



NEW SOUTH WALES JUNIOR BASEBALL LEAGUE

For the advancement of Junior Baseball within the State of New South Wales

ABN: 52 756 068 757
P.O. Box 2020
North Parramatta 1750

Telephone: (02) 9674 8964
Facsimile: (02) 9674 1969
Info line: 1900 920 229
www.nswjuniorbaseball.com.au

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Ref: C2001/390-03

Re: Notification 90853 – lodged by Australian Baseball Federation

General Manager,
Adjudication Branch
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission
P.O. Box 1199
Dickson ACT 2602

Thank you for the invitation to make a submission to the review of the above notification.

We find that the information provided by the ABF and BALME vindicate the position that we took on the earlier submission to the review in 2003-4. Our primary concern has always been that too high a percentage of the income from the licensing program was expended on administration.

Another objection that we have to the program is that the cost to Junior players is disproportionately high because Junior players need uniforms more often because of wear and tear and because of physical changes as they grow. This is compounded with their need for multiple sets of uniforms when they play at more than one level of competition in the same season.

We do not believe that the ABF has lived up to the expectations of ACCC in providing funds for the development and promotion of baseball to offset the identified public detriment. Since our disaffiliation NSWJBL does not have access to all the financial details within this State but to our knowledge there has only been one relatively small payment from the licensing program (BALME) since 2001 - this despite the fact that NSW makes up a major proportion of the ABF's member base.

The supply of baseball uniforms was always a specialised market. Before licensing there were a number of suppliers within the Sydney area competing for business which kept prices down relative to quality. At present there are only five NSW addresses listed in the ABF list of licensed suppliers of apparel – of these two are in country areas, one specialises in pants and one in caps. The other is a very small company that only deals with a few clubs. The licensing program has virtually closed down the Sydney market.

One of the supposed aims of the licensing program by the ABF was to promote Australia-wide unity to attract sponsorship. We were always happy to support that promotion idea through voluntary 'badging'. The ABF has now introduced a membership card which provides them with the whole-of-sport base that gives them that opportunity to display that unity. Three dollars per head from membership funds has been redirected to that project

The licensing program has been detrimental to the sport. It has caused disunity in the sport. It has increased costs and reduced competition in the baseball uniform 'market' in Sydney. While the Junior players in NSW constitute a major share of the total ABF membership, no funds have been directed back to assist them in either promotion or development. We continue to believe that the detriment outweighs the benefit of the exemption from third line forcing.

Yours sincerely,

Cheryl Barnier
PRESIDENT

