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Margo's Memo

Great Leaders

That dreaded examination—how did you go?

Every year we the fraternity of umpires are put through their the wringer to come up with that all important pass mark.

Many umpires, including me race home from the examination and start checking answers and making a few telephone calls to see if they have it correct.

Well as usual I did that. The only problem I left the examination and felt that I had finally nailed the exam and had 100 percent. That was until I started to check the iffy ones.

By the time I finished checking I had a reality check and moved back to 95 percent. Then I talked to a few colleagues and the more I discussed the answers the more I found which were not right.

So, I decided to stop asking and wait for the results to be published by Big Al.

If you want to know any answers from the exam, DON'T ring me as I would like to stay at the mark I think I have at this point in time.

To those who are awaiting a pass mark to move up for a higher accreditation I wish you luck, for all the other Blues who did the examination I hope you achieved your desired result.
TOFTY

What makes great leaders great? Is it the number of people following them? Or could it be something else? What do you think a good leader does? Run the show? Tell others what to do?

Lou Tice of the Pacific Institute has some interesting ideas about leadership. He believes that great leaders are really servants. Their function is not to command, but rather to remove barriers so that those around them can do their jobs better. Leaders don't start out leading. They start out serving others and, because of their character and effectiveness, others push them forward to lead.

Something that has been noticed over the years is that great leaders naturally develop those around them and teach them to be leaders too. They do it all the time, because competition or the new generation coming up behind them does not threaten them.

Great leaders earn the trust of those who follow them. It wouldn't occur to a great leader to think of the people he or she leads as subordinates or in any way inferior. The respect the unique talents and worth of every individual and can step aside and allow someone more qualified to lead when the situation calls for it.

Great leaders are not in a quest for personal power. They are, though, very passionate about their purpose and can inspire others to feel strongly as well.

What do you think? Who qualifies as a great leader in your book?

What in BNOL this Month

- The Wedding Photos
- Big Al's Tester
- Letter's to the Editor
- Fair Go for Officials
- Coaches thanked by Sports Commission
- National Umpiring Staff appointments
- And much more

STATE WRAP

At time of publishing I had not received all the State's News and I apologize that there are some States that have missed out.

My suggestion is that everyone get your articles in ASAP or even sooner.

BNOL is published on the last Friday of each month and the deadline is one week prior to that.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulation to Margo Koskelainen, Tricia Sibraa (nee Bichel) and David Crowe for their re-appointment by the National Body to the National Umpiring Committee. Margo remains National Director (of course), Tricia (Deputy Director) and David member of National Staff. The three join Andrew Rindfleish, John Larter, Ken Culpitt and Alan McAulliffe to make up the National Umpiring Staff. Re-appointment come around every two years.

Larter
the best
Medicine



There is always
time to laugh!

Blondes have so much fun...
Making others laugh!!!

A married couple were asleep when the phone rang at 2 in the morning. The wife (undoubtedly blonde), picked up the phone, listened a moment and said, "How should I know, that's 200 miles from here!" and hung up. The husband said, "Who was that?" The wife said, "I don't know; some woman wanting to know 'if the coast is clear'."

Two blondes are walking down the street. One notices a compact on the sidewalk and leans down to pick it up. She opens it, looks in the mirror and says, "Hmm, this person looks familiar." The second blonde says, "Here, let me see!" So the first blonde hands her the compact. The second one looks in the mirror and says, "You dummy, it's me!"

A blonde suspects her boyfriend of cheating on her, so she goes out and buys a gun. She goes to his apartment unexpectedly and when she opens the door she finds him in the arms of a redhead. Well, the blonde is really angry. She opens her purse to take out the gun, and as she does so, she is overcome with grief. She takes the gun and puts it to her head. The boyfriend yells, "No, honey, don't do it." The blonde replies, "Shut up, you're next!"

A blonde was bragging about her knowledge of state capitals. She proudly says, "Go ahead, ask me, I know all of them." A friend says, "OK, what's the capital of Wisconsin?" The blonde replies, "Oh, that's easy: W."

What did the blonde ask her doctor when he told her she was pregnant?
"Is it mine?"

Returning home from work, a blonde was shocked to find her house ransacked and burglarised. She telephoned the police at once and reported the crime. The police dispatcher broadcast the call on the channels, and a K-9 unit patrolling nearby was the first to respond. As the K-9 officer approached the house with his dog on a leash, the blonde ran out on the porch, shuddered at the sight of the cop and his dog, and then sat down on the steps. Putting her face in her hands, she moaned, "I come home to find all my possessions stolen. I call the police for help, and what do they do? They send me a blind policeman!"



Rules Challenge

Big Al's Tester

Scenario

Two down, R1 at second, R2 at first.
B3 hits a line drive that first hits the ground and then deflects off F1's toecap toward F6. F1 could not get down to the ball to field it. R1 heads for third on the pitch and runs in front of F6 (does not contact the ball) who is moving in to field the ball. There is a misfield. R1 makes third, R2 makes second. Interference is called on R1 making the 3rd out.

Question

Is this the correct call, or should the deflection have been seen as an infielder playing/touching the ball? Had the ball been cleanly fielded a tag play could have been within normal effort for F6.

Response

The deflection from F1 has no bearing on whether interference should or should not have been called, as R1 has not interfered with, or been struck by, the BALL. If R1 had contacted the ball, he may have been declared out for interference under Rule 8 Section 9j. However, if the deflection was such that R1 could not avoid contact with the ball, then he would not be out under Rule 8 Section 10f. The important thing here is that it must be interference with the BALL.

The assumption is the interference has been called for R1 interfering with the FIELDER (F6). Rule 8 Section 9l calls for a runner to be declared out when he interferes with a FIELDER attempting to field a fair-batted ball. It does not matter whether the ball has been deflected from another fielder, or whether the ball has passed any other fielder prior to the interference.

Running in front of a fielder attempting to field a fair-batted ball does not, in itself, necessarily constitute interference - Rule 8 Section 10a refers. However, when a runner deviates, or changes stride, while running to a base in order to avoid interfering, the umpire must exercise his judgement as to whether the action of the runner in any way causes the fielder to misplay the ball. Obviously, if there is any contact between the runner and fielder before the misplay, then interference MUST be declared.

In the above scenario, it would be purely the umpire's judgement as to whether R1, by running in front of F6, did anything to contribute to the misfield by F6. If so, interference is the correct call; if not, no call and play on. The deflection by F1 should not have been considered.

The foregoing should assist umpires in understanding the difference between interfering with the batted BALL and interfering with the FIELDER attempting to field the fair-batted ball.

Letter to the Editor

Re - April Edition BNOL 'Money to umpire - Are you in it for the right reasons?'

(Mark, I hope you have the room to print my reply to what is nothing but a biased, uninformed load of rubbish from someone who appears to have very little else to do, has an axe to grind and has their nose out of joint because something either happened or didn't happen that they have taken offence to.)

What a pity they did not sign their name to such an uninformed conglomeration of garbage.

I have been involved as an official in Basketball, Football, Baseball and Softball for over 20 years, since I realised that I did not have the elite talent to play at the level that I have, and still hope to, officiate at.

Your anonymous letter implies that every umpire is mercenary and money hungry and this to me is totally insulting.

Lets really put things into perspective.

As an umpire, I have never been paid more than an amount that was reasonable for the time, travel, study, courses and effort that I put in to the job that I was requested to do.

The countless unpaid hours that officials put at home studying, viewing video tapes of games, practicing alone on the playing field and learning to understand the game, so as to better themselves, can never be covered by money. It is because the official wants to improve and umpire to their full potential.

The most disappointing aspect of umpiring comes down to the simple fact that, uninformed, biased and belligerent know alls have nothing better to do than look for an excuse or reason to blame (or abuse umpires), for their own short comings, or to use them as an excuse for losing – I'd like to put a price on that (sic).

What ever happened to umpiring the game because we love it? I do or I wouldn't be up at 6:30am every Saturday morning. Drive 300 kilometres to softball, umpire 2, 3, or 4 games, (depending on who turns up to play) and then driving home, trying to think how I could improve on my game or appreciating what I got out of the day.

Sure the money that is available in some cases pays for the beverages after the games, or allows me to update some gear, or nearly covers my fuel 1 way – but I will never be able to live on what I get for doing it.

Of course the money has to come from somewhere – do you expect umpires to pay for the privilege of coping abuse from frustrated and acknowledgeable players. What

are you thinking - I ask you?

I too, am an umpire and from a small country association and I have also had to make many financial sacrifices to advance in umpiring. I have made many lasting friendships through sport and especially through umpiring. The benefits of making quality friends within any fraternity cannot have a price tag on it.

What is the game worth?

You ask "Are you accountable for the decisions you make?" Of course we are, with the continued escalation of legal cases against people that are not accountable, how could we be otherwise?

In a look at travelling expenses – I have been waiting 3 years for payment incurred in travelling 300 kilometres to a mid week game that had been forfeited before I left home. No one even bothered to let me know that it was cancelled and they had my home and mobile phone numbers. When I arrived, 1 hour before the game, I was advised and then returned home.

"If you can't afford it, don't go seems to be the logical answer." - This is not really the logical answer, as, with a little thought, you would have realised. We as umpires make a commitment to the game, to our fellow umpires, the players and the association to do our best and we deserve to be assisted in order to do this.

The last line of your epistle is one of the very few that I agree with – "Umpires are not bigger than the game, no one is!" but would you pay a stone mason or a pigeon to work on something you want to be proud of?

Umpires deserve to receive a fair and reasonable remuneration for what they do. No one deserves to be continually out of pocket for supplying a quality service and doing a job that no one else wants to do.

During the last 3 years, I have travelled over 60,000 kilometres to umpire softball, attend courses, attend meetings, attend State Championships and act as a liaison officer at National Championships at a personal cost of over \$10,000.

The season just finished alone saw me travel 18,000 kilometres, umpire 115 senior games and spend just over 240 hours on the diamond. My travelling time alone was nearly double the time I spent on the ground. The remuneration I have received for the season worked out at the princely sum of one cent per kilometre.

So build a bridge and get over it.

Kevin Offer
57 Lynott Street
Horsham 3400



**Ladies and Gentlemen
Introducing
Mr and Mrs Sibraa
(Darren & Tricia)**





Everything I need to know about life I learned from Noah's Ark

1. Don't miss the boat.
2. Remember, we are all in the same boat.
3. Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
4. Stay fit. When you're 600 years old someone may ask you to do something really big.
5. Don't listen to critics, just get on with the job that needs to be done.
6. Build your future on higher grounds.
7. For safety sake travel in pairs.
8. Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were onboard with the Cheetahs.
9. When you're stressed, float a while.
10. Remember the Ark was built by amateurs, the Titanic by professionals.
11. No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.

New South Wales

Congratulations!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Four New South Wales umpires successfully obtained their Australian Level 2 Umpiring Accreditation.

A long trip to Lismore was a very worthwhile for the four candidates. Completing six one hour games at the NSW Under 16 State Championship, four people left the grounds at Lismore exceptionally happy with great big smiles of relief and joy.

The successful Candidates were - Matthew Hayes (Sutherland), Sam Mooney (North Shore), Greg Zucchetti (Georges River), Robert Young (Coffs Harbour).

From here, these four will need to learn another advanced umpiring rotation system that will lead them in the right direction to their level three. I look forward to working with all of them in the future.

On behalf of the New South Wales Softball Umpires Association Executive and all members of the Umpires Association, congratulations on this fantastic achievement and we all look forward to seeing you on the diamond very soon.

Scott Rindfleish
 NSW SUA Information Coordinator
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This is what all umpires are striving forSelf Confidence.

A little girl and her daddy

Her hair was up in a ponytail
Her favourite dress tied with a bow.
Today was Daddy's Day at school,
And she couldn't wait to go.

But her mommy tried to tell her,
That she probably should stay home.
Why the kids might not understand,
If she went to school alone.

But she was not afraid;
She knew just what to say.
What to tell her classmates
Of why he wasn't there today.

But still her mother worried,
For her to face this day alone.
And that was why once again,
She tried to keep her daughter home.

But the little girl went to school,
Eager to tell them all.
About a dad she never see
A dad who never calls.

There were daddies along the wall in back,
For everyone to meet.
Children squirming impatiently,
Anxious in their seats.

One by one the teacher called,
A student from the class.
To introduce their daddy,
As seconds slowly passed.

At last the teacher called her name,
Every child turned to stare.
Each of them was searching,
For a man who wasn't there.

"Where's her daddy at?"
She heard a boy call out.
"She probably doesn't have one,"
Another student dared to shout.

And from somewhere near the back,
She heard a daddy say,
"Looks like another deadbeat dad,
Too busy to waste his day."

The words did not offend her,
As she smiled up at her Mom.
And looked back at her teacher,
Who told her to go on.

And with hands behind her back,
Slowly she began to speak.
And out from the mouth of a child,
Came words incredibly unique.

"My Daddy couldn't be here,
Because he lives so far away.
But I know he wishes he could be,
Since this is such a special day.

And though you cannot meet him,
I wanted you to know.
All about my daddy,
And how much he loves me so.

He loved to tell me stories
He taught me to ride my bike.
He surprised me with pink roses,
And taught me to fly a kite.

We used to share fudge sundaes,
And ice cream in a cone.
And though you cannot see him,
I'm not standing here alone.

"Cause my daddy's always with me,
Even though we are apart
I know because he told me,
He'll forever be in my heart"

With that, her little hand reached up,
And lay across her chest.
Feeling her own heartbeat,
Beneath her favourite dress.

And from somewhere in the crowd of dads,
Her mother stood in tears.
Proudly watching her daughter,
Who was wise beyond her years.

For she stood up for the love
Of a man not in her life.
Doing what was best for her,
Doing what was right.

And when she dropped her hand back
down,
Staring straight into the crowd.
She finished with a voice so soft,
But its message clear and loud.

"I love my daddy very much,
He's my shining star.
And if he could, he'd be here,
But heaven's just too far.

You see he was a fireman
And died just this past year
When airplanes hit the towers
And taught Americans to fear.

But sometimes when I close my eyes,
It's like he never went away."
And then she closed her eyes,
And saw him there that day.

And to her mother's amazement,
She witnessed with surprise.
A room full of daddies and children,
All starting to close their eyes.

Who knows what they saw before them,
Who knows what they felt inside.
Perhaps for merely a second,
They saw him at her side.

"I know you're with me Daddy,"
To the silence she called out.
And what happened next made believers,
Of those once filled with doubt.

Not one in that room could explain it,
For each of their eyes had been
closed.

But there on the desk beside her,
Was a fragrant long-stemmed pink
rose.

And a child was blessed, if only for a
moment,

By the love of her shining bright star.
And given the gift of believing,
That heaven is never too far

They say it takes a minute to find a
special person, an hour to appreciate
them, a day to love them, but then an
entire life to forget them.

Take the time... to live and love.

I have had a number of people send this into me and I thought I would share it with the ones that haven't read it.

Thanks for sharing a special piece with us.

It had bought a tear to my eye as I am sure it will to you.

Tofty



Letter to the Editor

Mark, In reading the latest news letter there is one part that I feel needs to be studied more closely. That is the Letter to the Editor by some one called Anon

The comment that some umpires won't take the diamond without being paid does happen in a very small instance, but the majority of umpires only receive their payment at the end of the season.

Unfortunately some clubs/teams would rather pass the hat around and pay for someone else than fulfill their commitments themselves.

Why does this happen?

1. Clubs/Teams do not encourage players to take on extra duties
2. Players who have previously done the right thing by their club are disenchanted with the lack of help, encouragement or support from their Association
3. Team umpires are not able to cope with some players, coaches and spectator abuse

Therefore it is easier to pay an extra \$5 to \$10 dollars a week to have somebody else to do their duties.

4. Associations not supporting their umpires with stiff penalties for anybody reported for abuse, sledging and unsavory comments during the game

Most umpires use their remuneration to good cause such as.
Updating equipment (So as not having to use ill fitting club gear)
Travel costs (e.g. fuel, accommodation and meals)
Training course fees
Going to Nationals

I believe that if clubs/teams and associations encouraged the players to fulfill their commitment to umpiring with proper training, encouragement and support they would not have the problem of some people (not umpires) holding them to ransom

I believe umpires that come back week after week to do one, two or three games a day are not in it for a monetary reward. I personally could stay at work and earn a lot more but chose to umpire because it is my sport. A sport, that I enjoy.
We all make sacrifices when it comes to umpiring, be it financial or personal, but that is our choice.

Of the umpires that held their association to ransom: All the association had to do is tell those people to find something else to do with their afternoon and work around the short-term problem.

The comment about travel expenses must have come from somebody who either does not have to travel far to umpire or has their head in the sand.

Many Australian Masters competitions would not go ahead without the great number of umpires in attendance. If you take away the team umpire who receives remuneration for travel and or accommodation, then there would be no games.

Even with the World Masters Games coming up we have had requests for (free) accommodation from umpires within Australia and New Zealand during the time of their stay. Isn't this some kind of remuneration?

George James
Level 6 Umpire

MAY NEWS FROM THE NT

In Darwin the umpires continue to enjoy their umpiring. We have lots of fun and usually end up with a few drinks afterwards reflecting over the games of the day.

For a detailed account week by week we invite all umpires to check out the web site –www.umpires.nt.softball.org.au – you will find all sorts of interesting tidbits of information. Beware there may be a new signal about to hit the scene – that of a tie-breaker!!

Our returning umpires are finding their feet and Penny has ventured into doing bases in A Reserve and a plate in the Under 16s. Our candidates in the umpires clinic capably run by Blondie are beginning to show good understanding of position and rules and are actually doing some Under 16 games under supervision.

The Men's competition has begun again with 3 teams participating, and are playing on Sat afternoons at Gardens Oval with the Women's competition so the "blues" are very busy. Unfortunately it often means running 2 umpire systems rather than 3 but we try to get a 3 umpire running at least once on a Saturday to keep our skills up.

The weather is still very unusual with rain last week but this morning was a real "dry season" one –quite brisk. We won't say exactly how low the temperature fell but it was below 20!!!

Hopefully it will continue and umpiring will become more pleasant than at present. A few of us are preparing for the Masters in Alice in October and anticipating a great time. Join us if you can!!

Marg Lee State Director of Umpiring—Northern Territory

Coaches thanked in new Sports Commission program

In a first for Australian sport, the Australian Sports Commission has developed an innovative series of electronic cards to thank coaches and officials in sport.

The e-cards represent different coaching and officiating scenarios and can be emailed to a coach or official in recognition of their efforts or in appreciation.

Australian Sports Commission CEO, Mark Peters described coaches and officials as the backbone of many sporting organisations.

“A sport or club that actively supports its coaches and officials has a better chance of recruiting and retaining its coaches and officials, especially considering that most are volunteers,” Peters said.

“Good coaches help ensure that people have positive experiences and good officials reinforce this during match play. Participants are more likely to continue in sport if the experience is positive. We believe coaches and officials are central to this experience.”

There are e-cards for the team or for the individual. In total there are eight “thanks e-card” for coaches and four “thanks e-card” for officials.

All you need is the email address of the coach/official that you want to thank and your email address. They are available from the Australian Sports Commission coaching and officiating website at <http://www.coachingaus.org/thankscard.htm>

The e-cards are part of the Sports Commission’s broader Thanks Coach, Thanks Official campaign. The campaign aims to have coaches and officials recognised at all levels, and to educate the community about their importance.

The Australian Sports Commission is assisting state and national sporting organisations to run the campaign by providing grants, campaign materials and advice and information. During 2000-2001, the Thanks Coach, Thanks Official campaign operated in all states and within 20 national sporting organisations.

Tony De Bolfo

The preceding article was downloaded from the on-line magazine The Sports Vine. We thank them for the use of this particular article for this month’s edition of Blue’s News On-line. May 30, 2002, Volume 4 Issue 20

“FAIR GO FOR OFFICIALS”

The Australian Sports Commission will hold a series of nationwide forums designed to tackle the issue of abuse against officials in Australian Sport.

Each day long forum, which are to be held in each State and Territory, will seek to develop fresh and effective strategies to deal with this growing problem at all levels of sport.

The ASC will request the expertise of a wide body of officials, coaches, player associations and high profile sporting personalities to participate in strategy building discussion and workshops.

The timetable for the forum in each State:

State	Date	Venue
NSW Sydney	Thursday, June 13	Sydney Football Stadium
VIC Melbourne	Tuesday, June 18	Rod Laver Arena, Melbourne Park
ACT Canberra	Tuesday, June 25	Marathon Room, Visitors House AIS
SA Adelaide	Monday, July 8	Football Park
WA Perth	Friday, July 12	Subiaco Oval
NT Darwin	Monday, July 15	NT House
QLD Brisbane	TO BE ADVISED	
TAS Hobart	Friday, July 26	Grand Chancellor Hotel

Queenslanders are busy (like everyone else)

Most of the senior umpires of Queensland will be in attendance at this year’s South Brisbane Men’s Classic. This tournament is now in its eleventh year and brings together some of the best softballers. Of course, it is also a qualifying tournament for the Macarthur Shootout which is held in Sydney in February.

The Queensland umpiring committee also use the tournament as a clinic for those Level 3 umpires who wish to be assessed for their Level 4 at the Open Men’s or Open Women’s Tournaments later in the year.

The winter competition are in full swing with most of the South East Queensland umpires officiating at Brisbane, South Brisbane and Redlands. Those living in COLD areas are having a break.

See you on the Diamond.