

*'Elbows' member – Chris O'Meagher (Bear)
1969-2018*

Vale: Chris O'Meagher



Chris O'Meagher

I first met BEAR in 1998 when he joined our premier league bowls club as a profile and prized recruit. He has often told me he knew me earlier, when as a presenter at a coaches forum, I openly challenged the bowls audience, of which he was in, about their staid and dated approach to bowls, me!!!

When he got the invite to join our club he told me later he agreed because he remembered that outspoken coach named Latchland Tighee was there.

On arrival at our club BEAR asked me to coach him, though we had a premier league head coach and I continued as his personal coach these next 20 years. You all call him BEAR, whereas I used to call him Grizzly, which he hated so I either called him Chris or Berung, which is Malaysian for Bear.

In 2000 I formed my own squad of bowlers, ELBOWS, with BEAR, Deno and Maryanne as part of that initial membership. Elbows squad is renowned in the world of bowls due to most members, 25 in all, gaining elite level winning competition results, even as recently as the 2018 Commonwealth Games. BEAR cast a big and imposing shadow of influence

*‘Elbows’ member – Chris O’Meagher (Bear)
1969-2018*

over we Elbows members and the winning and sharing attitude that prevailed in the squad.

It is with joy that in 2016 and 2018 the YouTube videos of Elbows, also on my website, feature BEAR prominently on screen. As do two of the menu images on my website; a lasting visual memento. Talking memories, we in Elbows who stayed at Chicken Legs’ house will recall the Bendigo incident with great hilarity with the infamous black bowls shoes saga, a treat for us.

In November 2005 BEAR asked me to write a recommendation for him to be considered for the Fijian Commonwealth Games team of 2006. Part of what I wrote within the recommendation was this:

“With the experience as a coach preparing for my second Commonwealth Games, I am of the strong opinion Chris O’ Meagher is capable of competing favourably (for Fiji) at the Melbourne Games 2006 if included as an emergency / reserve for the Fijian national bowls squad.

I have coached Chris as a member of my own squad since August 2000 and have witnessed his development to consider him amongst the top bowls skippers in the state of Victoria.

Chris’ capacity to further his tactical and mental skill has enabled him to constantly compete favourably against the very best bowlers in Victoria, and when occasion occurs and Australia.

The Elbows squad Chris is in has at times included five Australian squad members, and nine state representatives. Chris therefore, is always surrounded by elite bowlers in training and competition.

This past year I have used Chris as an assistant in my training and coaching for both the Malaysian bowls team and the Victorian state ladies team. I have no doubt some of the success from both those teams is attributed to his contribution as an elite bowler, a great team man.

I assure you that I have utter faith in my support for Chris O’ Meagher as a suitable person if Fiji was considering a local (Melbourne based) Fijian bowler as their formal emergency / reserve for the Games 2006...”

In 2012, the CEO of BA actively encouraged BEAR to submit for a position as a director of BA. BEAR asked me to endorse his application, which I duly did. BA never considered his submission. More fool them at BA. As is the case with many sports we have ‘Wombats’ ‘running’ our sport. Wombats is a term used in an Economics book on the business of sport in Australia and was defined as ‘white old men in blazers and ties’.

When it comes to Hall of Fame, BEAR is a shoo-in amongst bowlers as no one has / had the level of popularity to claim as fame than he. Our sport has multiple deserving bowls champions, BEAR being one of those.

*'Elbows' member – Chris O'Meagher (Bear)
1969-2018*

However, his champion status was at another level. He was a champion bloke.

The big fella was a natural legend.

Thanks for the life with us, we shall relish the memory.

**Prepared by Lachlan Tighe 'Elbows' coach.
September 14, 2018.**