



This guy should be a Blue:
Cool, Calm & Collected in
adverse conditions.

Happy New Year Everyone

It's hard to believe that we are fast approaching 2003 and another round of National Championships to officiate.

For some of us this is an exciting time, (to be reacquainted with old friends), for some (Candidates and Skill Shares) a nervous one, but overall it is the time we have been waiting for for 12 months.

I hope everyone is able to get what they want from the Nationals.

For those who have recently qualified with a Level 4 accreditation, good luck with the examination in May and maybe it will be your turn in 2004.

On behalf of my family I wish you all a Happy New Year and I look forward to working with you in the near future.

Tofty

George James recovering in Hospital

Victorian Umpire George James is currently spending a little time in the Mercy Hospital in Melbourne after surgery on Friday, December 13.

George is a known to everyone as a 'tough nut' and I am sure he will be fighting hard to overcome this setback.

George when you read this I know I speak for every Blue you have known over many years, get well soon, our thoughts and prayers are with you.

See you real soon Mate!

Season's Greetings

Christmas is a wonderful time for family and friends to get together and celebrate.

Just a couple of house-keeping matters. There has been a couple of umpire movements for Nationals in January. Those effected have been notified.



With amount of movement across our large country at this time of the year I urge all of you to be safe on the roads.

For those who have loved ones who are unwell, our thoughts are with you and your family at this time.

I take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

I hope you have a wonderful break and are recharged for 2003 and I look forward to seeing you all (as many of you as I can) in the New Year.

Margo

Margo's Memo



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Words of Wisdom

More from Nancye Sims' 'Winners'

Winners.....

- **Don't blame fate** for their failures, nor luck for their successes.
- **Are positive thinkers** who are good in all things; from the ordinary they make the extraordinary.
- **Are patient.** They know a goal is only as worthy as the effort that's required to achieve it.
- **Accept responsibility** for their lives.

News from the Blues in Victoria

Victoria

During the course of each season umpires are examined at our State Championships.

Level 4 at the Open Championships.

Level 3 at the Under 19 Championships.

Level 2 at the Under 16 Championships.

Unfortunately there were no candidates at the Open Championships in October at Geelong, but this enabled a number of potential candidates to be assessed under championship conditions for examination later in the season.

The first of the umpire examinations for the season were conducted at Fawkner Park, over the 7– 8 December, during the Under 16 Championships and it is very pleasing to announce that all the candidates during the weekend successfully attained their

Level 2 Accreditation.

The candidates were –

Courtney Barnes – Weribee

Shane Cantelmi – Berwick

Chris Nelson – Knox

Brendan Shatwell – Knox

Ron Townsend – Waverley

Congratulations to them all on a job well done.

Sibraa and Gill make it back-to-back wins

Queensland

Tricia Sibraa and Rick Gill have defended their title at the 2nd Annual Queensland Blues' Golf Day earlier this month.

How did they get to team up together for the second year running? Well it was purely luck as the names were drawn from the hat. It is not the case of letting the boss win (or was it) as many were keen to take the title from these two rouges.

More than 24 Blues turned out for the day and had a great time (something which was needed after a busy Summer schedule). It is predicted that there may be a lot more starters next year (even a couple of ring-ins), so look out Tricia and Rick there could be some stiff opposition.

Thanks also to the Clissold's who opened up their home as the 19th for the celebrations and the reminiscing session.

The Queensland Committee wishes to thank Tupperware Managers Mark and Margaret Toft who donated the prizes for the day valued in excess of \$250.00.



Rules Challenge

Big Al's Tester

During the past couple of months I have had several questions put to me with regard to Rule 8 Sec 2l and POE 24 (Intentionally dropped ball).

The questions have revolved around the understanding of the words "Controlled it with hand or glove" and "Merely guiding the ball to the ground". The major question has been~ what is the definition of "guiding"? The following should assist in understanding the rule and give you a 'tool' if ever required to explain to a coach why you called a batter out under this rule.

Guiding the ball to the ground can be defined as deflecting the ball to the ground, rather than catching it. The deflection can be done in several ways, the most common being to let the ball contact and deflect from (a) the back of a closed glove, or (b) the palm of an open glove.

In determining the difference between (a) catching and deliberately dropping the ball and (b) guiding the ball to the ground, you should look at the flight of the ball.

If the ball is not physically stopped in any way on its downward flight, even though touched by the glove or hand, then it cannot be considered to have been caught and controlled.

A ball that goes into the glove and held momentarily (i.e. the flight has been stopped) could be determined to have been caught and deliberately dropped, whereas a ball that has deflected (but not stopped in the downward flight) should never be ruled as having been controlled and dropped. Obviously, if a fielder catches the ball in the glove, turns the glove over and lets the ball fall to the ground, then the flight has been stopped, the ball has been controlled and a deliberate drop should be ruled.

If you are unlucky enough to have this happen in a game and you have trouble with an explanation, remember, it is a judgement call as to whether the ball was deliberately dropped, so simply explain what you consider to have happened and then press on.

At this time I take the opportunity to wish all readers of Blues News a safe & prosperous New Year and to all umpires attending Nationals in 2003 ~

Good Calling!

Umpires Moving Forward

Western Australia

It is with great pleasure that I would like to announce that two umpires have been successful in achieving an upgrade in their umpiring qualifications.

The examinations were conducted at the State League Competition under the control of the State Umpiring Body.

Bill Kilmurray (SEMSA) was successful in obtaining his Level 4 Accreditation.

Brett Treeby (Rockingham) was successful in obtaining his Level 3 Accreditation.

Thanks must go to Graham Bancroft (State Examining Coordinator) for arranging the examination process. The senior examiners were:

- Graham Bancroft
- Peter Baker
- Julie Richardson
- Peter Richardson
- Allen Cheesman

Assistant examiners used include:

- Betty Maass
- John Mooy
- Warren Duff

Well done to Bill and Brett!

Warren Duff
State Director of Umpiring -
Western Australia



Above:
Brett Treeby (WA)
New Level 3 Umpire



Left:
Bill Kilmurray Western
Australia's newest
Level 4 umpire

WA Umpires Receive Lessons from a "True Student of the Game"

A two day Advanced Clinic was run by Alan McAuliffe for a small but enthusiastic group of WA umpires. The clinic was organised by the State Umpiring Body and the National Umpiring Committee, with the WA Department for Sport and Recreation providing the funding.

The overall theme of the weekend was how umpires should become "students of the game" and need to treat each game as an opportunity to learn and develop. Alan's skills as a presenter were only outstripped by his enthusiasm for the subject, as he covered topics such as:

- Umpire's Career Path;
- Harassment in Sport;
- Advanced Plate Mechanics;
- Working with Players and Coaches; and
- Practical Field Work.



Big Al in the Classroom

With only a small group of people, the sessions proved to be highly interactive and lead to strong discussions. Unfortunately this resulted in the agenda slipping slightly as sessions tended to run over time. This was offset by everyone getting something for each topic of discussions.

The practical sessions proved to be a great hit, with everyone gaining at least one idea that they could use immediately – especially from behind the plate as the photos show.



Figure 2 - Alan demonstrating the plate stance



Figure 3 - Putting the theory into practise



Fig 4 - Working on getting out of the way of the catcher



Fig 5 - Alan makes another point

A social dinner was arranged on the Saturday night (including partners) that was much enjoyed by all. Whilst the conversation did tend to focus around softball, our partners tried to steer the conversation back to other topics occasionally. In the end they gave up and talked amongst themselves!

Overall, the clinic was a great success. It has updated the knowledge and skills of WA senior umpires, who are going to pass that information back down the various levels. Thank you to those umpires who attended and to Alan McAuliffe for his well prepared material and excellent presentation. We look forward to seeing Alan in Perth again in the very near future.



Figure 6 - Perth Advanced Clinic Attendees 2002

Lose the “Blues”

It was pretty hot here in Perth last Sunday. I'd just finished plating my last WA State League game for this year and I felt like my chest plate would melt if I didn't take it off quickly. I got changed into my shorts, T-shirt and beach sandals and the home team barman offered me a beer, which I gratefully accepted.

I was drinking said beer with Rob, the other umpire at the games we did that Sunday and we were talking about the game, what we were doing for Christmas, the aches and pains we were recovering from etc. I noticed that the home team were standing around a small movable bar table, drinking their beer, talking about the game, what they were doing for Christmas, aches and pains etc. and I realised that I know nothing about these people.

We spend a lot of time with these folks (more time than we should sometimes – ask my girlfriend Kelly!) but rarely are we given the opportunity to mix with them socially. Think of the place where you work. You spend a lot of time there and it would be unusual to find a workplace where you don't have *some* kind of social get-together throughout the year.

Let's be honest though, with some of the antics that happen on the field, maybe we think we don't *want* to know these people. Most of the problems we encounter in day-to-day life, in my opinion at least, occur because we don't understand where the other party is coming from. Understanding comes from knowing the people you're dealing with and having an appreciation for what they're trying to achieve. That doesn't mean we have to agree with them, of course. I acknowledge that there are people (umpires included) who fall into the category of “unreasonable” and all I can say to that is “why can't people just get along” (thanks Kamahl).

Anyway, I'll continue my story. I got another beer (it was hot, you know!) and wandered over to where the guys were drinking. It wasn't too long and I was in a discussion about “things” with one of the players and I got to hear “stuff” I wouldn't usually hear. Some of it I agreed with and other stuff I didn't. That didn't matter though because I was getting an understanding of where this player was coming from and hopefully I was coming across as a little more human and a little less blue.

In the end, he and I both agreed there should be more social interaction between umpires and players (at the appropriate time, of course) and I left the ground feeling I was better off for the experience. I won't always feel comfortable talking to players after a game but it's good to expand your comfort zone once in a while.

Jason Carter
2002

How's your hearing?

There's nothing worse than a snotty doctor's receptionist who insists you tell her what is wrong in a room full of other patients. I know we all have experienced this, and I love the way this old guy handled it.

An 86-year-old man walked into a crowded doctor's office. As he approached the desk, the receptionist said, "Yes sir, what are you seeing the doctor for today?"

"There's something wrong with my privates," he replied.

The receptionist became irritated and said, "You shouldn't come into a crowded office and say things like that."

Why not? You asked me what was wrong and I told you," he said.

The receptionist replied, "You've obviously caused some embarrassment in this room full of people. You should have said there is something wrong with your ear or something and then discussed the problem further with the doctor in private."

The man walked out, waited several minutes and then re-entered. The receptionist smiled smugly and asked, "Yes?"

"There's something wrong with my ear," he stated.

The receptionist nodded approvingly and smiled, knowing he had taken her advice.

"And what is wrong with your ear, Sir?"

"I can't pee out of it," the man replied.

The doctor's office erupted in laughter.

We need contributions

I know we have called for any umpire to send through contributions for the Blue's New On-Line magazine on many occasions, well now it is more serious.

As the magazine was designed for all level of umpires it is important that your contributions come in on a regular basis.

State Directors, Staff Members make many of the contributions you see each month, but it's the Grass Roots stories I want to hear about.

Got something to say? Send it to mtoft@ozemail.com.au NOW!

Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year

To all Blues.

From
Tricia Sibraa & the
Queensland Umpiring
Committee

Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year

To One and All

From
Kerry Franklin & the
Victorian Umpiring
Committee

Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year

To All

Good Calling!

From
Denise Culpitt & the
ACT Umpiring
Committee

Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year

All the Umpires

From
Marg Lee & the
Northern Territory
Umpiring Committee



Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year

Men and Women
In Blue

From
David Lipscombe
(State Director
Tasmania)

Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year

Everyone

From
Darrell Shephard &
the New South Wales
Umpiring Committee

Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year

To One and All

From
Neville Lawrance & the
South Australian
Umpiring Committee

Merry Christmas
&
A Happy and
Prosperous New Year

To all Blues

From
Warren Duff & the
Western Australian
Umpiring Committee

Christmas in Oz By Mark Toft

In the middle of summer you would expect no one would want a hot roast Christmas lunch, but the traditionalists still do. Many however have the colder version with all the trimmings.

As the temperature rises above 35 degrees Celsius (100 Fahrenheit) and the flies gather for the festive season, the two-legged males arrive at the 'in-laws' with a slab (carton of 24 cans) of beer in hand.

The female family members have the bits and pieces to add to the smorgasbord of food which is laid out in a meticulous order.

Grandma makes a check of the meats as they are placed on the table. Ham, turkey, chicken, lamb, beef..” That should tame the hungry beasts,” she says with a smile.

Salads galore are added: Coleslaw, potato salad, bean salad, rice salad, pasta salad, in fact anything with mayonnaise and is made for Christmas is now called.... salad.

“Grandma, where’s grandad?” “Oh! He’s probably around somewhere dear, just go and play with the other kids.”

“Ho! Ho! Ho! Merry Christmas!” In walks an elderly man dressed in a Santa suit. The pillow at the front is visible and the beard and wig don’t cover granddad’s dark hair.

All the kids are excited as there are plenty of presents around the Christmas tree. Some have bits of paper torn from the corner.

“Come on everyone gather around the Christmas tree and we will open presents now,” calls Grandma.

The angel has a lean, in fact the tree has a lean, but no one cares, as all eyes are focused on the gifts at the base.

Grandma makes a head count of children, but everyone waits for Uncle Bob who walks slowly into the lounge room. He struggles to open his eyes as it seems just minutes ago that he had gone to bed.

Grandad (oops Santa) starts handing out presents. The paper flies high into the air as if it’s going through the paper shredder.

Ooh! Ahh! Wow! Gee! Are the calls as presents are revealed from beneath the pretty Christmas paper.

Once a toy is discovered by each of the children, their attention span is gone. Suddenly their name is called out again, and the ripping and tearing of paper can be heard once more.

After all the presents are opened the women start the clean up as the children race off to play with their new toys.

As time goes by, a call comes from the kitchen... “Lunch is ready!” There is a mad rush to the table as the little ones fight to get the seat next to Grandma or Grandad.

The bon-bons crack as they reveal the fashion statement of the day....the Christmas crowns made of coloured crepe paper.

There’s so much food, it’s hard to work out where to start, so the ladies start serving children while the men sit back and exchange a joke or two.

After the festivities the male population adjourn outside, drag the rubbish bin (the wickets) to the middle of the backyard to play the traditional cricket game.

There’s no room to swing a cat, but plenty of room for 10 fielders to huddle around the batsman as the bowler commences his approach.

“How’s that!” Is the cry as the ball whizzes past the batsman head. The bowler thumps in again, to release another thunderbolt and there’s contact with the bat... catch it, catch it, but don’t spill your beer, they all scream!

As the sun beats down, the men resemble lobsters in shorts and t-shirts sweating like pigs.

The females finally arrive in the backyard after the huge wash up. Some join in, others sit sipping their favourite thirst quencher and watching the game.

“What’s for dinner?” Comes a cry...as the evening meal is being prepared. Yes! The tradition continues.

“Merry Christmas”

(This has been reprinted this year for those who missed out last year)