. He appreciated the others who participated in scouts in contrast to disliking his teammates in under fourteens at Cockburn. Scouts and basketball were on at the same time and thus Charlie chose to attend scouts rather than continue playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium. Edward stated that he chose to quit basketball so he could focus more attention on football. Neither David nor Fred alluded to there being another sport to play instead of basketball. This was clearly not a factor for them.

#### 5.3.7 Personal Injury

Fred was the only participant who stated an injury as the reason for his decision to stop playing basketball. Fred was diagnosed with Osgood Schlatter's Disease and was advised to stop all physical activities that he was doing at the time thus his reluctant decision to stop basketball. The only other participant who mentioned being injured at any time was Charlie, who twisted an ankle just prior to the beginning of the under fourteens season, but it had no impact on his decision to quit basketball.

### 5.4 What Wasn't Found in the Interviews

Themes and issues that emerged from the study but weren't a factor for any of the participants in making their decision to quit basketball at Cockburn were referees,

playing ability, enjoying physical activity and being physically active. Andrew, Ben, David and Edward shared stories of what they perceived as some examples of poor refereeing at Cockburn. At the time of the incidents concerning poor refereeing their fun diminished. All four participants stated quite clearly that refereeing had nothing to do with their decision to quit basketball. This was consistent with other statements they made during the interviews. Neither Charlie nor Fred made any reference to referees at Cockburn that would suggest an impact on their decision to quit basketball.

All six participants enjoyed being physically active, had always been physically active and continued to be physically active at the time of the interviews. There was a variety of ability levels across the six participants from those who weren't good compared to their teammates to Andrew who was a star for his Cougars team. Ability level had little, if any, impact on each of the participants' decision to quit playing basketball at Cockburn.

What surfaced in the literature review but not in the study was the influence of the media and the impact of SES on participation. Andrew was the only participant who had stated anything to do with the media. He acknowledged that from watching ice hockey and grid iron on television, along with some other influences, he developed an appreciation for the rough and tough side of sports. Andrew stated that the reduction in media exposure of basketball had no impact on his decision leave basketball and play football. No other participant made any comments about the media in any way. None of the six participants had stated that they couldn't afford to play basketball or that money was a factor on their decision to stop playing basketball at Cockburn.

### 5.5 Summary

Each participant had their own unique reasons for quitting basketball at Cockburn. Themes that emerged from the study that had an impact on the decision to quit basketball at Cockburn were friends changing teams and schools, undesirable teammates, out of control parents, poor coaching, less success experienced, loss of passion for the sport, poor uniforms, injury and discovering other activities. Themes that emerged from the study that weren't contributing factors to their decision to quit basketball were referees, playing ability, enjoying physical activity and being physically active. Themes that arose as reasons for quitting a sport in the literature review but not in the data analysis were the influence of the media and the impact of SES on participation.

## 6.0 Conclusion

This study began with a realisation that the number of junior teams playing at the Cockburn Basketball Stadium had diminished from close to two hundred teams at the beginning of 1996 to below one hundred at the beginning of 1999. I then set out to find out why people were dropping out of basketball at Cockburn. Since I wanted to find out “the why” of drop-outs I deduced that I required a qualitative method to collect the data, which led to the use of open interviews. I then set out to find out why did adolescent boys, between the ages of 12 and 15, quit playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium between 1995 and 1998?

There is no one single reason or set of reasons that covers all six participants and therefore can not encompass the adolescent boy population of participants who chose to quit basketball at Cockburn. There were a number of themes that emerged during the study as reasons for dropping out of basketball.

Significant others played an instrumental part in the decision to quit basketball for some of the participants. One participant cited that the parents of some of his Cougar teammates to be extremely off putting. This participant explained that these parents would sometimes belittle their children after a loss and often wanted to win the game more than their children. One participant cited his coaches as one of the major reasons for quitting basketball. This participant was of the opinion that these coaches favoured the better players, gave out unequal court time, didn't allow equal scoring opportunities and had very little knowledge about the game of basketball. Another participant had stated that the coach had nothing to do with his decision to quit basketball but some of his statements were a little contradictory to this. At one time he said that he felt the

Cougar practice sessions were repetitive and boring and the team lacked discipline. Both these descriptions are the coach's responsibility, which imply the coach had some impact on his decision to quit basketball. Parents and coaches can both add and detract to the enjoyment of basketball thus influence a player's decision whether to continue playing or quit basketball.

Teammates were cited as a reason for quitting basketball at Cockburn by some of the participants. One participant found his teammates almost nauseating because they didn't share his desire or dedication to win and when they tried to win a game they would do so on an individual basis rather than within the team structure. He also stated his opinion that his teammates' desire to look good was more important than the team winning. Another participant disliked "hogs" immensely and thought his teammates were major "hogs" during his last season at Cockburn. He also disliked how his teammates would yell at each other during games and reacted so disconsolately after losses. For two other participants teammates impacted their decision in an entirely different way. Both thoroughly enjoyed the company of their teammates since they regarded them as their friends. They cited the fact that their teammates joined other teams and so they wouldn't be able to play with their friends anymore. One of them said it also had to do with his friends going from primary school to different high schools. Peers, in the form of teammates and friends, can both positively and negatively influence an adolescent's participation in basketball.

One participant cited a loss of passion for the game after having played a heavy concentration of basketball for six years. This particular participant had played



domestically at Cockburn, for the Cougars and went to a prestigious high school which gives specialised basketball coaching during school hours. It is interesting to note that this participant craved success and loved to win and over the years his Cougars team, the one team he took seriously, experienced less success. An emphasis on winning within a sporting environment can lead to unpleasant experiences and drop-out.

Some of the participants had found another activity, which they found more enjoyable, to substitute for basketball. These activities varied from other sports to scouts. One of the participants said he quit basketball so he could concentrate on a football career he was pursuing.

One participant said that receiving a “scabby uniform,” compared to the uniform he had in the previous season and compared to the uniforms his teammates had, as a contributing factor for his decision to quit basketball at Cockburn. Another participant gave the sole reason as being diagnosed with Osgood Schlatter’s Disease. He was advised to stop all the physical activities he was participating in at the time to enhance recovery from his injury.

There were some issues that arose in the interviews but did not contribute to the decision to quit basketball for any of the participants. Some had discussed some negative experiences with referees and at the time of the incidents they impacted on their fun of the game. All those who alluded to referees were adamant that they did not contribute to their decision to quit basketball, which was consistent with their stories. The participants had a variety of ability levels for basketball. Neither did having a great

ability keep some interested nor did having a low ability deter others from enjoying their basketball at Cockburn. It is very interesting to note that all six participants enjoyed being physically active both during their times at Cockburn and during the times of the interviews.

None of the six participants had cited the media as having any influence in their decision. In addition, none of the participants had sighted a lack of money as a reason for dropping out of basketball.

The fundamental basis proved extremely useful for this study. This study was about finding reasons for drop-out from basketball. Reasons are created from meanings attached to what actually happens. Muuss (1996) sums it up nicely:

Phenomenologists maintain that meaning and significance arise in the interaction of the individual's subjective perception of what is objectively there. The way an object or an event is perceived does not depend solely on experience of the thing-in-itself, but is interpreted in the context in which it is seen. Human beings bring to any situation their own individual perceptions, interpretations, feelings, expectations, and intentions, all of which are significant shapers of their evaluation of the situations. Psychologically speaking, these person-generated 'shapers' are crucial variables. (p. 321)

Each of the participants had their own unique reality and brought to their situations these realities. Situations arose that didn't meet the expectations and intentions that each participant brought with them when they played basketball at Cockburn. When an

expectation isn't met or an intention thwarted that person, more often than not, will experience some disappointment. When there is a disappointment arises people have a choice whether or not to deal with this disappointment. If they choose to deal with it then the "how" comes into effect. For four of the participants when disappointment was met their decision was to quit playing basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium. For one of the participants the expectation of having a career in football led to his decision to quit basketball to allow him to concentrate on football. For another participant the expectation of further participation with basketball causing serious long term physical damage guided him to decide to quit basketball.

Muuss (1996) stated:

What matters psychologically speaking are not the objective properties as defined by physical reality, but the significance attached to these properties by the individual in that environment. Human perception of reality is selective and evaluative. The factors in the environment that shape the behaviour and development of the person are those that the individual in that setting endows with personal meaning. (p. 321)

In the case of drop-out from basketball it doesn't just matter what happens within the basketball stadium but the meanings and significance that is attached to what happens by the individual. It is important for those whose interest is to see the CBA and basketball as a whole to prosper to talk with the players. Through conversations with the players it is possible to find out what they are thinking – how they perceive the stadium and its operations, their teammates, coaches, the parents, and referees. If a situation

arises where a player is unhappy then action can be taken, whether it is to attempt to change the perception the player has of the situation or to change the situation.

The good news for Cockburn Basketball and basketball in general is that all the cases are preventable, some more easily than others. It is important to note that only six cases are presented here and that further research is required for preventative strategies to apply to a broader range of drop-outs. Perhaps a better way to say this is that further research would allow for strategies to be devised that would make basketball attractive to a broader range of participants.

## **7.0 Recommendations**

### **7.1 For Basketball and Cockburn**

#### **1. Talk to the players**

Talking with both present and past players is useful in gaining knowledge that would lead to creating programs that cater for a broader range of players. Talking with current players provides knowledge about what they like and dislike in the present moment. Coaches and administrators are empowered to act appropriately upon gaining knowledge that players dislike a situation concerning basketball. Actions that can be taken are to change the situation to the players liking or to teach the player to look at the situation in a positive light. Talking with the players such that they feel comfortable disclosing information, regarding what they like and dislike concerning basketball, may require educating the coaches or designating an educated or amiable person to talk with the players.

Conversing with players who have recently quit basketball provides knowledge as to the reasons for their decision to quit. This knowledge enables basketball administrators, coaches or other interested parties to decide whether or not to act on this knowledge.

#### **2. Educate the coaches, referees and parents**

Lack of knowledge and ability of coaches has been found, both in this study and past studies, to have contributed to reduced enjoyment of sport and drop-out. Educating coaches of all levels will prevent some players from dropping out of basketball and more importantly raise the enjoyment. The form of education required includes knowledge of the sport and skills, the importance of delegating equal court time, the

power of variety in practice sessions, and the value of creating a positive atmosphere focussed on fun rather than competition.

Although referees were not identified as contributing to drop-out in this study poor refereeing did contribute to a reduction in enjoyment in playing. Educating referees from all levels may lead to more fun during basketball games. The education required would include highlighting that it is the players that matter most and advise the players what they did wrong after blowing the whistle.

Educating parents would lead to creating a positive and supportive environment and empower the parents to help their children improve. Some parents require reminding that most children prefer support rather than to be pushed to succeed. Producing brochures which emphasise the club's aims to create an environment that focuses on good sportsmanship, cooperation, fun and equal participation is one method that can be used to educate the parents.

3. Design programs that de-emphasise competition and enhance the fun aspect of competing (Taggart & Sharp, 1997, p. 59)

Some of the participants of the study expressed that they did not have fun playing basketball just prior to quitting, which is supported by the literature (Taggart & Sharp, 1997). The focus on competing within the Association may have influenced the actions of significant others that caused the reduction of enjoyment. To enhance the fun aspect of competing, the CBA would need to create a mission statement that would clearly lead to enhancing the opportunity for all the players to have fun whilst playing basketball at

Cockburn. The mission statement or supporting guidelines could contain words such as good sportsmanship, cooperation, full participation, and equal opportunity to play and score. The previous recommendation of educating the coaches, parents and referees would accelerate the creation of a basketball program where fun is emphasised above all.

#### 4. Have more social activities for teams, domestic clubs, each age group and the whole Association

Two of the participants quit basketball because their friends joined other teams. If there had been regular social activities that would enable these participants to create friendships with players from other teams their continued participation may have been possible. Creating an atmosphere within the Association that furthers the creation of friendships outside the team would prevent some of the drop-out from basketball.

#### 5. Explore strategies to minimise drop-out at the 12-13 age group

Four of the participants dropped out of basketball between the ages of twelve and thirteen. Taggart & Sharp (1997, p. 60) emphasised the importance of developing strategies that would minimise the drop-out for this age group, “There are many variables that impact on this phenomenon with the shift from primary school to high school clearly being of prime importance.”

## 7.2 Further Research

### 1. Advantages of using this method for uncovering reasons for drop-out

I found that using the “Three-Interview Series” described in Seidman (1991) enabled me to obtain deep rooted reasons and a profound understanding for the participants’ decisions to quit basketball. I believe the advantages described by Seidman (1991) of the “Three-Interview Series” were accurate and applied to this study. More specifically that by using three interviews on a one-on-one basis I felt the participants were open when divulging their thoughts about why they quit basketball. The time in between interviews allowed the participants to reflect on why they quit playing basketball and thus provide more accurate statements. Further information on drop-outs is always beneficial not only to the sporting body concerned but sporting enthusiasts in general. For the gathering of this information I highly recommend the use of the “Three-Interview Series” described in Seidman (1991).

### 2. Interviewing parents and past coaches

For future studies on drop-out from sport interviewing parents and coaches will allow the researcher to obtain information the player may be too embarrassed to disclose but important to the study. This allows for triangulation of data and developing highly accurate information regarding drop-out. It is important to discuss information gained from parents and coaches with the participant for clarification of data. It is also important to bear in mind that the player’s reality is the one that matters most when searching for reasons for drop-out from sport.



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**9.0 Appendices**

9.1 Appendix 1 – Questionnaire

Date of birth – \_\_\_\_\_

Country of birth – \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' country of birth – \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' occupations – \_\_\_\_\_

Family Details (parents together or split, brothers, sisters) – \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Suburb of Residence (now and whilst playing at Cockburn) – \_\_\_\_\_

School attended and/or attended whilst playing at Cockburn – \_\_\_\_\_

Number of seasons played at Cockburn each year – \_\_\_\_\_

Level achieved in basketball – \_\_\_\_\_

Age when the participant stopped playing basketball at Cockburn – \_\_\_\_\_

How often the participant used to play at Cockburn – \_\_\_\_\_

Other sports/interests the participant engaged in whilst playing basketball at Cockburn –

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other sports/interests the participant is engaged in now – \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 9.2 Appendix 2 – First Interview

### Focused Life History (Seidman, 1991)

Have the participants tell as much as possible about themselves in light of the topic of dropping-out of basketball. Ask the participants “to reconstruct their early experiences in their families, in school, with friends, in their neighbourhood” and sporting experiences (Seidman, 1991, p. 11). Considering the topic is about drop-out from basketball, focus on the participants’ experiences involving sport, basketball, and discontinuing participation in anything, sporting or otherwise.

I would commence by inquiring, ‘Tell me about your life leading up to basketball, going back as far as possible.’ When the participants have arrived at the point in their lives where they started basketball ask them, ‘Could you please tell me about your life, in and out of basketball, whilst you were playing basketball up until the time when stopping basketball first entered your mind.’

I will be prepared for any discussion that suggests the participants are preceding towards talking about experiences which led to their drop-out from basketball to prevent delving into that in this first interview.

If at any time I cannot grasp what the participants are talking about I will request that they elaborate or attempt to express it in different way, without taking away the meaning of what they are talking about.

### 9.3 Appendix 3 – Second Interview

The Details of Experience (Seidman, 1991)

Invite the participants to reconstruct the details surrounding their decision to discontinue playing basketball. Maintain the focus of this interview on their experiences rather than their opinions. Inquire into the participants' relationships with their teammates, coaches, referees, opposition teams, administrators, parents, friends, and the wider community (for example, the media). Invite the participants to reconstruct a day in which they play a game of basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium.

I would lead off by requesting the participants to 'tell me about your experiences which led to you dropping-out from basketball, right from the first experience.'

If any of the following were not covered and may be relevant, I would inquire into the participants' relationships with their teammates, coaches, referees, opposition teams, administrators, parents, friends, and the wider community.

If there is time remaining I would invite the participants to describe a day in its entirety in which they played a game of basketball at Cockburn.

#### 9.4 Appendix 4 – Third Interview

Reflection on the Meaning (Seidman, 1991)

Entreat the participants to reflect on the meaning of their experiences. What were the factors that led them to drop-out from basketball. Uncover what meaning the adolescent male attached to what happened and what their perception was of their circumstance/s at that time when they resolved to discontinue playing.

I would lead off by asking the participants, ‘What do you think led to your decision to stop playing basketball at Cockburn?’ I would then ask, ‘If you could change anything at Cockburn, what would it be?’

I would continue delving into reasons, what meanings were added and their perceptions until the participants feel confident that the real issues, as perceived by them, have been uncovered.

### 9.5 Appendix 5 – Statement Outlining the Intention and Procedure of the Study

Dear Sir,

I am conducting a study to uncover what the reasons are behind adolescent boys dropping-out from basketball at Cockburn Basketball Stadium.

I would be delighted if you would agree to participate.

My study involves one questionnaire followed by three 90 minute interviews over the course of two weeks. Tape recorders will be used for the interviews, which will be conducted at Cockburn Basketball Stadium.

All information will be kept strictly confidential with pseudonyms used to hide your identity.

Any questions concerning the project entitled “Adolescents and Sport: A Case Study of Boys’ Drop-out from Basketball” can be directed to myself, Philip Jelovsek, of Edith Cowan University on (08) 9339 4878. If you have any concerns about the project or would like to talk to an independent person, you may contact Andrew Taggart on (08) 9370 6806.

If you, with your parents’ consent, agree to take part in the study could you please fill out the form below and return it using the enclosed envelope.

Thank you for your time,  
Yours Sincerely,

Philip Jelovsek

---

#### CONSENT FORM

“Adolescents and Sport: A Case Study of Boys’ Drop-out from Basketball”

I \_\_\_\_\_ (name)  
of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (address and phone  
number) have read the information above and any questions I have asked have been  
answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to participate in this activity, realising I may withdraw at any time.

I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided I am not identifiable.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Investigator’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



## 9.6 Appendix 6 – Ethics Clearance



**EDITH COWAN  
UNIVERSITY**

PERTH WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
MOUNT LAWLEY CAMPUS

Higher Degrees Office  
FACULTY OF COMMUNITY SERVICES,  
EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

2 Bradford Street, Mount Lawley  
Western Australia 6050  
Telephone (+61 8) 9370 6565  
Facsimile (+61 8) 9370 6032

23 August 1999

Mr Phillip Jelovsek  
56 East Street  
EAST FREMANTLE WA 6158

Dear Phillip

I am pleased to advise that your research proposal "*Adolescents and Sport: A case study of boy's drop-out from basketball*" has been approved by the School Postgraduate Studies Committee on the condition that you consider the points offered by the reviewers. The Committee also granted ethics clearance.

This approval means that the Committee believes that you have developed the proposal to a stage where worthwhile research can be conducted on your topic. It does not mean that an examiner will be unable to find fault with your work.

Before submitting your thesis for examination, you must obtain confirmation from your supervisor that the format in which you intend to present your thesis is consistent with University requirements.

If you have not already received a copy of the booklet "Preparing a thesis or research project for Honours, Master and Doctoral awards [1999]" please contact Molly Schwegler on phone: (08) 9370 6565.

I wish you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely

  
Penny Madgax  
Executive Officer  
Higher Degrees Committee

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**JOONDALUP CAMPUS**  
100 Joondalup Drive, Joondalup  
Western Australia 6027  
Telephone (08) 9400 5555

**MOUNT LAWLEY CAMPUS**  
2 Bradford Street, Mount Lawley  
Western Australia 6050  
Telephone (08) 9370 6111

**CHURCHLANDS CAMPUS**  
Pearson Street, Churchlands  
Western Australia 6018  
Telephone (08) 9273 8333

**CLAREMONT CAMPUS**  
Goldsworthy Road, Claremont  
Western Australia 6010  
Telephone (08) 9442 1333

**BUNBURY CAMPUS**  
Robertson Drive, Bunbury  
Western Australia  
Telephone (08) 9780 7777

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#### SPECIAL NOTES

- 1) All the names of people used in the interviews are pseudonyms. No original names are used.
- 2) ... is used when there is a pause in conversation or when one person's sentence was interrupted by another's.
- 3) ??? is used when I was unable to decipher what was said on the tape.

9.8 Appendix 8 – Sample of a First Interview

- Pilot A:* I don't even remember when I started playing basketball but I know it was in Primary school. I had a interest playing at school, on the basketball courts at school. Going on from there I got intertwined with umm Aaron.
- Me:* Uh huh.
- Pilot A:* And, anyhow, he showed me to put me into the basketball down at Cockburn. Got hooked up with their team and got taken down to the stadium. And then gradually joined up with them. Started that in ... Miniball, I think it was and, like, a season in there and went along into Allstars in under tens and ... basically once success there that kept me into basketball. Coz for that season I got MVP of, for winter and summer seasons during that year.
- Me:* Wow.
- Pilot A:* And that was the first year under tens. And, yeah, just kept playing on from there. Umm ... moved around to all the different clubs. Played for Timbertigers, Allstars, Hawks, Coogee, pretty much everyone. Umm ...
- Me:* So, you feel like at the very beginning when you got ahh an allstar and MVP for those seasons, that kept you interested because you ...
- Pilot A:* Yeah, it did. The success had kept me going coz ... that season I think we won both umm premierships. ??? Hawks as well. And from there kept winning again. Umm ... kept winning those Allstar t-shirts. Got about a hundred of those.

---

9.9 Appendix 9 – Sample of a Second Interview

*Subject C:* I didn't even hardly make it through the one season.

*Me:* Okay. Well tell about that season.

*Subject C:* Well, it was alright, but not many people were, I felt that not many people got to have a try on the court. It's, like, only the good guys could go on.

*Me:* Okay, so ...

*Subject C:* I was just on the bench. And ...

*Me:* So some people didn't get much court time?

*Subject C:* Nuh. I'd be on, I'd be put on starting five and umm ... we'd start playing and then as soon as I got the ball and I had have a perfect shot, they'd tell me to pass it off and give someone else a shot.

*Me:* Okay. Umm ...

*Subject C:* I didn't get a shot, you know. Which I felt was unfair.

*Me:* Fair enough. Umm ... what about other teammates. Were there other teammates who didn't get much court time as well?

*Subject C:* Yeah. It wasn't, mainly, I'm not trying to be racist or anything, but mainly the Aboriginals were the ones who which got all the time.

*Me:* Okay. Well that, that's just what you, that's just what you saw?

*Subject C:* Yeah.

*Me:* Okay. Umm ...

*Subject C:* And they would, like, get all the passes, all the shots, they were the ones we were told to pass the ball to.

*Me:* Yeah.

9.10 Appendix 10 – Sample of a Third Interview

*Me:* Okay. Umm ... do you think ahh ... you mentioned also last time that umm ... your parents didn't really know much about basketball. Well umm ... whereas they did umm know quite a bit about hockey and everyone in the family did hockey. Do you think that may have been, that may have contributed as well? Do you not ...

*Subject B:* Yeah. I think they all come into each little part of everything and that comes into the, the big reason. Coz, like, I can shoot a lot coz ... I'd get home and, like, my dad wouldn't know anything about basketball so he wouldn't be helping me or teaching me how to do it proper way or showing me stuff coz .... He'd actually watch it on TV sometimes.

*Me:* Yeah.

*Subject B:* So my mum and dad didn't know anything about basketball. Umm yeah, I just, yeah, they just didn't help me on.

*Me:* Yeah.

*Subject B:* I tried to get them interested in, my dad came to a few games. He watched and kinda got it after a while but, I guess he just ...

*Me:* Do you think umm, do you think umm the difference between them, your dad not knowing much about basketball and umm not being able to help and maybe not pushing you compared to say hockey where your dad does know a lot about ...

*Subject B:* Yeah.

*Me:* ... because, like you said, that he umm, it was his passion.

*Subject B:* Yeah.

---

### 9.11 Appendix 11 – Sample of Raw Data Analysis

Edward said he liked basketball since “It was a fun game and it was good fun handling the ball.” When asked about his teammates Edward said, “Yeah. It was a team sport so it was fun. It was a good game.” Sounds like Edward liked team sports. Later he said he also liked football.

When asked if he got to touch the ball much in football Edward said, “I touched the ball most of the game coz ... Nearly every game except two games in football I played the whole game. ... In the centre. I was there quite often. ... I played there most of the game. ... I felt like I was one of the better players. I got eight best player for the South Freo District in football. ... With nine votes from umpires and the crowd.” He said this was playing for his school. I think this suggests that Edward was an exceptional football player for his age.

When asked if he played any games during recess or lunch Edward said, “That’s the only practise we’ve got, except playing with teachers and that during sport’s class. ... So practise mostly during lunch time and recess. ... we didn’t do drills. We played games with each other. And teach each other new styles. ... There was our Sports Teacher who made us keep going and that.” Edward said the Sports Teacher was there every recess and lunch and that “He used to umpire for us and like be our coach. ... It was a good experience. ... Because he was older and he would have all these, kind of, good tricks and he knew what to do when someone came onto you. ... And teach you new stuff.” I think this shows that Edward liked playing sports and enjoyed being shown new things. It appears that the Sports Teacher had some influence over Edward and his friends.