



Capturing the brighter moments of umpiring

Over the past 12 months I have had the opportunity to speak to a number of senior umpires in regards to the funny stories about things that have happened while on tour.

Now before you jump to any conclusion, I am not going back on my word about, 'What happens on tour stays on tour' policy. But there are a few moments on a tour where something very funny happens and I though we could all do with a laugh.

Of course it will take a bit of work to put such a book together, but wouldn't it be a laugh, especially with the yarns that I have already heard about.

The idea is not to embarrass any umpire, it's just part of our big family and with them we share. True?

So now I am looking for some expressions of interest in helping me collate a number of these stories, yarns, fun times, moments or what ever you would like to call them.

I don't believe there should be any blondish jokes told as there be a couple of umpires who would not understand them, even if they were about them. No names!!!

If your interested send me an Email—subject What happens on tour....

Hope to here from you all real soon.

Tofty

What in this issue of BNOL

- **Nominations for Umpire recognition**
- **ASC Pregnancy Policy**
- **Pics from the South Pacific**
- **Mensa2 answers**
- **Big Al's Tester**

- **Laughter with Larter**
- **State by State Wrap + More**
- **The importance of recognition**
- **Umpire of the Year Nomination Form (page 7)**
- **2001 Umpire of the Year**
- **Sunshine recognise Leigh**

DO YOU KNOW ANYONE WHO?

Margo's Memo

- « **respects everyone who is involved in softball and softball umpiring and demonstrates good sportsmanship?**
- « **is involved with umpiring development programs in your area?**
- « **is a positive umpiring role model?**
- « **tries to become a better umpire through education and training?**
- « **contributes to local umpire programs in various ways?**
- « **shares their expertise with the softball community?**

It is important that in all areas of the softball community recognition of the contribution that everyone makes is essential and umpiring is no exception.

There are three awards in which umpires can be acknowledged for the work they do – the Softball Australia Service Award, the Vivienne Triplett Umpire of the Year Award and Hall of Fame.

The Service Awards and Hall of Fame nominations have specific criteria which is clearly outlined in the respective documents available through Softball Australia and on the Softball Australia Web Page.

Elsewhere in this edition of BNOL you will find information on how you can go about nominating an umpire in your association or State for the Vivienne Triplett Award. A nomination form is also included on page seven of this magazine.

Please take the time to consider the umpires with whom you have worked and the contribution they have made to the Umpire Program over the years and who you believe meets the criteria mentioned above.

Contact your State Director of Umpiring for specific information on the nominating procedure for an umpire in your State.

I know there are a great number of umpires around Australia who should be recognised for the work they do – I challenge you all to find them .

Margo Koskelainen.



MUM TAUGHT ME HEAPS.....BUT DID I LISTEN

Mum taught me TO APPRECIATE A JOB WELL DONE: "If you're going to kill each other, do it outside. I just finished cleaning!"

Mum taught me RELIGION: "You'd better pray that will come out of the carpet."

Mum taught me about TIME TRAVEL: "If you don't straighten up, I'm going to knock you into the middle of next week!"

Mum taught me LOGIC: "Because I said so, that's why."

Mum taught me FORESIGHT: "Make sure you wear clean underwear in case you're in an accident."

Mum taught me IRONY: "Keep laughing and I'll give you something to cry about."

Mum taught me about the science of OSMOSIS: "Shut your mouth and eat up!"

Mum taught me about CONTORTIONISM: "Will you look at the dirt on the back of your neck!"

Mum taught me about STAMINA: "You'll sit there until all that spinach is finished."

Mum taught me about WEATHER: "It looks as if a tornado swept through your room."

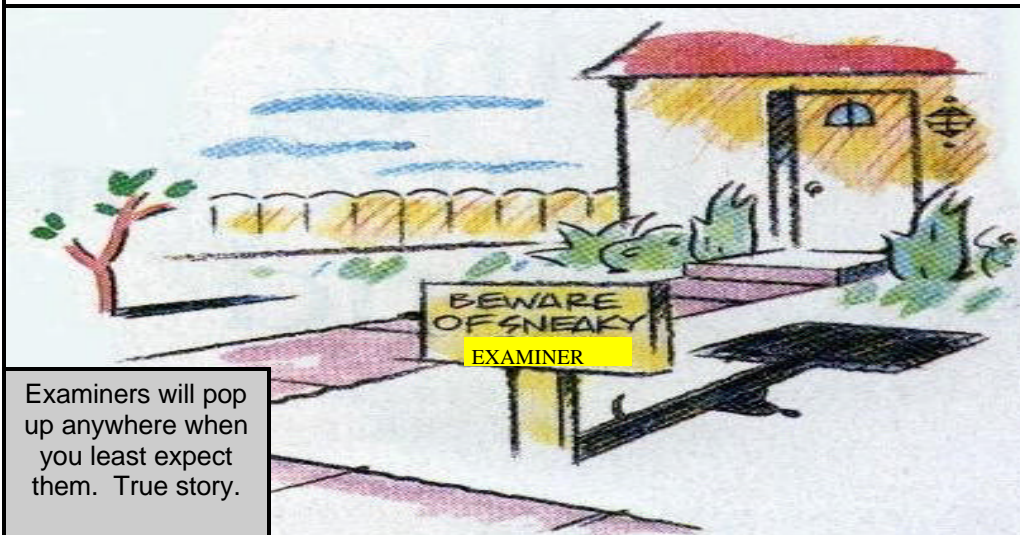
Mum taught me how to solve PHYSICS PROBLEMS: "If I yelled because I saw a meteor coming toward you, would you listen then?"

Mum taught me about HYPOCRISY: "If I've told you once, I've told you a million times - Don't exaggerate!!!"

Mum taught me about BEHAVIOUR MODIFICATION: "Stop acting like your father!"

Mum taught me about ENVY: "There are millions of less fortunate children in this world who don't have wonderful parents like you do!"

And most of all Mum taught me THE CIRCLE OF LIFE:
"I brought you into this world-and I can take you out of it!"



Examiners will pop up anywhere when you least expect them. True story.



This month's question is an unusual one, and concerns the On-deck batter.

Question:

The batter hits a sharp foul fly line drive toward the dugout. The on-deck batter attempts to avoid the ball, but only succeeds in deflecting the ball from his bat toward the first base fielder (still inside the diamond) who catches the ball. What is the outcome of this play?

Answer:

The on-deck batter, including the warm-up bat that he is holding, may not interfere with a fielder's attempt to catch a foul fly ball. (This includes interfering with either the fielder or the ball).

A dead ball should be ruled as soon as the foul fly ball contacts the on-deck batter or his bat. The umpire must then determine if any fielder could have caught the ball had the contact not occurred.

If he determines the ball could have been caught, then interference is ruled and the batter-runner declared out. (Rule 7, Effect Section 1e 2 refers). If he determines that no fielder could have caught the ball, then a foul ball is declared and the batter-runner resumes batting with an additional strike (unless he already had 2 strikes) added to the count.

The fact that the ball was caught after the contact with the on-deck batter's bat must be disregarded, as it is not possible to have a legal catch after the ball has been touched by anything, other than a defensive player, while it is in flight and has subsequently been declared dead (See Rule 1 Section 11 Note).

2002 National Examination results at a glance
The top candidates from each State (Levels 4-8) were:

- ACT ~ Martin Turnbull
- NSW ~ Scott Rindfleish
- NT ~ Margaret Lee & Cathie Allen
- QLD ~ Ian Goodman
- SA ~ Toula Connolly
- TAS ~ No Candidates
- VIC ~ Leigh Evans
- WA ~ Graham Bancroft



Umpire Recognition Awards

3 Categories

Softball Australia Service Awards

Vivienne Triplett Umpire of the Year Award

Softball Australia Hall of Fame

DO YOU KNOW AN UMPIRE WHO:

- ◆ Respects everyone who is involved in softball and softball umpiring and demonstrates good sportsmanship?
- ◆ Is involved with umpiring development programs in your area?
 - ◆ Is a positive umpiring role model?
- ◆ Tries to become a better umpire through education and training?
 - ◆ Contributes to local umpire programs in various ways?
 - ◆ Shares their expertise with the softball community?

VIVIENNE TRIPLETT UMPIRE OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINATION CRITERIA

- The umpire shall be an Australian citizen.
- The umpire shall be fully accredited [at any softball level] to qualify.
- The umpire shall be nominated through their State Umpiring organisation and State Association.
- The umpire shall have served in a volunteer officiating position for a minimum of 4 years.
- The umpire shall have contributed to umpire development as an instructor, evaluator, mentor or program developer.
- The umpire should have a high level of officiating ability.

Nominations should include the following information:

- Nominee's name, address and contact telephone numbers
- Name, address and telephone numbers of nominating State
- Record of nominee's umpiring experience
- Record of umpiring achievements
- Nominee's role in developing and improving the officiating aspect of the sport
- Nominee's personal highlights

Points which should be noted when considering forwarding an application for the Vivienne Triplett Award for Umpire of the Year.

The Nominee needs to:

- Present a positive public image of umpiring and the role of the umpire
- Strive to improve umpiring effectiveness through active participation in the National Umpire Program
- Consistently demonstrate a high level of officiating skill
- Be involved in Local Association, State or National umpire education, training and development programs
- Show respect for those involved in all areas of Softball
- Have outstanding qualities, which demonstrates a firm commitment to softball in general and softball umpiring in particular

Australian Sports Commission Pregnancy Policy.

It has been brought to the attention of the Editor that all umpires should be aware of the new Australian Sports Commission Pregnancy Policy which is available from their Website.

Pregnancy in Sport - Guidelines for the Australian Sporting Industry

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC), with Sport Industry Australia, hosted the National Forum on Pregnancy in Sport in Sydney on August 1, 2001. Participants from all aspects of sport in Australia, including government, non-government, health, legal and industry sectors, took part. This resource is based on the conclusions of that forum, and on other expert contributions.

www.ausport.gov.au/asc/corpdocs

Take the time to read this

In light of recent events involving officials who were involved in on-field brawls and bashings by spectators lets take a moment to look at officials code of ethics and a touching story which gives us a different perspective.

I'm an Ump: I try Hard but I Can't Do a Perfect Job.

Donald Jensen was struck on the head by a thrown bat while umpiring a Little League game in Terre Haute, Indiana. He shook off the blow, and finished working the game, but that night he went to hospital with head pains. While being kept overnight for observation, the umpire wrote the following letter to parents of Little League everywhere.

I'm an umpire. I don't do it for a living, but only on weekends for fun. I've played baseball. Coached it and watched it. But somehow nothing takes the place of umpiring. Maybe I feel deep down that I'm providing a fair chance for all the kids to play the game without disagreements and arguments. But there is one thing that bothers me about my job. Some of you folks don't understand why I'm there.

Some of you feel I'm there to exert authority over your son. For that reason, you often yell at me or encourage your son to yell when I make a mistake. How many of you really understand that I try to be perfect. I try not to make a mistake.

I don't want your son to feel he got a bad deal from an umpire. Yet no matter how hard I try, I can't be perfect. I counted the number of calls I made in a six innings game today. The total

Cont.... Page 10

Softball Canada selects its 2002 Hall of Fame Recipients

(Ottawa, ON) - Softball Canada has selected the recipients of the 2002 Softball Hall of Fame. Four nominees have been selected in the categories of Builder, Official (2) and Athlete. These nominees will be inducted in the 2002 Softball Canada Hall of Fame on Saturday November 9, 2002 during Softball Canada's 2002 AGM & Congress in Summerside, PEI. The 2002 Hall of Fame Inductees are:

Paul Dawson from Newcastle, New Brunswick who was selected for the category of "Builder". Paul supervised at seven Softball Canada Canadian Championships, was a former Vice-President of Softball Canada and former President of Softball New Brunswick.

Hailing from Rothesay, New Brunswick is Douglas Foster who is one of two recipients in the "Officials" category. Douglas is a former Umpire-In-Chief for Softball New Brunswick as well as a former Softball Canada commissioner. He was one of the first level 5 umpires ever and worked 7 Canadian Championships and 1 ISF World Championship.

The second recipient in the "Officials" category is Robert "Bobby" Smith. Bobby, who is from Halifax, Nova Scotia, worked at 3 Canadian Championships and at 2 Canada Games as well as 1 ISF World Championship. He served as President for the Halifax Umpires Association for 10 years. Mr. Smith is also the father of the Men's National Team Head Coach and Hall of Famer Mark Smith.

In the "Athlete" category, Hubert "Sock" MacDonald is the fourth inductee for 2002. "Sock" is from Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. He is a 3-time All Canadian at the Men's National Championships, having made 18 appearances in total at Nationals. He is regarded as the best all round fastpitch player to even come out of P.E.I.

Softball Canada is honoured to have these recipients inducted into the Hall of Fame. Inductees such as these four spend tireless years of commitment and dedication to the growth and betterment of Softball in their Province and in Canada.

Softball Canada hosts its annual AGM & Congress each November and honours distinguished inductees at Softball Canada's Hall of Fame. Softball Canada is a non-profit organization responsible for fast pitch, slo-pitch and orthodox softball in Canada.

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"Something designed especially for Umpires" - Also great for
Catchers or general Softball enthusiasts

Hope to hear from you very soon

SCOTT RINDFLEISH

Email—scottrindfleish@ozemail.com.au

The importance of recognition

By Mark Toft

It is very hard to stress the importance of recognition in the National Umpiring Program. Umpiring is at times a thankless job and of course we (the Blues) are never going to get everyone to agree with any one call we make on the diamond.

But there is a base from which we can work. If 50 per cent of the audience are happy with a call and 50 per cent is not that is a start. Maybe over time and due to respect we can lift the acceptance rate to 85 per cent.

Anyway back to recognition. Over many years there has been a number of Blues have been recognised for great achievements especially with the National Officiating Program and the Viv Triplett Umpire of the Year award. Our own Alan McAuliffe was awarded the 2000 Eunice Gill Award which is a Sport Industry of Australia Fellowship Award, which is selected from all sports and which some believe to be the ultimate recognition.

These umpires are at the top end of the scale who have proved themselves on the international arena with honor. But that is not what it is really all about. The National Umpiring Committee is looking for nominations from a whole range of people about their achievements and dedication to the umpiring program.

It does not matter if you are a Level eight and umpired at the Olympic Games or a Level Two who has been involved for 20 years and has no ambition to go any further in the step ladder of Levels. It could be a person who is contented in the fact that they can teach the system to those who inspire to be an Olympic umpire in years to come.

Now I can think of a number of Umpires who come into those two categories and many in between, as I am sure you the reader can.

But let's not just leave this on the computer. Spread the word about the awards and get some nominations through to your State Directors who can forward them onto the National Umpiring Committee.

I have it from god authority that the National Umpiring Committee is awaiting in anticipation for a number of nominations for all the awards mentioned above.

Each State must have at least one nomination and I urge you to do something about it sooner rather than later.

Let's take recognition to a new Level. Put in your nominations and let's read about those who are doing something worthwhile in the National Umpiring Program.

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2002
PERTH
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Answers to MENSA2

No.	Cryptic	
0	24 H in a D	24 Hours in a Day TRUE
1	26 L of the A	26 Letters of the Alphabet TRUE
2	7 D of the W	7 Days of the Week TRUE
3	7 W of the W	7 Wonders of the World TRUE
4	12 S of the Z	12 Signs of the Zodiac TRUE
5	66 B of the B	66 Books of the Bible TRUE
6	52 C in a P (W Js)	52 Cards in a Pack (without Jokers) TRUE
7	13 S in the U S F	13 Stripes in the United States Flag TRUE
8	18 H on a G C	18 Holes on a Golf Course TRUE
9	39 B of the O T	39 Books of the Old Testament TRUE
10	5 T on a F	5 Toes on a Foot TRUE
11	90 D in a R A	90 Degrees in a Right Angle TRUE
12	3 B M (S H T R)	3 Blind Mice (See How They Run) TRUE
13	32 is the T in D F at which W F	32 is the temperature in Degrees Fahrenheit at which Water Freezes TRUE
14	15 P in a R T	15 Players in a Rugby Team TRUE
15	3 W on a T	3 Wheels on a tricycle TRUE
16	100 C in a R	100 Cents in a Rand TRUE
17	11 P in a F (S) T	11 Players in a Football (Soccer) Team TRUE
18	12 M in a Y	12 Months in a Year TRUE
19	13 is U F S	13 is Unlucky For Some TRUE
20	8 T on a O	8 Tentacles on a Octopus TRUE
21	29 D in F in a L Y	29 Days in February in a Leap Year TRUE
22	27 B in the N T	27 Books in the New Testament TRUE
23	365 D in a Y	365 Days in a Year TRUE
24	13 L in a B D	13 Loaves in a Bakers Dozen TRUE
25	52 W in a Y	52 Weeks in a Year TRUE
26	9 L of a C	9 Lives of a Cat TRUE
27	60 M in a H	60 Minutes in a Hour TRUE
28	23 P of C in the H B	23 Pairs of Chromosomes in the Human Body
29	64 S on a C B	64 squares on a Chess Board TRUE
30	9 P in S A	9 Provinces in South Africa TRUE
31	6 B to an O in C	6 Balls to an Over in Cricket TRUE
32	1000 Y in a M	1000 Years in a Millennium TRUE
33	15 M on a D M C	15 Men on a Dead Mans Chest TRUE

SORRY LEFT OUT OF LAST ISSUE. HOPE YOU ALL GOT THEM RIGHT.

They were probably easier than the National Umpire Examination.

(Just Kidding, Big Al)

NOMINATION FOR THE VIVIENNE TRIPLETT AWARD FOR UMPIRE OF THE YEAR

Name of Nominee

Year of Nomination

Address of Nominee:(Including Post Code)

Telephone #(Including Area Code) (Home)

(Work)

Number of years the nominee has been actively involved with umpiring.

Level of umpiring accreditation achieved.

1. Presents a positive public image of umpiring and the role of the umpire:

2. Strives to improve umpiring effectiveness through active participation in the National Umpire Program.

3. Consistently demonstrates a high level of officiating skill.

VIVIENNE TRIPLETT - UMPIRE OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINATION FORM (P 2)

4 Involvement in Local, State or National umpire education, training and development programs

5. Shows respect for those involved in other areas of Softball

6. Notable achievements

7. Other [Include any outstanding qualities which you believe should be considered by the Review Panel.]

Nominating State:

Date:

.....
State Director of Umpiring

.....
State Association President / Exec. Director.

"ONE GONE WALKABOUT" With Marg Lee (NTSDU)

How's umpiring on an open football field with a road behind you, no fence and hundreds of cars driving in behind you to park in a paddock to listen to the Darwin Symphony orchestra grab you?

That was the scene for the weekend of June 1/2 down at Daly River Community about 3 hours drive from Darwin. A great weekend for the DOU (Marg), husband Ian & Ando. Four aboriginal teams who really enjoyed the games, learnt quickly and showed the usual amazing natural talent.

Come the Grand Final between Daly River & Peppimenati & Marg asked if Daly River were happy to share helmets – "You have 4" "No we only got 3 now – one gone walkabout!" It was a great game almost going to a tie breaker and we left four community teams keenly interested in attending the Inaugural Indigenous Carnival to be held in August. Ando enjoyed himself so much he declared next year he was going to bring the family down!

This was followed a week later by the same three travelling to Katherine to umpire the Secondary School Championships. Again very rewarding with a lot of interest being shown by Darwin High Schools to start an inter-school comp. Also Katherine are about to rejoin the NTSA and begin their games on June 30 so some "Blues" (Ian, Marg & David) are driving down early Sunday morning to help them for the first games. This will be followed by an umpiring clinic later.

Meanwhile back in Darwin our first Umpiring clinic finished with 4 new umpires sitting the basic paper & passing. Congratulations to Yvonne Newman for her tireless work in running the clinic. Also there has been a reappearance of another umpire who has spent the past 3 years working in the Torres Strait Islands so hopefully he will be back on the diamond shortly. Cathie Allen was

up from Alice on the weekend for the AGM and umpired two games as well.



**NORTHERN
TERRITORY**

Viv Triplett Award - Umpire of the Year 2001

Six years ago, the Meeting of State Umpiring Directors and National Umpiring Committee asked Vivien Triplett if they could name their new umpires award after her. She was greatly honoured to accept. This award is for service to umpiring at all levels, capped off by a year of significant achievement.

On Sunday, March 24 this year Vivienne was on hand to present the 2001 Umpire of the Year Award to John McAuliffe at the South Australian Presentation Evening.



WELL DONE: Vivienne Triplett presents John McAuliffe with the Vivienne Triplett Umpire of the Year Award for 2001 earlier this year in Adelaide.

The following is an extract from Vivienne's speech

"This person started umpiring in the mid sixties and has umpired virtually every weekend since either at Central Districts or Adelaide.

"He was the Deputy Director of Umpiring for South Australia to Toula (Connolly), for several years. He served as Chairman of Examiners from 1986 to 1992, and Umpires Training Coordinator from 1993 to 1998.

"He was part of the first International Elite Umpire Development Squad, which went on a self-funded tour of Canada and the U.S. in 1990.

"He has served on the National Umpire Examining Panel and as Tournament Umpire in Chief many times over many years.

"John, you join an elite and short list of people who have given tremendous service to umpiring in Australia and your State should be proud to note that with the addition of your name to this trophy, four of the seven recipients are South Australians.

"It is with great pleasure and heartiest congratulations that I present the 2001 Vivienne Triplett Umpire of the Year Award to John McAuliffe."

John McAuliffe's International credits include:

- 1991 Girls World Championship – Adelaide
- 1993 Trans Tasman Umpire Exchange
- 1993 Boy's World Championship – Auckland, NZ
- 1994 Women's South Pacific Classic, Sydney
- 1995 Women's Olympic Qualifier – Auckland, NZ
- 1995 Women's Superball, Columbus Ohio, U.S.A.
- 1996 Men's World Championship - Midland, Michigan, USA
- 1998 Junior Girl's World Championship Qualifier, Australia
- 1999 Qantas Challenge, Canberra
- 1999 Japan Cup (Women), Japan
- 1999 Men's World Championship Qualifier, Canberra
- 2000 Olympic Games - Sydney, Australia
- 2001 Junior Men's World Championship, Sydney, Australia

Sunshine recognise Leigh's contribution

News from VICTORIA

At their Annual General Meeting recently the Sunshine Softball Association (Victoria) recognised Level Six umpire, Leigh Evans for his contribution over many years with an Association Life Membership.

Leigh has been involved in softball dating back to 1979 and has been a tireless worker for his home association.

Softball Profile of Leigh Evans

Marital Status: Married (Sandra) with two children, Stacey and Andrew

Employment: Service Manager of a Toyota Dealership.

Involvement: He first became involved in **Fast-pitch** Softball in 1979 at the Sunshine Softball Association by watching his girl friend play. Over the next few years he became involved in scoring at club level and he represented Sunshine teams at the Victorian Championships as a statistician in 1983, 1984, 1985 and 1986.

He started playing softball for the Hi-way softball club in 1983, he continued playing for clubs like Avondale Heights, Blue Jays, Raiders and most recently the Melbourne Warriors Masters all from the Sunshine Association.

He won club best and fairest 1985, 1987 and 1990 and was runner up in 1988. He also won the Sunshine Association MVP in 1985. Leigh played State League and Blue Diamond softball from 1985 through to 1993, when he gave up playing to Umpire at that level.

During his time at Avondale Heights Softball club he spent several years on the executive committee including Vice President. In 1989/90 season he received a services award from the Avondale Heights club and also coached their men's team in 1987/88 to a Grand Final.

Since 1990 he has been a member of pennant and protest committees at Sunshine and is currently the Umpire's Co-ordinator and a member of the protest committee.

Leigh started umpiring in 1989 and gained his level one in 1991 through to level

3 in 1993. He has given several rules lectures and training sessions and assisted with Umpire allocations at Sunshine since 1993.

Victorian Level

Leigh has been involved on the Victorian Umpires Committee since 1994, as allocations officer on the sub committee. Leigh has been a part of the Victorian Umpires Examinations panel since 1993 and the junior training committee since the year 2000.

He has been Deputy UIC (Umpire In Chief) and UIC at several Victorian Championships, and gained his Umpiring level 4 in 1994.

National Level

In 1996 he gained his Level 5 in Perth, and in the year 2000 gained his National Level 6 at the Open Men's in Melbourne.

Leigh has officiated at nine National Championships and has traveled to New Zealand in 1999 with a team from Victoria to compete in the Island Bay Classic.

In 2002 he was selected in the International Umpire Development Squad to train and study in preparation for possible international selection.

The Squad participated in lectures and study at the A.I.S. in Canberra over one week and later participated in the Open Women's National Championships.

Leigh's allocation as the Plate Umpire on the Championship Game between Victoria and Queensland is one of his career's many highlights.

In April 2002 he was selected to travel to Japan for the Japan Cup in August 2002 with the Australian Women's team and to later tour playing local teams.

Congratulations Leigh on your recognition from the Sunshine Association and on behalf of all the Blue's News On-Line readers well done on a great career so far.

BNOL would expect a run down on your trip to the Japan Cup. Our readers will be waiting with great expectation.



National Umpire - Leigh Evans

South Brisbane Men's Classic a real eye-opener

This year's South Brisbane Men's Classic was a real eye opener for all concerned, players, spectators and especially umpires.

QUEENSLAND

The quality of teams were very good with each having their fair share of State, National and international players performing at the highest level.

Of course, the South Brisbane Men's Classic is the Queensland qualifying Tournament for the annual "Macarthur Shootout" held at Camden in Sydney.

Scorpions won the 'Shootout' in February and have automatic selection to defend its title next year the remainder of the Queensland teams needed to vie for the other spot up for grabs.

The Queensland Umpiring Committee uses the South Brisbane Classic as a clinic for those umpires wishing to advance from Level Three to Level Four, and boy did they get a baptism of fire from game one.

Those umpires to officiate were Tricia Sibraa (nee Bichel) (UIC), Mark Toft (Examiner), Ian Frame (Examiner), Frank Thomas, Yvonne Kahler, Darren Sibraa, Ian Bunston, Keith Hardman, Bruce Challenor, Jamie Harries, Dianne Bunston, Peter Walsh and Rick Gill.

Besides the Level Three umpires being under examination most of the remaining umpires who have aspirations of advancement in the system used the Tournament as a yard stick on their performances.

Championship Game Allocation—Mark Toft, Frank Thomas, Darren Sibraa.

Softball Queensland will be hosting a series of games between a USA team from the Coast to Coast organisation (Illinois Under 19 All Stars Girls) and three Queensland invitational teams. Games will be played at Redlands, South Brisbane, Caboolture and Ipswich.

Two of Queensland umpires, Carolyn Gutteridge and Bill Buckley are unwell at the time and on behalf of all the members of our Blue Family I wish them both a speedy recovery. I know everyone wants to see you both back on the diamond real soon.

Our own State Director, Tricia Sibraa will be the UIC at the Friendship Games in Melbourne from July 5 to July 13. Hope she has a great time in warm Melbourne.

.....From Page 4

I'm an Ump: I try Hard but I Can't Do a Perfect Job

number of decisions on balls and strikes or safes and outs was 146. I tried my best to get them all right, but I'm sure I missed some. I could have missed eight calls tonight and still got about 96% right. In most occupations that percentage would be considered excellent.

Let me tell you more about my game today, there was one close call that ended the game. A runner for the home team was trying to steal the plate on a passed ball. The catcher chased the ball down and threw to the pitcher covering the plate. The pitcher made the tag call and I called the runner out.

As I was getting my equipment to leave, I overheard one of the parents comments. "It's too bad the kids have to lose games because of rotten umpires. That was one of the lousiest calls I've ever seen!"

Later, at the concession stand, a couple of kids were telling their friends, "Boy the umpires were lousy today. They lost the game for us." Well I heard that and felt terrible. Those kids had made a lot of mistakes that had cost them runs.

A parent or adult leader who lets a child blame his failures on an umpire is doing the worst kind of injustice to that youngster. That irresponsibility is bound to carry over the future years.

As I sit here writing this letter I am no longer upset as I was this afternoon. At one point I wanted to quit umpiring behind the plate because of a pitcher who pantomimed his displeasure at any close call.

One could sense that he wanted the crowd to realise that he was a talented player who was doing his best to get along, and I was a black-hearted villain who was working against him. The kid continued for two innings at the same time yelling at his own players mistakes.

For two innings the manager watched this. When the kid returned to the dugout to bat in the top of the third, the manager called him aside. In a voice that I was able to overhear, he said "Listen son, it is time you made a decision. You can be an umpire, an actor or a pitcher. But you can only be one at a time when you are playing for me. Right now it's your job to pitch and basically you are doing a lousy job. Leave the acting to the actor, the umpiring to the umpire, or you won't do any pitching her!"

Needless to say, the kid chose the pitching route, and went on to win the game. When the game was over the kid followed me to the car. Fighting back the tears he apologised for his actions during the game. He said he had learned a lesson he would never forget.

I can't help but wonder how many young men are missing their chance to develop into outstanding ball players because their parents encourage them to spend their time umpiring, rather than working harder to play the game.

[The following morning, Donald Jensen, part-time umpire, died of brain concussion resulting from the blow by the thrown bat.]

Thanks to Thanks Ref, Thanks Coach for allowing the reprinting of this article.