



# Glory owner wants league club

# NRL SHOCK

PERTH Glory owner Tony Sage wants to set up an NRL team in Perth coached by State-of-Origin legend Ricky Stuart.

Sage would replicate the business model used by fellow mining magnate

Nathan Tinkler in Newcastle.

Sage has brought in Balmain Tigers' legend and fellow Perth Glory board member, Benny Elias, to drive the bid for NRL entry in 2015 by preparing a proposal to go to league

boss David Gallop and the new independent commission.

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## Sage in league bid

### New team would share staff with Glory

Russell Quinn and Phil Rothfield

PERTH Glory owner Tony Sage has lofty ambitions of buying his own NRL team in WA by replicating the same business model used by fellow mining magnate Nathan Tinkler in Newcastle.

Sage has brought in Balmain Tigers' legend and fellow Perth Glory board member Benny Elias to drive the bid for NRL entry in 2015 by preparing a proposal to go to league boss David Gallop and the new independent commission.

The proposal is centred on replicating Tinkler's business model in Newcastle: merging an A-League soccer team with an NRL side - namely the Newcastle Jets and Newcastle Knights - and then sharing support services and expenses.

And Elias has State-of-Origin

coach Ricky Stuart in his sights.

He rang Stuart on Friday and offered him the coaching job.

"Ricky's my first, second and third choice," Elias said.

"He'd be the first person you sign. He was very excited about it when I spoke to him."

Elias has also had private talks with a member of the independent commission and hopes to see Gallop this week.

Sage said it "made sense" to run a joint operation with Perth Glory following in Tinkler's partnership with the Knights and Jets.

"Same marketing team, same medical team, same media team, all working out of the same area," Sage said.

"Perth is ready for a rugby league team and I've asked Benny Elias to drive it from here

(Sydney) and be the initial chief executive.

"I needed someone based in Sydney with the right business credentials and the right connections.

"I know how closely he's still connected to the Tigers, but he's keen because he wants to see rugby league become a national game."

WA Rugby League chief executive John Sackson was surprised to learn of Sage's audacious plans, highlighting the massive potential for the NRL if it allocated a team to Perth.

The NRL plans to expand the competition from the current 16 teams during the next few seasons.

"There's lots of talk on the east coast in favour of what a

WA franchise can bring to the table in terms of strategic growth of the game of rugby league," Sackson told *The Sunday Times*. "The fact that there's this talk about interest by Tony Sage, I think it's exciting times for rugby league in terms of its future.

"Tony is a very ambitious, driven and determined individual. If he sets his sights on a particular goal, he certainly goes after it with gusto."

Sackson said it was important to have an efficient business model and pointed out the many positives stemming from the State Government's commitment to spend almost \$100 million refurbishing nib Stadium.



Stuart



Elias



Sage



Sackson



## Benny to lobby for NRL Perth berth

**Phil Rothfield**  
Sports Editor-at-Large

BALMAIN Tigers legend Benny Elias has been hired by a Western Australian business tycoon to set up and manage an NRL franchise in Perth by 2015.

Tony Sage, who made his millions out of the WA

mining boom, wants to replicate another magnate Nathan Tinkler, who has bought the Newcastle Knights and merged the administration with the Newcastle Jets soccer team.

Sage already owns A-League team Perth Glory.

“As a born and bred Tigers man, I find it hard to

align myself with any other club,” Elias said.

“But I’m already on the board of Perth Glory and Tony has asked me to try to make this happen.”

Elias is now preparing a proposal to be put to NRL boss David Gallop and the new independent commission. Gallop last night re-

vealed Perth was a leading expansion contender.

“Western Australia provides an extra live timeslot opportunity for television and would increase our national profile in an area where the economy is booming,” Gallop said.



Franchise: Benny Elias



**EXCLUSIVE: Mining magnate pushes for Perth NRL franchise**

# NRL STRIKES GOLD

**Phil Rothfield**  
Sports editor at-large

A PERTH business tycoon wants to replicate mining magnate and Newcastle Knights owner Nathan Tinkler by buying his own NRL team to play out of Western Australia.

Tony Sage, who has made hundreds of millions out of the WA mining boom, already owns the Perth Glory soccer team and wants to run a

joint operation with an NRL side. He has already called in Balmain Tigers

legend Benny Elias to drive the bid for entry in 2015 and prepare a proposal to go to NRL boss David Gallop and the new independent commission.

Gallop favours a Perth team to create a new TV timeslot and increase the value of the next broadcasting deal.

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## ***Forrestfield United Soccer programs***



WHEN school returns parents of soccer-loving children in the Forrestfield area can take advantage of the facilities offered by one of the biggest soccer clubs in Western Australia.

Forrestfield United Soccer Club president Heinz Luik said the football club, which continued to grow every year provided fun, fitness and development for players of all ages and abilities.

Four and five-year-olds play in the home

league and then progress to the small sided games at between six and nine years before they move up to a full-sized pitch and competitive league football from the age of 11 upwards.

Mr Luik said players can register for the club's Equalfootball Program now and migrants can register for CaLD – an outreach for diversity program.

He said the club had about 500 players and almost 800 adult members.

As well as junior teams the football club caters for social teams, a women's side and amateurs and master teams.

"The continued growth of Forrestfield United Soccer is a great tribute to the efforts of the committee, players and parents who make the club the biggest sporting club in the community," he said.

This weekend the club is hosting the Perth African Nations Club at Hartfield Park with 16 teams taking part.



# PAN Cup at Hartfield Park



**[L] Kenya [4-0] in action against Egypt. [R] The Zambian team lost to Kenya 7-0.**

FORRESTFIELD United Soccer Club is hosting the 2012 Perth African Nations Cup at Hartfield Park.

Last night Uganda was due to play Ethiopia and Morocco was to take on Tanzania.

Today Chad will face Burundi, D.R. Congo will play Western Sahara,

Nigeria plays Zimba-

bwe, Somalia competes against Eritrea, South Sudan faces Kenya, Uganda plays Tanzania, Zambia faces Egypt and Morocco competes against Ethiopia.

Players will also have their eye on the golden boot award with a close competition between 10 players on three or more goals, with Kenya's Zorgun Samawr leading

with five strikes.

Then tomorrow the quarterfinals start.

The first games kicked off last weekend with the hot weather making for tough conditions.

The competition on the first weekend was fierce with some highly skilled performances.

Western Sahara demolished Eritrea by eight goals and Ethiopia

won a thrilling match against Tanzania 7-4. Morocco struggled and were well beaten in their opening match by a strong Ugandan side.

More than 16 clubs from the metropolitan area representing the African community will take part in the three-week competition.

The competition finishes next weekend.



## Soccer for all

The Kelmscott Roos soccer club is introducing an equal footingball league (EFL) team this year

The league is a community initiative to ensure people with disabilities have similar opportunities and access to soccer for fun, participation and elite development.

The Roos believe an EFL team would open doors for young people with disabilities by mixing boys and girls with vari-

ous personal situations into a mainstream club environment.

Football West in partnership with the WA Department of Sport and Recreation will deliver fun programs to involve people with disabilities in the world game.

An open day will be held in April to determine community interest and players aged from 11 to 18 years can register.

Players need to be able

to move around unassisted on a pitch, with concession available for a walking frame or stick. Armadale mayor Henry Zelones has encouraged more local clubs to make their activities inclusive.

"The equal footingball league is a competitive game which is played in a family-friendly environment," he said.

Call the club development officer on 9399 0642.



# Scouts' eyes on Marcelo

BERNARD Marcelo could soon become the latest Australian soccer player talented enough to be awarded a national men's strip.

Only he won't be wearing a Socceroos one if he's successful.

The Currambine 19-year-old has been invited to try out for the Filipino national squad, after impressing while on scholarship at Cloud County Community College in the United States.

He will attend trials in

May and has no idea what to expect.

"I think it will be tough, but I don't really know because I don't know the standard over there," he said.

Marcelo's T-Birds recently became the best junior college team in the US after winning the National Junior College Athletic Association title in Phoenix.

The Kansas side had a convincing 4-1 victory against New York-state side Monroe. The T-Birds had to

first win their division and regional championships before qualifying for the nationals.

"Being the best team in America is the biggest thing I could ever dream about," Marcelo said.

The attacking midfielder was selected from more than 100 applicants to claim the soccer scholarship and place on the team in 2010.

He grew up playing with Quinns Junior Soccer Club, before moving to Sorrento

and Floreat Athena.

Now he's finding out what it's like to concentrate on the game full time.

"You're training everyday and the coach recruits top players from other countries like England and Brazil - it's a good standard," he said.

"You learn so much from them, coming from a lower standard and you progress as a player."



**Bernard Marcelo has his eyes on a spot in the Philippines national team.** *Picture: Louise White* [www.communitypix.com.au](http://www.communitypix.com.au) d371603



## Mandurah City prepare for hot season

MANDURAH City Football Club is back in action as they start their warm up rounds before the season.

Saturday, January 21, Mandurah City vs Fremantle Spirit at Beeliar Oval, Beeliar – Reserves 3pm, First team 5pm.

Saturday, January 28, Mandurah City vs Armadale at Armadale – Reserves 3pm, First team 5pm.

Night series games commence February 4 with all fixtures played at Dalmatinac Park.

Saturday, February 4, Mandurah City vs Bunbury Forum Force, kick off at 6pm.

Friday, February 10, Mandurah City vs Cockburn City, kick off at 8.30pm.

Sunday, February 19, Mandurah City vs Rockingham City, kick off at 5pm.

## SOC:Roar ensure home semi in W-League

By Pete Smith

SYDNEY, Jan 15 AAP - Champions Brisbane Roar maintained their recent dominance against Sydney FC with a 1-0 victory over their W-League rivals enough to shore up second spot and secure a home semi-final against the same opponents.

A tight final-round contest was settled by an own goal from Teresa Polias, with the Roar extending their unbeaten streak against their rivals to four matches, including last year's grand final.

Goalscoring opportunities were at a premium in Brisbane with the decisive moment coming on 33 minutes as Polias turned Joanne Burgess's low cross into her own net.

The previously free-scoring Sydney struggled to break down the Roar and the closest they came was a fierce long-range effort from Servet Uzunlar which shaved the crossbar.

The competition heavyweights will meet again next Sunday, while Canberra, who finished top of the ladder despite a last-round bye, will entertain Melbourne Victory on Saturday.

"It was very tight match and physically very tough," said Brisbane coach Jeff Hopkins.

"The good thing about my team throughout the season has been our resilience which has proven important once again.

"It's great to have the home semi and not being forced to travel will be an advantage after such a demanding match.

"I think Sydney will perform better next week but I expect it to be tight again with matches between us almost always in the balance until the last minute."

Melbourne secured passage to their second successive finals series with a 4-1 win on the road against Adelaide United.

The Victory were forced to come from behind but a three-goal burst before the interval meant their nerves were quickly settled.

Katrina Gorry, Ashleigh Brown, Caitlin Friend and Kendall Fletcher all on the scoresheet as the Victory's confidence received a boost ahead of their meeting with the undefeated Canberra.

Perth Glory ended a six match losing streak to stun Newcastle Jets 4-2 and avoid a maiden wooden spoon.

The Glory, who just last month crashed to a record 11-0 defeat against Sydney FC, cruised past a Newcastle side that needed all three points if they were to claim an unlikely finals berth ahead of Melbourne.

However Perth were in the ascendency throughout thanks to an early goal from Katarina Jukic plus further strikes from Carys Hawkins, Elisa D'Ovidio and Marianna Tabain to stun the Jets and condemn Adelaide to bottom spot.

AAP str/ash/gjw

**SOC: WL Results/Standings after Rd 12**

W-League

Rd 12

BRISBANE ROAR 1 (Teresa Polias 33m og) bt SYDNEY FC 0 at Queensland Sport & Athletics Centre.

PERTH GLORY 4 (Katarina Jukic 10m, Carys Hawkins 64m, Elisa D'Ovidio 73m, Marianna Tabain 83m)

bt NEWCASTLE JETS 2 (Lisa De Vanna 77m, Alanna Kennedy 90+1m) at 6PR Stadium.

MELBOURNE VICTORY 4 (Katrina Gorry 32m, Ashley Brown 37m, Caitlin Friend 45m, Kendall Fletcher 90+2m) bt ADELAIDE UNITED 1 (Marijana Rajcic 24m) at Burton Park. Referee: Stacey Sasopolous.

LADDER AFTER Rd 12      P   W   D   L   GF   GA   GD   Pts

Canberra United      10   7   3   0   23   9   14   24

Brisbane Roar      10   6   3   1   20   11   9   21

Sydney FC      10   5   2   3   26   8   18   17

Melbourne Victory      10   5   2   3   21   9   12   17

Newcastle Jets      10   4   0   6   18   22   -4   12

Perth Glory      10   2   0   8   11   36   -25   6

Adelaide United      10   1   0   9   6   30   -24   3

LEADING GOALSCORERS

12: Michelle Heyman (Canberra)

8: Jodie Taylor (Melbourne Victory)

7: Emily Gielnik (Brisbane)

5: Lisa De Vanna (Newcastle), Renee Rollason (Sydney)

4: Kylie Ledbrook (Sydney), Caitlin Friend (Melbourne Victory), Taryn Hemmings (Canberra)

3: Ashleigh Sykes (Canberra), Katrina Gorry (Melbourne Victory), Kendall Fletcher (Melbourne Victory), Marijana Rajcic (Adelaide), Tara Andrews (Newcastle), Heather Garriock (Sydney), Leena Khamis (Sydney), Marianna Tabain (Perth), Kyah Simon (Sydney), Nicole Bolger (Newcastle), Tameka Butt (Brisbane)

AAP



## African Nations Cup kicks off

HARTFIELD Park in Forrestfield will be abuzz with activity this weekend when the 2012 Perth African Nations Cup soccer tournament kicks off.

With more than 500 people watching as Sudan defeated Burundi last year, the competition has now grown to include night games and a famine fundraiser.

There will be two morning matches today, before the official opening ceremony at 1.30pm to welcome all teams, delegates and fans.

For the first time in 2012, some matches will be played under lights on January 21-23.

Teams representing 16 African countries will play 24 games before quarter finals kick

off on January 22.

The semi-finals will be held on January 28 before the grand final the following day.

In another first, the Perth African Nations Cup Football Council will put on a famine fundraiser on January 15.

The event will include a screening of the Ashley Morrison Media documentary, *Standing at the Touchlines*, highlighting the influence of football on social development in Africa.

Ticket to the famine fundraiser will cost \$20 and include the documentary screening as well as finger food and soft drinks.

For more details call Football West inclusive development officer Gordon Duus on 9422 6914.



**Members from last year's winning team, Sudan, with the shield.**



# Local sports clubs receive sport grants

The City of Joondalup's Sports Development Program has approved funding applications submitted by both the Edith Cowan University Joondalup Soccer Club and Whitford Hockey Club.

The Sports Development Program is designed to provide financial assistance to local district sporting clubs for projects, programs and events that benefit the development of a particular sport and enhance its delivery to residents.

Of the \$90,000 available for allocation, \$20,000 was given to the ECU Joondalup Soccer Club and \$11,136 was granted to Whitford Hockey Club.

The ECU Joondalup Soccer Club received \$6,200 to spend on soccer clinics, \$2,740 for school visits and \$11,060 for employment of a director of coaching and professional coaching.

The ECU Joondalup Soccer Club is based at ECU Sports Centre and currently has 230 mem-

bers. The club currently participates in the Football West State League in the Men's competition and the Premier Division for each age group.

Whitford Hockey Club was granted \$4,000 for their School Program, \$3,436 for the Summer Junior Program and \$3,700 for the Minky and Graduates Programs.

The City has previously funded both clubs through the Sports Development Program.



# Teenager on a Glory high

GEORGE GOODWIN

JUST one year ago nearly to the day Bunbury teenager Josh Risdon became one of the youngest A-League soccer debutantes, selected for a baptism of fire for Perth Glory amid a host of suspensions and injuries to play a part of the side's one-all draw against North Queensland Fury in Townsville.

And there was no easing into top-quality soccer for the 18-year-old who found himself and fellow defenders under enormous pressure when Perth had two players sent off.

Typical of the cool temperament built into him by parents Leanne and Ray, young Risdon said: "We were under the pump for the whole game.

"It was a tough game but I love challenges and it was a good challenge for me."

In and out of the team over the past season, the youngster has grown in confidence and ability, helping Glory fight back from a disastrous period in recent times.

Still to see his 20th birthday, the young Bunbury tyro is etching his name in the record books with a series of eye-catching performances of late.

The Bunbury-born defender, who showed his talents to locals with a polished performance against the Bunbury Forum Force in a pre-season match last season, has seized his recent opportunities to make a positive impression during a campaign that had produced so few team

highlights until the thrilling, midweek draw against champions Brisbane Roar.

Just as he had against Brisbane, Risdon again was asked to provide resilience and determination in equal measure when Glory attempted to break a hoodoo at Westpac Stadium against Wellington Phoenix.

Rank underdogs at \$5.40 to \$1.57, Glory had not won in eight trips to Wellington, but 19-year-old Risdon believed the current side could build on the draw against Roar and score an upset win.

"We will take momentum out of the game against Brisbane and if we go over with the right attitude and a lot of confidence I think we can pinch the three points," he said.

"The next few games it's important for us to get back up to the top six. We're not that far off at the moment but it's important to (at least) stay around fifth or sixth."

Glory did just that, shocking Wellington 1-0 at Westpac Stadium last week.

Coach Ian Ferguson has been delighted with Risdon's response since he returned to the senior side after being dropped to the youth team early last month to regain his self-belief.

"He's been outstanding," Ferguson said.

"He has come back in the last three games and he's been one of our best players.

"For me, he's had three absolutely outstanding performances.

"He's going to be a big part of the future of the club."



Bunbury teenager Josh Risdon is taking big strides in establishing himself as a regular member of Perth Glory's A-League starting 11. PICTURE: THE WEST AUSTRALIAN



# Soccer's rising star

By **ERIEENNE LETTE**

SPORT EDITOR

**SOCCER:** With a clear shot to fame in just his second season with the Perth Glory, 19-year-old Joshua Risdon is a shining star in the state team.

Debuting in the A-league team last season Risdon has proved his worth with outstanding performances for the team which have seen him shoot to the top of the players-to-watch list.

But Bunbury-born Risdon has been humbled by the exposure.

"It's so different to what I am used to," he said.

"It is great but I'm so humbled and I just try not to get a big head."

The Glory celebrated their first win in Wellington last week against Wellington Phoenix.

The team stole the game with the

only goal in the final minutes in tough, wet conditions.

Last year the team came second last on the ladder.

"It felt really good to have a win – especially when our previous two draws could have been wins," Risdon said.

"We're hoping to make it to the finals this year."

Risdon first began pursuing his athletic career at the tender age of 14 when he left home in Bunbury to live with a guardian in Perth to attend the National Training Centre.

The centre specialises on training soccer athletes four to five times a week for 90 minute sessions.

"It was hard leaving my family and friends but at the time soccer came first," Risdon said.

"I know I made the right decision – I had some excellent coaches

and the travelling from Bunbury got too hard."

Risdon told *mail sport* that he hoped to see out the end of this season and then hopefully get another contract.

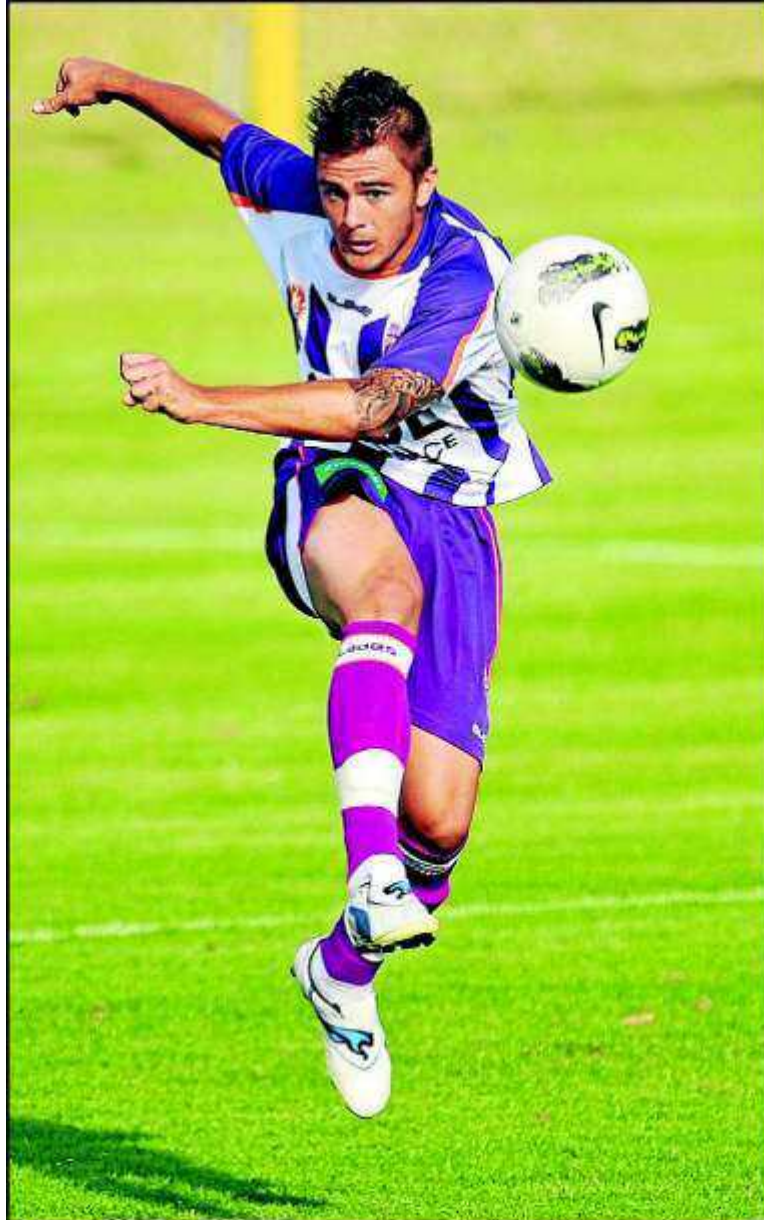
"I'll just see what happens really," he said.

The last time the Glory visited Bunbury they battled against the South West Bunbury Forum Force to win three-one.

Risdon said he hoped the team could come back again.

"I really enjoyed coming here last time - playing in front of my friends and family on home turf," he said.

"The support I felt at home was really good – I was proud to be home."



Bunbury man Joshua Risdon is catching eyes from around the field at the beginning of his second season with the Perth Glory. Picture: perthglory.com.au



## Dunsborough joins Premier League

David Andrews

DUNSBOROUGH Towners will move up and compete in the South West Football Association's Premier League this year.

That was the overwhelming endorsement of the members at a well attended annual general meeting of the Towners last week.

There was a strong feeling that the club needed a more competitive environment to boost the interest among players after two years of coasting to success winning league and cup titles in both the first and Premier reserve divisions

The Towners experienced Premier League football in 2008 and 2009, performing well to finish midway on the league ladder.

On both occasion they looked strong until the halfway mark of the season when many of the visa players who had signed on at the start had to leave,

"This has always been a problem for the Towners and it places a heavy strain on our ability to retain enough players to field the two teams required in the Premier League," club president Tony Plumb said.

"For that reason it is imperative that we start a program to combine the juniors with the seniors and promote a compre-

hensive plan to provide a pathway for the local youth to be part of the future rather than rely on temporary outsiders.

"There are a number of talented youngsters in the Dunsborough community and it will benefit everyone if they move into senior ranks."

There have been a number of outstanding juniors who have contributed significantly to the development of the past Towners teams, such as Cid Richards, Kayden Heathcote, Darcy Carroll, Richard Olsen and Jake Smith.

This year new coaches have been appointed with the experienced Tony Wilkinson taking on the first team, while club stalwart Marty Mulley, a former Perth Premier League player, will direct the reserves.

In addition, a number of members have stepped forward to fill positions to boost the ambitions of the club to become a force in the South West.

"We now have a first class facility at the Dunsborough Playing Fields with superb floodlighting and a decent club house. Initial training will be on Wednesday nights at 7pm starting tonight," Tony said.

"Our first serious game will be on February 4 for the first round of the Pioneer knockout cup on what looks like being a long season."



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## Only one loss...

IT was incorrectly reported in Tuesday's *Times* newspaper that the ECU Joondalup under-12s team had not lost a Football West game in two years.

The side lost its only Football West game of the last two years 3-0 against Swan United in the semifinals of the 2011 under-13 division one competition.

It was a shock loss following an undefeated regular season where ECU had won games by as much as 15-0.

The *Times* apologises for the error.