

National Golden Gavel Competition Finals

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Klarin Sivyer and Sophie Anderson, working hard!

Over a few days in mid September I spent some time in Melbourne rubbing shoulders with young lawyers in very serious black suits. I brushed the mould off some old tights, layered some Territory clothes and attended the National Young Lawyers Conference and National Golden Gavel Competition finals.

The National Golden Gavel competition is an amalgamation of the best junior lawyer orators from across Australia. Each jurisdiction is represented by the winner of their local competition. The topics are funny. Competitors only have 24 hours to prepare their speech. I feel sick thinking about how nervous they would be.

For those of you who didn't already know, Klarin Sivyer won the Territory's Golden Gavel competition at the Crowne Plaza Darwin in July with the speech 'Diary of a first year lawyer'. It was now time to see what a young lawyer from Darwin could bring to the national stage.

Klarin, our Mums and I sipped champagne and nibbled canapés in the foyer of the State Library of Victoria. Klarin was calm under the circumstances – I was busy looking at the young lawyers with bow ties on.

The Hon Justice Betty King of the

Supreme Court of Victoria and Mark Holden from Australian Idol, I mean 'the Victorian Bar', judged the event. Males and graduates from Allens Arthur Robinson and Mallesons made up the majority of speakers. Everyone was brilliant and seriously talented.

The crowd laughed and cringed as Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania Western Australia and South Australia gave the crowd a taste of their wit. Then Klarin from the Northern Territory was called to the stage to present:

'Your partner's just not that into you: 10 tips to make yourself more popular at work'

Her speech included tips such as:

Tip No 6: Involve yourself in charitable pursuits; or at least appear to.

It's important to show people you care. Try leaving Friday night drinks early and saying you have to go because you need to be up early on Saturday so you can take your down syndrome cousin and his special school mates to the footy. This can work really well, but try not to overplay it or your partner will offer you member's tickets and

you'll find yourself trawling special schools looking for a fake cousin, which can lead to all sorts of career and legal problems.

Sometimes less is more; just stick a fake picture up of a world vision sponsor kid and work your way up from there. You even get to name them! Personally I like Brian Mopopo.

The final result was that Klarin came third, which is an exceptionally good result. Trust me, I was there; the competition was amazing. Nick Russell from Victoria took out the Golden Gavel with his speech ***'Friday night drinks: The lawyers guide to scoring a touchdown'*** and second place was awarded to Brianna Rositano from South Australia.

I hope Northern Territory Young Lawyers and the legal profession continue to support this event in the Territory and send a representative to compete at this prestigious event. It would also be wonderful to hold it in the Territory one year – something to think about for an up and coming NTYL committee!

Thanks to the Law Society's Public Purposes Trust for sponsoring the NT attendance to this event. ●