



Dream the dream

Success starts with a dream.

BEAUDEN BARRETT KICKED five penalty goals to help Taranaki win the Ranfurly Shield from Southland on 24 August.

In one of those lovely coincidences, it was 15 years to the day since Taranaki had last won the “log o’ wood” and Barrett’s father Kevin was a member of that (1996) team.

After the Southland game the *Taranaki Daily News* ran a great photo, first run in 1996, of a then five-year-old Beauden standing proudly beside his father, who was holding the Ranfurly Shield. You can be sure that Beauden was dreaming that he would do exactly the same thing one day. And 15 years later he turned that dream into reality.

Dreams are very powerful. Dreams motivate people to achieve outstanding success. Without them the world would be a much poorer place. It doesn’t matter whether it is sports, politics, the arts or business, success always starts with a dream.

Often, those dreams come from an external motivator. It is well known that Tiger Woods’ goal is to win more golf majors than Jack Nicklaus. At the moment he is stuck on 14 still four behind Nicklaus. While that gap remains he will continue to try and achieve his target. He is not retiring from golf any time soon.

In other cases the dream comes from within. As a young boy I loved playing cricket and dreamed of scoring a century. Eventually at the age of 33 it all came together one Saturday afternoon in Palmerston North and I scored 147 not out in a club game. The dream of scoring a century kept me practising and playing cricket for more than 20 years. The achievement of that dream is something I still treasure.

Similarly, I harboured the dream of writing and publishing a book from a young age.

While success starts with a dream, it is planning and perseverance that allows some of those dreams to be turned into reality. You can bet Beauden Barrett has endlessly practised his kicking so that he can step onto the park and make it look easy when it counts.

In recent years several books (including Malcolm Gladwell’s *Outliers*) have publicised the counter-intuitive idea that achievement is not primarily the result of talent. Rather, it is suggested that achievement comes from being in the right place at the right time and then having the dedication to commit at least 10,000 hours to the chosen activity.

An example of the impact of circumstance is that in many sports high achievers birthdays are often just after the cut-off dates for age group sides. Being born at the right time, means as children these athletes were on average a little bigger and more experienced than those born in the same year but several months later. This slight advantage of circumstance means these children were perceived as the best in their age group and attracted more support and coaching, which reinforced the advantage from their date of birth. In turn this success meant these children were more encouraged to dedicate the time necessary to ultimately achieve outstanding success. A slight initial advantage of circumstance is turned into the opportunity for high level achievement.

On a personal level, I know I would not be doing what I am doing now if

I had not moved to New Plymouth in 1999 and joined the practice then known as Cottam Cave Evetts & Fah (which became STRATAGEM). This group of people wanted to try some new and innovative techniques for managing an accountancy practice. Because the right environment was there I was able to get involved in this process and develop a new career.

While I was given an opportunity by circumstance it then required dedication and hard work to make the most of the opportunity.

I was also able to use these circumstances to write the book I had always dreamed about. But *Absolute Certainty* would not have happened

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if I had not been practicing and practicing my writing for years.

Dream the dream, take advantage of the right circumstances, and put in the time. That’s the three-step process for achievement.

I write these words just before the World Cup is about to begin. In 1987 I was lucky enough to be at Eden Park when David Kirk held the William Webb Ellis Trophy aloft. I am sure that a young Ritchie McCaw also saw that image and one day dreamed of doing the same thing. Let’s hope he was just as inspired as Beauden Barrett. ■

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