



Platypus — how you too can contribute

Don't forget we need to hear from you on any topic you think would be of interest to AFP members.

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And for those in the regions receiving 'Platypus' at home, if the copy is going to the wrong address please let us know immediately by writing to:

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A Rugby first for NT drug man

Senior Constable Noel Simmonds gave up chasing drug criminals for a day recently to tackle the heavies of the Great Britain touring rugby league side.

Noel, attached to the combined AFP-Territory drug unit in Darwin, was selected in the Northern Territory team to play against the Great Britain team.

He is believed to be the first Australian Federal Police officer to have played an international touring side in rugby league.

Playing second row, he gave an excellent display of a forward's skill.



• Senior Constable Noel Simmonds... played like a veteran.

The local sports press has credited him with being one of the reasons his local team, Brothers, has made a comeback this season.

The Territory team was defeated 40-13, but not before its players put up a valiant fight.

And as the local newspaper columnists said of the game, the score may not have seemed attractive, but the Territory is one of Australia's smallest sporting States and the half-time score of 14-9 (England's favour) was a tribute to the local team's courage.

They said Simmonds shone throughout the game, and played rugby like a veteran — although he had only played social matches in Canberra during the past six years.

Noel said his selection for such a team was a culmination of a sporting career he had not been able to follow because of his commitment to the AFP.

"I was surprised I didn't find the internationals as difficult as I'd imagined," he said. "They were tough and extremely fit, but they had just come out of the English season and each player had had at least 38 games during the season."

"They were good players too — and fair," he added.

Noel said he would now concentrate on playing for Brothers while in Darwin. His team may well take out the premiership.

Barefoot, he sees out the distance

Move over, Zola Budd, AFP has its own barefoot long distance runner!

He is Senior Constable Terry O'Neill of Special Intelligence section, Perth.

In the inaugural National Police Games held in Melbourne in March, Terry was a surprise performer, coming a creditable third in the 800 metres and fourth in both the 1500 and 5000 metre events.

Terry, 47 and a self-styled 'fun runner', was up against competitive athletes. When he arrived at the starting line without starting blocks and in bare feet he cause a few raised eyebrows!

He competed in the golden masters events for the 45s and over.

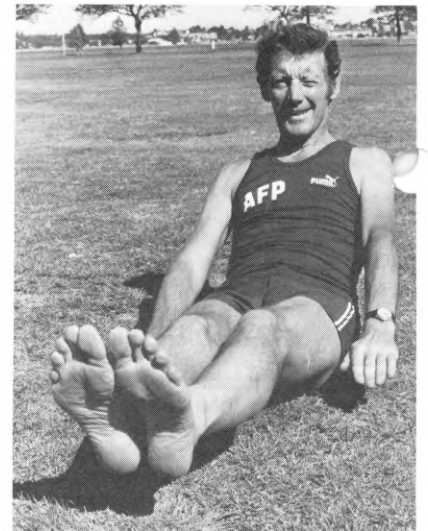
He was impressed by the high standard of competition.

"I thought that at my age, if I didn't have a go in competition now, then that would be it," he said. "I was satisfied with my performance; I thought before the games that I would be really struggling."

Terry also was impressed by the organisation of the games by the Victoria Police.

"It was first class," he said. "There were hundreds of events and they were run spot on time."

Terry was one of 30 AFP representatives at the games and the



• Terry O'Neill and the bare feet that carried him into placings at the National Police Games in Melbourne.

only one from WA Region. He paid his own fares and expenses.

He runs between two and ten kilometres "every other day" just for the enjoyment.

Terry's next appearance will be for AFP again when WA Region clashes with the Deputy Crown Solicitor's Office, Perth, in a 10km race. The inaugural race last year was won by DCSO.

Grand Prix class on a Honda

Flashing around a race track at speeds close to 190 kms an hour is not everyone's idea of recreation.

But it is to young Sydney AFP Constable Simon Fawcett.

Simon, 23, of the Sydney suburb of Camden, is gradually making a name for himself as a crack Australian motorcyclist.

His sleek, modified 125cc Grand Prix machine has already this year carried him to a fourth in round one of the NSW titles at Oran Park, and a fifth in the Australian Grand Prix at Bathurst in May.

He's achieved this, without sponsorship, in the five years that he has been competing.

His love of motorcycles began as a child, and has remained.

"My first bike was a trail bike," he said. "It was a Ducati (the legendary Italian motorcycle) and owning it led me to join the Ducati Owners' Club and to racing it."

"Then I had a Honda 550cc short

circuit bike. It was very much like competing in speedway events," he said.

Nowadays, thanks to the considerable help of former Australian champion and brilliant mechanic and tuning specialist Tony Hatton, Simon is competing in the big time.



• Simon Fawcett in action on his Honda.

His grand prix bike bears little resemblance to the Honda it once was. It still holds the current lap record at Sydney's Amaroo Park.

"Even to get it to its present stage has cost well over \$7,000 in development," said Simon. "Racing bikes at this level is an expen-

sive sport.

"In Europe, a bike developed similarly to this would cost around \$12,000 to \$14,000."

Machine trouble cost him participation in the initial round of the Australian Championships in Tasmania late in February, but he hopes his bike will be ready for round two in Sydney.

"If I can get to the remaining Australian title races I genuinely believe I can make a strong showing," he said.

Participation in subsequent title rounds in August, September and October, however, depends on his job and time off.

"I went into the game with my eyes open, knowing it would be difficult to get time off in the future," he said.

If he makes it, the big races will take him to Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and, finally, for the last round late in November, to Victoria.