

David Applegarth

BSHS 1948 & 1949

BRISBANE
STATE
HIGH
SCHOOL



Mr David Applegarth was the guest speaker at the 2019 GPS Cricket Dinner held at Southbank TAFE on Wednesday 24 April 2019. The following notes are from Mr Applegarth's speech:

Thanks for this invitation. I am excited to be here and feel seriously blessed to be able to do so at my age. I am now 85 years old.

I've searched for an approach to this talk, to find something that would never fade with time and something, in both cricket and life, to pass on to you all.

So I looked and found the latest cricket newsletter. I noted the mission statement that was described in this newsletter. It says that you set out to:

- strengthen the student
- mature the man and to
- challenge the cricketer

Now, looking back, I can observe that all of these aims, although not published or written, have helped me in my time at BSHS in 1948/1949, some 70 years ago this year.

I was selected in the first XI during that time. Today, sadly, there are only 4 of us left: John Macklin, Bob Miles, Ron Beech (our scorer manager) and myself.

So, I will talk to you about my cricket at a young age and go from there to some important principles and lessons which I hope will help you, if applied, to achieve your own aims and objectives in life.

Here, I cannot avoid a small boast. I probably was a fair player, in my time at school and thereafter. This 1949 team was so special to us and to the School's sport history. In 1948, BSHS had run last. What a change in 1949, with the injection of new blood!

I need make mention of the animosity between church schools and BSHS in those days. Does it still exist today?

I hope you all have a pen, or a retentive memory to note some pieces of proven advice that may appeal to you.

Let me begin with a quote from an Irish Poet and Play Wright. It goes like this: Experience is the hardest form of teacher. It gives you the test first and the lesson afterwards.

Well, it all began for me and became serious with Queensland Schoolboys Team of 1947. Then, in 1948, opening the batting for Queensland at the 1948 carnival in Melbourne with Ron Archer, my friend for life. I scored the only century of the carnival.

Coming to BSHS in 1948 and into the D1 team, I moved up to the IST XI later in that 1948 season. In the last game of the season, I was given the opportunity to play in Toowoomba against TGS. I managed another 100. I guess I was on a high and felt unbeatable at 14 years old.

John Macklin and I were the opening bats in the 1949 team. After a couple of games he came to me and said something like this, "You know Dave, it is your and my job to get the team a good start. I think that you are going for too many rash shots too early". The test, the experience and the lesson, all in one, hit me. We went onto be a formidable opening combination, both gaining GPS selection in 1949.

Now, about the 1949 team...

It was a relatively young team. The average age was 16 years. Gordon Jones was our captain and also the School Captain in 1949. He went on to be a leading person in education in Queensland, heading up the Brisbane College of Advanced Education. Gordon had a steady approach to everything. We had great team talks, great spirit and we really supported each other. We soon became players in a solid team, not just a team of players. Note the subtle difference.

On paper, when you looked at the other teams, we probably looked a bit ordinary. We had the fighting spirit and the honor of the school on our shoulders and always strived to do our very best!

We saw our main matches as Churchie and BBC. Our results were a win by 4 runs and a draw. Peter Burge and Ron Archer were in the Churchie team and they became test players. The wickets were not covered in our time, so we learned to play on tracks that did a bit.

The team had only one set of gear to share. No-one had their own bat. The coaches we had were both teachers. George Lockie and Vic Honour were both accomplished cricketers who played for Queensland. Of our team, only Richard Searle went on to play Shield cricket. Remember, in those days, only the top 20 players got a shot at selection. This is different today where there are multiple choices with 50 over games and twenty-twenty cricket.

I played for 2 years with the Qld Colts Under 23 team but I am disappointed that I did not take my opportunities. I should have specialised as a batsman. Instead, I become an allrounder which is a tough gig. As a result, I didn't focus enough on my batting.

I played for Souths Club in Brisbane until 1966 and scored almost 4000 runs at an average of 25 and took 390 wickets at an average of 15. We won 3 grade premierships in the early 1960s.

I got much pleasure out of the game and its connections allowed me to go on to Administration in cricket. It helped my business career of 50 years in the Insurance Industry and Directorships elsewhere.

I have a few tips. Practice your defence. Cover your off stump first. Batsman should consider an eye test. You bat best with good eyes. Concentrate on each ball with no premeditated shots. Against slow bowling, if the ball is above eye level look to go forward.

Bowlers Bowl at the stumps with your eyes on bottom of middle stump. Your head will then be still and your mind focused. On a pitch doing a bit, bowl at a steady pace. The surprise element is to then quicken one up or dig it in.

Everyone needs guidance. Talk to special cricketers you admire. Write a letter. You may be delighted at the response you get.

A few special notes. I had a long and successful career in Insurance. It isn't always a career path that is talked about and I can recommend it to you. It did me well over 50 years!

Remember:

Attitude determines altitude.

The door to success is labelled push

In a general sense, I cannot do better than refer you to my son's papers for the school. His name is Peter Applegarth and he wrote "Reflections of the last third of BSHS History" in 2011. He spoke at the 2012 BSHS Graduation Ceremony. You can see his work on the BSHS website.

In closing, I hope that all of you here tonight appreciate the dedication of all efforts of your teachers and coaches make on your behalf. To repay them, you have a duty and a responsibility for realising your own potential.

My teacher and coach at BSHS was George Lockie. He became a sort of mentor for me. He had a wonderful social conscience and used it to great extent as Headmaster of the school in 1960s.

Let's hope that many of you, now and in the years to come develop a similar relationship with your teachers and coaches as I did way back in 1949.

On Foundation Day on the 29th July this year, we old cricketers are being invited as special guests to the Annual School Assembly. I hope to see some of you again then. Thank you for listening.

David Applegarth
Brisbane State High School 1948/1949