





# INTRODUCTION

**Twelve contestants will be plunged into a world of sabotage, suspicion and intrigue as they undertake confronting physical and mental challenges in the new series of The Mole, returning soon to Seven.**

Hosted by Shura Taft, The Mole contestants must work together as a group and perform challenges to earn money, with a potential \$250,000 up for grabs for the winner.

But among them is one contestant who is a saboteur - the Mole. It's their job to create confusion, throw others off-track and use whatever means they can to stop the group winning money. And the Mole's brief is to remain undetected.

Contestants have to hold their nerve, back their judgment and find out everything they can about each other in an attempt to uncover who among them is The Mole.

One by one, each contestant is Terminated from the show based on their ability to identify The Mole in The Quiz. The player who correctly identifies The Mole in the final episode will win the potential \$250,000.

The Mole is a world-wide hit and was last seen on Australian screens in 2005. It's time to return to the captivating world of fun, intrigue and suspicion. The Mole is compulsive viewing as alliances are made and broken, personalities clash and tempers fray.

The Mole throws contestants into a series of quirky, scary, exciting, fun, thrilling and mind-boggling challenges that will keep viewers enthralled.

Each episode features tasks that will push contestants to their limits - such as a high-wire relay suspended 20-storeys above ground in the Blue Mountains, a stunt plane ride near Melbourne and a dive with sharks in Queensland.

The physical challenges may seem daunting, but the mental challenges are downright terrifying. Contestants can't afford to drop their guard for a second because the game is always ON.

The contestants own morality will be constantly tested and their interpretation of trust will forever shift. A lie during a game of honesty could leave them sleeping in a chain gang in the rain overnight beside Sydney Harbour. But is the temptation of an Exemption from Termination too great?

And that's far from the only dilemma they'll face. The contestants, and the viewers, will be constantly asking questions: Who is working against us? Is my friend really my enemy? Who is lying? Who can I trust? And the big one -

## **WHO IS THE MOLE?**

The Mole is a FremantleMedia Australia production for the Seven Network.





# GLOSSARY

## MOLE LANGUAGE

**QUIZ** – When the host decides it's time for the Quiz, contestants individually sit down in front of a laptop and answer 20 questions about who they think is The Mole. The person with the lowest score is immediately Terminated from the game. The questions will change each Quiz and are timed so if there is a tie between the bottom two, the contestant who took the longest to answer the Quiz is Terminated.

**TERMINATION** – The contestant who comes last in a Quiz and reveals they know the least about the identity of The Mole is terminated from the series. With contestants expecting the unexpected, a Termination can happen at any stage and there is no predictable structure dictating when this can happen.

**FREEBIE** – A token that allows the holder to correct a wrong answer on the Quiz. Contestants can determine at which quiz they use their Freebie, but each Freebie can only be used once.

**HIDDEN QUESTION** – A clue found in a challenge that gives you advance knowledge of one question in the quiz. It allows the finder of the clue – that is often hidden – to ask questions throughout the game to find out more information to answer that question.

**MOLE-ING** – A contestant who is engaging in what others think is 'Mole-like' behavior, but not necessarily considered the true Mole. If a contestant thwarts the group's attempt to raise money during a challenge they are said to be 'mole-ing'. They are trying to distract others from figuring out who is the true Mole.

**MOLE PACK** – A backpack that all 12 contestants receive at the beginning of the series, which contains various items such as a compass, spade, lantern, beanie, water bottle and binoculars. Each mole pack is different and not everyone gets the same items.

**MOLE DIARY** – Every contestant receives a diary in their mole pack. This is their bible and allows them to write down every thought they have about challenges, contestants and who they think is The Mole.

**EXEMPTION** – This is a sought-after token and allows a contestant a one-off chance to avoid the next quiz and Termination. An exemption comes at a cost to the holder before it can be played.





# SHURA TAFT

HOST

## “The contestants need to have their wits about them 24/7”

If there is one bit of advice the contestants in the new series of *The Mole* should take from host Shura Taft, it is to never trust the person next to them - even when the cameras stop rolling.

The affable host, and self-confessed *Mole* tragic, says the game is always on and the *Mole* will take any opportunity day or night to sabotage the group's money-winning efforts.

“The contestants need to have their wits about them 24/7 because it could be something as small as a blink or a smirk that could reveal the *Mole*,” says Shura, 30, who will be familiar to families from his children's television work.

He was such a big fan of the show while he was at high school that he and his mates used to keep their own diaries to exchange ideas on the identity of the *Mole*.

“The appeal of *The Mole* is that it's a game the audience can feel a part of not only because of the exciting challenges, but the psychological aspect drawing the viewer

into the mystery of working out who's the *Mole*,” he says. “The fact one of the contestants is actually trying to sabotage what the others are trying to achieve is fantastic intrigue.”

Shura – who has Russian heritage and grew up in Melbourne in a close-knit family with two sisters – says the mix of contestant backgrounds will provide for riveting TV as viewers watch the changing perceptions, alliances and opinions of the contestants.

“They're from different socio-economic backgrounds and upbringings, and they all have different reasons for wanting to be on the show,” he says. “Some are here just to play mind games, some want to win the money and some want to challenge themselves. The show will have broad appeal as we have aspirational challenges that aren't set up for the contestants to fail. That's a job for the *Mole*.”

Shura has had a stellar career in TV. After school, he studied biomedical science with the dream of being a doctor. But, after a stint of backpacking, decided a career in television was his calling. He has since

forged a reputation as a versatile presenter, easily flitting between children's shows to a travel documentary and entertainment programming and sport. He has also appeared on various variety shows.

Shura's love of *The Mole* is almost as big as his love for sport, with the Melbourne-based star barracking for Hawthorn, Manchester City in the English Premier League, the Melbourne Renegades cricket team as well as keenly following golf and is a PGA Ambassador. His love of all things sport has led him to host shows including *The Supercoach Show* for pay TV and Cricket Australia's web show ‘Big Bash League's Cricket TV’.

Given his love of travelling, it seemed fitting that in 2011, he was the national face of travel firm Expedia. He is a big supporter of charity TLC for Kids and raised \$50,000 for charity during his appearance on *Celebrity Singing Bee*.





# SEBLE

24, MELBOURNE / LAW GRADUATE

## The Mole is a game of deception and half-truths, and Seb has brushed up on her research.

There is nothing subtle about Seb. Though she's determined to find The Mole and win the series, she's going to do it with perfect hair, freshly painted fingernails and a beauty regime that would leave a model exhausted.

"I've brought along my hair straightener, blow dryer, about 20 different nail polishes, nail filers, tweezers you name it, I've got it," she laughs, adding that she has even got up at 1am to do her hair for a 4am filming start on one day. "I'm really bubbly and a people person...oh, and I love anything pink. But just because I'm girly doesn't mean it makes me weak."

And don't for a minute think this pint-sized Victorian law graduate is a pushover. While she admits her petite frame may give her a disadvantage at first glance, there is a lot of fight in her.

"The smaller you are, the bigger personality you have to have," she says. "You have to shine and be authoritative - all at five feet tall! I'm a little pocket rocket."

"I want the other contestants to underestimate me, and I haven't told them that I've done a law degree. I want them to think all I do is my make-up and that I'm tiny, and allow them to come up with an image of me."

"It's easy to come into The Mole and in the beginning, make friends," she explains. "But you soon learn we haven't come here to make friends, this is a game and someone next to you is lying to you. It's not a popularity contest."

Fitting in is something Seble [pronounced Seb-lah] has had a lot of practice doing. Born in war-ravaged Ethiopia during the late 1980s, her aging parents died when she was just nine-years-old.

"My family then brought me to Melbourne," she says. "When we first arrived it was very difficult because I couldn't speak English and it was hard to make friends. It took me about 18 months to learn perfect English."

"But I now know the Australian culture a lot better than the Ethiopian way of life. I'm used to the Australian standard of living and when I recently went back to Ethiopia for a month to see family I got really sick and just didn't fit in."

The Mole is a game of deception and half-truths, and Seb has brushed up on her research.

"I had to prepare to come on The Mole," she says. "I'm not very good at picking up on people lying to me and I always believe things at face value. So I read articles on how to tell if someone is lying to you...there was a good one that Dr Phil had written actually."





# JAYDEN

21, MELBOURNE / LIFEGUARD

## The lifeguard is hoping the other contestants underestimate him.

With his surfer good looks and warm charm naturally drawing in strangers, Jayden is hoping that his greatest asset could lie with conforming to a stereotype.

"I guess people have this image of a surfer, and while I might come across as a bit chilled out, I know that the game is always on and I'll be watching everyone like a hawk," he says.

The lifeguard is hoping the other contestants underestimate him.

"I've got no university degree or any qualifications other than high school but I've learnt a lot of life experience and lots of things about people and cultures," says Jayden. "This game is not about coming second."

And if that means using his charm and good looks to build an alliance with a female contestant, or to overtly flirt to flatter in order to lull someone into a sense of trust, then so be it.

"Why not!" he laughs.  
"All is fair in love and war."

Jayden is a keen traveller and has spent vast amounts of time seeing the world. The experiences have opened his eyes and taught him how to keep calm in tricky situations that are out of his control.

"What I saw and experienced while travelling, especially in Africa, has moulded me into the type of person I am now," he explains. "I have learnt the value of restraint and mental-wise I can handle a lot more things in life now. It gives me a 100% advantage against the other contestants about handling pressure."

"I love the whole mental aspect of The Mole and it intrigues me. I don't really have a concrete plan on how I'm going to play it, but I have the type of personality that naturally brings out an all-or-nothing approach."

And while he doesn't consider himself manipulative, as far as Jayden's concerned, it's every man and woman for themselves and his competitors should expect some games.

"There's nothing wrong with omitting information if someone isn't smart enough to ask a question," he says. "I like the power of assumption. The Mole is essentially a world of mistrust and every move you make you have to assume the mole is next to you."





# HILLAL

22, SYDNEY / COMMUNITY YOUTH LEADER

## “My religion is pretty much opposite to what you need to display to win the show,”

Distrustful, manipulative, deceitful and selfish are all personality traits indelibly linked to playing a successful role in *The Mole*. While many of us may at first struggle with living out these traits, Hillal has fretted more than most.

As a devout Muslim aspiring to strictly follow his religion, the thought of embracing the conniving nature of the contestants was at first a moral dilemma.

“My religion is pretty much opposite to what you need to display to win the show,” confides Hillal, who has prayed daily during filming. “Juggling the show and my religion is tricky but I do explain every step I take in regards to why I made a decision and how I felt about it throughout the show.

“Before I make any decision I juggle it in my head. If I feel that a decision is not acceptable religiously I will not do it. If I feel that it is a decision in the context of the game – and it is important to remember that

it is just a game – it takes the load religiously off my back.”

Hillal – who is a recent graduate of a Health Science degree and is aiming to follow a career in teaching – was at first nervous on how his strict beliefs would be perceived by the other contestants.

“I first thought people wouldn’t like me and would be against my background, but on the first day I mentioned to Aisha that I couldn’t shake her hand and not to get offended,” he explains. “Putting that boundary up and allowing them to see who I am right from the beginning has allowed them to be closer to me.

“It’s funny how the Muslim gets along with the Christian, who gets along with the gay guy – but *The Mole* is still a game and sooner or later someone is going to get backstabbed. But it’s part of the game and not part of religion or a background.”

Religion wasn’t the only personal dilemma

Hillal faced before filming began. He also had matters of the heart to confront, breaking the news to his fiancé Rayann that filming dates conflicted with their proposed wedding day.

“Telling my bride-to-be that we should delay the wedding for me to go on *The Mole* was extremely nerve-racking!” he says. “She is a very strong woman and it was hard to tell her, but she was okay with it and knows it is important to me.”

Hillal is a model citizen in his community and has a strong competitive streak having played rugby league for the Lebanon national team and the Australian Universities Team. He hopes this ability to be a team player helps him forge alliances in the dog-eat-dog world of *The Mole*.

“My game plan is to be the best of both worlds – to be a mediator and a friend of everyone,” he says. “But when night time comes, I need to use those friendships to benefit myself.”





# SHAUN

33, CAIRNS / BUILDING SALES REP

**“Thank God my wife isn’t on this show though. She’d be able to call me out immediately on any lies!”**

If it takes one to know one, then Shaun is a contestant to watch. The straight-talking Queenslander openly admits he has spent a large proportion of his life lying and admits he will “do anything” to win the show.

After suffering a traumatic childhood – he was born with low grade spina bifida and also suffered third degree burns as a two-year-old when boiling water from a kettle accidentally fell on him – Shaun’s greatest battle came during schooling when he was severely bullied.

“My parents were like gypsies and we moved around a lot, and with that I found it hard to make – and keep – new friends,” he says. “My parents weren’t very well off so we weren’t dressed very well and seen as fashionable. At one school I was bullied to the point I suffered severe depression at the age of 12 and I was self-harming and hospitalised.

“From then on, I thought nobody liked me for who I am so I’ll try and lie about who I am. So I’ve gone through a lot of my adult life trying to pretend I’m someone who I’m not. I met my now wife and she could see there were issues there – including gambling – and everything now is in the past.

“Thank God my wife isn’t on this show though,” he adds. “She’d be able to call me out immediately on any lies!”

Describing himself as an “easy-going father of three and a loving husband”, Shaun says his wife Kellie, son Bayden, two, and stepsons Reece, 11, and Ashley, 13, are inspiration for him to win The Mole.

“I’ve given up my job to be on the show so I’m determined to win for my family,” he says. “I’m going to be myself and be transparent because I figure that being honest will throw a lot of people off. It’s easier to be honest than keeping up with a bunch of lies.”

With his straight-talking, driven and stubborn personality being exposed, Shaun will not hold back on trying to figure out who The Mole is.

“Am I worried that these people won’t like me on a personal level?” he asks. “I was at first but now I just think I couldn’t care what 11 other people think of me as a person – at the end of the day I know what my friends and family think about me.

“Not everyone will like me and there will be differing opinions on how I’ve played the game; this is an individual game and at the end of the day there’s only one person that can win the money so if I have to do anything I can to get to that final hurdle then I will do it.”





# ALLY

28, SYDNEY / DESIGN CONSULTANT

## And just like she landed Mr Right, Ally is looking at methodically winning The Mole.

Driven, determined and, quite frankly, couldn't give a damn about other people's opinions, Ally does not mince her words and has a stare that could freeze water.

"I am a bag of assorted lollies – you just don't know what you're going to get on any given day," she says. "When I wake up in the morning it's a case of 'what personality will I be today'. Will I be the bitch, the crazy girl or the happy gal?"

Not afraid of offending people, Ally revels in being the centre of attention and wants to throw a cat among the pigeons during challenges.

"People don't quite know what I'm about and just think I'm nuts and crazy," she says. "I've just let the contestants think I'm some kind of lunatic. That's a great position to be in because they don't think I've got it in me to win The Mole."

"There is quite an art to making myself look nuts!" she laughs. "Being opinionated is a strong point as there are personalities here who don't like confrontation and back away from it. So I can use it as a strength and manipulate the weaker people that don't have the drive or tenacity to stand up to me."

Ally is adamant that when it comes to life away from The Mole, she displays a much softer side and is not manipulative. Indeed, if there is one thing that makes Ally go weak at the knees it is her love for her pug puppy.

"Ollie-May is 18 months old and she's my baby, my little precious princess and I love her to death," she swoons. "She's amazing and, as I don't have children, I put all my time and energy into her."

"She has her own room and gets a home cooked meal each night...she loves chicken and vegetables and rice and eggs. Every night, I have to tuck her into bed, give her a little teddy otherwise she will not stay in

bed, say goodnight and turn the light off. She really is like a person."

The one thing that does compete with Ollie is Ally's love for builder fiancé Matthew. The couple is due to marry later this year, with Ally saying he is the love of her life.

"He is a remarkable human being to have taken me on!" she says. "I pursued him for pretty much a year, didn't give up, and remarkably found myself turning up at the places I knew he frequented – and I eventually got him!"

And just like she landed Mr Right, Ally is looking at methodically winning The Mole.

"I'm hoping to outwit everyone," she says. "I want to give the contestants a bag of confusion and hope that they're so confused by me that they'll just think there is no way I can outsmart them."





# SAM

22, BATHURST NSW / AFL DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

## Sam believes that fate will hopefully lead him to the finale.

With boyish good looks and oozing confidence, it's easy to take Sam at face value. But don't be fooled - this charismatic Gen Y is ultra-competitive and has his eyes set firmly on the prize of winning The Mole.

"I'm absolutely different when I play the games and challenges than to how I am in real life," says Sam, a devout Christian. "In real life I'm cocky, confident, forward, loud, funny, not shy, not easily offended and I generally get what I want."

"But this is a game of deception, manipulation and smarts. You can't take the word of anyone here. So in The Mole I'm quiet, submissive, go-with-the-flow, and I let other people have their way even when I know they're wrong."

Sam shrugs off this almost Machiavellian behaviour, but admits he did struggle at first with the idea of lying and reconciling it with his strict Pentecostal Christian teachings.

"Tying this game in with religion was very hard at first," he says. "The hardest rule in this game in regards to my religion is simply not to lie. It's a strong commandment in the Bible and it's hard here because this is essentially a game of lies. But The Mole can be won without lying."

"I'm attempting to not lie and I've discovered that if you just don't open your mouth you don't lie. If someone asks me a question I just don't want to answer I don't say anything."

Sam believes that fate will hopefully lead him to the finale.

"I believe God has put me here for a reason and while He wants me in the game I'll be here," he says. "If God wants me to win then I'll win, if not I'm not fussed."

Growing up in Bathurst, the AFL Development Officer - who works mainly for the Greater Western Sydney Giants - Sam

says he's looking forward to meeting people with a range of backgrounds and religions.

"I've grown up in a fairly mono-cultural part of the country and I have never been close friends with a Muslim, but I immediately hit it off with Hillaal," he says. "The fact that we both have a religious belief actually brings us together."

The two may yet form an alliance, but Sam knows the only person he can count on is himself and to trust nobody.

"You can't be too cocky or confident in The Mole or you end up going home early," he says. "You can't be a team leader in this game because if you're in the front, you can't see what's happening behind you. Unless you're the Mole of course."





# KERRIE

28, MACKAY / HR MANAGER - MINING

## The tough-talking woman says working in the mining industry will hold her in good stead.

Kerrie has spent her professional life in the mining industry being exposed to a hostile environment where she needs to stay alert and watch her back - which sounds a bit like being a contestant on *The Mole*!

The mining human resources manager, who has spent years travelling to mines in Outback Queensland, is incredibly competitive and all too aware that all is not what it appears and one mistake in a hostile surrounding could be her last.

"I love twisting with people's minds," says Kerrie. "Some of the contestants don't think before they speak and have no logic behind their arguments, which comes across as stupidity. But they could be quite clever and playing a game against me.

"I don't have a fear of being loud and outspoken and I don't have a drama telling people how I feel. I don't manipulate, I use facts to persuade people but I think people

agree with me because I'm quite confident."

The tough-talking woman says working in the mining industry will hold her in good stead when it comes to dealing with the males on the show.

"Because I've had dealings with a lot of men who want to listen to other men and not necessarily a woman, I know how men think," she says. "But if you are a confident woman and are strong within what you do and say, they respect that.

"I don't want the girls to think I'm cocky but a lot of them have a fear of speaking out to the guys and they come to me and ask if I can put it across. They're more than capable of doing it themselves but don't want to come across as outspoken."

For all the bluster and strong words, however, Kerrie reveals her love of motherhood and being a parent to three-year-old daughter Katie with her partner Dennis is the way to tap into her vulnerable side.

"The hardest thing I will tackle is missing Katie," she says. "Ever since I've had her, I've turned into a blubbing mess. If I had come onto *The Mole* before I had a child I would play it as individual as possible, but once you become a mum you just don't think like that anymore. You no longer think everything is about you.

"My biggest downfall will be instantly bonding with a couple of the contestants and mothering them," she says. "The problem is one of them may be the Mole, but at the same time, I want to help them. I am a sucker I guess!"

Opinionated with firm ideas, Kerrie is nervous about whether she will get on with everyone in the show.

"I admit I've come in here with pre-conceived ideas," she says. "But Hilla has opened my eyes to what I originally thought about how Muslim men treat females. There are two sides of the story and I'm glad to have met Hilla!"





# NICK

26, BRISBANE / ART GALLERY ASSISTANT

## Nick believes being an only child will help him reach the finale.

Nick boasts with pride that he's manipulative, self-absorbed and selfish. The eloquently spoken and not easily flummoxed art lover is here to put himself first and isn't looking to find a new best friend.

"This is a social game to a degree and I daresay I have made friends here, but at the end of the day, I want to win," says Nick. "I will throw any one of these contestants under the bus if I need to.

"Once I get something in my mind I follow through and stick with it. I struggle to take anyone else's considerations seriously if I think my own concerns override them, and I think I'm stubborn, cocksure, selfish and self-centred in terms of how I want to achieve my goals."

And if the other contestants think Nick is being a little hard on himself, think again. So caught up in his own world of putting himself first that the only child is yet to tell his own

mother that he has legally changed his birth name to Nikolaus.

"My parents named me after an Austrian guy's nickname – Niki, as in Niki Lauda – and that name in English is of course a girl's name," explains Nick, who has French heritage. "I have always hated it and have always wanted to change it to the masculine version. Even to the day I changed it my mail would be addressed to a Mrs or Ms, which infuriated me.

"I respect my parents' decision about my name so essentially it's still the same, just different spelling. My father has discovered it but my mother does not know yet. I know she will obviously find out now; I think initially she'll be totally bamboozled but once she hears my reasoning she'll completely understand."

Nick believes being an only child will help him reach the finale.

"It's very easy in this show getting caught up being social and brotherly or sisterly but I will very much withdraw to myself,"

says Nick, who has childhood memories of "hating" other children who touched his toys. "I will of course build alliances but it will be for my benefit rather than a joint benefit. At the end of the day, these people were inconsequential to my life before this show and I can't forget that I'm not responsible for anyone else other than myself. "

Unsurprisingly, Nick is very opinionated when it comes to politics, describing himself as right wing.

"I'm definitely not the stereotypical inner city gay who works in the arts but I feel I have a fully formed view of politics," he says. "I have spent a lot of time reading about politics and one of my favourite books is Friedrich Hayek's *The Constitution of Liberty*. I'd say I'm probably the only one in this group that has read it."





# ERIN

24, GEELONG / SPONSORSHIP CO-ORDINATOR

## Those who take Erin at face value do so at their own risk.

Erin is a highly intelligent law graduate, shows a strong discipline to maintain a healthy lifestyle and admits to being a conniving teenager by cheating in school exams and writing the answers on the inside of her pencil case.

But this is not the image Erin wants the other contestants to have of her.

In a show like *The Mole*, perceptions are everything and underestimating people can make or break a contestant. It is why Erin sees herself going far if she is viewed as a stereotypical bubbly, image-obsessed ditz.

"It's a good perception to have and I'll try and play up the whole bubbly, here-to-have-fun vibe," says the pretty petite blonde. "But I am here to win and surprise people. I'm here for the money and I like to challenge myself.

"I don't share too much but am good at getting information from people. I will be questioning a lot of things and making a lot of observations but not giving a lot of direct answers."

Those who take Erin at face value do so at their own risk.

"I think I'll probably even surprise myself with how manipulative I can get during this game," she says matter-of-factly. "It comes quite easily when you're stuck with people you don't necessarily care about."

Erin, who is now doing a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice to be admitted as a solicitor, says perceptions will play a great role in how contestants will interact with each other during challenges.

"You definitely build up pre-conceived ideas of how you think stereotype personalities should act like," she says. "When you find out

someone is religious you automatically think they can't lie, but then they're on *The Mole* so obviously something is going on there. And I know it's not necessarily true, but I think of someone like Alex and think he must be smart because he's Asian."

Away from 'Mole life', Erin is decidedly warm, honest and has a loving relationship with her two younger siblings and her parents.

"My closest friends and family will be excited for me when they realize I'm on *The Mole*," says Erin, who dreams of having a husband, kids, nice house and a great job by the age of 30. "My sister and brother and I are really close and we've never had a major fight. Both of them are a good motivation for me to win."





# AISHA

22, GERALDTON, WA / COMMUNICATIONS GRADUATE

## Describing herself as a 'feminist tomboy', Aisha rejected her Muslim upbringing.

Aisha has cleverly played a game of manipulation and power for two decades. The recent university graduate has grown up as the middle child between two sets of twins, forcing her to be a strategic thinker in how to get what she wants.

"I learnt to share and be patient because mum would be attending to the twins," she says of her childhood with older twin brothers and younger twin sisters. "I saw the twins get what they wanted and, while I learnt to share, I also learnt how to not share. I made sure I got my own bedroom whereas the twins had to share and the manipulation came from knowing how to make them feel sorry for me and seeing me as weaker than them."

Seeing herself as non-confrontational and a peacemaker, Aisha rejects talk that her compassionate and diplomatic personality may be her weak point.

"There will be times when I will no doubt feel I'm too nice to be on The Mole," she says. "One of the hardest things for me on this show is to be confrontational. But when I believe something is right I'm very passionate and I can be a bitch."

"I do care way too much though about what other people think of me. Whether or not someone takes advantage of my niceness remains to be seen. If they do, just know that when I get my back up I'm good at manipulating. I may be placid but when I fire up I usually get what I want."

With her father from New Zealand and her mother hailing from Christmas Island – which is a melting pot of Malay, Indonesian and Polynesian heritages – Aisha is uncomfortable with people judging her on stunning good looks.

"I've never seen myself in that sense and it's only something I've recently become accustomed to," she says. "There is always a perception that someone can't have good looks and be smart too. I'm not the token

hot chick. You can't win The Mole on looks. It irks me and pisses me right off that people could think that."

Describing herself as a 'feminist tomboy', Aisha rejected her Muslim upbringing, but still follows a strong moral path.

"There were parts of the religion that I rejected when I was a teenager like women being oppressed," she says. "I agree with some of the values but not all of them. How you should define yourself should be through the values your family has instilled in you, and mum and dad are fine with it because it all comes down to whether I'm a good person and I am."

She admits to feeling nervous on how her religious past will be perceived by the other contestants.

"I was a bit apprehensive coming in because as soon as people find out I was a Muslim they're usually shocked and say I don't look like one," she reveals. "The dumbest, ignorant one I've heard is 'but you're hot'."





# LINDA

42, GOLD COAST / MEDICAL SECRETARY

## As the oldest contestant in the show, Linda says age is no barrier.

There is nothing diplomatic in Linda's manner to other people. In her words, she tells it how it is – and if that means inadvertently offending people with a stream of consciousness, then so be it.

"I consider myself to be a bit of a bitch sometimes and I talk before I think," she says. "You know exactly where you stand with me. Lots of people take offence at things I say, so if I think one of my friends looks fat in something I'll tell them, and people who aren't close to me don't quite know how to take it.

"Sometimes wrong things come out of my mouth before I actually think about it and if it's racist I go, oops, I shouldn't have said that."

As the oldest contestant in the show, Linda says age is no barrier.

"There are some young beauties here but I definitely don't want to take on the

mother hen role," she says. "I don't base relationships on age and I don't actually feel like there's a huge age gap between myself and the other contestants.

"Away from The Mole, I have a mixture of younger and older friends anyway. But because this show is not just about physical challenges – it's also about mental games – I can't even use my age as an excuse if I don't win."

Indeed, Linda has consistently proven she can deal with stress. If moving house is seen as one of life's more stressful experiences, then Linda is mentally strong – during her life she has moved house 22 times!

"I seem to find fault in every house I live in and just want to move," she says. "I can't stay in one place very long and I like experiencing something different."

She will need to muster up all the mental strength she has to win The Mole.

"There are loads of personalities that could overshadow me so I think unless I

do something the other contestants see as controversial then I may struggle to get noticed as a threat," she admits. "I'll be trying to win everyone over and get them to see me as trustworthy, before, bam, I steal an exemption or something.

"But my weakness is that I'm a bad storyteller and I don't try to be somebody I'm not. The feeling of being dishonest would just eat at me."

There is a line in the sand for Linda on how far the mind games and insults can stretch, and that line stops at family. The mum-of-two is fiercely protective of her teenage children Dylan and Alyssa and husband of nearly 20 years, Wayne.

"I don't like people being intentionally nasty to someone else, particularly about someone's family," she says. "Being a mum I don't like it when other people have a go at someone else's family. It's nasty and it's crass. I won't be bringing up my family over and over just to ensure they're not put in the firing line."





# ALEX

31, SYDNEY / ENGINEER

**“I enjoy messing with people’s heads and, in that process, people will become suspicious of me”**

Alex is one cool, calm and collected person. No matter what the situation that confronts him, he is totally unflappable and, with a perfect poker face and a love of “messing with people’s heads”, he’s planning to get to the finale.

“I can manage my emotions extremely well,” explains Alex. “If I’m coming across as cool and calm, then I’m luckily enough that on the inside, I’m normally the same and emotionally under control.

“The other contestants shouldn’t make judgments based on appearances because there is a lot behind what you see. I enjoy messing with people’s heads and, in that process, people will become suspicious of me – and all the while I will run circles around them. I’m good at dealing with isolation and high pressure.”

It was a life threatening situation that has allowed Alex to keep his mind focused and emotions in check. While recently working in Africa as part of a geophysical survey team mapping the continent, Alex became caught in the middle of a deadly gun battle.

“We were in a situation where there was crossfire,” says Alex, who looked after logistics for his team. “It makes you very alert and sharpens your awareness. It’s not like the movies where people are running around everywhere panicking; most are in shock.

“I also had a phone call at 4am one morning telling me that according to the World Health Organisation, I was right near an outbreak of the Ebola virus. Compared to all of that, being on The Mole will be like a walk in the park.”

Alex says the biggest factor to ensure he wins is patience, slowly chipping away at who the Mole is – but he knows he first has to concentrate on making his mark on the other contestants.

“When I’m in my element I can be perceived as cocky, arrogant and over confident and I won’t be putting anything on in the show – I’ll just be me,” he says.

Alex studied engineering at university but has since had a myriad of careers, but he believes that his skills as an engineer will hold him in good stead.

“Engineers aren’t known for risk taking,” he says. “What I do get from engineering though is a very strategic thinking and I’m very logical about things.”







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