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## The Role and the Experiences of the Sports Team Captain

Michelle Nelson  
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THE ROLE AND THE EXPERIENCES OF  
THE SPORTS TEAM CAPTAIN

By

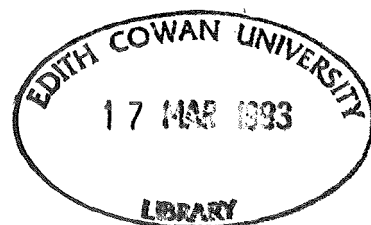
Michelle Nelson

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Requirements for the Award of

Bachelor of Applied Science (Sports Science)  
with Honours

Faculty of Science and Technology

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## USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

## Abstract

The role of the sports team captain is often underestimated in terms of the responsibility involved, the essential attributes and knowledge required. The qualities and expertise of the captain can potentially have a great effect on the performance of the team. To date there has been very little research conducted on the role and experiences of the sports team captain.

The purpose of this study is to outline the role and the experiences of the sports team captain, with particular emphasis on the responsibilities, the influencing factors and the power of the captain.

Ten former or current captains of state and national sports teams currently residing in Perth, Western Australia, were each interviewed using an open ended, flexible interview schedule. A combination of inductive and deductive content analysis of the verbatim interview transcripts was used to establish common and unique themes pertaining to the role, attitudes and experiences of the sports team captain.

The major theme to emerge from the data was "be yourself". The findings demonstrated that the duties of the captain are primarily determined by the role and nature of the coach. Other factors including the nature and profile of the sport, type and level of competition, number of support personnel, team stability and length of the playing season also influenced the extent of the captain's responsibilities. With

the exception of cricket, the captain has little authority or involvement in team selection and strategies. The major duties of the captain involve (a) representing the team in either a public relations capacity or in discussions with the coach and management, and (b) identifying and solving problems within the team.

"I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text."

Signature.

Date..

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## CHAPTER 1

### Background

During 1990 the researcher observed a football team which was regularly defeated, and began to ponder the possible variables that may have been affecting the team's performance, including the attributes and behaviour of the captain. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour by the captain highlighted the need for research to be conducted on the influence of the sports team captain on the morale and performance of the team.

### Statement of the Problem

The contribution of the sports team captain to the overall performance of the team is frequently underestimated in terms of their effect on and importance to the team.

The captain's attributes and expertise has the potential to enhance or obstruct the team and captain's performance. Considerable research has been conducted on the desirable qualities for a coach or successful leader in physical education (Siedentop, Tousignant, & Parker, 1982; Claxton, 1988; Markland & Martinek, 1988; Segrave & Cianco, 1990), and the quality and quantity of interactions between team members (Carron, 1982; Brawley, Carron, & Widmeyer, 1987; Carron & Chelladurai, 1981; Landers & Luschen, 1974). Yet very little research has been conducted on the role and desirable qualities of a successful captain. The literature that is available on the

captain is primarily anecdotal. As little research has been conducted on captains, a broad analysis of the role and the experiences of the sports team captain was considered necessary to paint an extensive picture from which future research issues could be identified and explored.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Captains of sports teams encounter a variety of experiences that contribute to the uniqueness of their sporting experience. The purpose of this study is to systematically investigate the role, attributes and experiences of sports captains as the basis for providing informed guidelines for sports personnel, particularly captains and coaches and identifying future research directions. The research tests elements identified in mainly anecdotal literature against the perceptions of experienced captains collected during systematic interviewing.

### **Research Questions**

As the result of incidental observation and a review of the literature, five research questions were identified that required further investigation. These questions are addressed in terms of the perception by the captain of his/her role and responsibilities:

- (1) What role(s) do(es) the captain perform?



- (2) What are the responsibilities of the captain?
- (3) How does the type of sport and the level at which it is being played affect the number of responsibilities a captain has?
- (4) What difficulties does the captain encounter?
- (5) How can the captain's job be improved or assisted?

An interview schedule was designed to elicit the subjects responses to these questions.

### **Significance of the Study**

To date no comprehensive study of the role and the experiences of the sports team captain has been conducted. The primarily anecdotal literature available on sports team captains highlighted the need for the systematic investigation of the role, attributes and experiences of several sports team captains as undertaken in this research. The resultant data provides a conceptual framework for understanding the intricacies of the captaincy and identifying future research directions. The key issues identified as a result of the examination of various captains' experiences will be of future benefit in the selection, development and utilisation of a captain.

## Definition of Key Terms in the Study

The following report contains a number of key terms that require clarification.

### Captain

The captain is the elected or selected leader of a sports team. The captain can be either one of the players or an adviser to the players.

### Coach

The coach is responsible for directing and coordinating the sports team to achieving a goal, including selection of players, training and implementation of strategies prior to and during a sports competition.

### National Competitions

There have been significant changes to the national sporting scene over the past two decades. Traditional round robin tournaments played over a one to two week period have in the majority of sports been replaced with longer competitions played over a number of months (cricket, basketball, Australian rules football, baseball). Factors that have changed the nature of sporting competitions include (a) advancements in media technology, (b) an increase in the spectator audience, (c) private ownership of teams, and (d) international players playing in national competitions, particularly in sports such as basketball and baseball. There are various categories of national competitions played in Australia, which can be referred to in Appendix A.

### State Team

A State team can be one that incorporates "State" in the title of the team, for example, Western Australian State Hockey Team, or a team, such as the West Coast Eagles, that is the sole representative of Western Australia in a modified long national competition.

### State Captain

State Captain refers to those captains who are captaining a team in any one of the National Competitions identified in Appendix A.

### National Team

A team comprising of players from various state teams, combined to represent Australia at the International level.

### National Captain

The captain of a National team representing Australia at an International level.

## Outline of the Study

Ten sports team captains who have captained at the state or national level were interviewed using an open-ended, flexible interview instrument. The interviews lasted on average 38 minutes, and were recorded and transcribed with an average of 6,068 words. The transcripts were systematically analysed into categories using a

combination of inductive and deductive analysis.

## **Limitations and Delimitations**

### **Limitations**

The following limitations were identified:

- (1) Geographically limited to captains currently residing in Perth, Western Australia.
- (2) Captains of state and/or national teams assumed to be elite.
- (3) No attempt to attain gender balance due to the limited number of female captains who meet the purpose of the study (male to female subjects, 6:4).
- (4) No attempt to attain a balance between captains of state and national teams (state teams to national teams 10:7).
- (5) Passage of time will influence captains' recall ability.
- (6) No attempt to balance representation from different sports.
- (7) The data obtained from this research came from a very select sample, captains of elite teams, therefore the duties and experiences of an elite captain will not be transferable to lower levels of competition including junior or school team captain.
- (8) The occurrence of a situation for one elite captain does not allow for prediction of it occurring for all elite captains.

## Delimitations

A delimitation of ten subjects was implemented due to the availability of current or recent elite captains. As this study is a qualitative analysis of the sports team captain's experiences at the state or national level other delimitations were imposed (a) restricting the study to interviews only and not observation of the captain in action; (b) not seeking confirmation or denial from other sources in relation to the captain's experiences, (e.g., the coach or other players); (c) selecting captains from interacting teams not coacting teams. Interacting teams have to work together to accomplish a performance goal, whereas coacting teams work independently to accomplish a goal; and (d) Selecting captains who have captained at the state or national level, not those who have captained at the club level only.

## Format and Content of the Research Report

Chapter one introduced the background, the significance and the purpose of the study, as well as outlining the key terminology, procedure and the format of this report.

Chapter two discusses the review of literature, highlighting the anecdotal nature of the literature and common themes that evolved.

Chapter three addresses the research method implemented, including the selection of subjects, instrument, procedure, and validity and reliability.

Chapter four involves a discussion of the data categorised from the interview

transcripts. The categories are presented in a format similar to the chronological development and experiences of the captain.

Chapter five concludes the report with a summary of the major findings, their implications to captains and coaches, methodological problems and recommendations and future research directions.

## CHAPTER 2

### Review of the Literature

The literature available on sports captains is primarily anecdotal comments from former and current captains in player autobiographies (e.g., *Allan Border An Autobiography*) and biographies, media reports, and articles in glossy sports journals. The exception to this is "*Rugby Union: Captaincy*" written by sports journalist, David Frost and rugby coach, Roger Uttley (1981) who comprehensively described the captain's job from school team to representative and tour level, as well as essential advice for captains.

Not only is the literature on captains primarily anecdotal, there is a disproportionate amount of literature attributed to different sports. Of 49 items reviewed on the captain, 22 items were from cricket (45%), hockey and rugby received 6 items each (12% each), general articles on the captain followed with 5 items (10%), and the remaining 10 items (21%) were divided amongst 9 sports (Australian Rules Football, Baseball, Basketball, Sailing, Soccer, Tennis, Tenpin Bowling, Trampolining and Volleyball). Thirty eight of the 49 items were journal articles averaging 2.5 pages in length.

Research based literature has been limited to the selection of the captain (Chelladurai & Carron, 1977), leader behaviour (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978), team interaction and the emergence of leadership and interpersonal attraction in field hockey (Tropp & Landers, 1979).

The work of (Anshel, 1990; Bird & Cripe, 1986; Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978; Gill, 1986; Martens, 1987) have examined leadership styles in sport. Martens

(1987, p. 33) defines leadership as "the action of an individual to influence others towards set goals". Anshel (1990) suggests that an effective leader can influence players sport performance and the success of the team. "The team leader's job is to help each competitor to reach his or her potential" (Anshel, 1990, p. 160).

There are various theories of leadership in sport that have been supported by researchers and educators (Anshel, 1990; Bird & Cripe, 1986; Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978; Gill, 1986) (a) Fiedler's contingency model, where the effectiveness of the leadership style is dependent on the situation; (b) the Life Cycle Theory, which focuses on the development of task-relevant maturity in the group, (the coordination of people-oriented and task-oriented behaviours); (c) Chelladurai's Multidimensional model, which focuses on actual leader behaviour, the leader behaviour preferred by the team and required leader behaviour; (d) Macgregor's Theory X and Y, a dichotomous view of the leader either having a authoritative or humanistic coaching style depending on how the leader views the team; and (e) Tannenbaum and Schmidt's Model, where effective leadership is dependent on forces in the manager, forces in the work group and forces in the situation. These theories propose different leadership styles according to (a) the influence of the situation, (b) the objectives of the team (task or socio-emotional/people), and (c) the relationship between team personnel (leader and followers). The objectives of the team can be task oriented objectives, socio-emotional oriented objectives (relationship/people) or a combination of task and socio-emotional objectives.

According to Martens (1987) leadership style refers to the way that a leader approaches helping the group achieve the task and socio-emotional objectives.

Leadership styles as defined by Anshel (1990), Bird & Cripe (1986), Chelladurai &



Saleh (1978) include (a) authoritative/autocratic, the leader sets themselves apart from the team, acting on his/her own and insist on everything being done their way; (b) behaviourist, the leader attempts to modify players behaviour through reinforcement; (c) humanist, the leader attempts to understand the athlete's emotional and psychological makeup and how these factors affect the player's performance; (d) democratic, the leader lets the athletes participate in decision making and solicits their opinion and approval on important matters; and (e) training behaviour, where the leader attempts to improve performance by technical instruction and coordinate the activities of the team members. The effective leader adopts a combination of these approaches depending on the situational requirements. "Effective leadership in sport is a function of performing a variety of roles and styles to meet the needs of athletes and to reach team objectives" (Anshel, 1990, p. 207)

The leadership style of the sports team captain can contribute to the success or failure of a sports team. Effective leadership is influenced by four components "(a) the leader's qualities, (b) the style of leadership, (c) the nature of the situation, and (d) the followers' characteristics" (Martens, 1987, p. 45). The above leadership styles and theories have been discussed by researchers and educators on the assumption that coach is the leader of a sports team. Leadership styles and theories have not been directly applied to the Australian sports team captain. This focus of this research is the clarification of the role and duties of the captain to determine where the captain fits in the leadership hierarchy given there are other personnel including the coach and manager.

The predominant themes to emerge from the literature review were:

- (1) Role of the Captain
- (2) Duties of the Captain
- (3) Attributes of the Captain
- (4) Selection of the Captain
- (5) Where the Captain Should Play
- (6) Role Conflicts
- (7) Highs and Lows of the Captaincy
- (8) Media Relations
- (9) Politics
- (10) Vice-Captain
- (11) Learning the Skills of a Captain
- (12) Thoughts on Attaining Captaincy
- (13) Change in Performance on Becoming Captain

Each of these themes are individually summarised below, illustrating the breadth of the topic that necessitated the systematic investigation of the role and the experiences of the sports team captain.

### **Role Of The Captain**

A captain is the appointed leader of a sports team. In sports such as cricket and lawn bowls the captain is colloquially referred to as the "Skipper". The captain's role should not be confused with the role of the coach, although the two roles can

and do overlap on occasion.

The coach may well prepare the team physically, technically and psychologically and plan team methods and strategies in practice sessions. But the team captain and the other players are entirely responsible for putting these things into practice in the game. (Luke, 1984, p. 38)

In some instances both positions can be fulfilled by the one person, as in the case of a captain-coach of a basketball or football team, two sports where this commonly occurs. Although at the elite level this is becoming less common.

Different sports require varying degrees of on-field leadership from the captain. Sports such as cricket and rugby union require the captain to constantly analyse the situation and implement the appropriate strategies and tactics as the game progresses. Alternatively, sports like basketball tend to rely on the off-court coach to decide and implement tactical decisions and changes. Sports that have a higher coach input during the game tend to be those with intervals during play (basketball), change over of innings (baseball, softball) or where the coach is in close proximity to the action (basketball, baseball, hockey). In rugby union, Frost and Uttley (1981) advocate that the captain has the final authority on what happens on the field, and the coach therefore becomes an "adviser to the captain". Not all captains have an on-field or on-court role. In the case of Davis Cup Tennis and team golf the captain is frequently a non-player (e.g., Neale Fraser is the non-playing captain of the Australian Davis Cup team).

In a panel editorial in *Sports Coach* (1983, p. 29) Jack Sheedy, National Coaching Director for Judo stated that the captain's role may be identified by certain features:

Communicator (between players, coaches, officials, peers, parents, media); counsellor (the commonsense sport psychologist); ombudsman (team cohesion); model of behaviour (both on and off the field); motivator

(encourager, reinforcer, feedback); decision maker (strategy, tactics, aims).

As well as these roles the captain may also perform the roles of ambassador, diplomat, leader, mathematician, mediator, psychologist, travel agent, social director, manager and tactician. Brearley, a former English cricket captain (1982, p. 115) stated that "there are three domains of captaincy: the technical (or tactical), the psychological and the administrative". Whereas Lee (1984) broadly defined the demands placed on leaders as "(a) pursuit of the task goals (task leadership) and (b) pursuit of positive feelings among group members (socio-emotional leadership)".

Close (1964, p. 27) reflecting on his captaincy of a cricket team, observed:

At times you have to be everything from a father, mother, teacher, boss and psychiatrist, and to combine these with your knowledge and playing ability of the game. You get little respite from it, since off-the-field activities are almost as important in keeping the spirit and general happiness of the team at the right pitch.

One can infer from this cross-section of comments that the role of the captain can be both complex and demanding depending on their experiences and the sport played.

### Duties of the Captain

The type of sport and the level at which it is played influences the extent of the captain's responsibilities from the more general to the highly specific on-field, off-field and on-tour duties as listed in Table 1. With the exception of those sources noted the duties are the author's summation of the literature.

Ian Chappell (1975, p. 12), former Australian cricket captain, reflected that

during a test series "there are numerous other demands on the captain. Television interviews, radio shows, appearances, coaching at schools and clinics, promotional work - it is endless". The duties of the captain are numerous and vary in their overt and covert nature. It is clear from this list of duties why there were many roles of the captain as previously identified. For example, the captain may assume the role of sports psychologist to provide support, encouragement and lift players when they may be feeling homesick or exhausted. To fulfil these many roles and duties the captain must have certain attributes.

Table 1

*The Duties of the Captain: General, On-Field, Off-Field, On-Tour*

---

General

1. Mould team unity on and off the field, promote a cooperative driving spirit, and a pride in belonging.
2. Provide support and encouragement to new team members.

On Field

1. Determine the strengths and weaknesses of opponents.
2. Select and implement strategies and tactics.
3. Coin toss and selection of playing direction based on weather conditions.
4. When tactics devised by the coach are not working "it is then the duty of the captain to evaluate the situation and to direct his team towards different tactics" (Frost & Uttley, 1981, p. 9).

Off Field

1. Spokesperson for the team in communications with the coach and management. "The captain must ensure that there is a constant flow of information between the players and coaching staff and vice versa" (Mosher, 1979 p. 7).
2. Representative of the team/players on sporting committees, e.g. the Australian cricket captain and vice-captain are on the touring party committee.
3. Negotiate contracts on behalf of players.
4. Assist in team selection.
5. Liaise with players in regard to team selection.
6. Assist with training.

*The Duties of the Captain: General, On-Field, Off-Field, On-Tour Cont.*  
On Tour

1. Be an ambassador for the team.
  2. Maintain his/her own form.
  3. Enforce discipline.
  4. Lift players when they may be feeling homesick or exhausted.
  5. Remain optimistic when things may not be going well.
  6. Establish an understanding relationship with the press.
  7. Ensure all players maintain good relations with the referees. (Frost & Uttley, 1981)
- 

### Attributes Of The Captain

One would expect that the personal attributes of the captain would determine to some extent their success as a captain. Benaud (1969, p. 219) stated that "the real test of captaincy is the ability to inspire a team". The following attributes in Table 2, have been identified as qualities that contribute to the success of a captain, (Benaud, 1969; Bradman, 1969; Frost & Uttley, 1981; Kennedy, 1991; Le Boeuf, 1989; Sargeant, 1989; Spedding, 1989) . .

The research sought to consolidate and verify the extensive list of attributes in Table 2, via discussions with various captains.

Table 2  
*Attributes of the Successful Captain*

- 
1. Intelligence in regard to the sport. A shrewd tactician.
  2. Quick tactical decision maker, who can act under pressure.
  3. Courage to implement changes.
  4. Respected by fellow players.
  5. Leads by example at training and competition.
  6. Understanding of sport psychology to know when and how to provide feedback.
  7. Motivator.
  8. Natural rather than a manufactured ease of command.
  9. Gets on well with the coach.
  10. Effective representative of the players in mediations with the coach and management. (Mediator)
  11. Able to discover and exploit the oppositions weaknesses and blunt their strengths.
  12. Utilises his/her teams strengths and hides their weaknesses.
  13. Encourages players to think up novel moves that will take the opposition by surprise.
  14. Provides enthusiasm through encouragement rather than reducing players performance by blaming them for errors.
  15. Knows the players well enough (e.g., positions they can play, and their skill strengths and weaknesses), so the captain can make changes according to the demands of the situation, such as a loss of a player through injury.
  16. Interested in lower teams that supply the captain's team with reserves.
  17. Behaves responsibly on and off the field.
  18. Supportive and encouraging to new team members.
  19. Available and approachable for the players.
  20. Binds players together during social activities.
  21. Knows the rules.
  22. Gains the confidence of each player, so that the player realises that directions and commands from the captain are in the best interest of the team.
  23. Aware of any improvements players may show and praises them.
  24. Seen by team members as a person who does not play favourites on or off the field.
  25. Aware of personality differences which may inhibit team performance.
  26. Possesses the technical ability to win and maintain their own place in the side.
  27. Is able to concentrate for long periods of time.
  28. Knows what is going on all the time.
  29. Confident but not arrogant.
  30. Firm but not obstinate.
  31. Able to take criticism.
-

### Selection Of the Captain

The limited research into captain selection was based on propinquity and task dependence (Chelladurai & Carron, 1977), leader behaviour (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978), team interaction and the emergence of leadership and interpersonal attraction in field hockey (Tropp & Landers, 1979).

Jack Sheedy, National Coaching Director for Judo, identified six criteria (*Sports Coach*, 1983, p. 29) which have been the basis for selecting a captain:

Overt or covert selection biases; they are the best players; they are the most extroverted (outspoken); they hold key positions in the squad; they tend to show the greatest maturity; they are the oldest or largest players.

These criteria are not necessarily the ideal reasons on which to base the decision for selecting a captain. Research into captain selection criteria is required in order to determine the appropriate criteria for selecting the best captain.

Based on their experiences, Frost and Uttley (1981, p. 11) recommended that the captain "need not be the best player on the field but he [or she] must always be capable of setting an example and of leading by that example". Mosher (1979 p. 8) recommended that "the selection of the captain must be done by the coaching staff. The team captain is too critical to a team's success to leave the selection to chance (player's voting)". When selecting a touring captain, Frost and Uttley (1981) recommend using the following criteria (a) experience as a captain, (b) strong personality, and (c) mental and physical stamina. In addition to these attributes, the *M.C.C. Cricket Coaching Book* (1976, p. 110) advised in selecting a cricket captain that:

Experience is certainly an asset; so is personal prowess; but neither is so important as character, personality, enthusiasm and the capacity to think and



learn about the game.

### Where The Captain Should Play

Proximity to the other team members seems to be of major importance when determining the captain's ideal playing position. Close proximity allows the captain to relay instructions, conduct tactical changes and offer encouragement. Due to diverse player positions not all sports allow the captain to be in close proximity to all players. Rugby, according to Uttley and Frost (1981, p. 24), can be captained from any position on the field with special considerations taken into account, for example "just as a captain who plays among the backs needs to have a pack-leader to look after the forwards, so does a captain who is a forward require one of his players to lead the backs". Lee (1984, p. 175) proposed that for hockey and soccer the captain would be most effective playing "towards the rear of the team, and in positions of high interaction, i.e. centrally". Chappell (1974, p. 10), at the time he was captaining the Australian cricket team, stated:

I prefer captaining my side from first slip. I find I get a better view of the game from there, but it is a purely personal thing. Bill Lawry, for instance, preferred to station himself at mid-off or mid-on.

The demands of the sport and the various playing positions play an important role in determining the playing position of the captain. Bradman (1969, p. 186) advocated "it is far easier for a specialist batsman to handle the position than a bowler, an all-rounder or a wicket-keeper" due to the fielding demands on the other positions. It is interesting to note that the last non-specialist batsmen to captain

Australia in cricket was Richie Benaud in 1964.

### Role Conflicts

Two roles which are regularly a source of conflict for the captain is wanting to be one of the team and then having to exercise their authority over his or her teammates. When assigned the captaincy of the Australian cricket team, Allan Border stated "I think, deep down, I was just happy to be one of the boys. I just saw the captain as being the big boy who sometimes had to be a bit mean to get the message across" (1986, p. 130). Reflecting upon his captaincy of the Australian cricket team, Richie Benaud (1969, p. 220) stated "my attitude as captain was always that I wanted to be one of the team though retaining an overriding authority that allowed me to make the decisions where necessary". From these comments it is possible to ascertain the importance of maintaining a balance between the role of captain and the role of player.

### Highs And Lows Of The Captaining

A captain cannot truly enjoy the euphoria of a 'high' if he/she has never had a 'low' against which to compare it. Like most things in life, the captaincy also has its combination of ups and downs. Richie Benaud, (1969, p. 221), exemplified this with his statement, "one day all will seem dark and dismal and a week later the luck

of the game, and perhaps a successful move on the field, means that the skipper is being feted as a hero". Anne Sargeant (1989, p. 33) recalled a low from her career as captain of the Australian netball team, was when she was injured in 1987, and Australia was playing New Zealand in a World Championship final. "I sat on the bench in an Australian team, and I was shattered. But I was the captain and I had to make sure those playing had every bit of support from the bench".

According to Pawson (1984), captains "are more likely to be personalised as scapegoats for losing, rather than lionised as victors". When a team has been unsuccessful the quality of the opposition may be overlooked in the eagerness of the administration, media or the general public to find the captain the cause of defeat.

For example, in cricket

When Mike Denness led an unsuccessful team to Australia he was duly crucified as if defeat was all his fault rather than being due to the obvious fact that Lillee and Thompson were just too good for us [England]. (Pawson, 1984)

The effects of these highs and lows can make or break a captain. Too many bad experiences can affect the morale and performance of the captain, or galvanise them into action. Overall an understanding of the variety of experiences that a captain may endure may assist a captain in preventing or riding out the lows.

### Media Relations

The media has a great influence on how the general public views its sporting heroes and contests. One week the captain can be feted as the conqueror and the next week condemned to the scrap heap. Allan Border (1986, p. 177) recalled his thoughts

during one cricket match "I started to imagine the caning I'd get in the morning newspapers. The media are very good at taking apart a captain who sends the other mob in and sees it backfire". Alternatively, a cricket match victory to Western Australia resulted in the following tribute to captain Geoff Marsh by sporting journalist John Yarwood in *"The Australian"* (1991, p. 25), "Western Australia's Geoff Marsh masterminded a sledgehammer blow last night to West Indies morale on the eve of the lucrative World Series Cricket triangular one-day contest". The captain's relationship with the press is not to be underestimated in the terms of the effect that the press can have on the career of the captain and the perception of the captain in the public eye.

### Internal Politics

The internal politics of an organisation is how the governing body conducts its internal affairs, a code of conduct for the ways things are managed. Going against the accepted code of conduct can result in retribution as Border (1986, p. 145) pointed out in his appraisal of his predecessor Kim Hughes:

It would have been easy for him to toe the ACB [Australian Cricket Board] line. He was, after all, Australian captain and there was nothing to suggest at the time that his situation was going to change. He could have soft-pedalled, but he spoke out and trod on some ACB toes in the process. Kim was instrumental in winning a better contract deal for all of us. He was prepared to put his cricket career on the line for his beliefs and for that I admired and supported him.

Sporting journalist, Mervyn Jeremiah, also alludes to politics in his article on Indian cricket in *"The Australian"* (1992, p. 25).

The composition of the present team [India] is a case in point: has any cricket team in the history of the game ever had four former captains playing under a fifth? Why did the other four lose their jobs? Was it poor form or bureaucratic politics?

Internal politics have influenced the careers of many athletes, including captains over the years. Highlighting the problems may serve to remind the governing bodies of sports for the need for objectiveness when dealing with the careers of sportspeople.

### Vice-Captain

The vice-captain must also be chosen with the same careful consideration as you would select the captain, as they provide a supportive leadership role to the captain and assume the on field responsibilities in the event of the captain being unable to play. The importance of the vice-captain from the captain's view point is eloquently described by Allan Border (1986, p. 209):

The role of the vice-captain on an overseas trip is, I think, understated. On the domestic scene he is a handy man; on tour he is worth his weight in gold. The efficient vice-captain abroad will see and hear everything his skipper misses. The captain cannot be aware at all times of every problem, every situation - and that's where the deputy is invaluable. He must be seen to be totally committed to his captain and totally supportive. He must be virtually an extension of the captain, he must be the skipper's trusted confidant, and adviser in selection, at net sessions and in the dressing-room. He has a big and underrated job. (Border, 1986, p. 209)

The role of the vice-captain is even more underestimated than the role of the captain. As understudy to the captain and quite possibly the future captain the role and utilisation of the vice-captain also requires investigation.

### Learning the Skills of a Captain

Acquiring the necessary skills to be a captain is traditionally a matter of observation and making enquiries of the experts. Ian Chappell (1974, p. 6) recommended to aspiring captains:

Gain experience in any way possible. Study captains and players and the way they achieve things. ... I like to talk with captains, and for that matter, anyone from whom I think I can learn something. Be prepared to listen, whether you are talking with a former Australian captain or the last fellow picked in a grade side.

A former captain playing in your team can be a valuable source of information and advice for a new captain. Allan Border, on being successor to Greg Chappell as captain of the Queensland cricket team, reflected in his autobiography "I'd already decided that I wasn't going to be running to Greg for advice after each over, but I'd never captained at senior level and I was going to pick his experienced brains whenever I felt I needed him" (1986, p. 51).

### Thoughts on Attaining Captaincy

Taking over the burden of leading a team can be a daunting prospect to any player despite their proven performance as a player. Reflecting on his own ascendancy to the Queensland captaincy and then the Australian captaincy, Allan Border stated "I was a leadership novice, I had a great deal to learn. Had I known then what I know now, I'd have taken a crash-course in captaincy because within a little over a year I was going to find myself leading Australia" (1986, p. 51-52). Insights on how the

captain felt on becoming captain may assist in the planning of strategies to train captains prior to their selection and to assist them once becoming captain.

### Change in Performance On Becoming Captain

The increased responsibility or duties of the captaincy can impact on the captain's playing performance. West Coast Eagles player, Chris Mainwaring, in a media interview (Happell, 1992, p. 122) stated his lack of football form resulted from lifestyle changes he made on becoming vice-captain of the Eagles.

I was just trying a bit hard, I suppose; trying to do the right thing and lead by example but perhaps my concentration was not always where it should have been. .... At the time I sat down and had a big think about everything and tried to order my social life but everything just backfired.

Changing one's lifestyle or becoming overly concerned with the concept of being captain can be detrimental to a captain's performance. The effect the captaincy can have on the playing performance of the captain was identified as an issue requiring further investigation.

### Summary

The review of the literature primarily revealed the anecdotal nature of the literature and the disproportionate amount of literature attributed to cricket and rugby compared with other sports. The purpose of the study was to conduct a systematic investigation of these issues, confirming them or identifying new issues. The study

also broadens the representation of sports, to ascertain the consistencies and inconsistencies of the roles and the experiences for captains of different sports. The interview schedule was based on the captaincy issues raised in the literature review. The following chapter will discuss the development and implementation of the research method.



## CHAPTER 3

### Method

#### Design

The application of a qualitative methodology involving the interviewing of ten captains of elite sporting teams was chosen as the most appropriate method to understanding the role and experiences of a captain. Qualitative methodology can more effectively investigate the human elements of the captaining experiences that are essential to the objectivity of this study.

To better understand enjoyment and stress in their full complexity and from the perspective of the participants' experiences, we realized it was essential to incorporate qualitative methods and an inductive analytic approach into our program of research. (Scanlan, Ravizza and Stein, 1989, p. 55)

Qualitative methodology allows the subject to introduce issues important to them and brings their experiences to life through their expression of their emotions and attitudes.

#### Subjects

The subjects chosen for the study resulted from a purposeful sampling (Guba and Lincoln, 1985) of ten captains of state and/or national sporting teams, currently residing in Perth, Western Australia. The captain of a state or national team was perceived by the researcher to have greater knowledge and experience of being a captain and therefore better matched to satisfying the purpose of the study. In

addition to being current or recent captains, the captains were selected on their availability and willingness to be interviewed. Table 3 indicates the characteristics of the subjects as relevant to this study, that is gender, sport, the level currently and formerly captained at, type of competition and whether at the time of the interview they were in their playing season.

Table 3  
*Characteristics of the Subjects*

Characteristics	Subject Numbers										Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
<u>Gender</u>											
Male			x	x	x			x	x	x	6
Female	x	x				x	x				4
<u>Captaining Status</u>											
<u>Current State</u>											
Captain	x			x	x		x		x	x	6
<u>Former State</u>											
Captain		x	x			x		x			4
<u>Current National</u>											
Captain						x					1
<u>Former National</u>											
Captain	x	x	x					x	x	x	6
<u>Season</u>											
In Playing Season	x		x	x	x	x					5
Not in Playing Season		x					x	x	x	x	5

*Characteristics of the Subjects Cont.*

<u>Sport</u>											
Australian Rules Football								x	1		
Baseball								x	1		
Basketball	x		x		x				3		
Cricket								x	x	2	
Hockey		x	x							2	
Softball								x		1	
<u>Type of Competition</u>											
MLNC		x		x	x	x		x	x	x	7
TSRRNC		x	x		x		x				5

*Note.* MLNC = Modified Long National Competition; TSRRNC = Traditional Short Round Robin National Competition.

Potentially the characteristics identified in Table 3 can influence the data the subjects can contribute. Three of the captains were in their playing season at the time of their interviews. A fourth captain had begun pre-season training. Three captains were in their off-seasons or were not involved in a tournament or pre-tournament training, as is the case for Subject 6 who is a national captain only. The remaining three captains were no longer playing at the state or national level. Subject 8 had only captained at the national level on the one occasion.

The captains represented five types of teams (one national and four state) (a) a combined Australian team, (b) a state team in a traditional round robin national competition played over a period of one to two weeks, (c) a state team in a long round robin national competition played over a number of months, (d) a state team

in a modified long national competition played over a number of months, and (f) a state team in a modified short competition played over two weeks. At various stages of their captaining careers the subjects had captained one or more of these types of teams. Seven of the subjects have captained a state team in a Modified Long National Competition, five subjects have captained a state team in a Traditional Short Round Robin National Competition. Subjects 4 and 9 have captained teams in both of the above categories.

### Interview

An open-ended interview schedule incorporating the funnel approach of starting with the non-threatening general questions narrowing to more personal or emotive issues of captancy was implemented. The interview began with a brief overview of the purpose of the study and an explanation of the interviewing procedure. Based on Scanlan, Ravizza, and Stein's (1989) experience, an interview guide was used to ensure all pertinent issues were raised. The interview guide consisted of each question being assigned to an index card. Due to the conversational nature of the interviews the presentation of questions or issues was flexible to (a) accommodate the communicative ability of individual players, (b) to facilitate the raising of issues which were of concern to the respondents at that point in the interview, and (c) ensure the inclusion of those issues that the researcher had not previously considered. To ensure all questions were asked the index cards remained in order throughout the whole interview. The card obtaining questions that had been

discussed out of order were only discarded when that card turned up. That is, if question seven was asked after question two, then when the researcher was up to question seven, only then was the card turned down. This not only ensured that all questions were asked of the subject but all of the subjects received the same questions. An outline of the interview schedule, utilised to elicit a productive open-ended conversation with the respondents is represented in Appendix B.

The researcher and the subject bring to the interview various understandings, experiences and expectations that influences the data collected.

In a very real sense, then investigator and respondent together create the data of the research. Each influences the other, and the direction that the data gathering will take in the next moment is acutely dependent upon what data have already been collected, and in what manner. There is in the investigator-respondent dyad a transitivity, a continuous unfolding, a series of iterations. Each shapes the other and is shaped by the other. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 100)

An emergent design (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of further interview questions developed as a result of the insights gained into the experiences, history, and role of the captain that arose from initial interviews. That is the insights resulted in the inclusion of further probing questions discussing (a) the captains captaining experience, particularly state age-group teams; (b) qualities of a captain; (d) the role of the captain; (e) relationship and role with the media; (f) the effect of support personnel on the captain's duties; (g) the playing position of the captain; and (h) notification of captaincy.

The interviews were conducted in the year of the 1992 Barcelona Olympic's. This had some influence on not only the availability of the subjects, but the data received from several of the subjects. In particular Subject 7 was interviewed while the Olympics were being telecast in the background. Several of Subject 7's answers

were influenced by the earlier observation of the Australian Women's hockey team and their captain on television.

The interviews were conducted over a period of time (March - September) for two main reasons (a) pre-Olympic Tournaments and the Olympic Games, affected the availability of some captains; and (b) subjects whose sport was in season were difficult to contact due to (i) travelling interstate for games, (ii) training most afternoons, (iii) working during the day, and (iv) fulfilling captain's duties. The time between interviews was used to transcribe interviews, conduct preliminary data analysis and revise the interview schedule.

The interviews were transcribed with permission from the subjects. The transcripts were forwarded to subjects for review.

### Procedure

All stages of the research from contacting the subjects, conducting the interviews, transcribing the interviews, analysing the interviews and compilation of the report were conducted by the researcher. This ensured that analysis could be conducted at every stage contributing to clarification and continuity of subject matter. In particular the transcription of the interviews, although tedious proved extremely beneficial to identifying emerging issues. This facilitated the discussion of previously unidentified issues raised by the first subject with the following subjects.

Potential subjects were contacted by the author via the telephone. They were informed of the purpose of the research, the educational institution and school of

study of the researcher, and were asked if they would consent to being interviewed. If the captain was in agreement an interview appointment was arranged based on a time, date and venue convenient to the captain. Five of the interviews were conducted at the subjects' work location, three at their training venue, and two at the subjects' home. Although the researcher asked for a quiet room in which to conduct the interview this was not always possible due to (a) electrical interference, (b) the rolling of beer kegs at the training venue, (c) an echo in the room, and (d) cleaners emptying rubbish bins.

On arrival at the interview venue, the subjects were again informed of the purpose of the interview and the conversational nature of the interview. The subjects were then asked to read and sign a release form modelled on (Douglas, Roberts & Thompson, 1988) guidelines that gained the subject's consent for the interview and the release of the copyright of the interview to the researcher (refer to Appendix C). Microphones were attached to the researcher and the subject allowing for the interview to be recorded. The length of the interviews ranged from 25 minutes to 51 minutes, an average of 38 minutes per interview. Table 4 indicates the length of the interviews, the corresponding word count per subject and whether the transcripts were returned by the subjects.

Table 4  
*Interview Details and Transcripts Returned*

Subject	Length of Interview		Transcripts Returned	
	Time (Mins)	Word Count	Yes	No
1	49.1	8201		x
2	43.8	5962	x	
3	26.3	3784	x	
4	40.0	4900	x	
5	28.6	5439	x	
6	25.8	3996	x	
7	51.0	9437	x	
8	37.0	6623		x
9	46.0	7059	x	
10	31.7	5284		x
Mean	39.5	6068	7	3

On completion of the interviews the subjects were thanked and notified that they would receive a copy of the transcript, which they could read, edit or add to if they remembered additional information. The transcribing of the interviews were based on recommendations from Douglas, Roberts and Thompson, (1988). Seven of the ten transcripts sent to the subjects were returned (Table 4). Subjects 2, 4, 5 and 9 complied with the researcher's request to complete the blanks in their transcripts resulting from noise or electrical interference. This accounted for most of the notations made by the subjects to the transcripts. None of the subjects censored information.



### Ethical Considerations

A variety of ethical considerations were implemented to ensure the subjects' rights were not transgressed, including (a) voluntary participation of the subjects, (b) informed consent, (c) written release form, (d) use of the subject number instead of the subject's name, (e) the option of the subject to edit the transcript, (f) deleting of the subject's reference to other people that may reveal their identity, and (g) storage of tapes, transcripts and computer disks in a locked cabinet.

### Data Analysis

A combination of inductive content analysis of allowing "the themes and categories to emerge from the quotes" (Patton [1980] in Scanlan, Stein & Ravizza, [1989]) and deductive analysis was conducted.

Any researcher, no matter how inductive in approach, knows which bins [categories] to start with and what their general contents are likely to be. Bins come from theory and experience, and (often) from the general objectives of the study envisioned. (Miles & Huberman, 1998, p. 28)

The deductive analysis evolved from the researcher's predetermined questions, based on personal experience and the review of the literature. These questions formed the initial categories to which an inductive analysis of the transcripts added. Responses with similar meaning or pertaining to similar issues were assigned the same categories, as well as those issues unique to one or more captains. These categories were then summarised accordingly and placed into a chronological format similar to the development and experiences of the captain. The labels for the categories were

based on Spradley's (1980) three forms of domains (a) folk domains - those terms introduced by the subject, (e.g., grooming), (b) analytic domains - those terms introduced by the researcher, (e.g., internal politics), and (c) mixed domains - a combination of the subject's and researcher's terminology (e.g., sports psychologist).

The data is presented in the form of a descriptive report detailing (a) the emergent themes and issues pertinent to the experiences of a sports team captain, (b) implications to coaches and captains, and (c) future research directions.

### Reliability and Validity

#### Reliability

Reliability as defined by Gay (1990, p. 135) is "the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures". In the context of this research the interview is the test. The administration of the interview was consistent for all subjects in that (a) every question was included, (b) the opportunity for the subject to raise issues that were pertinent to them was provided, and (c) each interview was conducted by the researcher. Also those issues that were not on the interview schedule and that were raised by the initial subject, were included in the following interviews. Each transcript also underwent the same analytical procedure of systematically categorising subjects' quotes into predetermined and evolving categories. Categories that emerged from later interviews were then checked against earlier interviews. An audit of the analysis against the interview transcripts was

conducted by an independent person using the method advised by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to ensure comments were attributed to the correct subjects and the generalisations were valid. The auditor's statement is documented in Appendix D.

### Validity

To ensure the validity of obtaining the information obtained, a variety of measures were implemented (a) the subjects were selected according to their captaincy at the elite level, thus ensuring that they had relevant experiences to discuss; and (b) the questions were designed to elicit the extent of the captains' experiences and their perception of their role.

## CHAPTER 4

### Results and Discussion

This chapter identifies and discusses the results of interviews with ten captains in order to clarify the role and experiences of the sports team captain. The results have been directly obtained from the subjects' comments during the interviews. Those responses common and unique to the subjects were categorised into several themes by an inductive and deductive analysis of the transcripts. Table 5 summarises the themes identified and the order in which they will be discussed. A chronological format for discussion has been chosen, similar to the progression of a captain from pre-captaincy to captaincy, the factors influencing the captaincy at each stage and the resultant experiences and duties of the captain. Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between these themes and their contribution to the understanding of the role and experiences of the captain.

The captain is exposed to numerous factors influencing the role and responsibilities of the captain, prior to and upon attaining the captaincy. Several of these factors are external to the control of the captain, for example, the characteristics of the sport and competition. The captain's attitude and behaviour during the captaincy is within the internal control of the captain. The prevailing theme that emerged from the interviews with the captain was the suggestion of "being yourself". Several quotes have been repeated throughout the discussions illustrating the captains' theme of "being yourself".

The discussion represents the author's interpretation of the results. Each theme varies in size and is indicative of the degree of comment made by the subjects

on those themes. For example the brief discussion on vice-captains can be attributed to only one subject commenting on that topic. A combination of direct quotes and summarised points have been incorporated. Listing of points was deemed appropriate when there were many points raised and a similarity between comments. Direct quotes were included to retain a naturalistic flavour and demonstrate the emotion or content of particularly informative comments. The use of subject and captain is interchangeable throughout this chapter. All references to captains are directly attributed to the subjects' comments. When referring to a specific captain or captains, the term "Subject" has been used. Alternatively the term "captain" is used when referring to collective experiences. To reinforce the research nature of this report all figures use the term "Subject".

To retain the flavour of the subjects' speech, the subjects' language has been retained, (e.g., yeah, cause) in excerpts in Chapter 4. Due to the nature of conversation, subjects frequently repeated parts of sentences, changed their train of thought, or illustrated their points with examples. To maintain smoothness of reading, unnecessary words have been eliminated and replaced with ellipsis points. The direct reference by the subjects to people that may identify them has been replaced with that person's role, for example "the coach".

When referring to the captain the author has endeavoured to remove any gender bias. However, the author has included in Chapter 4 quotes from the subjects who have referred to gender as relevant to their individual experiences.

There are several issues that arise out of this discussion, that have implications for the captain and coach. These will be discussed in Chapter 5 in greater detail.

Table 5

*The Role and Experiences of the Sports Team Captain: Themes*

---

**BECOMING A CAPTAIN**

- Previous experience
- Role models
- Attributes
- Grooming captains
- Playing position of the captain

**SELECTION OF THE CAPTAIN**

- Selection process
- Reasons for selection
- Notification of captaincy

**ROLE OF THE CAPTAIN****FACTORS INFLUENCING THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CAPTAIN**

- Characteristics of the Sport and Competition
  - Nature of the sport
    - Perceived differences between sports
  - Level of competition
  - Profile of the sport
  - Length of the playing season
- Sports Team
  - Hierarchical Structure
  - Nature of the coach
    - Responsibilities and duties of the Coach
    - Coaching style
    - Coach's relationship and rapport with the players
  - Nature of the captain
  - Number of support personnel
  - Senior Players
  - Team stability
  - Team Composition

**ATTITUDE AND APPROACH TO CAPTAINCY**

- Attitude towards being a captain
- Changes in attitude/approach on becoming a captain
- Similarities between being a player and a captain
- Goals
- Coping mechanisms and strategies

**POWER****DUTY STATEMENT**

*The Role and Experiences of the Sports Team Captain: Themes Cont.*

**DUTIES**

- Mediator
- Troubleshooter
- Public relations
  - Media
  - Spokesperson
- Sports Psychologist
- Development and implementation of team strategies
- Selection of playing direction
- Assisting with team selection
- Planning and implementation of training
- Dictate or enforce punishment/discipline
- Assist with tour arrangements
- Negotiate player payments/contracts

**EXPERIENCES**

- Significant events
- The highs of the captaincy
- The lows of the captaincy
- Conflicts
- Internal politics
- Team relationships
  - Captain and coach
  - Captain and players
- Changes in captain's relationship with players on becoming captain
- Change in the captain's performance

**ASSISTANCE TO CAPTAINS**

- Pre-Captaincy
- Initial captaincy support
- Long term captaincy support
- Advice to successor

**VICE-CAPTAINS**

---

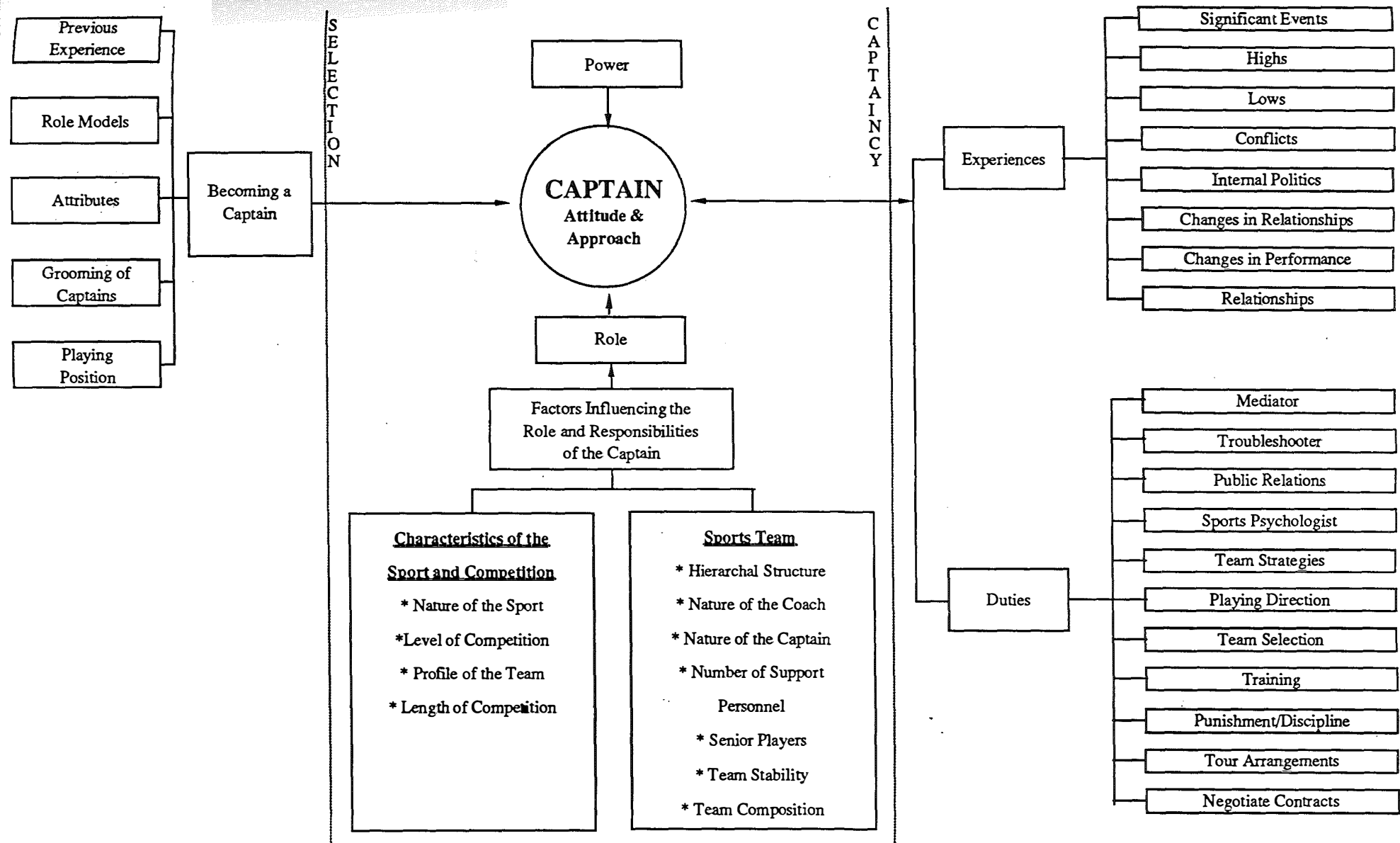


Figure 1 Influencing Factors of the Captaincy



## Becoming a Captain

The evolution of a captain is a multidimensional process. Despite the apparently innate leadership abilities of certain individuals, additional factors such as observing others, training, and experience have also contributed to their development. Five components were identified as contributing to the development of a captain (a) previous experience, (b) attributes, (c) role models, (d) position played, and (e) grooming.

### Previous Experience

Before attaining the state or national captaincy, captains have usually undertaken this role at lower levels. All subjects had captained at either the club level or in a Junior State or Representative team as indicated in Table 6. Subject 5 exemplified the captaining history of the subjects, "I was always captain or vice-captain of junior sides".

Table 6  
*Experience: Previous and Current Captaincy Position*

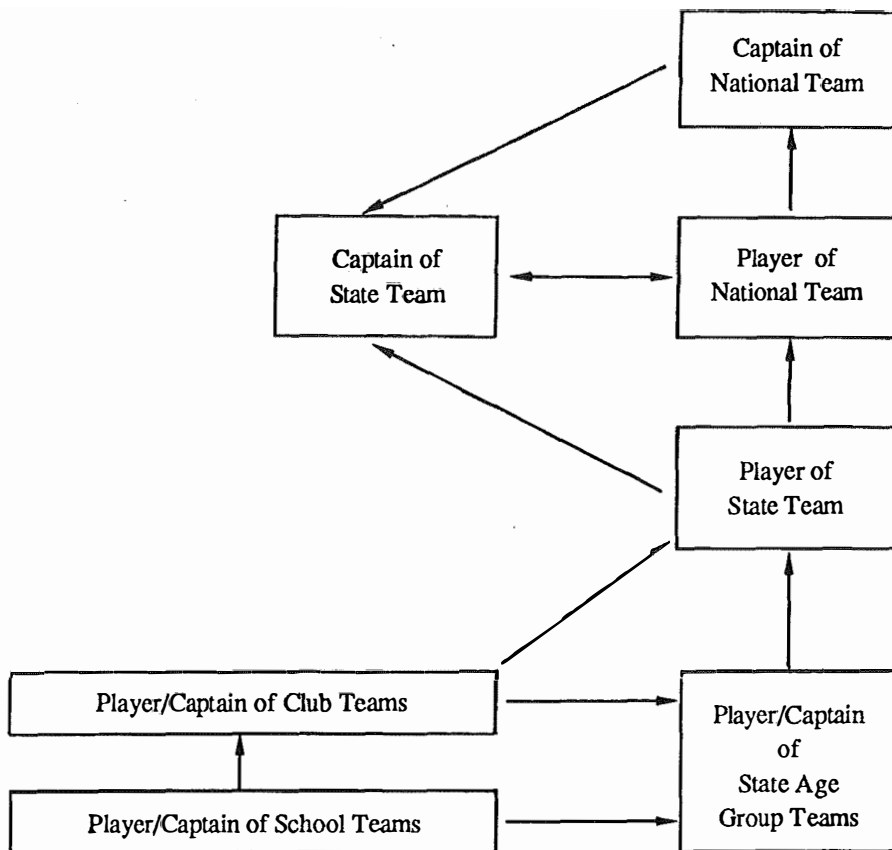
EXPERIENCE	Subject Numbers									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SENIOR NATIONAL CAPTAIN	x	x	x			x			x	x
SENIOR NATIONAL VICE-CAPTAIN	x					x		x		x
SENIOR STATE CAPTAIN	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
SENIOR STATE VICE-CAPTAIN					x		x			x
CLUB CAPTAIN	x	x	x			x	x	x		
COLTS/UNDER 21'S			x							x
STATE UNDER 20's				x						
STATE UNDER 19's										x
STATE UNDER 18's									x	
STATE UNDER 16's	x		x					x		x
STATE UNDER 14'S								x		
AUSTRALIAN JUNIOR TEAM									x	
REPRESENTATIVE JUNIOR TEAMS					x					

Table 6 consists of only those teams mentioned by the subjects.

Consequently the captains may have captained other teams and there may be other age group teams not included in Table 6. The majority of sports in Australia cater for national age group competitions. A player can play in any age group team above their age, but cannot play in any competition below their age. For example, a 13 year old can be selected to play in the Under 16 team even though they qualify for the Under 14 team. Not all sports have the same age group categories.

Captaining at the senior club level was reported by 60 percent of the subjects. The rapid promotion of Subjects 5 and 8 to the state level restricted their opportunity to captain at the club level, with Subject 8 captaining at the club and national level on one occasion each, and Subject 5 not at all. Similarly, 60 percent were vice-captain of either the state or the national team.

Captaining at the state level is traditionally a prerequisite for selection as national captain. The retirement of the preceding captain prior to an impending International competition, presented Subject 3 with the unique experience of captaining Australia before captaining the State team, of which both teams were captained by the retiree. The typical playing and captaincy progression of the captain from school to national level within a sport is illustrated in Figure 2 as developed from Table 6.



*Figure 2.* The Typical Pathway of the Playing and Captaincy Progression of the Captain.

The captain gains vital experience captaining at various levels prior to captaining at the senior state or national level. The advantage of captaining at various levels is that it allows the captain to develop skills and knowledge important to a captain without the greater risk and responsibility of being a captain at the highest levels. The maturation and development of the captain then becomes a more gradual and natural occurrence, similar to that of an ordinary player. The experience, knowledge and leadership qualities gained from the captain's previous experiences targets them as a viable candidate for captaining an elite team. Frost and Uttley (1981) identified previous experience as a prerequisite for selection as a

touring captain.

### Role Models

Observing others can be a powerful learning tool. Although the captains admired and appreciated the qualities of previous captains they tended to implement their own natural leadership style, "being themselves". "I make a bit of a conscious effort to think about the way she's a captain, but I've got my own style" (Subject 1). Two arguments for maintaining one's own style were conveyed by the captains. Firstly, the qualities exhibited as a player indicates the player's suitability for the captaincy position, "I assume I was picked as captain because of the way I approach my game. By trying to change that I don't think you would be sticking to the captain's role that they [the selectors] picked you for initially" (Subject 5). Secondly as described by Subject 8 "I don't think that you can change yourself, I just probably went for my own style".

While playing under previous captains, the subjects consciously, or unconsciously, observed and learned from the previous captains' mistakes, weaknesses and strengths. Subject 10 revealed:

You know how far you go and what not to do, what makes you look an idiot, what players don't like and all those sort of things. They're the things you've got to learn before you become captain and I think I learnt that before.

A difference exists between the captain's principles and the captain's style. The captain's principles is the captain's beliefs and code of conduct, whereas the style of the captain is their method of implementing strategies: firm, soft, quiet,

loud, relaxed, intense. Adopting the principles of previous captains was perceived to be more acceptable than the adoption of previous captains' style. "I modelled myself on ... and that was to form a team and to have tremendous spirit and to get everybody playing at their best" (Subject 10).

Role models have a two-fold effect of demonstrating (a) the right way, and (b) the wrong way of doing things. They serve as a reference point, an example of what a captain does; the responsibilities and role. Although captains may not consciously adopt the behaviour of role models their captaincy style may have been influenced by previous captains or players behaviours and the consequences of those behaviours. The captain does not attempt to copy previous captains' or players' style, but to implement their own style based on what they have learnt from the role models.

### Attributes

The attributes of a person are those behavioural and personality characteristics that distinguish them from other people. Particular attributes are suited to the performance of particular roles, including the role of the sports team captain. It was generally agreed by the captains that it is not necessary to possess all of the ideal attributes. Nor is the possession of all the ideal attributes reasonably possible, although it is advantageous to possess a few of them.

When asked to identify those attributes that the subjects admired in previous captains, the following list emerged (a) gets on well with the coach; (b) gets on well

with the players; (c) led by example, tried to play as well as they could all the time; (d) available to players; (e) approach to the game; (f) always calm, relaxed and poised; (e.g., "Champion people"); (h) professional approach to getting the team to play and work hard and to work as one team; (i) encouraged other players to enjoy the success of team-mates; and (j) respected by everyone for their ability and personality.

On being asked to identify additional ideal characteristics of the captain to those they had admired in previous captains, the subjects nominated the following attributes (a) have sporting ability, so they can lead by example and command respect; (b) have a very good attitude, the right attitude; (c) have effective communication skills, be able to converse with coaches, media, other players, other people; (d) be able to make decisions on behalf of a lot of people; (e) be able to put your own theories aside and go with what the majority thinks and put that to the final decision maker; (f) have good judgement in how to treat people; (g) be a good role model; (h) will not fold under pressure; (i) be "level-headed"; (j) mature; (k) be a leader, have leadership qualities; (l) be professional in your approach to everything; (m) have the ability to identify a problem before it happens; (n) be able to get players to produce their best performance at a high percentage of the time; (o) know when to be one of the boys and girls, and when to lead; and (p) be a good person.

It was interesting to note that Subject 10 in response to the question "Were there other characteristics that you feel are essential to being a good captain?" referred to the calibre of the players as having bearing on the quality of the captain.

Well I always believed that obviously the captain's got to have stock. He's got to have good players, he's got to have players that are prepared to work

really hard and it's his job to make those players work hard and to bond them. In team spirit you've got to, I think spirit of the team gets you a certain way, doesn't it. If you've got a close team that really wants to work well together then you'll go a long way, and I think that's something very important as a captain. Getting players to produce their good cricket at a high percentage of the time.

A player does not have to be the appointed captain to exhibit the leadership attributes of a captain. The qualities that signify the natural leadership attributes of a potential captain are already being exhibited by the player before becoming captain and would continue to be exhibited even if they were not selected as captain. It was identified that the captain is usually selected in recognition of those existing behaviours.

I think even if I hadn't been named captain then I would still be doing the things that I've talked about. So if they had someone else as captain I'd still be doing, trying to lead by example, and set an example, and try and pull players into line and so forth. (Subject 3)

The qualities identified by the subjects confirmed the magnitude of the successful captain's attributes, previously identified in the literature review. Overall the captain must not only have playing ability, but be able to get on with everybody, and adapt to any situation in a professional and competent manner.

### Grooming Captains

Serving an apprenticeship or "being groomed" as Subjects 8 and 9 defined the process, is an extremely appropriate way to develop future successful captains. Particular reference was made to identifying those qualities in a current player that are deemed appropriate in a future captain, including variables such as (a) whether



the player is Australian or an imported player from overseas, as occurs in sports like basketball and baseball; (b) whether the player has ambitions to stay in Australia or play in an overseas competition during the off-season; and (c) whether the player will continue to play for a number of seasons to provide stability and continuity for the team.

Subject 9 claimed that it was preferable for the captain to remain in Western Australia during the off-season to fulfil any off-season duties. Subjects 8 and 9 indicated it would be advantageous for two known players currently being groomed, to be vice-captain or wait for 2-3 years, "In two or three years he'll be ready to go into the role and be mature enough to carry himself in the right way" (Subject 9). The likelihood of the player being available for quite a few seasons is also a strong consideration in selecting a captain. This provides leadership stability, and maintains an element of prestige about the position.

A guy that's going to be there over a long period of time. There's nothing worse than having a captain this year and another one next year, cause the job loses its air of whatever it is. 'Cause if you're there for four of five years, it starts to hold a bit of prestige around the place. (Subject 9)

The grooming of a captain involves selecting a captain well in advance of their predicted accession to the position. The vice-captain as understudy and assistant to the captain is the logical choice for selection. This again allows the gradual introduction of the captain to the role and duties of the captain.

### Playing Position of the Captain

Particular playing positions are more conducive to captains exhibiting on-court or on-field leadership. The point guard in basketball is one example of a position responsible for signalling predetermined offensive strategies. The opportunity to have contact with other players and a clear vision of the whole game are two key factors in defining ideal playing positions of the captain. For cricket and baseball this has been indicated as being first slip and catcher respectively.

Obviously the ideal spot to captain is first slip, 'cause you can see the whole field, you can see the angles. (Subject 10)

Yeah, well catchers are, see, catchers control. The ideal captain is a catcher I reckon, 'cause they control the game. They can see the whole field. But you find a lot of catchers don't catch for very long, they sort of catch and then go and play first base or out-field, 'cause their knees get old and they can't bend down and young kids are coming up. (Subject 9).

Cricket captains in recent years have tended to be batsmen rather than bowlers, and for those batsmen to bat in the middle of the order.

Well Australia tend to have more batting captains than bowling captains. .... I think recently the trend has been for someone who bats in the middle order, whether it be Chappell, Kim Hughes, Border that type of thing. (Subject 8)

However, not all batting captains are confined to the middle order as indicated by Subject 10, "Well, I think as a batsmen and being captain, I like to open, 'cause then you can sort of lead from the front, and get out there and really try to set the example". Where one bats as a cricket captain is determined by where the captain feels the most comfortable and therefore able to perform at the highest level.

Although the position played by some captains may assist them to perform their on-field duties, the overall importance of the playing position as a selection

criteria is as of yet not fully determined.

### Selection of the Captain

There are three issues for discussion regarding the selection of the captain (a) the process of being selected, (b) the reason for being selected, and (c) notification of selection. Each have their own idiosyncrasies and will be discussed individually.

#### Selection Process

Selection of the captain is predominantly made by the coaching and/or management staff as shown in Table 7. Two exceptions to this were the selection of the Australian Women's Basketball captain and Junior State Basketball captains, by the respective teams. The team selection of the Junior State Basketball captain was overturned on occasions by the coach. The process of selecting the captain was best illustrated by Subject 5:

Team management. I don't think at this level if any club actually uses the players to choose a captain. I think the way it is has always been done here, is that the selectors and coaching staff put a submission to the Board of Directors and they give the all clear or not, and go back there and say it's fine and they'll announce it. So obviously the coaching staff would put in their selection and if the Directors have anything against that they'll have maybe some for this reason or not, we don't want this player to be up there. So then they'll go through their second or third choice.

Even though the majority of teams do not directly vote for their captain, they may vote indirectly as suggested by Subject 4, "I think that you would find if the

team wasn't happy then they would say so and things would happen. I think in the end they really do have a say". Alternatively on being asked whether the team or the management should select the captain, Subject 3 replied, "If the team votes you don't always get the right person for the job". Whereas Subject 6 believed that "the team should have some say in it".

Table 7  
*Personnel Responsible for Selecting the Captain*

Selected By	Subject Numbers									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Coach	xS			xS	xS	xS				xS
Management/ Governing Body	xS	xSN		xS	xS	xS	xS			xS
Selectors			xN		xS			xS		xS
Team Players	xN									xN

*Note.* xS = State Team; xN = National Team

The use of coach, management/governing body and selectors in Table 7 were at times not clearly delineated by the subjects. Therefore when a subject nominated the management or governing body as being responsible for their selection, even though not stated this may have included the coach and/or selectors. For some sports the coach may be considered part of the management, for example, football.

A combination of both coach and team input in the selection of the captain would seem appropriate, with the final decision being awarded to the coach/management. Including the team in the selection process ensures positive

team support for the captain and management decisions.

### Reasons for Selection

Selection of captains have been based on a variety of reasons, of varying degrees of importance (a) seniority, (b) previously Vice-Captain, (c) exhibited performance or leadership qualities as a player, and (d) ability to communicate effectively with all players.

A relationship between seniority, experience and being selected as captain appears to exist, as acknowledged by Subject 3, "Possibly it does tend to become a seniority thing, 'cause that person will have the most experience". Four of the captains cited seniority as a possible reason for their selection as captain. The term seniority referred to one or more of the three following components (a) the number of senior games played; (b) the level at which those games had been played, (a player would more likely to be selected State captain if they had played at the National level); and (c) the age of the player. The age of the player had less bearing on the selection of the captain than the number of games played and the level played. Seniority in age can often coincide with the number of games played, in that an older player would more likely to have played a lot of games.

"Earning one's stripes" based on seniority was deemed important in gaining respect from the other team players.

Usually a captain's been there for a long time too, ... been in the sport for a little while before they earn the captaincy. I can't see a rookie being in there for the first year and gaining captaincies, there wouldn't be much respect for you within the team. (Subject 6)

One of the essential criteria in the selection of the captain is the attributes of the player. Individual attributes were cited repeatedly by the subjects as reasons for their selection, as illustrated by Subjects 5, 7 and 9 respectively: "I assume I was picked as captain because of the way I approach my game"; "that's how I see my role a lot, mediating, and almost keeping the peace, and that's one of the reasons that I think that I was chosen for the position"; and "the management think that you have got the ability to lead some guys on the field".

Although playing ability was considered an essential criteria in a captain, the subjects also stated the captain does not have to be the best player. The best players do not necessarily make the best captains. Other qualities were considered to be just as important, if not more so, than ability. Subject 6 declared, "you had to be a good person first before you become a good athlete and then a good captain".

Similarly with Subject 7:

That's why I feel I'm there more as a like a mediator and there for everyone to come to and there as an example for the way I play and the way I behave, etc, but not necessarily for having the greatest knowledge of the game or being the best player type of thing.

Ability cannot be discounted entirely. Having a certain level of ability enables you to command respect and retain your legitimate place in the team. Subject 9 typifies this view:

I guess one of the easiest ways to be a captain is to have been around for a little while and actually proven that you can play at a certain level, not that you have to continue on that level once you have established that, but at a certain level where you may I guess at the time be better than the other guys coming up so it's easier to talk to them on a senior level, rather than knowing you're not quite as good as what they are.

Leadership and communication skills are considered a prerequisite to selection as captain. Although all of the captains are exceptional athletes in their

own right, being best player on the team was not essential. However, ability can earn the respect of fellow team members.

The selection of the captain cannot be based on one magic formula. The demands of the sport, the duties that have to be performed, and the various attributes required are too numerous and dependent on the prevailing conditions at the time, to be able to single out particular items. It is important though that the selection is based on careful consideration of the attributes of a player to meet the requirements of the position rather than for sentimental reasons.

#### Notification of Captaincy

There are various ways of informing a player of their ascendancy to the captaincy not all of which include obtaining the captain's consent. To the surprise of Subjects 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, and 10, they were respectively notified of their captaincy in the following manner (a) informed at a press conference, (b) read the team list and captaincy in the paper, (c) heard the simultaneous announcement of the team and the captaincy at the team selection trials. "We sort of had the trials and everything and then you rock up and they announce the team and they just announce the captain there and then, then I sort of just fell over backwards" (Subject 7), (d) asked by a journalist "Was I looking forward to the challenge next year?" (Subject 8), (e) advised at a team meeting, and (f) notified by the selectors. The lack of official notification from the management is still a source of discontent to Subject 8. Of the remaining four captains, Subjects 3, 4, and 6 did not state how they were notified, whereas, Subject 5 was asked whether he was interested in being captain.

Failure to inform captains of their selection, prior to a public announcement can be potentially damaging. Not all players aspire to the captaincy or relish the extra responsibility. Informing players of their captaincy in a private and official manner by the management, conveys courtesy and respect to the captain.

### Role of the Captain

The role of the captain can be defined as the captain's primary function or part that they perform in the whole scheme of the team. A captain can have an off-field role and an on-field role, which may or may not be the same. For example, the captain's on-field role may be to lead by example and their off-field role to facilitate team cohesion. Both these roles can be on-field or off-field roles. The captains saw their role as being (a) a team leader, setting an example; (b) fostering team spirit; (c) holding the team together; (d) one of the boys as well as leader; (e) mediator; (f) assisting younger players; and (g) facilitating players performance.

Although the roles of the captain as identified by the subjects was not as extensive as the list in the literature review, the roles that were identified reinforce the overall theme of assisting the team to achieve its optimal performance via physical, psychological, social and emotional means.

The role of the captain and the duties of the captain overlap. The role of the captain attempts to describe the overall encompassing function of the captain, in facilitating the success of the team. Whereas the duties are the many physical and

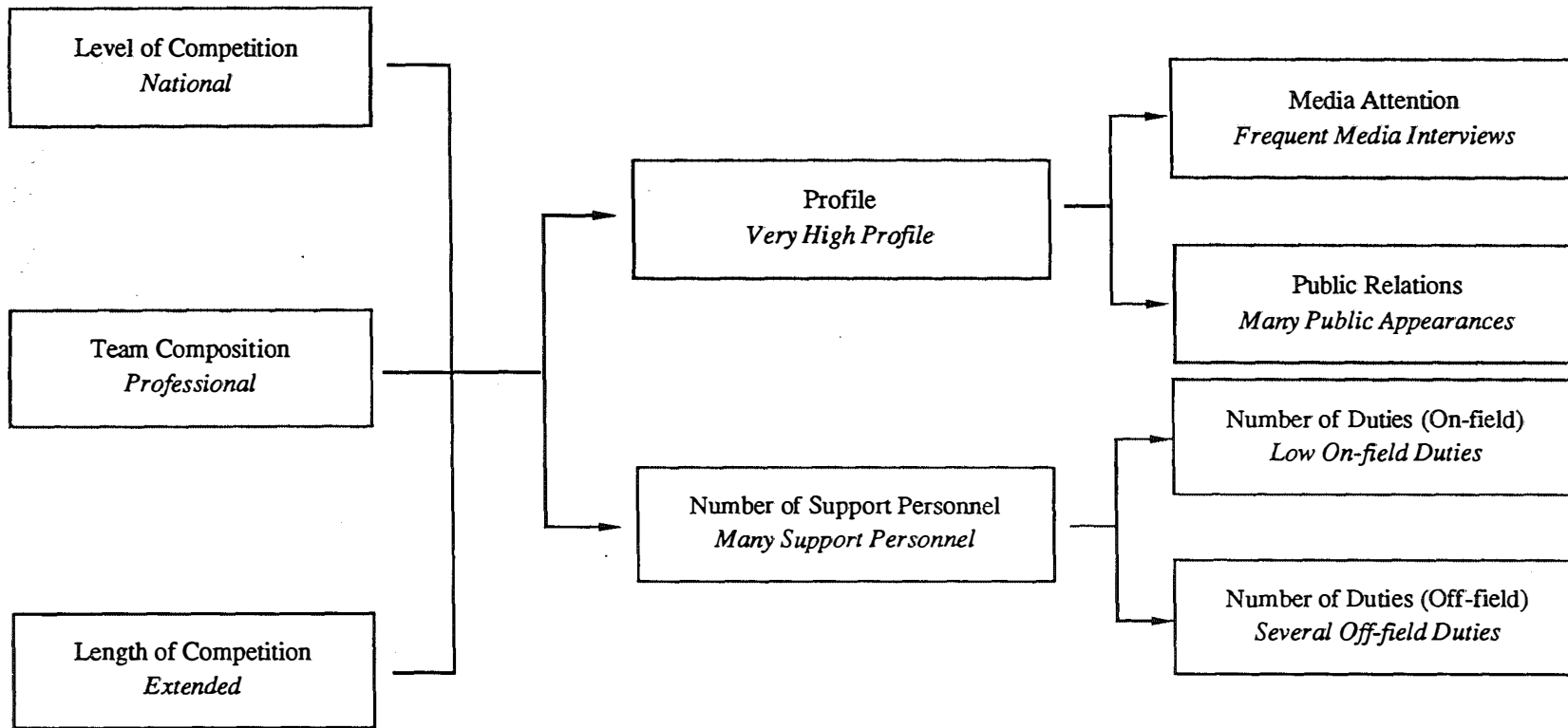


psychological tasks that the captain is required to perform within the captain's role. The performance of the captain's duties contributes to the accomplishment of the captain's role.

### **Factors Influencing The Role and Responsibilities of the Captain**

A captain does not operate in isolation of the team or sport to whom they are responsible. There are numerous factors that can impact on the role and the responsibilities of the captain. These factors can be divided into two categories (a) the characteristics of the sport and competition, and (b) the sports team. Within each category are several subcategories as illustrated in Figure 1 (a) nature of the sport, (b) level of competition, (c) profile of the sport, (d) length of competition, (e) hierarchical structure, (f) nature of the coach, (g) nature of the captain, (h) number of support personnel, (i) senior players, (j) team stability, and (k) team composition.

The preceding variables are not independent of one another. Each has the capacity to influence another variable to varying degrees or have the same effect on many variables. Figure 3 illustrates the relationship between several factors and how they influence the role and the responsibilities of the captain. However, to simplify matters each variable will be discussed separately.



*Figure 3.* The Relationship Between the Structural Factors Influencing the Role and Experiences of the Captain with the State Basketball Captain as an example.

*Note.* The words in italics refer to the State Basketball Captain

## Characteristics of the Sport and Competition

The characteristics of the sport and competition place limitations on the role and responsibilities of the captain. These characteristics include (a) nature of the sport, (b) level of competition, (c) profile of the sport, and (d) length of competition.

### Nature of the sport

Particular sports facilitate immediate and repetitive coach interaction with the players during the game (e.g., basketball, baseball, football). The coach who is in constant contact with the team is also the person making the majority of on-field decisions in regards to strategies and player movements. Therefore it is reasonable to suggest that the captain and coach would have an inversely proportional rate of interaction with the team in regards to strategies. Subject 9 illustrates the decision-making interaction of the coach with the team:

Whereas we're so contactable by the coach. We're sitting in the dugout next to him for half the game, and the other half he's standing like from here giving us all these signals to tell us what we've got to do and so he's right there so it's not like he's a hundred feet away. It's probably not unlike football where the runner will go and say he'll put the things in what the coach wants. Where the captain is really out there to say "Come on fellas keep your head up and get amongst it more".

Although the degree of coach interaction may reduce the on-field decision making of the captain in terms of strategies, it does not totally diminish the captain's on-field responsibilities, as advised by Subject 4:

Sometimes it greatens it, because he's sometimes on the players arse for some reason and he's right up them and they can get pissed off about it and

then the captain's got to try and calm them down, settle them down, cool them down, "relax we've got a job to do out here, don't worry about it, yeah, okay you did this wrong but that doesn't matter just fix it next time".

The length and breadth of the playing field and the resultant player positioning also influences the degree of the captain's involvement. Sports that require the players to play over a large area, such as football, decrease the captain's opportunity to interact with all players. This situation is particularly relevant if their position is at one extreme of the field. The employment of co-captains can overcome this, as has been done in baseball. A senior player is responsible for the satellite of players around them, consequently there is a pitching captain, an out-field captain and an in-field captain. The baseball captain in this study was also the in-field captain.

The closer the coach is to the playing action and players via distance (basketball) or a runner (football), the less on field decision making is required by the captain. Negative feedback by the coach however, increases the captain's motivational responsibilities.

#### Perceived differences between sports

As previously discussed, captains learn several captaincy skills by observing others. The researcher wanted to identify whether captains saw differences between their role and duties and captains of other sports. The captain's perceptions may influence how he/she judge their own performance or worth as a captain.

Apart from Subject 1 who was unable to respond to the question, the

majority of the captains perceived the role of the captain to be different for specific sports, particularly the role of the cricket captain. The subjects acknowledged that the captain in cricket (a) has greater on-field responsibilities, including decision making; (b) will be held responsible for wrong decisions, not the coach; (c) has a role similar to the coach in other sports, and the coach is more an overseer; (d) has a huge job; (e) has an active role that the spectators see them performing; (f) has a lot more control over the players, what order they bat and where they field; (g) they are one of the boys/girls but they really are the top man/woman, the selector; and (h) in cricket the captain cops the brunt, he/she's the main man/woman.

Despite being a captain and therefore aware of the possible off-field duties, Subject 7 assessed the role of other captains from a spectator's point of view, from what they saw the captain doing on the field or court. If a captain is making this assessment, what opinion is the general public construing who have limited knowledge of the behind the scenes duties of a captain?

Cricket was not the only sport noted for its different requirements of the captain. The following comparisons were made between captains of football, basketball, hockey and rugby union (a) "in basketball it is probably easier to have more hands on stuff, say than football" (Subject 4); (b) "probably football, hockey and basketball have a, you know their roles are probably similar" (Subject 6); (c) "but some how I don't imagine that the input and the position in our game [softball] is anything like say what it would be for Sharon Buchanan in the hockey, just because that's so much more professional, well I see it as being so much more professional" (Subject 7); (d) "the coach he just makes all the shots in football, whereas the captain is probably, a very popular guy, he's got a good image with the

public and the sponsors, and that's the type of thing they're looking for in a captain in football" (Subject 8); (e) "I've noticed with rugby union, he even talks to them at half time, the coach doesn't come down. So, yeah, those sort of guys [cricket and rugby captains] would have to be involved with selection, would have to be and really would have to be, they're really the assistant coach on the field" (Subject 9); and (f) "the [football] captain is really out there to say, come on fellas keep your head up and get amongst it more" (Subject 9).

Not all comparisons were made in regard to the duties of the captain. The evolution of sport over the past few decades, in terms of the amount of research a team conducts into the strengths and weaknesses of the opposing teams has had a major influence on the role and duties of not only the captain but the coaching personnel as well. This was perceived to be common for all sports by Subjects 8 and 10, with specific reference to cricket, football and basketball.

I think now probably more so than ten years ago. There is so much more planning involved. Ten years ago Western Australian [cricket] did jump the rest of the field because of the fact that we used to plan our pre-season and when we were going to play the other side and actually try and go through each player. .... Now I think all the sports whether it be football, basketball, cricket. Football in particular. ... they have people go, like if they're playing Footscray next week, they'll have someone watching Footscray this week so that they can plot their performance for the following week. (Subject 8)

The similarities in the roles of the various sporting captains were also highlighted by Subjects 4 and 10, particularly (a) being captain and being too preoccupied with everyone else and what they are doing can be detrimental to your own performance; and (b) I think in all team sports, captains have all got the same job, isn't it, it's just to mould a good side together and more importantly lead by example.

Differences were perceived between captains of different sports. In particular the cricket captain was perceived to have greater responsibility and pressure than other captains. The effect of any perceptions they may have had on the variance in captaincies, were not explored. However, negative feelings or envy were not expressed by the captains in relation to the degree of authority the cricket captain has compared to their individual sports.

### Level of competition

As the level of competition reaches the highest level, a change in emphasis in the composition and quantity of the captain's responsibilities may result:

At the club [level] you could do something like that [on field changes], but not for Australia or not for a State team. That is the role or was the role of the coach and you really didn't have that authority or I don't think you were game enough to do it actually. (Subject 2)

The changes in captain responsibilities from club level, to state level, through to national level are not uniform across all sports. Particular sports may experience an increase in media attention and others a reduction. According to Subject 6, her sports involvement with sponsorship functions was greater for the State team than for the National team, "on the day-to-day basis you would get more with that on the local scene than the national scene". Subject 7 perceived her role at the club level to be different and greater than her role at the state team for the following reasons (a) a closer affiliation with the club team; (b) the most senior club player and therefore had a lot more to do with what was happening in the team and training; and (c) less pressure to perform because you've already proven yourself, whereas at

the national level "it's the old knocker syndrome, if you don't perform".

Further role variations can be credited to the higher standard of team mates' performance as the captain climbs the sporting ladder. At the elite level, players tend to be of a similar high performance and knowledgeable standard, "all your players on the field are already set, and people know their own roles and maybe now again you've got to call something but that's it" (Subject 2).

Alternatively, Subject 6 inferred that the increase in level of competition enhanced the coach's confidence in the opinion of the captain or senior players:

I think that once you get to this WNBL level or the Australian level that the coaches are very much aware that the players have something to say and they'll talk amongst themselves, and usually the older players who are usually the captains anyway have that sort of say. But in the junior state teams and stuff like that there would be no say, you know between them. (Subject 6)

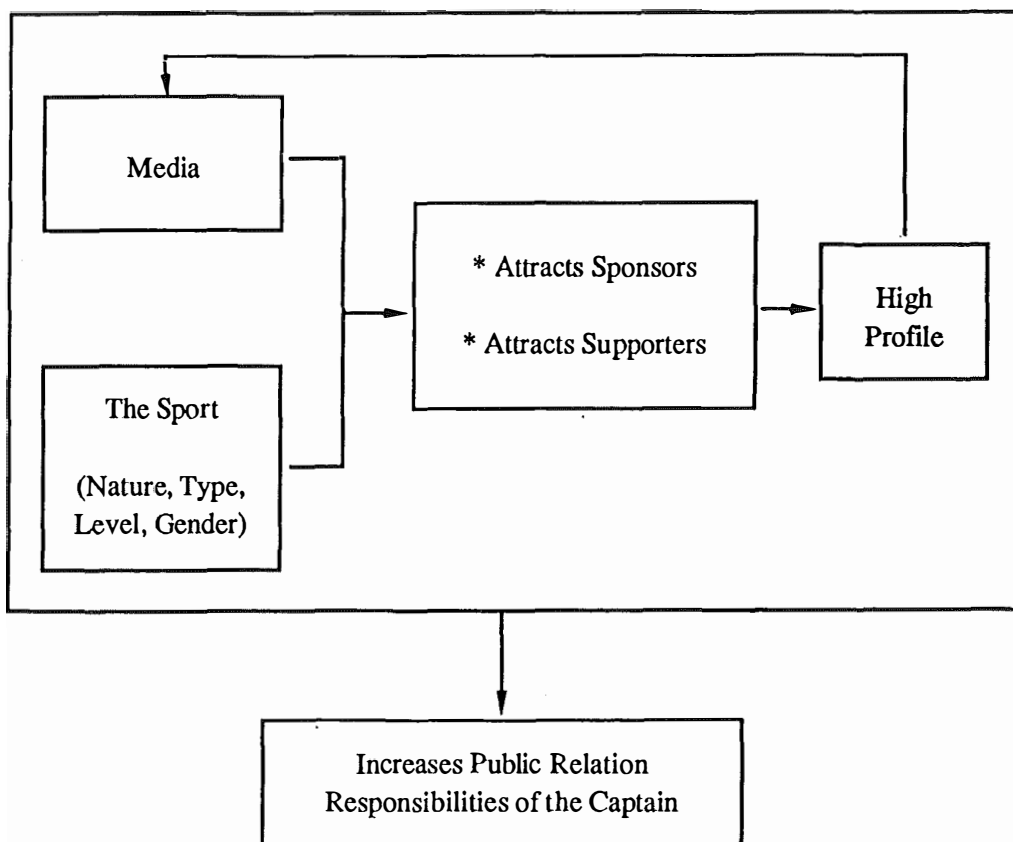
The various levels of competition affect the responsibilities of the captain due to resultant differences in (a) the profile of the team and captain, (b) the number of support personnel, (c) the feelings of affiliation the captain may have with the club or team, (d) the playing standard of fellow team-mates, and (e) type of competition. Each captain responds differently to the rise in level and the change in responsibilities.

### Profile of the sport

The profile of a sport is very much determined by the extent of media attention. A high media profile attracts sponsorship, supporters and consequently more media attention. There is an unequal distribution of media coverage towards the more



traditional male sports of cricket, football and basketball. These sports receive the greater amount of media coverage, (including live telecasts of the games) and the higher profile. The captains of those sports that enjoy a high profile have reported a high off-field relationship with the media and sponsors. The relationship between the profile of the sport is illustrated in Figure 4. Alternatively, a captain of a sport that has a low profile in the press would not be heavily in demand by journalists as Subject 7 can testify to, "Me, no. I don't think anybody would even know, half the people wouldn't even know I was captain".



*Figure 4.* The Relationship Between a High Profile Sport and Increased Responsibilities of the Captain

## Length of Competition

A competition can have an extended season over a period of months or a condensed season of several weeks. The sports that participate in a condensed season typically come together for a limited pre-season training prior to the competition. This is compared to extended season sports who sometimes have pre-season training nearly as long as the playing season. The captain of a team that is almost a twelve month proposition has more duties and is in demand over a longer period of time than a captain of a team that forms briefly for a tournament. The off-season duties can be as diverse as participating in a promotional fashion display for a major shopping centre on behalf of the team. The team is also in the public eye for a longer period of time increasing the profile of the captain and therefore the degree of responsibility required from the captain.

On comparing a team that plays together for a tournament versus a season,

Subject 4 reported the following differences:

It changed a lot of the emphasis of my captaincy. .... We became a side that was not something you just get together for one year or one tournament. It was a yearly long thing or a season in length. So that made a big difference. I think it put more pressure on you because you had to do it for a longer period of time it just wasn't a matter of doing [it] once off. I think with state teams, captains are just named and there's not really a lot of responsibility that goes with it.

The demands on the players and the captain of extended playing seasons are considerably greater compared to shorter seasons. The sports that are playing extended competitions are also the higher profile, professional sports. This increases the profile of the captain, as well as the off-field duties of the captain, particularly in the area of public relations.

## Sports Team

The structure of the sports team and the personnel within the sports team influence the role and responsibilities of the captain. The subcategories of the sports team that will be discussed further include (a) hierarchical structure, (b) nature of the coach, (c) nature of the captain, (d) number of support personnel, (e) senior players, (f) team stability, and (g) team composition.

### Hierarchical structure

A sports team is made up of players, captain, coach, support staff, and management. The tiered hierarchical structure of these components forms the power basis of the team as demonstrated in Figure 5. The hierarchical structure of teams is dependent on the type and level of competition. Professional teams that have a lot of money or prestige at stake tend to have a governing body that hires and fires personnel and manages the club like a business. The degree of power that each level has and the relationship between each level varies from team to team. The captains felt that the coach needs to be above the team, whereas the captain needs to be one of the team but also know when it is appropriate to step to the front and lead. The equality of the captain to the rest of the team is illustrated by the placement of the captain level with the senior players and players in Figure 5.

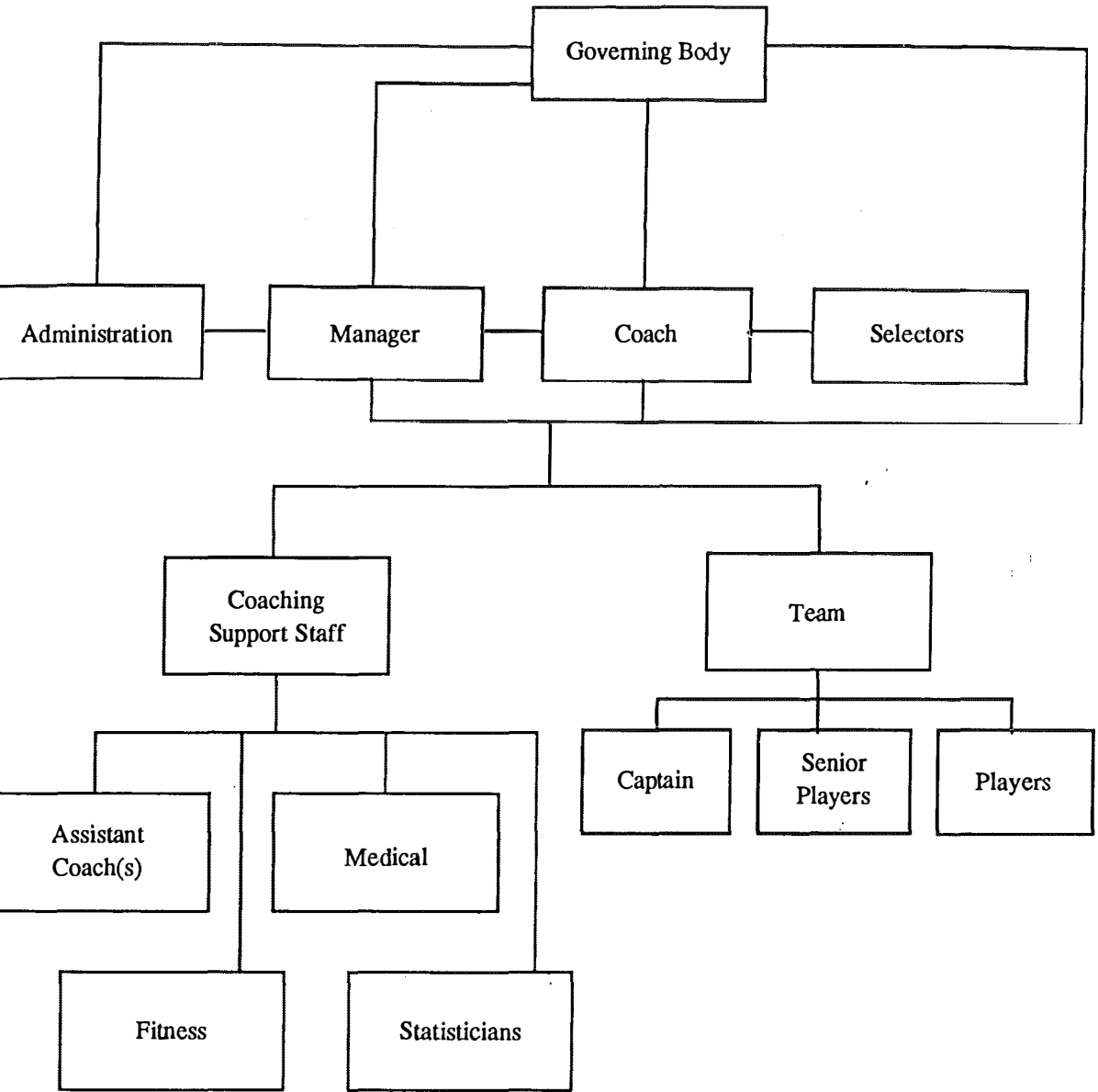


Figure 5. The Hierarchical Structure of a Typical Sports Team

### Nature of the coach

The nature of the coach is the underlying power and attributes of the coach, and is a significant determinant of the role of the sports team captain. In particular the coach's responsibilities and duties, as well as their coaching style determines the degree of involvement of the captain.

### Responsibilities and duties of the Coach

The influence the 'nature of the sport' has on the captain's duties is equally influential on the responsibilities and duties of the coach. The role of the captain and coach is dictated by the rules of the sport they participate in. Those sports previously identified (basketball, baseball, softball, football), as allowing for a higher degree of interaction between the coach and the players during play, ultimately result in more decision making from the coach than the captain. With the exclusion of cricket and rugby the majority of decision-making in sports is performed by the coach.

### Coaching style

Although the sport ultimately determines the role of the coach, it does not entirely determine the role of the captain. Of the sports that the coach is designated the

higher authority, the coach is then in the position to determine the role of the captain. The coaching style of the coach will influence (a) how open the lines of communication are between the coach and the captain and the players - The coach requests input from players and/or is receptive to feedback, (b) how much involvement the coach allows the players in decision making, and (c) how the coach perceives the delineation between the coach's role and the role of the captain.

The degree of involvement a coach allows a captain varies from coach to coach, "that depends on who's coaching" (Subject 2). Why some coaches are less receptive to feedback was perceived by the captains to be for the following reasons (a) the coach sees the captain's input as butting in, (b) the coach does not want the captain's opinion, (c) the coach has their own ideas, and (d) the coach sees feedback as criticism.

Cricket captains are in the reverse position to the coach of most other sports, in that they the captain determines the degree of involvement of the coach.

I think it's also a personal thing between the captain and the coach, and different personalities, they've got to work out between them, how much ground the captain is prepared to give that coach. If they can come to a common ground well it should be a very good working relationship. (Subject 8)

Receptiveness to captain and player feedback was deemed important by the captains to the achievement of team goals. Although Subject 4 advised, that when the coach is unreceptive to feedback the team must learn "to adapt to what the new style is".

The nature of the sport dictates the duties of the coach and how much interaction the coach has with the players during a game. That degree of interaction and authority is typically extended to off the field. For the majority of sports the

coach has greater authority than the captain, and therefore the coach determines the extent of the captain's role.

### Coach's relationship and rapport with the players

The coach's rapport with the team may also have some bearing on the duties of the captain. An unfavourable rapport between coach and players, and a lack of player respect for the coach, may increase the players need for mediation and support from the captain. Therefore the motivational and psychological duties of the captain may be inversely proportional to the rapport between the coach and team.

The coach has considerable influence over the degree of involvement the captain has in the decision making process of the team and the allocation of duties. The consequences of the coach's behaviour also influences the responsibilities of the captain. The degree of involvement the coach should allow the captain will be discussed in Chapter 5.

### Nature of the captain

The attributes of age and experience may influence the degree of responsibility a captain is given or takes on. This occurs in areas of (a) decision making, (b) strategies, and (c) team selection. A captain who is experienced and knowledgeable of the game, may be sought more often for their opinion by the coaching staff than

an inexperienced captain.

There are captains in the AFL [Australian Football League] who actually do sit with the selectors as a selector on the selection panel, but they're more senior players, like I think they've either played 200 games or they've been captain for 100 games, that sort of thing. (Subject 5)

Alternatively, a captain who is not confident in their ability to make the tough decisions may decline the opportunity to assist with team selection or strategy. Other factors may influence a captain's decision not to partake in the decision making process, such as the lateness of the hour that the selectors stay up to when selecting the team "I won't go in with them 'cause they sit there until eleven or twelve o'clock some Wednesday nights" (Subject 5).

The age and experience of the captain can be synonymous variables. At the same time the captain is gaining playing or captaining experience they are also growing older. However, age is not necessarily an indication of experience. There are differences between sports on the average age of the team players and the age of the captain. Australian Rules Football teams tend to have young players with considerable league experience, than compared to the cricket player at the same age and Test match experience. In 1992, the ages of the football and cricket state captains were 24 years old and 33 years old respectively. Therefore generalisations cannot be made between sports based on the age of the captain. Whether generalisations based on the number of first-class games played can be made, is as of yet undetermined.



### Number of support personnel

As the level of competition and the professionalism of the sport increases so does the number of responsibilities. At the elite level, many of the required tasks are performed by a number of support personnel (a) coach, (b) assistant coaches, (c) statisticians, (d) manager/ess, (e) selectors, (f) trainers, (g) sports psychologists, (h) club committee/board, (i) physiotherapists, and (j) other.

Consequently the quantity of support personnel may be inversely proportional to the number of off-field duties the captain is required to perform.

The captaincy hasn't really got much, many roles to perform. You know especially in team sports like basketball, hockey, whatever, that usually you've got so many coaching panels, like we've got a coach, and two assistants and two physio's and a manager, and a tour leader that always travel with us, so if they can't sort it out within themselves, then if the players have got any problems they usually go to the coach themselves. (Subject 6)

Tasks that require a representative of the team to meet with the media, sponsors and supporters tend to be left to the more suitable high profile positions of the captain and the coach. When a support person is unable to fulfil their duties (for whatever reason), the captain may step in temporarily and, for example, take a team warm-up session.

The high level of professionalism involved with elite sports and the consequences of winning and losing games, necessitates the variety and number of support personnel that are now commonly part of the team. The role of the support personnel is also to facilitate the performance of the team in specialised capacities: fitness, health, and administration. The responsibilities of the captain are therefore considerably reduced than if there were no support personnel.

### Senior players

In addition to the captain there maybe other senior players who are just as qualified to be captain, and are also exhibiting leadership behaviour. The experience and knowledge senior players have, makes them a valuable resource for the captain to gain input from and to bounce ideas off. As Subject 8 phrased it, "six heads are better than one". The coaching staff or captain make seek the senior players input or the senior player may spontaneously offer suggestions. Subject 9 felt that "there is probably two or three [senior] people on every team that they [the coaching staff] would ask". Similarly Subject 10 stated that he regularly discussed options with the other senior players, "I work very closely with [the coach] and the senior players in the side out on the ground. I think it is always important that you ask, 'cause you might just have one idea, as long as you don't get confused".

The senior players within a team are an additional valuable resource for the captain and the coach. They have knowledge and experience that can contribute to the success of the team. This can lighten the burden for the captain in terms of decision making and strategic development.

### Team Stability

Ideally a team likes to reduce the number of coach and player turnovers to enhance stability and cohesiveness within a team. A team that experiences a high player turnover would increase the captain's socio/psychological duties, such as (a)

nurturing young players, (b) teaching new players team rules and codes of conduct, (c) getting to know the players, and (d) facilitating team cohesiveness.

A change in coach not only requires the captain to adapt to the new coaching style, but to facilitate a positive relationship between the coach and players, therefore increasing the responsibilities of the captain.

Carron (1982) concluded that cohesion was considered to be essential in interactively dependent tasks. Interactive type sports are reliant on members interacting to complete the sub-task at hand, such as the passing of the ball from player to player to score a goal. All the captains interviewed, captained teams of an interactive nature (basketball, baseball, cricket, football, hockey, softball).

The captain of a team that is relatively stable does not have to perform the many psychological and socio-emotional duties required of a captain of a constantly changing team. The players of a stable team have generally learnt the rules of the team and found their niche in relation to the other team members. Getting to know and understand new players or coaches can upset the cohesion of the team.

### Team composition

An increase in the number of professional sports-people contracted to a team may also decrease the responsibilities of the captain. Professional contracted athletes are usually advised of an acceptable code of conduct. Unsatisfactory behaviour from a player can result in penalties, such as fines, being temporarily dropped from the team, or sacked. The rate of unacceptable behaviour consequently decreases

reducing the necessity for captains to admonish unsatisfactory behaviour. Also contractual disputes or infringements become the responsibility of the governing body.

Well, they're professionals, you see, and they know they're getting paid to, a lot of the guys are full-time professionals and if it goes back to America that they're doing this, then they know they're putting their careers on the line. (Subject 9)

Subject 7 attributed the degree of amateurism or professionalism as significant in determining the responsibilities of the captain, "We don't, have special functions or anything basically. They're ... really amateurish".

The higher levels of competition, correspond with a more professional approach in terms of financial considerations and attitude to the game. Professional sports-people are under an obligation to meet behavioural standards on and off the field and are usually accountable to the governing body, who dictates and enforces the punishment, therefore reducing the need for the captain to enforce discipline.

### Attitude and Approach to Captaincy

The adjustment from being a player only, to being a player as well as captain can alter the captain's attitude and approach to the game to varying degrees. The differentiation between attitude and approach was in the subjects' respective descriptions of their feelings and their behaviour. Several of the subjects stated making minor adjustments in their behaviour, whereas other subjects depicted carrying on as normal. The major theme of "being yourself" is very evident in this category of the captain's attitude and approach to the game.

### Attitude Towards being a Captain

Although the captains admitted to being honoured and proud to be captain, they also emphasised restraint in exaggerating the importance of the captaincy, as typified in this response from Subject 2, "I don't think I thought about being a captain, it was an honour .... It was no real drama". Not one of the captains registered their antipathy to being captain. Congruent with the captains' attitude of understatement was their inferred approach of leading by example and being oneself, with as little behaviour change as possible. Being more considerate of the needs of team-mates and what is best for the team were deemed acceptable behaviour changes. "As captain, I think the best way for a captain to be a captain is to lead by example and that's to get out there and get into it" (Subject 10). Subject 10 also advised, "You've got to captain on instinct, what comes to your mind first is what you do, and that's the way I go".

### Change in Attitude/Approach on Becoming a Captain

Major transformations in personalities and playing style are not synonymous with becoming a captain. Generally the captains maintained the same style of play that procured their selection as captain. However the following changes in approach to the game and team-mates, on becoming captain were stated (a) be alert to problems other players may be experiencing; (b) be more responsible; (c) assume greater interest in who is hosting a function and for what purpose, so as to enable an

appropriate response; (d) represent the interests of the team; and (e) do what is best for the entire team.

Maturing from an egocentric approach to a concern for the needs and interests of the whole team is the major change that occurs on becoming captain, as exemplified by Subject 9:

I think that you go from being a player where you don't really have to worry about anybody else, to realising you can't fob someone off just for the sake of it. ... You may have had a hard day at work and you go down to training and you can't be bothered talking to anybody, you sort of have to say "Hang on you might have a young kid wanting to ask you something here and if I ignore him he is going to say "I'm not going to go to you". So yeah, it does, it makes you mature a little bit more.

The selection as captain was perceived as an honour, and in recognition of their attitude and behaviour exhibited as a player. Although changes in behaviour and attitude were minimal, they followed a trend of being more alert to the needs of their team members.

### Similarities Between Being a Player and a Captain

The expectations, experiences and attitude to playing are not necessarily greater or less as a captain than if you were a player only. Four of the captains cited eight circumstances where they would have felt or done the same as if they were a player only (a) setting goals, (b) leading by example, (c) enjoying team achievements, (d) disliking team failures, (e) inclusion in coaching and management discussions, (f) negotiating player contracts, (g) playing the game, and (h) being injured and having to sit on the bench.

The following comments from Subjects 3 and 9 respectively, demonstrate the sentiments of the captains on this theme:

I think even if I hadn't been named captain then I would still be doing the things that I've talked about. So if they had someone else as captain I'd still be doing, trying to lead by example, and set an example, and try and pull players into line and so forth.

I don't know if I'd act any differently if I didn't have the word captain in front of my name, I'd probably be just the same.

As previously discussed, those qualities and characteristics that targeted the captain for selection while a player, are ideal for their role as captain. The captains already had expectations, were setting goals, and making a worthy contribution to the success of the team prior to becoming a captain. Major changes in behaviour were not advocated by the captains, and indeed for the majority were not undertaken. Leading by example and showing consideration for others were perceived as the optimal way for the captain to approach their captaincy.

The major theme of "being yourself" was again evident in the captains' responses. The captains were exhibiting their natural behaviour as a player "being themselves", which they continued to exhibit after being selected as captain.

## Goals

The goals one sets as a player and the goals one sets as a captain are quite often the same or only slightly different. Martens (1987) identifies two types of goals; performance goals and outcome goals. As a team consists of individuals, those two categories of goals can be broadened to include (a) team performance goals, (b)

team outcome goals, (c) individual performance goals, and (d) individual outcome goals.

A common goal of the captains was to maintain their form, enabling them to lead by example. Overall the subjects stated ten goals, including (a) maintaining own form, (b) winning championships, (c) achieving a realistic final position on the ladder, (d) having the team thinking and being focussed in the same direction, (e) playing consistently, (f) leading by example, (g) assisting and encouraging the team to play to the best of its ability, (h) instructing and encouraging the team to be more professional in its attitude and approach to the game, (i) developing in the first year of captaincy an inexperienced team that would be ready for the following year, and (j) developing a team that had tremendous spirit and to get everybody playing at their best. The goals set by the captains were a combination of the four types of goals previously stated, with several having a socio-psychological emphasis. For example the socio-psychological development of the team (focussed, professional attitude, tremendous spirit) was perceived as ultimately contributing to a winning team.

Subjects 5 and 6 initially denied setting any specific team goals. Although Subject 5 later described setting an individual goal of "maintain my individual ... performance [and] do the right thing by the team" which ultimately would benefit the team. The need for integration of personal and team goals was highlighted by Subject 4, "your personal goals must be orientated towards team performance or problems occur". Realistic and attainable goals were a characteristic of several captains goals as shown by Subjects 7 and 8 respectively.

Everyone wants to go to a National carnival and be the winner ... last year I think we looked at it more realistically and if we play at the best of our



ability we can do this and we seem to do it.

Our main aim for that first year was to try and get the side we wanted for the following year and then as I say try and get them tasting success, [and] .... I set personal goals obviously with my own performance as a batsman. As a captain the goal that we tried to set - I thought to get into the Shield final would have been a little bit hard for the first year. But I tried to finish third for that first year.

The characteristics of the team and sport, often provide the motivation for the conception of particular goals. In response to the perception by Subject 1 of the absence of professionalism and team cohesion within the team, Subject 1 set a goal of installing a sense of professionalism, as well as increasing the off-field social rapport of the players to bring about an on-field closeness. Interestingly Subject 8 expressed the goal of gaining the players' respect:

Well, the first year I suppose also was very important to try and get the players' confidence, that you were justified in being captain, and you did have their respect, and they had confidence in the decisions that you were going to make.

Ultimately every captain wants their team to win. When this is realistically perceived to be unlikely due to the inexperience of the team for example, achievable goals are set. Martens (1987) advises an emphasis on individual goals and performance goals, and the avoidance of team outcome goals. The captains had two types of goals, player goals and captaincy goals. The player goals were those goals that they would and do set themselves even if they were just a player, such as winning championships and playing well, whereas their captaincy goals were those they set in relation to their behaviour as a captain and their relationship with the other players. Overall the captain set individual goals that facilitated the performance of the team.

## Coping Mechanisms and Strategies

There are widely accepted strategies for coping with extra responsibilities and demands on one's time, for example the employment of time and stress management skills, and delegation. How a captain copes with the demands of the captaincy was not previously identified as a theme for discussion with the captains, and was introduced only by Subject 8. Subject 8 described the following method of coping with the intense demands and responsibilities of his captaincy:

It was a little bit nerve racking, the first, especially the first few games because as I say I hadn't done it and I hadn't even had the experience of setting a field type of thing. ... So what I used to do was *prepare thoroughly*. I've found whether it be at work or playing sport or just giving a speech at least if you're prepared and something does go wrong, you've got something to fall back on. I used to prepare fairly thoroughly on the opposition, even to the fact of writing down fielding positions, getting them in my memory for different players, and if things did go wrong, someone was on top, at least you could revert back to another plan. Whereas if you just go in cold, you can be made to look a bit of a dill at times.

It is conceivable the need for coping strategies is in direct proportion to the demands of the job, and therefore more relevant to those captains that had a high on-field responsibility. However, it may be of benefit in the future to explore how captains cope with other pressures, for example, talking to the media, having to perform consistently at a high standard, always having to set the good example, and so forth.

### Power

The power of the captain was defined as the captain's authority in being able to implement their decisions. With the exception of cricket, the captains saw their power as in name only, the real power being the coaches.

It seems to me that the coaches are the ones that are making the greater number of the decisions and whether they involve the captains as a representative of the players' group, I'm not so sure. (Subject 3)

However, the captains felt confident in raising team problems and issues with the coach or management when necessary. Subject 7 also referred to the vice-captain as being "even more of a figure-head" than a captain. The usual exception was the cricket captains who implemented their plans for the team.

With the exception of cricket, the captains had little real power or authority. The amount of authority a captain has is primarily determined by the coach and management. Generally the captains felt that they had the authority to take the initiative and discuss team problems and issues with the management.

### Duty Statement

Expanded national competitions are predominantly professional in that the players are paid a salary or game fee. For some of the players the game fee is their major source of income. Accompanying most occupations is a Job Description Form informing the employee of the duties and requirements for the position. This not only serves to clarify the duties but to set boundaries and expectations of the captain.

Subject 1 had the unique experience of being the only captain to receive a written duty statement as well as a verbal explanation. Written or verbal duty statements are not customarily issued on attaining the captaincy, nor during the captaincy.

Subjects 2, 3, 4, 8 and 10, attributed not receiving a duty statement to the coaching personnel's expectation that they, (the captain) would know what to do. "I think that perhaps they expected you to know what you were supposed to do." (Subject 2).

The captains were to carry on as normal and "be themselves". Whereas Subject 7 associated the "token gesture" of being captain as the reason for not receiving a duty statement.

Despite not receiving a formal duty statement, Subject 5 had the benefit of sitting down with the coach and discussing team goals and view points.

You sit down with the coach when I was first named captain and we just talked about sort of team goals and how we wanted the team to function, just so I knew what his views were and what he wanted but obviously it makes it easier for me to know which way he wants the players to go or not. To see which way he's pushing us with his training.

In particular observing previous captains and players, demonstrates "how far you [can] go and what not to do, what makes you look an idiot, what players don't like and all those sort of things. They're the things you've got to learn before you become captain and I think I learnt that before [becoming captain]" (Subject 10).

Interestingly Subject 5 referred to experience in other aspects of life as training for the captaincy, "I think most captains or most people who get named captain are people who have had some experience so, not as captain, but who have been around the traps for a while so they've been able to pick up other things". Captains who have occupations that place them in a position of authority are already utilising leadership skills which can be transferred across to their captaincy. In

particular one subject referred to their experience as a teacher as being advantageous in developing the communication skills necessary in mediating between players.

A duty statement was seen as being beneficial by the majority of the captains. Although the captain gains valuable knowledge through first hand experience, the provision of a duty statement may have alleviated some of the unnecessary trial and error that have interfered with the management of the team. Both Subjects 3 and 8 reported that confrontations with management may not have occurred if their roles had been clearly defined in the beginning of their captaincy. As the result of contractual issues with one subject, the team's Governing Board issued a handbook to players stipulating what players are allowed and not allowed to do, particularly in terms of sponsorship arrangements. Although several of the captains no longer felt they needed a duty statement, they did acknowledge the assistance it could have provided and the benefit it would be to future captains.

### Duties of the Captain

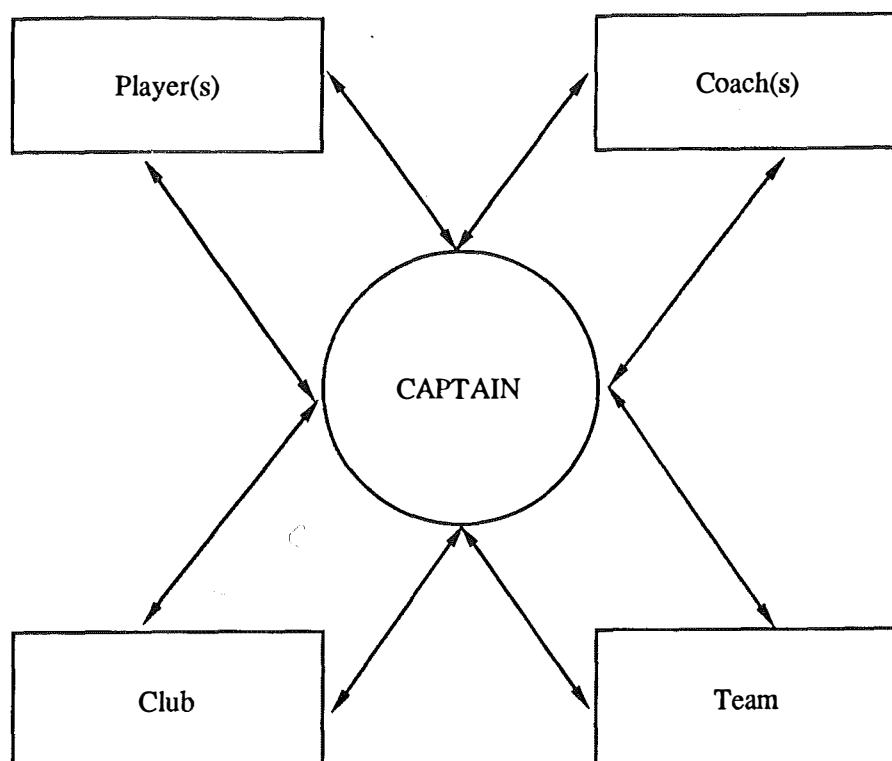
There are various duties for the captain to perform. These vary according to the different components of the sport as previously discussed. Although not all captains experienced excessive demands on their time or numerous responsibilities, there were duties that were common to all. Those duties that were stated by the captains as major responsibilities (or were emphasised as being a considerable part of a captain's job), have been defined as major duties. Minor duties were identified as those duties that were occasionally performed, or performed to a lesser degree.

Regardless of whether a captain does or does not receive a duty statement, there are duties that a captain must perform. This was described by Subject 4, "it is a mammoth task". The captain must have learnt somehow what these tasks were and how to go about accomplishing them. The majority of the subjects expressed observation of previous captains and "on the job training", as the two major training tools. This was testified to by these remarks (a) it was something I'd observed as a player, you pick things up along the way and you learn by your mistakes; (b) I had to fly blind and just work it out for myself; (c) you just pick up the role I suppose; (d) just being in the game you, I think that you tend to learn what is or what is not; (e) no I think cricket is one of those old staid games, where I think the captain is suppose to have certain standards to look up to, expected to know what they are and there's no sort of printed out sheet saying exactly what you've got to do; (f) you're expected to know and I was vice-captain for five years so basically you know; (g) I guess you learn all these things, don't you, from past players and I've been fortunate that I've had some great players that I've played [with] and I've learnt off; (h) observation of other people and the way they've handled it; and (i) fortunately in the early days it was easier so I got experience while I was learning.

Four duties emerged as the major responsibilities of the captain (a) mediator between players and the coach/management, (b) troubleshooter - identify and eliminate problems within the team, (c) provider of encouragement to the players, (d) representative of the team with the media and at social functions.

## Mediator

A mediator is one who "interposes between contending parties to effect a reconciliation" (Webster's Dictionary, 1989, p. 233). The captain as the spokesperson for the team often acts as the intermediary between the players and the coach and/or management on issues or decisions. It is a dual pathway in that the team uses the captain to express their point of view to the coach/management and the coach/management use the captain to put their point of view to the team, as illustrated in Figure 6. Not all mediation has to directly involve the team in the discussions. Either the captain or coach on recognising a problem may initiate a discussion with the other about the problem, as referred to respectively by Subjects 1 and 6: "Must admit a lot of times I take it on myself to, like if something's really bothering me and it's something that's within the team I just go straight ... to the coach"; and alternatively "If we've got any problems, I'm always the first one he [the coach] comes to". The coach as well as the team requires a good mediator. "The coach needs a captain that he knows he can get on with and who will be a spokesman for the players, and be that mediator at times between the two, the coach and the players" (Subject 9).



*Figure 6.* The Mediation Pathways of the Captain

The role of mediator is seen as necessary in maintaining team harmony and facilitating success. Mediation allows for the (a) expression of team, coach and management views; (b) solving of problems; (c) breaking of the barrier between a player and coach enabling them to discuss a problem; (d) discussion of team selection; (e) negotiation of player payments; and (f) provision of a buffer zone between the players and the coach.

A mediator ensures communication can occur between parties that may not have a good relationship as exemplified by Subject 2, "I was luckily one that he [the coach] would listen to, and probably the ones [players] that would talk to me were the ones that he didn't listen to". Subject 4 highlights one of the dangers in being a mediator: "The hardest thing is that you've got to make sure that you're putting the



team's idea forward and not just your own and that's a trap that you could fall into if you're not careful". Subject 9 took his role as mediator a step further in that he would clarify or reinforce the comments made by a coach to a player:

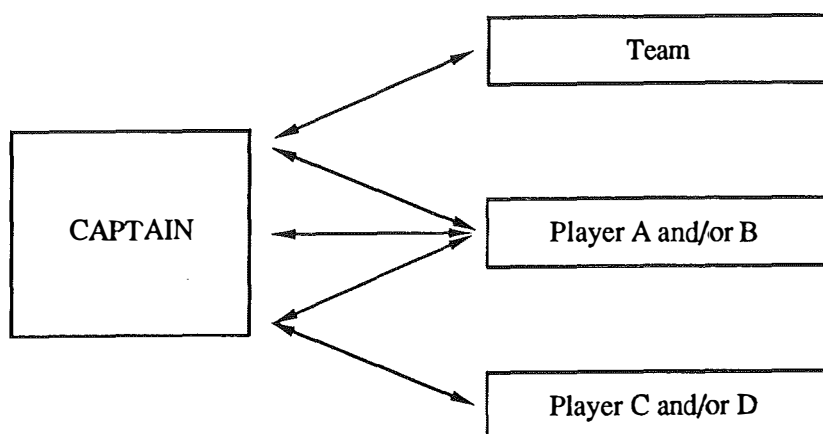
If I see, like a coach can say something to a player on the spur of the moment and then go off and do something else 'cause he's got 25 of us to worry about. If I can sort of sit back and see that a guy might be a little bit confused or a little bit upset, I'll then just wander over and say "Now do you understand what he meant?" by having more time to talk about it, ... then I'll say well if you really don't understand that why don't we go and talk to [the coach] about it. <

Mediation allows for indirect communication between the coach or management and the team. The captain as the representative of the team is the ideal candidate for the role of mediator. Not all problems experienced by the team need to be discussed with the coach or management. Often they can be solved within the team. The captain in solving problems before they reach the management level is fulfilling the role of troubleshooter.

### Trouble-shooter

A Troubleshooter is an "expert in discovering and eliminating trouble" (Webster's Dictionary, 1989, p. 399). The captain in the role of troubleshooter tries to discover and solve problems within the team or with a player before having to take the final step of taking unsolvable problems to the management. Figure 7 illustrates the three types of troubleshooting pathways. Problems that may require troubleshooting include (a) conflicts between players, (b) decrease in player performance, and (c) breaking of team rules or codes of conduct. Subject 10

suggested that "basically a good captain and a good coach knows what's happening before the player. .... A player will always make excuses of why he is not playing well, but deep down the captain and coach should know why he is not doing it".



*Figure 7. The Troubleshooting Pathways of the Captain*

The captain has to decide when to act as a troubleshooter and when to be a mediator:

If I think there's a conflict somewhere [I] then try and work out the best way to approach it. Whether you go straight to the coach and the coaching staff and let them sort it out or whether you keep them out of it and do it yourself with the players. (Subject 5)

In choosing whether to tell the coach that a player is having a problem, the captain has to balance up what is good for the player, and what is good for the team:

It does get hard sometimes because I know the coaching staff like to know exactly what's going on all the time, and sometimes individual players they may be in a bit of strife one way or the other and are just hoping the coaching staff don't find out. But I mean if it is affecting their performance, and the coaching staff do know, then it is going to help in the long run because they'll understand why he is not performing. (Subject 5)

The role of troubleshooter is vital to maintaining team harmony and

enhancing team performance. An alert captain attempts to identify and solve problems before they impact negatively on the team or if possible prevent problem situations occurring. Troubleshooting and mediating are two of the major duties performed by the captain, within the confines of the team. The major duties of the captain performed in the public arena is public relations.

### Public Relations

The captain as the representative of the team not only represents the team internally, but is also the external representative of the team. Captains are often required to fulfil public relation duties of speaking to the media, accepting awards on behalf of the team, and promotional appearances at social, sponsorship and fundraising functions. The public relation duties of the captain are represented in Figure 8.

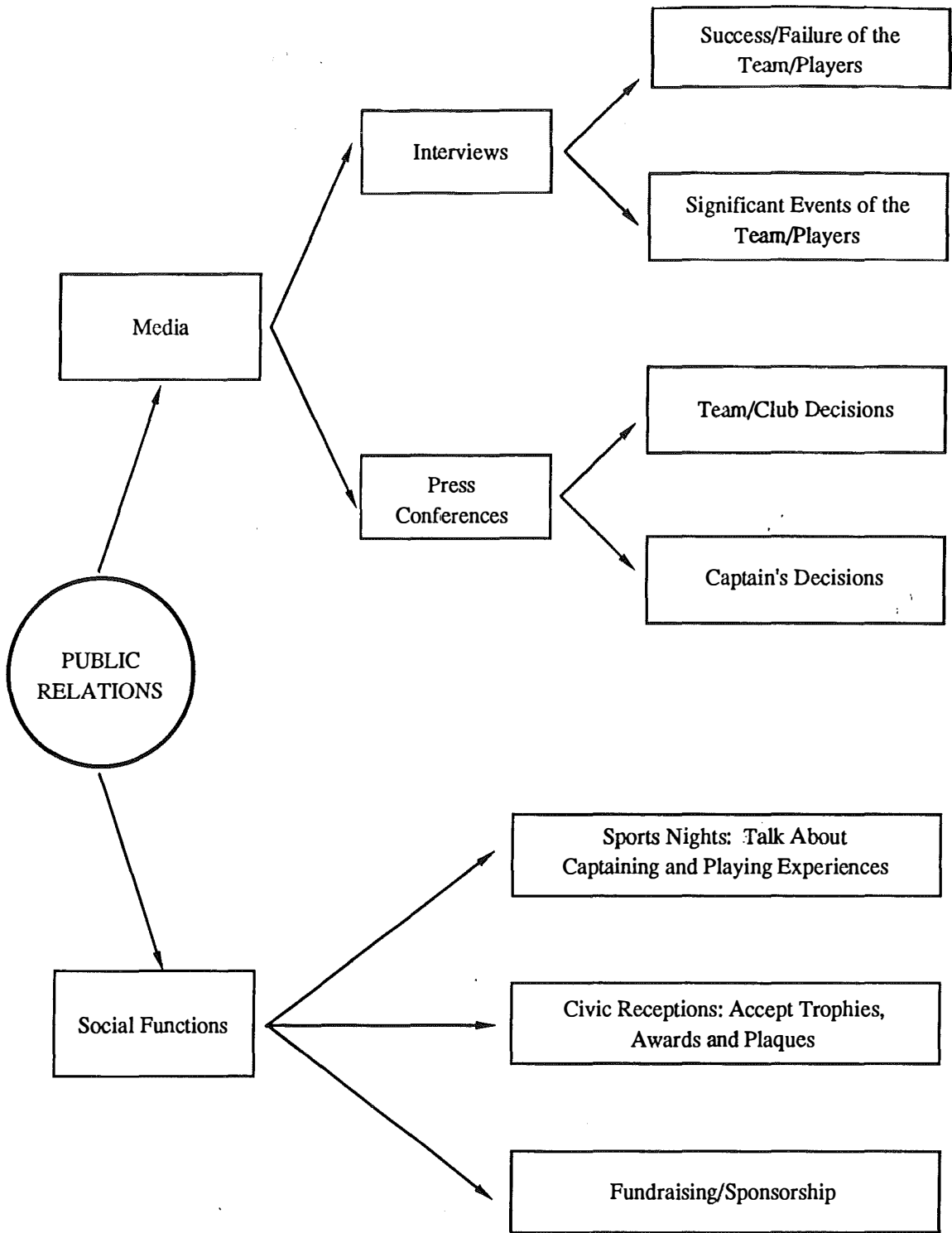


Figure 8. The Public Relation Duties of the Captain

### Media relations

Representing the team in communications with the media is a major role of the captain. Only Subject 1 reported receiving training in dealing with the media, although not when she was a captain. The National Basketball Team that Subject 1 was a member of received advice on how to interact with the sponsors and the media. For the other captains it was "learn as you go". With the exception of the hockey and softball captains, the majority of the captains stated that they were the main person contacted by the media in relation to the team. "If they [the media] want to talk to someone they always talk to the captain or the vice-captain or someone that's prominent in the team, but it's usually first of all the captain" (Subject 6). Subject 4 concluded he was frequently contacted because he gave the media "honest, straight answers". The way Subject 4 interacted with the media exemplified the major theme of "being oneself". It is not uncommon for the media to have the captain's phone number and call at will, "The press have all got your number and you'd receive probably fifteen calls a week regarding the team, what you were going to do in the game, pre- and post-game and all these type of things" (Subject 8).

Dealing with the media was not entirely a new experience for all of the captains. Subjects 6 and 9 stated their achievements as a player, prior to their captaincy had attracted the attention of the media on numerous occasions. To be selected to play at the state or national level the captains would have exhibited a degree of playing proficiency throughout their sporting careers. That same degree of proficiency may have also resulted in their winning of trophies and accolades

requiring the captains to deliver acceptance speeches, and therefore be used to speaking in front of an audience. On suggesting this to Subject 6 the reply was "Yeah, and I've also done a few sportsman's nights ... and it wasn't all of a sudden I've become captain I've got to speak to a media that I haven't spoken to before, you know it wasn't the case".

The captains accepted that liaising with the media was a necessary component of the job. The media provides the sport with the publicity it needs to attract spectator and sponsorship support. Therefore the captain must be prepared to talk with the media about the good things and the bad.

Trouble is though you've got good and bad and some people like to take all the good media and are not too fussy about answering all the bad stuff. So ... it's a give and take, you've got to do both. Sometimes you hate it. But you can't expect to just get all the gravy. Part of being a captain is handling the bad times as well. (Subject 4)

It is particularly hard to talk to the media after a resounding defeat when the captain along with the rest of the team wants to "drown their sorrows".

After games where we've been badly [beaten] or the team's performed dismally, you often don't want to speak to anyone, you want to hide, but you expect everyone to be there when you win and pat you on the back, and so you've got to do the right thing when you lose. .... you've got to do try and do the best you can and be graceful in defeat. (Subject 5)

The captain's relationship with the media reinforced previous captain's comments on the media, that it is an ever present influence on their captaincy and that their actions on and off the field are a source of attention. Again the profile of the sport determines the captain's media involvement, from being virtually non-existent to a daily or weekly encounter.

### Spokesperson

The captain of a high profile sport is required to represent the team at a variety of functions including (a) sponsor's functions, (b) sports celebrity competitions, (c) civil receptions, (d) fundraising functions for the team and other organisations, (e) team promotions, and (f) other events. In conjunction with appearing at these functions the captain is often called upon to deliver a speech. Public speaking was also perceived to be part of the job although not enjoyed by Subjects 2, 8 and 10, particularly impromptu speaking or "drunken sports nights". Alternatively Subject 5 responded, "I'm so proud to be captain of the side, I love anything we've done as a team, you know it's a good feeling, I'm quite happy to get up there and accept it [awards]".

Winning championship trophies increases the number of public engagements for the captain. "Yeah, ... especially when we won the Shields, two or three shields in a row, I can recall speaking at Parliament house and speaking at, a lot of requests to speak at Rotary functions and whatever" (Subject 8).

As previously discussed the high profile of the sport, enhances the profile of the captain and therefore the public relation duties of the captain. The public relation duties of the captain in turn increases the profile of the captain even further. A captain of a winning team is even more in demand for public engagements than usual. Some of the captains in Western Australia are in a unique position compared to their counterparts in the Eastern States, of being the captain of the only team in a national competition (e.g., basketball, football). The patriotism that is generated by being the only team also adds to the public demands on the captain.

## Sports Psychologist

According to Anshel (1990) "the leader in sport is required to fulfil the demands of many different roles and to deal with numerous psychologically based issues".

Although Anshel (1990) referred to the coach as "leader", many of the psychological issues he outlined were described by the captains as roles they performed, including (a) reassuring players in times of crisis, (b) keeping players' minds on the job and in the right direction, (c) providing guidance, (d) motivating the undermotivated, (e) reinforcing good behaviour, (f) counselling players who are having problems, and (g) assisting the younger players to cope with the demands of the competition.

Specific situations that required the psychological skills of the captains were (a) the occurrence of deaths within the team, (b) the involvement of players in controversies, and (c) team complacency as a result of winning the championship in the previous year.

Many duties identified by the captains falls under the all encompassing title of sports psychologist. In particular the captain performs a motivational and emotionally supportive role to the team.

## Selection of Playing Direction

Immediately prior to the commencement of a game, there are strategic playing decisions that must be considered, including direction of play, batting/fielding first, and first use of the ball. These decisions vary from sport to sport and are usually



decided by the toss of a coin between the two opposing captains. Cricket captains have to decide whether to bat or field first, hockey captains have to elect whether to have first use of the ball or their choice of direction (they cannot choose both), and football captains choose playing direction. The basketball and baseball captains were the only captains of the study that were not responsible for these decisions. In basketball the location of the team's bench determines the playing direction, that is in the first half of the game, your basket is at the opposite end of your team bench, and for baseball fielding or batting first is determined by whose home game it is.

The selection of playing direction or order, is a minor duty of some captains. The decision has more importance for sports that are played in the open and influenced by the weather conditions (e.g., cricket and football).

### Development and Implementation of Team Strategies

Sports teams are in the business of winning. To win they need a game plan based on the careful consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of their own team and the opposition team. Predominantly the captains had limited involvement in team strategy development, with the role essentially being fulfilled by the coach. With the exception of cricket, the inclusion of the captain in team strategy discussions in order to gain a players point of view, is typically instigated by the coach. However, for cricket, the captain is responsible for the development and implementation of team strategies. The captains felt confident in approaching the coach regarding problems that they felt required attention, although they realised the final decision

was the coaches.

The implementation of previously determined playing strategies were at times the responsibility of the captain. This is most evident in basketball where the point guard as they bring the ball into the offensive region is seen to be signalling a hand code indicating the next offensive move. The hockey captain was also responsible for implementing strategies via a codeword from the coach on the sideline. Subject 5 was responsible for implementing player position changes as directed by the coach

Generally, I'll know, we all know the line-up of the team, how we're lining up, but often it depends on how the opposition line-up, and sometimes [the coach] will say to me he wants particular players to man up on particular opposition players and I have to know which ones they are so if all of a sudden the opposition don't line-up that way I can make changes before the actual game starts.

One cricket captain described how the allocation of Sheffield Shield points determined his strategic approach to the game. In order to guarantee winning points or preventing the other team from winning points, Subject 8 would play for a draw:

If we'd gone for a win and lost the game the side that had beat us had got the six points. Instead of us just missing out on six [points], we're really missing out on twelve, because that side that has won, has jumped ahead of us by another six points, so that's also a factor.

The changes in the allocation of Sheffield Shield points over the years has impacted on how cricket captains approach the game, as Subject 8 testified "Well, that certainly changed how captains approached the game, for sure".

With the exception of cricket, captains have limited involvement with the planning and implementation of strategies. As previously discussed the role of the coach determines the role of the captain and whether they are included in team strategy discussions.

### Assisting With Team Selection

The team is selected in accordance with the team strategies and playing conditions. Not all players are suited to the same playing conditions. In cricket, the type of bowler the captain selects is based on the condition of the wicket, for example a spin bowler is selected when a wicket has a lot of turn in it. The duty of selection is mainly performed by the coach, who may ask for the captain's opinion. Those captains that are senior in age and the number of games played, may be more sought after for their opinion than the younger inexperienced captains. Also the willingness of the captain to be involved in selection determines to what degree the captain is involved. While on tour, Subjects 2 and 3 assisted in the selection of their respective national teams. Informing players of their omission from the team was not the responsibility of the captains.

Although the cricket captain is responsible for the on-field strategic decision making, it was interesting to note that they are not accorded with the same authority in the selection of the team. A group of selectors are ultimately responsible for the selection of the team, with input from the captain. This has been a source of conflict between captains and the selectors as the captain may not be allowed to include players that they feel are appropriate to the conditions and strategies. The relationship between the cricket captain and the selectors is evident in these comments from Subjects 8 and 10 respectively: "I tried to work fairly closely with the selectors to try and get the side that I wanted and often times things used to get fairly heated in that regard"; and "basically the selectors select the side which I'm involved in. .... Well last year the selectors were very good. I basically picked

what I wanted and providing that they thought it was fair enough they went along with it."

### Planning and Implementation of Training

The planning and implementation of training programs that will facilitate team performance is an important task, primarily performed by the coach. The coach may consult fitness personnel or the captain in regards to the content of the training program as well as seeking their assistance in the implementation of training. Five of the captains (Subjects 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10) stated that they had assisted with training, particularly helping players with specific aspects of their game, such as batting technique.

The captain's assistance with training can be in direct response to a request from the coach or the spontaneous gesture of the captain. It may involve assistance with the identification of the overall objectives of the training session or the coaching of particular skills.

### Dictate or Enforce Punishment/Discipline

A code of player conduct can either be formally or informally established within a team. A formal code of conduct is one that is discussed and acknowledged by the team, and usually has punishments associated with it. The accepted norms and

mores that the players learn from society are the informal, though not less important codes of conduct, such as respect for each other's property. The maintenance of acceptable behaviour is the responsibility of each player. However, the punishment of severe transgressions is the responsibility of the coach. If the captain observed something wrong happening, rather than enforcing a punishment the captains stated their preference for talking to the player. If the problem cannot be solved by the captain then the captain will inform the coach. Generally, the subjects stated that the need for discipline was minimal, and a quiet word usually brings the players back into line.

Discipline of players is a minimal responsibility of the captains. Normally, players at the elite level are intelligent and responsible enough to maintain an acceptable level of conduct. Major transgressions are punished by the coach or managing body.

#### Assist with Tour Arrangements.

There are many arrangements to make when a team goes on tour: accommodation, transport, meals, laundering of uniforms, to name a few. These arrangements are normally attended to by a manager or manageress. There are some circumstances where it is recommended to include the captain in tour arrangements, such as room allocations. Subject 7 cited the example of having to assist the manageress with the room allocations so as not to room players with conflicting personalities together, therefore preventing potential problems. Overall the captain has little involvement

with tour arrangements.

### Negotiate Player Payments/Contracts

The captain as the legitimate representative of the team acquires a level of authority enabling them to negotiate player payments and incentive schemes with the management. In professional sports the negotiation of player contracts can be initiated by the captain or by the management. Only Subjects 6 and 8 stated representing the team in payment negotiations:

As far as sponsorship goes and deals with the players, and player payments and also there were times where the WACA [Western Australian Cricket Association] offered incentives for the team to say get the final in Perth or if they won the finals. So I used to act as a go-between, between the team and the WACA. (Subject 8)

In regards to negotiating player contracts with the Australian Basketball Federation Subject 6 stated "I'm not sure whether that was a captain's job or it was just because I was a veteran, I'd say it was a little bit of both".

Depending on circumstances the captain may find themselves in the position of negotiating player contracts or team incentive deals. The captain may be sought out by the management or the captain may seek out the management in response to the team's dissatisfaction with pay rates. A number of professional athletes are hiring the services of agents (e.g., International Celebrity Management) to negotiate their contract, which will reduce the role of the captain in this capacity.

### Experiences of the Captain

The experiences of the captain are those events that they have undergone, felt, endured or encountered. These experiences contribute to the captain's knowledge and decision making capacity. Previous events and experiences influence the captain's response to and importance placed on an event. Consequently similar events may be perceived differently by different captains. Those events that were similar and experienced by the captains included (a) winning games or championships, (b) losing games or championships, (c) conflicts, (d) internal politics, and (e) team relationships. Whether the experiences were good or bad, there was a general acknowledgement from the captains that, that was all part of the job.

### Significant Events

The sporting career of an athlete is influenced by various turning points and significant events, otherwise known as critical incidents. For many athletes it may be the promotion to representative teams or the accession to the captaincy. With the exception of Subjects 4, 8 and 9, the majority of the captains did not experience a significant event that impacted on their captaincy. This is summarised in Table 8. Subjects 4 and 9 had the unique experience of being the prevailing state captains in a Traditional Round Robin National Competition when their respective sports joined Modified Expanded National Competitions. The resultant effect on their captaincy

being that it (a) changed the emphasis of their captaincy, (b) increased the pressure due to the longer season, (c) increased the responsibility, and (d) changed the team composition and formation (that is, the inclusion of American imports) resulting in having to "baby-sit" a team of players who did not know each other.

Whereas, for Subject 8 the significant event was the inheritance on becoming captain, of a team which had been depleted of seventy-five percent of its senior players over the two previous years. This resulted in an initial captaincy emphasis of assisting an inexperienced team to "taste success, get them to know the winning feeling and trying to get them hungry for the following year" (Subject 8).

A critical incident or significant event can have important consequences on the captaincy. Changes in the captains duties and role were reported as a result of competition reformations and player turnover. The changes can be both detrimental and beneficial to the captain, depending on the skills of the captain.

Table 8  
*Those Captains who Experienced a Significant Event During Their Captaincy*

Significant Event	Subject Numbers									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
YES				x				x	x	
NO	x	x	x		x	x	x			x



## The Highs of Captaincy

The highs of captaincy took two forms for the captains, a general state of being and their reactions to particular events. Emotive terms such as satisfied, proud, a challenge, wrapped, prestige, rewarded, an honour, and enjoyment, were used by the subjects to express their feelings of being a captain. In addition the captains identified that they enjoyed (a) the responsibility, (b) watching young players develop, (c) the knowledge that they had a role in the team doing well, and (d) talking to the media.

Generally being the captain was the greatest source of enjoyment and satisfaction for the captains, as typified by Subject 5, "I'm so *proud* to be captain of the side I love anything we've done as a team you know, it's a good feeling, I'm quite happy to get up there and accept it [awards]". The captains nominated the following events as their greatest moment as a captain (a) winning tournaments / championships, (b) leading the team onto the ground for the Grandfinal, (c) first game as captain, (d) playing the game that celebrated 200 games as captain, and (e) placing third in a competition. Five of the captains had the honour of leading their teams to a championship trophy. Winning the championship itself was not the sole source of enjoyment for Subjects 3 and 10; watching the younger players euphoria, satisfaction with personal performance and the progress of the team to get to the final were just as important. Although winning championships was a source of enjoyment, attaining a realistic final position on the ladder was also satisfying to the captains. "I was personally *satisfied* with the year and really *proud* in the way we played. It was third but it was a good result" (Subject 1).

Subjects 4 and 8 referred to the challenge of the captaincy, although in reference to different circumstances. Subject 4 referred to the difficulties a captain encounters and the challenge in dealing with them the best way possible that "is best for the entire team". Whereas Subject 8 found it a challenge developing tactical strategies to beat the other team:

I enjoyed the *challenge*. The thing with cricket whether it be captain or just playing, but more so as captain is that it changes every game you play, because you're playing on a different surface. Unlike football you run out on to a grassed oval and there's goal posts at the end of the ground. Cricket you're playing on a different surface, it could be a fast wicket, it could spin, a lot depends on the toss at times. One day could be hot, the next day could be interrupted with rain. So there is always that aspect of not knowing what's going to be around the corner. I used to enjoy coming up against guys like David Hokes and the confrontations you used to have with them. It used to get the old *adrenalin pumping* a little bit, but yeah it was thoroughly *enjoyable*.

The success of their teams provided the captains with most of the highs during their captaincy. But the honour of being captain provided the most enjoyment. Particular satisfaction came from knowing that as captain, they had assisted in the development and the success of the team.

### The Lows of Captaincy

Similarly to the highs of the captaincy, the lows of the captaincy can be either ongoing annoyances or particular events. The captains stated various circumstances that had led to their dissatisfaction or unease with being a captain including (a) coping with the lack of professionalism within the team, (b) captaining the current national captain, (c) knowing in advance which players had been excluded from the

team, (d) speaking to the media when things are not going well, (e) personal repercussions when mediating for the team, (f) not being able to relax at functions because of the duties of the captain, (g) public speaking, and (h) treatment by the press. Subjects 6 and 10 stated that there was nothing that they disliked about being a captain.

The worst moments as a captain occurred in the form of personal disappointments, team disappointments, and controversial decisions. More specifically these experiences were (a) not being selected to play, (b) being replaced as captain, (c) being sacked, (d) watching the winning team receiving their championship medallions, (e) the team not qualifying for the Olympics, and (f) poor personal performance. Subject 10 jokingly referred to "losing the toss on a wet wicket". The two captains who were replaced believed the decisions to be politically based.

Although the captains expressed some dislikes about the captaincy, they accepted those factors as part of the job and learnt to deal with them. The proportion of lows a captain experiences is also in relation to the degree of disunity or problems within the team.

### Conflicts

The captain performs many roles in life - sportsperson, family member, employee/employer, to name a few. The ability to perform all equally without detracting from the execution of another role can be difficult. The inability to

balance these roles can result in conflict between people and within oneself. The majority of the captains did not express role conflict, although in terms of impact, playing the sport itself was at times demanding. "That interferes, that cuts right into, that takes away your social life virtually. But there's no conflict in that. I'd never give up what I'm doing now just for a social life" (Subject 1). The demands were more a consequence of being a player rather than captain. However, some captains' responsibilities increased on becoming captain, particularly in the area of public relations.

Conflicts that were expressed by the captains included (a) being overly concerned with what the team was doing rather than their own performance, (b) media interviews interfering with work and lunch hours, (c) duties interfered with time spent with the family, and (d) media ringing captains at home. Other than Subject 5 having to find time in his lunch hour for interviews, the captaincy did not interfere with the captain's occupation. It is common for captains to be employed in a capacity other than the captaincy by the club or another sporting organisation, for example the Western Australian Institute of Sport.

The captain can experience conflict in trying to fulfil the many roles that they have. The duties of the captaincy can impact on the captain's private and working life, causing conflict within the captain and with other people. Conflict is not confined to being a captain. The demands of being a player can also produce conflicts and be time consuming.

## Internal Politics

Within an organisation there are formal and informal rules, power structures and the channels of procedures which can be defined as the internal politics of the organisation. The internal politics of an organisation can be limiting or frustrating if one wishes to make a change or follow a different procedure. A sports team being an organisation also has its own internal politics, that may interfere with the captaincy. As indicated in Table 9, Subjects 4, 7 and 8 concluded that internal politics had impacted on their captaincy. For Subject 4 the role the coach chose for the captain was an example of internal politics:

There is always internal politics there, and again I think that comes down to the communication thing. Whereas a lot of times you become just a namesake and then other times you are used the way you should be. So that definitely can be political, so no question. I mean it has been over a couple of the different years, depending on who was coaching at the time.

Subject 7 classified the power struggle between players and clubs on who should be playing and coaching as a clear indication of the internal politics at work in her sport. On being asked whether it interfered with her captaincy, Subject 7 replied "It does a little bit in the respect while you're mediating". Whereas for Subject 8, being sacked was perceived to be politically based.

Table 9  
*Those Captains Who Did or Did Not Experience The Effect of Internal Politics*

	Subject Numbers									
Internal Politics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Yes				x			x	x		
No	x	x	x		x	x			x	x

The captaincy of seven of the subjects were not affected by internal politics. Several subjects were confused by the use of the term "internal politics". Therefore when asked if internal politics had affected their captaincy, they responded in the negative. However, Subject 3 stated experiencing conflict with the management over a team meeting he called without their knowledge, but did not regard this as internal politics.

Everybody experiences internal politics. The effect that internal politics has on the performance of a role varies according to the type of internal politics. Generally, internal politics that facilitate confrontations have more negative impact on the performance of duties.

### Team Relationships

The type of relationship between the components of the sports team is determined by the personalities of the individuals involved and the hierarchical structure in place. According to the captains the ideal relationship between the (a) captain and coach, (b) captain and team mates, (c) team mates, and (d) team and coach, should be based on mutual respect, and confidence in each other to fulfil their respective duties. The relationship between the captain and the coach, and the captain and the players will be explored further.

### Captain and coach

The ideal relationship between coach and captain is an amicable relationship facilitating frequent and honest communication. Although an amicable relationship between the coach and the captain, and the coach and the players is ideal, Subject 2 advised that if the coach is too close to the captain or players it can separate the captain from the players, and confuse the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour between the coach and the team. In order to retain a level of authority the coach should be just above the team, with the captain bridging the gap when necessary. The following descriptions of the ideal relationship from Subjects 4 and 5 typifies the responses of the other subjects:

I think that the ideal relationship is one that the coach asks for opinions and the captain is able to feel he or she can put forward suggestions and have them listened to, but the coach should have the last word, because it's his neck [that] is on the line. .... But he also has to be able to listen to what the players think because as a coach a lot of times you can't see what's going on from the sidelines what's on the court. (Subject 4)

It just has to be amicable to start with, and have to get on with each other, and have respect for each other, and have the same goals. .... I think you've just got to be able to approach each other fairly easily. (Subject 5)

Table 10 indicates the variety of characteristics that the subjects nominated as being ideal in a relationship between captain and coach. The characteristic "Perceived as approachable", included comments such as felt able to put forward suggestions and able to approach each other fairly easily. Subjects 8 and 10 had similar suggestions of "working close together", due to the inverse nature of their relationship with the coach compared to the other captains. The cricket captain is more personally responsible for the success or failure of the team and therefore has a greater input into the training and development of the team. This comment from

Subject 8 differentiates the roles of the captain and the coach in cricket:

The captain is the guy that makes all the decisions on the field, but the coach should be there to organise training, take all that away from the captain, all those duties, and just let the captain run his own race as far as making decisions and organising the team in regard to the match. The coach can always help out with strategies as far as opposition players, and as far as organising training when you are away on tour, the captain shouldn't have to worry about any of that. I think that they should sit down whether it be after each days play and just go over it ... that days play and talk about the next day.

The main theme that evolved from the captains is that the coach has to be approachable and willing to listen to problems or suggestions.

Table 10  
*The Ideal Characteristics of the Relationship Between Captain and Coach*

Characteristics	Subject Numbers									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Perceived as Approachable	x			x	x	x				
Listens to feedback	x			x	x					
Coach and Captain have similar ideals and ideas			x		x					
Confidence/respect for each other			x		x					
Talk openly/honestly about team problems to the coach			x	x	x	x	x			
Get on well with the coach		x			x					
Coach asks for opinions				x						



*The Ideal Characteristics of the Relationship Between Captain and Coach Cont.*

Coach has the last word	x		
Coach doesn't take feedback personally		x	
Work close together		x	x
Coach has a philosophy, captain follows it.			x
Captain doesn't question coach in public	x		
Coach should be above the team	x		
Coach should not be too close to the team	x		

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Captain and players

An open, honest and friendly relationship between the captain and the players is also very important. The captain needs to remain on the same level as the other players, be "one of the boys/girls", and step to the front and lead when it is required.

Leadership comes from earning the respect and the confidence of the players, as well as setting the right example.

Well, the first year I suppose also was very important to try and get the players confidence, that you were justified in being captain, and you did have their respect, and they had confidence in the decisions that you were going to make. (Subject 8)

The characteristics previously stated as being ideal between captain and coach

are equally applicable to the relationship between captain and players. The captain should be perceived as being approachable and fair by the players. The cricket captain's relationship with the players is slightly different in that they have greater authority over the players than other captains. Subject 8 had the following to say on his relationship with the players:

At times you try and sort of stay a little bit aloof. It's hard when you're on tour, ... you're away with twelve guys for up to three or four weeks. It's hard to remain aloof in that regard, you go out with the coach and you try and plan things and at other times you relax with the players and become one of the boys. It's hard, you've got to try and find that happy medium where they, the team perceives you as one of them and that you can have a good time, a few beers after a match and go out and have a good time, but they also respect you and they respect your decisions and if you ask them to do something, that they're going to give you a hundred percent.

The captains advised that the captain's relationship with the players is ideally an honest, open and fair relationship and that the captain is available for all players to talk to. With the exception of cricket the captain is still very equal to the other players. The cricket captain has to be slightly more cautious due to the degree of authority the cricket captain carries. Overall the captains reiterated the theme of be yourself.

### Changes in Captain's Relationship with Players on Becoming Captain

The transition from player to captain can result in changes in the relationship between the captain and the players. The captain quite often has greater access to knowledge on team selection and strategies in advance of the rest of the team. The captain may also have input into the selection of the team which some players

do take it personally if they don't get picked in the team and some of them are quite good friends and you've got to decide that the other person is better and they do sometimes take it personally. .... They sort of think that you should push more for them because they're a friend. It happens all the time I think. (Subject 2)

Generally, the subjects reported a perceived lack of change in their relationship with the other players, citing good rapport with the players and a close team as the reasons why this level of relationship was maintained. However, Subject 2 was told a few years after she had retired that there had been a problem. Subject 8 believed a change in relationship was

only natural. ... If you're good mates with someone when you're just a player, I think they might tend to hide something from you when you're captain. If they had stayed out late or something and if they didn't want you to know, or they hadn't done the right preparation, they hadn't trained as hard that week as they should have, they tend to hide that from the captain, rather than if you were players just playing together they'll probably share that with you.

Because of the closeness of the team Subject 5 felt that:

Often it does get hard 'cause you are good friends with them and if you ever do have to pull them into line it gets pretty hard to do it, but they are pretty professional and it doesn't take much just a quiet word and they'll realise they're doing the wrong thing by the team. They're usually very good to get back in line straight away.

Perceived changes in the relationship between the captain and the other players on becoming captain can be from the viewpoint of either party. Generally the captains perceived there were not major changes in their relationship with other players. The closeness of the teams assisted the smooth transition from player to captain and has maintained a stable relationship. The level of authority a cricket captain has, alters the way other players may perceive and treat the captain.

Change in the Captain's Performance

The extra responsibility of being captain can either enhance, inhibit or have no change on the captain's personal playing performance. As shown in Table 11, six of the subjects indicated a change in their personal performance on becoming captain. Reasons for their identified decrease in performance were given as (a) placing a lot of pressure on themselves to win the game for the team, (b) worried about other players' performance rather than their own, and (c) personal pressure to perform consistently at a high level. Alternatively, Subjects 8 and 9 found the extra responsibility made them try harder and be more responsible, enhancing their performance. Subject 7 was not sure whether her performance slump was the result of the captaincy or that the captaincy exacerbated the slump.

There's more pressure on you, I mean personal pressure, and I guess it is from the team, because ... you do want to perform and ... when I started to drop off in my batting, you start to sort of say things to yourself like "You need to be doing this for the team", ... and the pressure just builds and builds and builds, and if you don't perform it sort of becomes worse. (Subject 7)

Table 11  
*Changes In Captain's Personal Performance on Becoming Captain*

Changes in Personal Performance	Subject Numbers									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Enhanced								x	x	
Inhibited	x		x	x			x			
No change		x			x	x				x

Six of the captains experienced changes in their personal performance. With the additional responsibility of being a captain, there is a danger of becoming over-concerned about other players' performance or the captain's own performance. However, the additional responsibility is not all bad news. Two of the captains benefited from the increase in responsibility.

### Assistance to Captains

The provision of training and education to captains could enhance the contribution the captain makes to the success of the team. From the discussion with the captains, three stages of assistance to captains emerged (a) pre-captaincy - grooming of the prospective captain; (b) initial captaincy assistance - outlining the captains duties and role, and why they were selected; and (c) long term captaincy assistance - management provide feedback on and support of the captains decisions.

#### Pre-Captaincy

The captains of elite sports teams tend to serve a long captaincy, for example, Allan Border is currently entering his tenth year as captain of the Australian Cricket team. Several years prior to the predicted retirement of the existing captain it is advisable to select a younger player in the team that has the potential to take over as captain. The selected player then undergoes a grooming process of gradually being

introduced to the responsibilities of the captaincy, making decisions, public relations, discussions with management, to name a few. The promotion of that player to vice-captain offers the opportunity for the player to practice being captain when the captain is unavailable for games (the grooming of vice-captains to be captains).

### Initial Captaincy Assistance

Initial captaincy assistance involves the management discussing with the captain the duties and management expectations of the captain, in the form of a duty statement. The management and captain discuss the delimitations of job roles reducing the chances of error or confusion of the captain encroaching on the role of the coach.

### Long Term Captaincy Assistance

Including the captain in the decision making process is a clear and positive demonstration of the long term support of the captain as being more than name only. This enhances the captain's and the players' perception of the captain's role as well as providing the team with an avenue for input. The captains particularly felt that the management's support of the captain's decisions in regards to player problems or team disputes was very important. Failure of the management to support the captain's decisions undermines the captain's credibility to the team.

Consideration by the management of the captain's non-captaining roles when

requesting the captain to perform off-field duties (e.g., family and work) would reduce role conflict for the captain. The pressure to perform all roles equally and effectively can be detrimental to the health and performance of the captain.

Augmenting the assistance the management can provide, the relinquishing captain also has a wealth of knowledge and experience that can be passed onto their successor.

### Advice to Successor

The advice the departing captain can offer to the new captain may reduce the uncertainty and errors that can occur in the transition from player to captain. The advice provided by the captains cannot eradicate all problems, however it may alleviate unnecessary ones. The typical advice from the captains, was to lead by example, be yourself and treat your fellow teammates fairly and with respect. The similarity in the subjects responses to what they would say to their successor, and their identification of ideal qualities in a captain, justified the amalgamation of these responses to form Table 12.

Table 12

*The Ideal Characteristics of the Captain and The Captains' Advise To Their Successors*

Advice/ Characteristics	Subject Numbers									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Be yourself/ Do it your way		x				x		x	x	
Set an example/ Lead by example	x	x	x	x	x		x		x	
Do not go over- board, Take it for what it is, Go about as normal	x				x	x				
Treat players the same	x						x			
Respect team mates	x									
Get along with team mates	x									
Be honest to players	x			x						
Earn players respect	x									
Enjoy your sport and yourself		x								x
Provide encouragement		x	x							
Foster team spirit and cohesiveness		x								
Be objective, do not take things personally				x						





parallel between the vice-captain in cricket being equal to a captain in other sports, such as football, "I think a vice-captain plays probably the same sort of role as what a John Worsfold does under Mick Malthouse in football." Whereas for cricket, the vice-captain has the following responsibilities:

Well obviously as vice-captain you're there to lend a hand when the captain asks. Basically you try to captain the side but you don't make any decisions. You know that as vice-captain, so that you're prepared when your skipper says "What do you think?" you're ready to let him know. (Subject 10)

For the majority of sports the contribution a vice-captain makes is minimal.

Potentially, the contribution a vice-captain can make to the team may also serve to reduce the responsibilities of the captain.

### Summary

The role of the captain is to facilitate the success of the team. The experiences of the captain vary according to the captain, the sport, and the level at which it is being played. The major determinant on the degree of responsibility and the number of duties a captain has to perform is the coach. Other factors such as the type of sport, profile of the sport, the level at which it is played and the length of the playing season are also important influences on the duties of the captain. The primary duties of the captain are public relations, mediator, troubleshooter and sports psychologist.

Of the captains interviewed the cricket captain was the most different in terms of role and responsibilities. The cricket captain performed a role similar to the coach in the other sports discussed.

All captains had experiences that were either good or bad. Generally the

captains felt proud and honoured to be captain which negated the unpleasant duties and experiences. Controversial management decisions were the major dislikes expressed by the captains.

The major theme to emerge was that whatever the situation or influences the captain experiences, the captain should be themselves.

Several implications and recommendations to captains and coaches arose from the discussion of the captains role and experiences. These will be discussed in the following chapter, along with recommendations for further research.

## CHAPTER 5

### Conclusions

This chapter will discuss (a) the major findings, with a particular emphasis on answering the research questions; (b) the implications of the findings for the captain and coach; (c) methodological problems and recommendations; and (d) future research directions.

The conclusions and recommendations are based on the author's interpretation of the results of the interviews and the review of the literature. The major theme that emerged was that despite all the influences, responsibilities and pressures of being captain, the captain should endeavour to "be themselves".

### Major Findings

All captains interviewed were captains of elite teams. For the players and captain to have reached the highest level in their chosen sports, they would all (players and captain) have exceptional skills and qualities reducing the need for the captain to perform excessive on-field leadership duties. As the team requires a captain to represent the team at various times, the player exhibiting the greater number of the required qualities is selected. Those characteristics identified by the subjects as being ideal behaviour characteristics of the captain include (a) team leader; (b) sets a good example; (c) is on the same level as the other players, does not set themselves above the team; (d) treats players equally; (e) respects team mates; (f) tries to get

along with team mates; (g) is honest and up-front with team mates; (h) earns players respect; (i) provides encouragement; (j) provides personal support to team mates; (k) exhibits a positive attitude on and off the field; (l) facilitates team spirit and cohesiveness; (m) available for players to discuss problems with; and (n) does not take sides on issues between players.

Prior to becoming a captain at the state or national level the captains had a history of captaincy, including age-group teams and club teams. The captains perceived their selection as captain was based on their previous experience and leadership qualities exhibited while they were a player. Although playing ability assists the captain to lead by example it was not considered the major prerequisite for selection as captain. Leadership and communication skills were considered more important than ability. The captains learnt the skills and duties of a captain from observing previous captains and on the job training. It was not customary for the captains to receive a duty statement outlining their duties and the expectations of the management.

### What Role/s Does the Captain Perform?

The fundamental role of the captain is to facilitate the successful performance of the team. The extent to which the captain can fulfil that role is determined by the nature of the coach. The nature of the coach includes two main categories (a) the degree of interaction that the sport allows the coach with the players on and off the field, and (b) the coaching style of the coach. A sport that allows for a high

interaction of the coach with the team during play, decreases the on-field leadership and decision-making duties of the captain. The sports that assign the majority of the power to the coach (basketball, baseball, hockey, football, softball) place the coach in the position of determining how much authority or input the captain has in the decision making process of the team (e.g., team selection, team strategies). With the exception of cricket, the coach determines the openness of the lines of communication between the captain and coach and how much input the captain has in team selection and strategies.

Those captains with little authority, mainly perform the role of facilitating team performance by setting an example to the other players and fostering team cohesion.

The role of the captain is diminishing in sports such as hockey, as the coach is responsible for the majority of decisions. For other sports, including football, basketball, baseball, the role of the captain is predominantly as a public relations representative of the team. Consequently the captain's role needs to be redefined in terms of the identified responsibilities (a) public relations, (b) mediator, (c) troubleshooter, and (d) sports psychologist.

### What are the Responsibilities of the Captain?

The major responsibilities of the captain include representing the team internally and externally, solving player and team problems, and providing physical, emotional and psychological support to the players. The captain of a high profile sports teams is

perceived as having an extensive public relations role. This involves being interviewed by the media on a frequent basis; representing the team at civic functions, sports nights, celebrity events; making acceptance speeches on behalf of the team; to name but a few examples. In addition to representing the team externally the captain represents the team in discussions with the management or the coach, in the role of a mediator. The captain mediates on issues such as, player contracts, disputes, player selection and strategy decisions. Another major responsibility of the captain is troubleshooting, the identification and resolving of conflicts within the team.

#### How Does the Type of Sport and the Level at Which it is Being Played Affect the Number of Responsibilities a Captain Has?

The rules of the sport dictates the role of the coach, who in turn dictates the role of the captain. Sports that have frequent intervals (time-outs, changes in innings, end of game periods), or allow the coach to be in close proximity to the players, either in distance (basketball, baseball, softball) or via a runner (football) allow for greater on-field involvement and decision making of the coach than the captain. In addition to the role of the coach, the responsibilities of the captain is determined by the degree of professionalism, the level of competition and the profile of the sport.

High profile sports receive extensive media coverage, particularly live telecasts of the game. The captain becomes recognisable and to a certain extent, accountable to the general public. As a clearly identifiable representative of the

team, the captain is then frequently required to perform public relation duties.

The business like nature of national competitions has increased the professionalism of sports, not only in attitude and approach, but financially. Teams are increasingly becoming privately owned companies. The players are therefore more accountable to the management in terms of performance and conduct. As a result, the captain is less responsible for the maintenance of player performance and discipline.

A sports team no longer comprises of just the players, captain and coach. There are now additional personnel who are responsible for the preparation and maintenance of the team (physiotherapists, doctors, sports psychologists, nutritionists, manager/ess, trainers, statisticians). The numerous duties that these personnel perform reduces the captain's responsibilities even further.

National competitions that extend over several months require the captain to perform more duties than the captain of a team that comes together periodically for a tournament. The captain of a team in a long competition is required to perform more duties, and over a longer period of time, particularly public relations.

### What Difficulties Does the Captain Encounter?

The difficulties a captain encounters can be isolated incidents, frequent incidents and a general state of being. The difficulties the captains encountered included (a) lack of management support, (b) intrusion of the media, (c) changes in personal performance, and (d) confusion resulting from an unclear delineation of power and



duties.

Conflict occurred between the captain and the team's management when the captain performed duties that the captain believed were within their authority, (e.g., calling a team meeting without notifying the management). The captains' perceived a lack of management support, when the management did not respect or act on the decisions made by the captain. Lack of support occurred in conjunction with the unclear delineation of power and duties.

Dealing with the media was considered a necessary although not always pleasant duty of the captain. It was particularly difficult to talk to the media after losing a game and when the team or a player were involved in a controversy. The intrusion of the media into the captain's private and working life was also difficult.

The responsibility of being captain and setting an example inhibited the performance of several captains. Being overly concerned with the performance of the other players accounted for a reduction in the form of two captains. Another captain found the extra burden of the captaincy exacerbated a performance slump. Whereas, a fourth captain found the burden of trying to win games solely on their own performance, destructive.

### How Can the Captain's Job Be Improved or Made Easier?

There are three stages to a captain's career: pre-captaincy, initial captaincy, and ongoing captaincy. The team's management can make the captain's job easier by implementing strategies at each of these stages. Prior to being named as the

official captain, the captain could be receiving training in the art and science of captaining. On being notified of their captaincy, the issuing of a duty statement outlining the captain's role, duties and expected code of behaviour would be of benefit to the captain. Ongoing management support for the captain's decisions throughout their captaincy would also make the captain's job easier. The underlying message to improving the captain's job is the dissemination of information and providing support and credibility to the captaincy. The assistance that can be provided at each stage of the captaincy will be discussed further in the implications to the captain and coach.

### **Implications for The Captain and Coach**

Several implications to captains and coach emerged as a result of the discussions with ten team sports captains (a) the role of the captain, (b) selection of the captain, (c) clear delineation of the major duties of the captain, (d) the ideal relationship between captain and coach, (e) assistance to captains, and (f) how the captain should approach the captaincy. The use of coach and management is used interchangeably, as the coach and management have the power to make changes.

### Role of the Captain

The team management needs to clearly identify the role they wish the captain to fulfil within the team. The captain should then be informed of the role and its boundaries.

### Selecting and Naming the Captain

The selection of a captain should take into account the captain's experience, their leadership qualities, and to a minor degree their playing position. These criteria will vary in importance according to the role that the coach and management wishes to assign to the captain. For example, a public relations role should consider the communication skills and personality of the captain.

The selection of the captain should ultimately be the decision of the management after consultation with the team. Including the team in the decision making process facilitates acceptance of the management's decision.

Although there are playing positions conducive to the on-field leadership of a team, selection should not be based on the playing position of the captain. One should not select a captain then decide their playing position, and neither should one select the ideal captaincy position and name the subsequent player, captain. The playing position of the captain is insignificant if the captain is primarily performing an off-field role.

Prior to publicly naming the captain the management is advised to discuss the

selection with the player involved. This determines whether the player is willing to be captain and demonstrates respect for the position and the player. Failure to advise the captain in a private and official manner can be harmful to the future relationship between the management and the captain.

### Duty Statement

A duty statement should be issued and discussed with the captain on the captain's official appointment to the position. Ideally a duty statement should be specific to the sport, the team or club, and highly specific to the captain. In addition to stating the duties of a captain, guidelines on how to conduct those duties were also considered by the captains to be beneficial. In particular guidelines on those duties involving public speaking and talking to the media. Overall the composition of a duty statement should include the following categories, as suggested by the captains (a) role of the captain, (b) responsibilities and duties, (c) expected code of conduct, (d) who the captain is responsible to, (e) the captain's strengths and weaknesses, (f) guidelines on public speaking, (g) how to talk to the media, (h) reasons for their selection, (i) what is expected of the captain in relation to their team-mates, (j) what is expected of the captain off the court, (k) how to interact with the sponsors, (l) how the actual club functions, and (m) who to go to with problems (the chain of command). The duty statement should not attempt to change the captain, but to identify what is expected of the captain and what is acceptable behaviour.

### Ideal Relationship Between the Captain and Coach

The ideal relationship between the captain and coach should be based on mutual respect and honesty. It should be amicable, but not overly friendly as to put the captain offside with the team. The coach should be receptive to team feedback whether it be via the captain or direct from a player. Issues or problems that either the captain or coach have with decisions made by each other should be discussed in private so as not to undermine the other's authority. The coach should respect and support the captain's solution in solving team problems.

### Assistance to Captains

Assistance can be provided at three stages of the captaincy: pre-captaincy, initial and ongoing. For the captain to be effective the captain needs to have a clearly identifiable role and the respect and support of the management.

#### Pre-Captaincy

Several years prior to the predicted retirement of the existing captain it is advisable to select a younger player in the team that has the potential to take over as captain. Once selected that player should be gradually introduced to the responsibilities of the captaincy, making decisions, public relations, to name a few. The promotion of that player to vice-captain offers the opportunity for the player to practice being captain

when the captain is unavailable for games, grooming vice-captains to be captains. Also as vice-captain they should be included in discussions with management and coaching personnel.

### Initial Captaincy Assistance

To clearly define the management's expectations of the captain the management should discuss or provide the captain with a duty statement and guidelines. The provision of this statement sets the boundaries of the role and the duties of the captain. This reduces the chances of error or confrontations that can result when the captain encroaches on the coaches responsibilities or steps outside of club arrangements, such as sponsorship.

### Long Term Captaincy Assistance

Including the captain in the decision making process is a clear and positive demonstration of the long term support for the captain. This enhances the captain's and the players' perception of the captain's role as well as providing the team with an avenue for input. The captains particularly felt that the management's support of the captain's decisions in regards to player problems or team disputes was very important. Failure of the management to support the captain's decisions undermines the captain's credibility within the team.

The management should also consider the captain's non-captaining roles when requesting the captain to perform off-field duties (e.g., family and work). The pressure to perform all roles equally and effectively can be detrimental to the health and performance of the captain.

### How the Captain Should Approach the Captaincy

The captain should maintain the leadership behaviours and qualities that identified them for selection. The only changes that should occur in the captain, is that the captain should become more aware of the needs and interests of the players, and be accessible and approachable. Generally, the captain should lead by example, and treat their fellow teammates with respect, honesty and fairness. The captain should not be overbearing in their attempt to lead the team. The captain should "be themselves".

The captain has different roles within the one role as captain. Two roles that could conflict are being one of the boys/girls and also being in a position of authority. The captain should not perform one to the level that it excludes the effective performance of the other. That is being overly friendly with players may inhibit the captain from being able to then discipline the same players.

Although the captain may not have a high on-field role, the captain is still a necessary component of the team. The team needs a captain to (a) Represent them in mediations with the coaching staff and management, (b) Provide encouragement and support of fellow players, and (c) Facilitate the discussion of problems as the captain is not so removed from the players as the coach maybe.

### **Methodological Problems and Recommendations**

The purpose of the research was to identify the role and the experiences of the sports team captain. Interviewing the subjects successfully obtained the qualitative information required to support the purpose of the research. The interviews allowed the subjects to express their feelings and experiences in their words. However the analysis of the results highlighted themes that required further investigation and supporting data, such as experience, age, length of captaincy period.

It would have been beneficial to send a preliminary questionnaire to the subjects, prior to the interview to ascertain basic facts. The questionnaire would have obtained information on (a) current age of the captain, (b) age of the captain at the time they were selected as state and/or national captain, and (c) names and categories of previous teams captained and the years captained. These facts would provide background information on the captain, that could be investigated in relation to major events occurring in the sport during the indicated time periods. The data could also be used in the analysis and conclusions.

### **Directions for Future Research**

The purpose of this study was not only to confirm or deny the anecdotal literature on the role and the experiences of the sports team captain, but to identify future research directions in this little known area. Numerous themes were identified and broadly discussed in relation to the role and the experiences of the captain.



Potentially each theme identified in this report can be explored in depth in relation to individual sports and captains overall. Seven research questions specifically identified as requiring future research are discussed below:

- (1) The nature of the sport and its affect on the role and duties of the coach and captain. Explore the rules and demands of the sport and how they influence the role and duties of the coach and captain.

Type of Sport -----> Affects Coaches Role -----> Affects Captains Role

- (2) What is the future role of the captain at elite level? Is the role one of public relations representative of the team? Is this a phenomena of Western Australian teams only or a growing trend for all high profile teams? What do the public relation duties entail and what skills are required by the captain?
- (3) Playing position and captain. At least three possible research problems have been identified in relation to the playing position of the captain. The importance of playing position as a variable in the overall selection of the ideal captain is as yet undetermined. Further research needs to be conducted on the relationship between playing position and the captaincy for various sports; why cricket captains tend to be batsmen rather than bowlers and if it really matters, and

other such patterns.

- (a) Are there similar leadership qualities between the requirements of a playing position and the leadership requirements of a captain (e.g., Point Guard in basketball)?
- (b) Conduct "Historical Research" of past captains' playing position for a number of sports over twenty years. The time period for each sport must take into account whether any major changes to the game, (rules) has been conducted as this may influence the leadership playing position of the game.

Historical research is the systematic collection and objective evaluation of data related to past occurrences in order to test hypotheses concerning causes, effects, or trends of these events that may help to explain present events and anticipate future events. (Gay, 1990, p. 186)

- (c) Bradman (1969) stated "it is far easier for a specialist batsmen to handle the position [captaincy] than a bowler, an all-rounder or a wicket-keeper". Is there validity to Bradman's statement? Why are cricket captains of the Australian team predominantly batsmen? Is the same for other countries national team (England, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, West Indies, Zimbabwe)?

- (4) Where do captains go upon retirement?
- (a) How many of the coaches of a particular sport (e.g., Basketball or Australian Rules Football) over the last five years were previously captains?
- (b) What occupations are the captains of a particular sport (e.g., basketball or Australian Rules Football) from the years 1985 - 1990 currently employed in? Are they involved in an occupation involving the sport they played (Coaching, Administration, Sports Commentators, Journalists, other)? Are they in occupations that involves capitalising on their name (e.g., sales or marketing)?
- (5) The Future Role of the Cricket Captain and Coach. Do the increasing demands of international cricket on the time, responsibility and duties of the cricket captain and coach require a re-examination of the role and duties of these two positions? Are the roles of the cricket captain and coach becoming similar to those roles in other sports?
- (6) The process of selecting a captain requires further investigation to determine the order and value that should be assigned to each criteria. That is, of the following criteria which should be classified as essential or desirable criteria (a) previous experience, (b) attributes, and (c) playing position.

- (7) Coping strategies. Explore how captains cope with the pressures of captaincy, for example, talking to the media, having to perform consistently at a high standard, always having to set the good example, and so forth.

Further investigation will enhance the knowledge of the themes identified in this report and the understanding of the captain. The seven research questions outlined above are examples of how themes and issues raised in this report may be further considered to broaden our understanding of the nature of captaincy.

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## Appendix A.

### Categories of National Competitions in Australia

#### Traditional Short Round Robin National Competition (TSRRNC)

A traditional round robin tournament played over a period of one to two weeks.

Each Australian State or Territory has only one representative team.

e.g., Australian Softball Federation National Womens Open Carnival, played the first week in January each year.

#### Long Round Robin National Competition (LRRNC)

A round robin competition played over a number of months, (a season) that each Australian State or Territory has only one representative team.

e.g., Australian Cricket Board Sheffield Shield.

#### Modified Short National Competition (MSNC)

A National competition played over a period of one to two weeks that does not involve all Australian States or Territories, of which a state or territory can have one or more representative teams.

#### Modified Long National Competition (MLNC)

A round robin competition played over a number of months, that does not involve all Australian States or Territories, of which a state or territory can have one or more representative teams.

e.g., Australian Football League, Australian Basketball League.

## Categories of National Competitions in Australia Cont.

### Traditional Pools National Competition (TPNC)

A one to two week national competition involving the allocation of states/territories into two pools based on prior performance.

e.g., Rugby Union's Australian Interstate Championships played every two years over ten consecutive days.

### Limited National Competition (LNC)

The State sporting body is instructed by the National sporting body to play certain teams at a time and place of the teams' choosing.

e.g., Australian Rugby Union. Western Australia are instructed to play four states as designated by the Australian Rugby Union in that particular season. The date of the competition is decided between the two teams.

## Appendix B.

### Interview Schedule

1. Could you outline for me the year/s and the team when you captained. Was there anything particularly significantly happening at this time (e.g., Moscow Olympics Boycott), that may have influenced the captaincy, the team, the sport, etc.?
2. Did you have previous experience as a captain, before being selected as a state/national captain? (school, social, state, etc)
3. What particular aspects did you pick up from the previous captain's performance (good or bad) and what influence did it have on your captaincy?
4. Captain role models
  - a. Is there a captain/s you admire and have modelled your own captaincy on?
  - b. Has any other captain had any influence on you, how?
5. Could you share with me the process in which you became captain?  
*Prompt questions if needed.*
  - a. Were you asked or told?
  - b. Did the Coaching and/or management personnel select you, or was it a team vote?
6. Were you given a duty statement (verbal or written) and what did it entail?
7. Could you outline any performance or personal goals you set yourself to achieve in your role as captain? (e.g. Winning a premierships/ gold medal/world cup?)
8. What have been your duties as captain - on and off the field?  
*To be used as a prompt if needed.*
  - a. Selection of playing direction.
  - b. Development of team strategies.
  - c. Implementation of team strategies
  - d. Assisting with team selection.
  - e. Inform players of team selection.
  - f. Conduct or assist with training sessions.
  - g. Dictate or enforce punishment.
  - h. Represent the players in disputes.
  - i. Liaise with the media.
  - j. Deliver speeches.
  - k. Assist with tour arrangements.

## Interview Schedule Cont.

9. Could you tell me how you may perceive there are any differences in the duties of a captain for different sports?
10. Joys of Captaincy?
  - a. What do you enjoy about being a captain?
  - b. What have been your greatest moments as a captain?
11. Woes of captaincy?
  - a. What, if anything do/did you dislike about being a captain?
  - b. What have been your worst moments as a captain?
12. Could you tell me about any role conflicts you experienced?  
*To be used as a prompt if needed.*
  - a. Between being a player and a captain
  - b. Captain and work conflicts
13. Can you share with me how internal politics may have impacted on your Captaincy.  
*To be used as a prompt if needed.*
  - a. Interference
  - b. Constraints placed on you.
  - c. Decisions made as a result of politics.
14. How much power was assigned to you in the role of captain, ie. were you able to carry out your decisions, or was your leadership in name only?
15. How would you describe the ideal relationship that should be present between a coach and captain?
16. Could you share with me any changes in your personal performance that resulted from becoming captain?
17. Could you share with me any changes in your relationship with the other players that occurred as a result of becoming captain?
18. What would be the one most important thing that you will say to your successor?
19. What can be done to assist captains? (Courses/clinics, text book)

## Appendix C.

### Interviewee's Release Form

Interviewee's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Interview No. \_\_\_\_\_

I have granted permission for Michelle Nelson as part of her Bachelor of Applied Science, Sports Science (Honours) research to record an interview with myself,

\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to the following conditions:

1. That the interview will be transcribed, the transcripts may be edited and all materials including tape recordings, transcripts, notes, etc will be kept secured by Michelle Nelson.
2. That I will receive a copy of the interview in transcript form prior to its inclusion in the research report. I shall also be able to request a copy of the interview in cassette form if I wish.
3. That I will not show the interview in transcript or cassette form to anyone not involved in the research until the research report has been published and displayed in the Edith Cowan University library.
4. That I have the right to correct errors in the transcript prior to its inclusion in the Research Report "The Role and the Experiences of the Sports Captain".
5. That every copyright I have in any of the tape recording(s), transcript, notes or any other material made in connection with the interview is assigned to Michelle Nelson.
6. That the Edith Cowan University will permit bona fide researchers access to the material in the Edith Cowan University library and control the use of the material in a responsible manner.
7. Should a book, article or other publication be written which incorporates any material from the "The Role and the Experiences of the Sports Captain", *I do/I do not* (cross out where inapplicable) give permission for my name to be attributed to extracts from the transcript or recordings involving myself and the interview.
8. That I have the right to use a pseudonym which will be used in all recordings, documents etc, in the research project. This name will be \_\_\_\_\_

**Interviewee's Release Form Cont.**

**SIGNED**  
**of**

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**DATE**

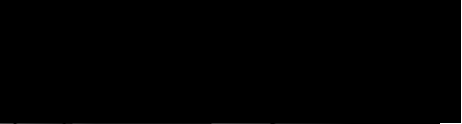
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**Appendix D.****Auditor's Statement**

I have conducted an audit of the final draft of this thesis against the transcripts of the interviews and have concluded that the comments attributed to subjects are correct and the generalisations valid.



June Benson, BA (Psych), Post Grad Dip (Bus)

27th November 1992