HEADLINE WRITING

The headlines of news stories are the outline of the story. It communicates a single idea with impact to try to sell the story to the reader and tell them it is a story worth reading. Headlines also help guide readers through a page.

Tips on Writing Headlines

- Keep headlines simple and direct
- Include a verb when you can
- Avoid using full stops
- Use the active voice
- Use present tense
- Avoid using people’s first names, unless they’re well known by that name.
- Use supplementary headlines to explain or lead readers into a story (see example below)
- Avoid using label headlines
- Avoid repeating words eg **Govt plea for air terminal for the Games**
- Avoid ambiguity (see examples below)
- Avoid using the articles a, an, and, the
- Search for key words - The best way to write good news headlines is to jot down two or three key words from the story
- Draw on idioms - identify phrases or expressions associated with the story’s theme, eg a story about a professional clown brings these sayings to mind: send in the clowns, class clown, clowning around, act the clown, court jester, put on a happy face
- Use a word with two meanings eg **He has reservations about hotels**

Example of a supplementary headline
‘Fountain Gate’s foxyroms pay a visit to the Coast’

Examples of headlines using ambiguity

- **Panda mating fails; veterinarian takes over**
- **Miners refuse to work after death**
- **Red tape holds up new bridges**
- **Juvenile Court to Try Shooting Defendant**
- **Kids make nutritious snacks**
ACTIVITY
Have a go at writing a headline for these stories. Remember to follow the tips on how to write a top headline!

By JENNIE DELL
Reporter

WHEN you buy a carton of free-range eggs at the supermarket, you may feel good that the eggs were laid by hens that are not caged or confined, but can roam in green pastures.

Think again. A meeting was convened by the NSW Food Authority in Sydney yesterday to discuss labelling standards, which currently allow producers to call their eggs “free range” even if the hens’ beaks have been cut off and they are densely farmed in barns with limited access to the open air.

Consumers need easily to see what kind of eggs they are buying, says Gunderimba egg producer Simon Cripps-Clark.

Mr Cripps-Clark markets more than 3000 dozen eggs a week from his certified organic farm, where 6000 contented chooks enjoy grazing on lush pastures beneath the fruit, nut and cabinet timber trees, with organic supplementary feed thrown in.

They are not debeaked – a cruel process, Mr Cripps-Clark says, inflicted on most hens raised for commercial egg production.

He’s furious the Australian Food Authority, which has responsibility for truth in labelling.

DO YOU THINK FREE-RANGE EGGS ARE BETTER?
SMS 0428 264 948, email opinions@northernstar.com.au or go to northernstar.com.au

COOLOOLA Heat hockey coach Peter Chatman is hoping for an improved performance from his young side tomorrow, after two disappointing weeks on the field.

The Heat will line up against Bundaberg Arrows today in their first home game for the 2012 season.

The Heat has had a slow start to their Wide Bay Premier League campaign. In their first match the Heat went down to Granville Tigers 7-0 and last weekend the scheduled match against Brothers was washed out.

The Heat and Brothers are both former teams of Australian soldier Ashley Birt who was killed in action in Afghanistan last year.

Both clubs were to wear black arm bands in memory of their lost friend and had a minutes silence before the start of the game.

Unfortunately after the minute silence, the game was called off.

The match was to be replayed on Sunday but has now been rescheduled till after Easter due to player unavailability.

Tomorrow’s match at Ramsey Park is set to be a tight one.

The Heat’s new look younger side will take on Arrows at 5.30pm.

Rockhampton’s Ashley Knight has a degree in human movement science.

It’s clear the 28-year-old sandwich-making extraordinaire certainly knows a thing or two about speed and movement.

Ashley was crowned the Australian and NZ Subway making champion at the company’s national conference in Sydney on the weekend.

He’s arguably the fastest sandwich maker in this part of the world and soon he’ll be off to Orlando in the United States to compete for the Subway world crown.

Having finished third at the Australian titles a couple of years ago Ashley adopted a new strategy this time around.

His winning time, with penalties included, was 61 seconds.

Subway store co-owner Ashley Knight holds up the ham sub he whipped up at the Blanchard St store.

Ashley is off to Florida for his shot at the Subway world crown.