

BLUES NEWS ON LINE

Contributions to mtoft@ozemail.com.au

April Edition

Vol 3 of 2003

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More Balls: Debbie Keogh was UIC Balls in Adelaide by the looks of this.

**If you think
you can, or if
you think you
can't, either
way you're
RIGHT!**

**Self-achievement
is the fruit of
discipline**

Attention all Level 4—Level 8

It is hoped that the revised National Appointment Form will be placed on the NUC website in the near future.

Previous editions of Blue's News On-Line are available from the Resource Library on the Umpire's Website
nuc.softball.org.au

International Appointments

The selection of three [3] umpires was recently approved at the March ASF Board meeting. These umpires will accompany Australian teams to various tournaments overseas during the winter months.

However, since then Debbie Keogh has withdrawn due to work commitments. The NUC then appointed Diane Waller.

The selected umpires are:

Damien McCauley - Men's tour to Canada - July

Diane Waller - Women's tour for the Japan and Canada Cups - July

Debbie Grove - Jr. Women's World Championship – Nanjing, China - September

Also, Neville Lawrance has been selected by ISF to travel to Puerto Rico in July to participate at the Americas Qualifier.

While Damien, Debbie and Neville have experienced umpiring in other countries before, the competitions this time around for each of them will be quite different from those previously. For Diane, this trip will be a totally new experience.

Damien, Debbie, Neville and Diane have all come through the International Umpire Development Program and have continued to show the dedication and diligence required to improve their umpiring skills. They will experience new and different challenges this time around which will add to their understanding of umpiring.

Congratulations to you all, we wish you well and good calling.

**MARGO'S
MEMO**



On behalf of the Umpire Program I offer our sincerest congratulations to the Australian Women's team for qualifying for the 2004 Olympic Games in Sydney in last month. It was a pleasure to see the commitment and determination of the entire team to ensure that Australia was a part of the Athens Olympic Games. Well done, everyone.

The workload of the Women's team will now definitely pick up a pace or two in preparation for Athens, and the ASF Calendar of Events shows that there will be plenty of opportunities in the coming months for other members of the current Development Squad to umpire and experience top level competition.

A copy of the ASF Calendar of Events is published elsewhere in the Newsletter and covers the latter part of 2003 and early 2004.

Margo.

Making Rules Simpler

with Alan McAuliffe (Big Al)

I recently have had several questions in relation to Rule 3 Section 4b; in particular along the lines of

- (a) What constitutes a multi-coloured glove, and
- (b) Which gloves should be deemed illegal for pitchers.

The following points should make the rule easier to understand and enforce.

- (a) Multicoloured gloves are legal for ALL players in Slowpitch.
- (b) They are legal for all players in Fastpitch EXCEPT the pitcher.
- (c) Gloves with a grey or white circle on the outside of the glove are ILLEGAL in both Fastpitch and Slowpitch.

It is important to note that two tones of the same colour are not considered to be multicoloured (these types of glove are predominant in the marketplace today and are extensively used by pitchers throughout the country) and as such should be permitted for use.

Some examples:

- * Black and brown gloves are NOT multicoloured.
- * Orange is a shade of brown.
- * Dark blue and black are OK together.
- * Webbing of a different colour is not considered to be part of the colour scheme on the glove.
- * Any other colour scheme like green and brown, or red, white and blue is considered to be multicoloured.

Common sense should be used when deciding if a glove is multicoloured or not, as the intent of the rule is not to eliminate equipment but to prevent a pitcher from using equipment, especially bright gloves, that is a distraction to a batter.

In order to eliminate future embarrassing situations, it would be useful if this information could be passed to all umpires in your area.

Men's Nationals in Brisbane

by Mark Toft

The old saying of "Queensland, beautiful one day, perfect the next" should now be stowed away especially when hosting a National Men's in March.

The three times the Men's have been held in Queensland twice at Redlands and once in Noosa the heavens opened up and disrupted proceedings.

To their credit the grounds persons at Redlands were able to bring up diamonds for play and the full program was achieved.

The umpiring crew may have had it easy in the early part of the week, but when we lost Wednesday and Thursday. It was all hands on deck and a couple more.

The crew, led by Margo Koskelainen O.A.M. were Ken Culpitt, Andrew Rindfleish, George James, Leigh Evans, Graham Bancroft, Damien McCauley, Frank Thomas, Phil Waller, Kerry Franklin, Debbie Grove and Werimu Tamaki from New Zealand. Of course we must acknowledge Darren Sibraa and Steve Gutteridge from Queensland who helped out in the final days of the Championships. Also Rick Gill our Liaison Officer who did a great job.

I think you go away from most National and you say, Gee that was a great crew! But there are sometimes it really is a great mix of these volunteers who you live, work, eat and sleep with for a week, and that was the case, in my opinion again this year.

Working with an International Umpire at Nationals is always a thrill, but to have an ISF Accredited umpire from another country is something special. Werimu fitted in very well, but was humbled when Australia beat the Kiwis in the cricket. Don't worry he gave us 'stick' following the first innings, but you couldn't find him in the morning.

The weather conditions were not the best everyday of the championships, but we were able to get some cards going and to watch a couple of videos. A couple of other highlights of the Championships was the return of George James to the diamond and the success of candidate Frank Thomas to Level 6.

The cooking expertise by a couple of the units was outstanding. This seems to be more of a tradition, but I don't think anyone will outdo the **three roast with all the trimmings** effort put up by a few of us at Bribie Island a couple of years ago at the Under 19 Men's. But if you want to please feel free to, make sure I'M there!

Damien, Debbie and Andrew officiated the Championship Game. Well Done!

G E O R G E P E T E R N
 N O L I P S C O M B E M
 R E W Y A A R B I S M C
 Y E K T O U L A R I L G
 D U F F Y V O N N E A U
 N A N O R I E E L B P I
 A N N T A V V A T N O R
 O G R A M G S N A V E

TANNERBRING WAS THE POWER WORD FOR THIS PUZZLE.
 Kevin Tannerbring is a South Australian Level 5 umpire.

Something to think about

I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career.

I've lost almost 300 games.

26 times I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed.

I've failed over and over and over again in my life.

And that is why I succeed.

Find the Umpires Name—Answers

- Abbreviated first name of South Australia's Director of Umpiring (NEV)
- Former Level 8 Umpire from Tasmania (Last Name) (PALMER)
- Victoria Duo Stacey and Leigh (Last Name) (EVANS)
- Our National Umpiring Director's first name (MARGO)
- Tricia Bichel's married name (SIBRAA)
- Level 5 Queensland umpire (first name) (YVONNE)
- Former Queenslander, now ACT umpire (First name) (KEN)
- State Director of Umpiring Northern Territory (Last Name) (LEE)
- ISF Hall of Famer (Abbreviated first name) (VIV)
- Editor of BNOL nick name (TOFTY)
- Level 8 Umpire (The Traveler)(GOWTY)
- State Director of Umpiring Western Australia (Last name) (DUFF)
- NSW Level 7 Hill (Deceased) (PETER)
- Retired Victorian umpire Betty(MCGUIRE)
- ACT Umpire known as Dangerous ... for his driving ability (DAN)
- Abbreviated first name of NSW Level 8 Umpire (ANDY)
- Victorian Umpire who's email address was lafox (first name) (GEORGE)
- New Level 5 Victoria Umpire (first name) (RON)
- Director of Umpiring—Tasmania (Last name) (LIPSCOMBE)
- Former State Director - South Australia Level 8 Umpire (first name) (TOULA)
- Level 3 Toowoomba umpire first name Youngman (MARY)

EMAIL TO THE EDITOR

You may have heard that the Lockyer District Softball Association is starting up a winter competition this year.

I would like to have at least one Blue doing plate for the Women and Under 16 teams. All blues will be paid \$10.00 per game irrelevant of what Level you are (well must be at least Level 1)

The competition starts in May and is held on Sunday afternoon. The level of competition for the Women will be around (A2 Toowoomba).

Could you put an expression of interest in the Blues News regards

Eric Eyre (Umpire Coordinator) Email: eeyre@uq.net.au



Japan Cup 2002

by Leigh Evans

I am standing in Tullamarine Airport International lounge, and am about to go on my first official international tour. I am excited but nervous.

Many thoughts were going through my mind;

- Most of the people I am traveling with I have never really met.
- I am going to a country where they don't even speak English,
- I will be working with umpires that don't speak English.
- What system will they use, how will I communicate?

Once on the jumbo we were bound for Sydney, Players and officials from WA, SA, NSW and VIC were to travel on this plane, QLD on another flight all bound for Tokyo.

On the plane one of the stewards came up to me, (I was sitting further up the plane than the rest) he asked me if they were the Australian Softball team. I said "yes", he asked if he could go down and talk with the girls, I replied if you like, he was so excited (reminded me of Jim Carey). He never left me alone, asked me every 10 minutes is there anything he can get me, am I comfortable? An hour later he came up to me with a team list out of the tour book, one of the girls must have gave it to him, it was signed by the girls. He asked me which one of the officials I was? I pointed to my name, beside it was my title....umpire, he closed the book and walked off, I never saw him again. Amazing isn't it!

On arrival in Tokyo we had a 2-hour wait for the Qld'ers (typical). We met Ni-shi, our translator, he said his name translated to; 'front the west'. So we nick named him Westy. Accommodation for the first leg was in Yokohama, a 45-star 5- star hotel.

The next day we traveled in a very comfortable coach to our training ground one of the colleges, a fully synthetic ground used for every sport imaginable. Lunch was in a cardboard box, rice packs, seaweed, strange looking round things, and a bottle of water..... *the water was nice!*

While we were training all the college people went about their sports, including Sumo wrestlers. A couple of the girls had photos taken with them, the girls looked dwarfs next to them. We also had the college school children helping with anything we wanted. They didn't speak English. Simon was teaching them to say something in Australian all morning, without the team knowing, when the girls come back from the cool down he said " one, two, three, they all said in unison, "GIDAAAAY..... MATE!" in was so funny. The Australian team responded with Waltzing Matilda. During the practice sessions I even

got to help out with a glove, (closest I would every get to playing for Australia).

Back at the motel I decided to go up to the 45th story and take some photos, at the top I found a dinning room and full bar. As I walked in a waiter showed me to a table overlooking Yokohama, I was trying to say I only want to look and take photos. He gave me a bar list, To be respectful I asked for a bourbon, he didn't under stand, I said "jack" he said OK! I the asked for coke and ice. After taking several photos and drinking the Jack Daniels I asked for the bill. It was 7,000 yen for the jack, 4,000 yen for the coke, plus tax, plus corkage it ended up costing me around \$44.00 AUS. Wow expensive photos.

Tuesday, August 27

We traveled to Hodogya Baseball stadium, where the first of the exhibition matches were to be played and also where the Cup would be held. The stadium was huge. I met for the first time the umpires I would be working with during the exhibition matches, they were made up of Level 3 and 4 mostly, other Umpires sat at the back of the room, listening and making some comment (later I found out they were the Cup umpires). We sat in a small room overlooking the stadium, none of them except the UIC spoke English, and his was only limited and he was very hard to understand. He got up and started drawing on a white board; a discussion went on for ages in Japanese. They all looked at me, the UIC offered the pen to me and pointed to the board. Well here goes nothing I thought, I drew Both systems on the board, the 4 man system we have used for ages and the new system, as I did I watched their facial expressions. I crossed out each movement that they screwed their faces up at, and ticked the others. When we had finished each base movement we were only left with the old 4 man we have used in Australia for ages. An applause from everyone in the room endorsed the old 4 man. All those months of practicing the new system I thought, ha.

The Japanese umpires were always dressed in their blues, although they never left the umpires room. Even at the technical meeting they all had their blues on, the scorers and President of JSA was also at the tech meeting, I had to give a speech at the meeting which caught me by surprise, a translator told them in Japanese. Over the next two days we played the Japan Under 22 team and a pro club team. One of the umpires handed me a small bottle of liquid of some kind, it had Japanese writing on it, reminded me of medicine, they looked at me and motioned for me to drink it! I must of looked puzzled, they all laughed, I then watched one umpire open it a scull it down, I thought oh well here goes and followed suit, Vitamins..... few!

Friday, August 30 nervous night sleep Thursday night, I was told I was to plate the opening game of the Cup, straight after the opening ceremony, Japan Vs China. Sold out crowd. During our pre game meeting with the crew a

(Continued on page 5)

welcome surprise happened, I was having a little trouble with my charades, then I heard an American ascent, I looked around, all I could see were Japanese, then I heard "hello there, it's me. My name is Haruhi"; she had gone to school in the USA for several years, great I thought.

Soon we were into the game, 4 pitches later a line drive off the bat of one of the Japanese batters straight into the jaw of the number one pitcher for China, still on the rise. Down she went, I called time straight away, by the time I got out to the center she was unconscious, blood running from her mouth. An ambulance took her straight to hospital, she was unconscious until 10 PM that night, with a broken jaw. Welcome to the Japan Cup I thought. It was so hot, so humid, I have never, never, been so hot and wet from perspiration, even the corners of my collar were wet and down to my knees. The game started at 1pm, I drank 3 litres during the game, a further 2 liters during the day and didn't go to the toilet until 10pm that night, incredible. The Japanese drank a lot of green tea; needless to say I drank water.

Announcing the changes was interesting. The UIC kept saying to me, "changes, buck number, buck number". Out of first, in after" later I realised he meant, use the number on the back of the player going out of the game first followed by the back number of the player going in. I was to use a walkie talkie, problem was the official scorer didn't speak English, so she had a translator, the translator had trouble as well, so I found myself repeating it several times. Some times I just turned the player around and pointed to the number on their back, other times it was easier to say the field position they were playing, as I could say in Japanese the position, after hearing it announced all game every game.

Two more days of this to go. Along came the final day of the Cup, allocations were posted, **I could not believe my eyes.** I was to call the Grand final. What a blast! I spent most of the day pacing around. Had lunch during the bronze medal game, packed boxes again, yuck. Started hydrating about 2 hours before.

The mood amongst the Australian team was fairly somber, they were not doing as well as they would like, they played off in the Bronze medal game against China and went down. Time has come, time to get changed relax and talk with the crew, I prepared my lower half and waited for the game before to near end, It went for about an hour longer than expected, so I played the waiting game with the rest of the crew.

The time had come, the announcer called each of the USA team members as they walked out, then the Japan team, finally the umpires, by this time I had got used to the pronunciation of my name. I had been told before the game what was expected of me during the announcements.

I walked onto the diamond, toward the plate area, then turned to face the capacity crowd, took my hat off and bowed. The amazing thing is the crowd cheered. Ha! (photo shows me bowing to the crowd)

I was so intent on not getting caught up in the emotion, I didn't notice the cameras and microphones until the 2nd innings, one at center field, one on each bench and one behind me, I looked into when I first turned around and called my first foul ball, and there it was a big microphone in a satellite dish behind the net. I am glad they didn't tell me until after the game they televised it around Japan. The game went till the bottom of the ninth innings, finishing under lights, 2-1 USA.

The next day we traveled to Kawasaki, along the way we did some sight seeing. Tokyo Tower, Emperor's Palace, Mask shop Syorinzan Darumaji, where they made the DARUMA tumbling doll, Muzuno Shop (Seven floors), and several temples. The Tokyo Tower went 333 meters straight up, made from steel like a mechano set, there was a glass floor at the top, unbelievable, it took me several minutes to step out onto it and looked straight down to ground level.

The accommodation at this place was great, big rooms, and hall ways, problem was one lift, 27 people, plus bags, equipment, medical, and video equipment, it took us 45 minutes to check in. During this leg of the tour we played Toyota Jidoshokki and Hitachi Software, two pro ball league teams. This night we decided George, our translator would take us out to eat. George was not as good as our first translator, Nishi, however fairly good considering he was self-taught from tapes and books. We ended up eating at a Japanese restaurant, not bad.

After dinner I played mini Golf in the hall way with a couple of players, great fun, plastic clubs and ball. Then it was to my room, Very lonely at times, a little isolated without other umpires or friends to talk with. Coaching and medical staff had their own things to do, so sitting and watching television, reading or walking was done during most of my spare time.

I must say it is a difficult situation traveling with a team, you are always on one of their games, making calls on their games, at times participants wanting home team calls and not all of them going their way. Especially if they are not winning. It is hard enough at any tournament being an umpire, let alone traveling home on the same bus for an hour or so.

On Thursday we traveled to Gunma, Takasaki. Over the next few days we played Hitachi Takasaki and Taiyo Yuden at their home grounds.

On this leg of the tour the regional prefecture umpires were very nervous, they were very interested in watching me umpire and asked lots of questions through interpreters, they seemed to look up at me and bowed a lot, later the

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

UIC told me he told them I umpired at the Japan Cup. They are so respectful.

On Friday night, we had a trivia night, only problem was it was fancy dress, bad taste.

Some went out shopping for unusual items, horrible colors. Fay set me up to dress in girls clothes, Most of them Kelly Gentle's, not a good look, thought I might scan one of the photographs to put in this article, but then I decided what happens on tour stays on tour, so as I am sworn to secrecy, sorry! On the way to the room where we were to have the trivia night one of the staff locked them selves out in the hallway and had to call the porter up to open it, the look on his face was priceless.

The guys, Terry Downs (massage), Simon, David (video), Ed (physio) came into the room with robes on, and on the count of three reveled their costume. Sumo Wrestlers, they had used the white sheets off their beds and made up like nappies, every one was rolling around on the floor in laughter.

Monday, September 9 was time to leave for the airport, The end of a very memorable tour. I made lots of new friends, Japanese and Australians, I thoroughly enjoyed myself and was proud to be invited to travel with the Aussie Spirit

I personally would like to thank Softball Australia, The NUC and the umpiring program for allowing such an opportunity.



The Japan Cup Crew: Australian Umpire Leigh Evans is head and shoulders above the rest. (Back row fourth from the left)



GREETINGS: Leigh Evans bowing to the crowd before the Japan Cup final.

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for further details



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The following letter was sent to BNOL by the editor of *Calling the Strikes* (Victorian Umpires Newsletter). It has been passed onto BNOL for our readers. The writer wishes to remain anonymous, but has supplied name and address..

After many years involvement in softball I feel compelled to write this to express my thoughts on what I feel is a decline in the softball standards of players, particularly on the diamond.

I have read many articles and all seem to say the same thing " control of games by umpires". Yes, I agree that umpires do have a responsibility to control games, it is part and parcel of being an umpire. But nowhere have I read any article that advises players, coaches and other officials that they also have a duty of responsibility towards themselves and their clubs.

I have seen and heard players on the diamond sledging, umpires advising them to curtail their comments, which advice seems to be largely ignored, and spectators commenting "get on with the game blue" or "stop ruining a good game blue".

Not once have I heard the same comments being directed to the players or coaches.

I know that remarks and what starts out to be good-natured banter between offensive and defensive players can often turn very nasty. And that should not be acceptable on a softball diamond.

I understand that at National Championships the attitude is taken that ejections are not good for the game. Well, I believe that ASF is letting down the grass roots administrators by this, as we do not have the qualified umpires, coaches or other officials to control this a club level. Nor do we have the volunteer administrators to deal with these ejections. Believe me there a fewer people around who wish to sit on tribunals to deal with these players who don't want to play within the rules.

Most umpires at local Association games are volunteers or players co-opted by their club to umpire a game so that these games **can** be played each Saturday. I might also add, that many are very reluctant to put themselves in such a position especially on men's games.

When an umpire is brave enough to eject a player more often than not it has been the umpires fault NOT the players fault. Players need to ask themselves where did the action start and who started it. Certainly not the umpire who wants to avoid confrontation all costs, but sometimes they are pushed to the

limit by these players and sadly most of them are State representative players who feel that they have a God-given right to carry on at all times.

I don't believe that there is any room in softball for sledging, or players who incite other players to the limit, nor for the manner in which some coaches abuse umpires for what they perceive as a bad decision. Perhaps that is an area that should be compulsorily addressed in all coaching levels.

Most coaches are reasonable in their requests or queries to umpires but there are always the minority who don't seem to feel that this applies to them.

I commend the umpires who give of their best in every game regardless of the intimidation by these players, who should be setting an example by the very fact that they are either current or past State representatives.

Name and address supplied.

Reminder

If you have anything which you think is newsworthy send it to
The Editor - BNOL (mtoft@ozemail.com.au)



Queensland Secondary Schoolgirls Softball supports Junior Umpiring Program

By Mark Toft

Following the Queensland Secondary Schoolgirls State Championships the President of the Association read out the names of the officials and the team, as they do every year. But this time it was different.

In support of the Queensland Junior Umpiring Program 15 year-old Louise Hancock from Toowoomba was named as the official umpire to accompany the team to the National Championships in Adelaide.

Louise has been a consistent performer at Junior State Championships over the past three years and was named in the inaugural Junior Development Squad in her State at the age of 13.

In Toowoomba she has set herself numerous goals and one of those was realised this month when she was third base umpire on the A Grade Women's Grand Final. Mind you she had a busy day when she played in the Under 17 Grand Final and was plate umpire in the A2 Women's Grand Final.

During the year she has also work men's play in the A2 division as both a plate and base umpire. Louise is an up and coming umpire who has excelled in many aspects of softball.

We take this opportunity to congratulate Louise one of the young ones going places.

Well Done Frank

by Mark Toft

The Open Men's Nationals in Brisbane will go down as a special occasion for many of the umpires, especially Frank Thomas.

Frank was a successful Level 6 candidate in what was a trying week of games which was interrupted by rainouts, blessed with some fine days and at times was so hot you could have melted in the midday sun.

In what would have been difficult times Frank came through with flying colours to achieve yet another milestone in his career.

A former State Training Officer, Frank has nurtured a number of umpires through the Program and his work and dedication to officiating has been rewarded.

On behalf of the entire Umpire Family I take this opportunity to congratulate Frank on attaining his Level 6.

Blue Family growing in South Australia

Congratulations and welcome to all the new umpires in all associations and affiliates. In South Australia this year we have had 13 new Level 1 umpires, nine of which are from country regions.

The new umpires: from the Adelaide competition are Tammy Hunt, Shane Knight, Dion Schenk, and Kristy Tannebring; from the Central Districts competition are Danielle Gilboy, Melanie Gilboy, Steven Baker, Tanya Denton, Peter Hibberd, and Monica Smith; from the Gawler & Districts competition are Barry Harkin, Heather Jackson, and Suzy Skewes.

Congratulations as well to all the umpires who have progressed to a higher level. In South Australia we had 8 umpires move up a level. The new Level 2 umpires are Damien Shattock (Adelaide), John Slater (Adelaide), and Denise Moldovan (Riverland).

South Australia

The new Level 3 umpire is Robert Davis from the Gawler & Districts competition. The new Level 4 umpires are Dave Roberts, and Peter Wauer, both from the Adelaide competition. Graeme Webster achieved Level 5 and Neville Lawrance achieved Level 7, both are from the Adelaide competition.

This year the South Australian Softball Umpires Association decided to present certificates to our most experienced umpires in recognition of the many years of service they have given to officiating Softball.

The inaugural recipients in the Adelaide competition of 15 year certificates are Marg Abbott, Toulia Connolly, Neville Lawrance, John Glistak, Alan McAuliffe, John McAuliffe, Rae Robinson, and Jill Williams.

Certificates will also be awarded to umpires in the other South Australian competitions and the names will be published after the certificates have been presented.

Congratulations and thank you to all the umpires who have achieved this milestone in their careers and may you have many more years umpiring.

Those of us who have only been umpiring for a few years appreciate the benefits of your experience that you pass on to us.

Steph Parker

More than friends.....its family

What a close knit group umpires are, and, importantly what great camaraderie is experienced when a group of umpires gather at an event. I experienced two examples of this in March.

The first was at the Australian Men's Championship, held in Redlands, Queensland, and was assisted by the fact that there were no night games. However, the tournament was also the victim of a two day wash out and the umpires, like all the participants, were left to test their skills at being patient, mostly at "home" at the accommodation.

Card playing [I can only imagine the total amount of matchsticks that were won and lost over this time], watching videos, reading, shopping, writing reports, sleeping and/or catching up on work related subjects were among some of the activities of choice.

However, as we were staying in apartment style units the opportunity arose for each unit to contribute to the dining pleasure of the crew. On offer at various times was a range of culinary delights prepared by various members of the crew. Salmon dip as an appetiser, Green curry, Chicken breasts stuffed with camembert and wrapped in bacon with salad; Ham steaks with seasonal vegetables as main fare, and freshly made fruit salad and ice cream were on the menu at different times.

The group BBQ with all the trimmings was a joy to behold with the nominated chefs combining to produce a meal of gargantuan proportions all the while listing to the Kiwi's demolishing our cricketers in South Africa. The talents of the umpires never cease to amaze me.

The second example was associated with the ISF Asia/Oceania Qualifier, a qualifying tournament for the Athens Olympic Games, which was recently held in Sydney.

Six [6] umpires were appointed by ISF to staff the tournament. Leyland Okuda [Hawaii, USA]; Harsh Goto [Tokyo, Japan]; Lee Pacini [Ontario, Canada] and Alton Ledwig [Texas, USA] along with Sandy Adams [Christchurch, NZL] and Andrew Rindfleish [Sydney, AUS].

Lee Pacini, immediately upon accepting her appointment, made arrangements to spend a little extra time down under – a week in Australia before the event and a week in New Zealand with Sandy Adams after the event. Leyland Okuda also arranged to come in two days early.

The hospitality of Sue Itzstein and Lisa Freeman, both NSW, was wonderful,

looking after Lee for the week before the tournament started in true Australian style – including visiting the Blue Mountains and Paddy's Market - with Sue having Leyland stay also.

Lisa achieved what few of us have managed to do over the years – convince a North American that Vegemite is great. Well done Lisa, very impressive to say the least.

Sue Itzstein and Scott Rindfleish were the Umpire Liaison Officers for the Tournament and, as well as performing the usual duties associated with this job, spent a lot of out of hours time with the umpires, choosing to have lunch and dinner with the crew and accompanying the overseas group on the Harbour Cruise, arranged on the Sunday after Australia were successful in two games of the play offs.

The point that umpires have a National and world wide network of "friends", whether you have met them or not, is very true and the hospitality is always first class. Take the opportunity to ask some of the Australian umpires, who have worked national and international competitions, about friendships – you will spend an hour or so hearing some great stories.

Margo Koskelainen



Family Affair: Above, Andrew, Sue and Scott Rindfleish at the Under 19 Men's National Championships in Sydney this year. Andrew and Scott officiated while Sue was the Championship Conveyor/Announcer. To top it off Adam Rindfleish was the final night dinner entertainer. Great family effort!

ARAFURA LOOMING FAST!!!!

The 2003 Arafura games are fast approaching and final clinic arrangements are in hand. The clinic timetable even provides for a quick visit to the famous Mindil Beach markets. Presenters will be David Crowe and Mark Toft and Margo will be in attendance. The clinic will run from Tuesday May 13 until Friday May 15 with both practical and theory sessions.

The Darwin umpires are continuing to meet every fortnight to go over Rules and Case Studies. At our last get together Yvonne and Derek presented a video from the Men's Nationals and gave a talk about it.

Many thanks to the umpires who were at that Championship and went out of their way to make Yvonne and Derek feel part of the team. Derek was amazed that so many people remembered him from previous championships which just goes to show how big the family of softball umpires is!!!

Congratulations also to Yvonne who has been nominated by Darwin Softball Association for Umpire of the Year at the NT Sports Awards. They will be held this coming Friday, April 4 and she will be supported by the umpiring fraternity here.

Alice Springs are about to start their season and Cathie Allen held a basic clinic there last weekend to refresh all umpires and those wishing to become umpires. She will be coming up for Arafura and hopefully some others. Robyn Pellenat from Nhulunbuy will also be coming.

Marg Lee

SDU—Northern Territory



Left: Graham Bancroft, Marg Lee and Raylene Robinson enjoy a pie at the famous Adelaide Pie Cart in the city during the Under 16 Girls Nationals this year.

Umpire Rules Clinic 2003 - Western Australia

The Clinics are designed to give all persons THEORY training in preparation for the Australian Umpire Exam.

Six Clinics are planned:

Venue: Mirrabooka Softball Complex

Dates: Tuesday, 15th April
Tuesday, 22nd April
Tuesday, 29th April
Tuesday, 6th May
Tuesday, 13th May
Tuesday, 20th May

Time: 7:30pm

The agenda includes:

- Rules (including new rules such as DP/DEFO and obstruction)
- Practice with previous year's exams
- Question and answer analysis
- Open forum for questions and answers

Whether you intend to sit the Australian Umpire Exam or not, all members of the softball community are encouraged to attend

- Umpires (accredited or otherwise)
- Coaches
- Players
- Team Managers
- Parents and supporters

The exam is to be held on MONDAY, May 26 7:30pm at Mirrabooka & Regional Centres throughout the State. Accredited umpires **must** sit the exam at least every two years or if they are planning on going for their next level in the current year.

Western Australia - State Championships 2003

Run over the Labour Day long weekend, the annual WA State Championships provides the opportunity for many country associations to pit their softball skills against other country and city associations.

It also provides the opportunity for umpires from all around the state to work with new umpires and brush up on their skills.

The tournament was played at two venues. The Men's competition was played at Mirrabooka State Softball Headquarters. UIC was Warren Duff; Deputy UIC was Bill Kilmurry. "Blues" covered only Division 1 with club providing the umpiring services for Division 2.

All games were played in excellent spirit whilst displaying exceptionally high levels of softball ability. A special mention must go to the Esperance Division 2 Men's team, who only trained 5 times prior to the tournament.

Their first game was actually at the tournament! Esperance were narrowly defeated by Hills District in the grand final. A great effort.

The Women's, Junior Boys and Junior Girls competition were all played at Yokine Reserve. Alen Cheesman was appointed as the UIC with Rob Harris acting as Deputy UIC.

The WASUB would also like to welcome two new accredited umpires into the system! Welcome to Terry Scudds and Matthew Wilson – both from Perth Umpires Association – who obtained their Level 1 accreditation. Obtaining his Level 2 was Colin Gibb. Well done to all!

Congratulations are extended to all participants in the tournament – players, coaches, managers, scorers, spectators and umpires – for a great weekend.

Special mention must be made to the organisers, who do an exceptional job - Dave Searle (Men's), Laurie Prior (Women's) and Ingrid Smith (Women's) – in running the tournament.

Finally, a really big thanks to all umpires who donated their time over the weekend and I look forward to seeing you next year.

Western Australia - Fastpitch 2002/2003

Western Fastpitch 2002/2003 season has recently completed. With a condensed finals campaign due to various international and national commitments, the usual 5-team final system was changed to a top four final system. The grand final remained a "best of three" format.

Congratulations to Southside Mariners who won the women's competition, defending the title they won in 2001/2002. Mariners won 2 games to nil against Stirling Centrals.

Each club must field both a men's and women's team in the Home and Away competition. Night games are played at State Softball headquarters (Mirrabooka) on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday nights. Day games are played on a Sunday.

There were 8 clubs participating, resulting in a total of 178 games being played. 15 umpires were used throughout the season, covering a total of 359 slots – 63 games were covered using a three-umpire system, whilst 76 games were covered by a two-umpire system.

A big thank you goes to those 15 umpires who are listed below for their commitment, dedication and support of the State League competition. Two new umpires were introduced to the roster this year – Kathy Garbutt from SEDSUA and Dave Searle from Azul. Bill Kilmurry from SEDSUA was successful in obtaining his Level 4. Brett Treeby from Rockingham was successful in obtaining his Level 3.

John Mooy was the Operations Officer - a tough and demanding job that he devoted a considerable amount of time and energy to. Thank you John.

Looking forward to seeing you all back next year after a well earned break.

Warren Duff
State Director of Umpiring

Basic Clinic - Western Australia

Basic Umpiring Clinics are designed to give all persons PRACTICAL training in umpiring mechanics and rotations.

Venue: **Mirrabooka Softball Complex**

Date: **Tuesday, April 8**

Time: **7pm – 9pm**

Cost: **FREE!**

Topics covered include:

- Base and plate mechanics
- Calling safes and outs
- Judgment calls – fair/foul, check swing etc
- Starting positions – where do I stand?

All members of the softball community are encouraged to attend, whether you are a(n): Umpire, Coach, Player, Team Manager and Parent or supporter

Tassie a bit quiet

Quiet time for umpires over the winter months in Tasmania, BUT The annual games between the University of Tasmania houses is underway with the final on Sunday, April 6.

These games are a totally DIFFERENT experience for the umpires- much abuse for both umpires and players but all in fun (so long as the most verbal team wins).

Rules clinics being held in the North and south of the State as a lead up to the ASF Ump Exam in May.

David introduced and donated a trophy for- Umpire of the Year This was voted on by all teams and won convincingly by young umpire Wayne Clarke. Wayne received a great reception when his name was announced.

Ev Seabourne
Acting Secretary
TSC.

VENUE STILL BUSY – ALMOST 3 YEARS AFTER HOSTING OLYMPIC SOFTBALL

While in Australia for the Olympic Qualifier, ISF President Don Porter met with Softball Australia President Darryl Clout, who indicated that there were over 200 softball events at Blacktown Olympic Park in 2002, and that just as many will be completed in 2003.

The ISF President said, “Sydney brought back memories of the successful softball competition in 2000, and the fact that the Olympic softball venue in Blacktown is still being used for numerous events and competitions is another testimony to the success of those Games.”

ISF Secretary General Andy Loechner, and Director of Competition Laurie Gouthro accompanied Mr. Porter on the trip.

STATE OF FUTURE ISF COMPETITIONS

While in Sydney, Mr. Porter and the ISF delegation met with Blacktown Mayor Alan Pendleton to discuss continued improvements of the softball facilities and the interest on the part of Blacktown to host a future ISF (major) event.

In discussing the coming events in the immediate future, Mr. Porter – asked about whether the war in Iraq would cut back on any of the upcoming events, including the next qualifier (in Italy) – said that he hoped that the military situation wouldn’t keep sports competition from going on.

He said that the need for sport competition is important, as it continues to allow both the athletes to interact between countries and the attention to, albeit briefly, be taken away from the military conflict.

Tragedy in the U.S. on September 11, 2001 cut back many sports events, including the 1st Jr. Girls World Cup in Plant City, Florida – although a good number of teams still participated.

The 2nd ISF Jr. Girls’ World Cup is to be held this July, again at the ISF facilities. Thus far the event is still scheduled. “Sports are important to keep a perspective that even with military conflict the world can still come together in athletic competition,” Mr. Porter said.

The two articles on this page extracted from the latest ISF UPDATE newsletter

Calendar of Events 2003/2004

2003

March	20 - 23	WOMEN	ISF Asia / Oceania Region Olympic Qualifier	Sydney, NSW
APRIL	3 - 6	UNDER 23 WOMEN	Invitational Tournament	Sydney, NSW
APRIL	3 - 6	UNDER 23 MEN	Invitational Tournament	Ipswich, QLD
APRIL	18 - 21	WOMEN	Australia Cup	Sydney, NSW
APRIL	18 - 21	MEN & WOMEN	Australian Masters Championships	Redlands, QLD
APRIL	18 - 21	MEN	ISF World Championship Qualifier	Canberra, ACT
MAY	12 - 16		<i>ARAFURA GAMES UMPIRING CLINIC</i>	<i>Darwin, NT</i>
MAY	14 - 18		Unity of Purpose Coaching Conference	TBA
MAY	17 - 24	MEN / WOMEN	Arafura Games	Darwin, NT
JUNE	13 - 15		<i>NATIONAL UMPIRING COMMITTEE MEETING</i>	<i>Melbourne, NT</i>
JUNE	24 - 29	WOMEN	ISF Africa / Europe Region Olympic Qualifier	ITALY
JULY	2 - 22	MEN	Canada Tour	CANADA
JULY	4 - 11	UNDER 16 BOYS AND GIRLS	Friendship Series	Sydney, NSW
JULY	5 - 11	WOMEN	Canada Cup	Vancouver, Canada
JULY	20 - 27	WOMEN	ISF Americas Region Olympic Qualifier	PUERTO RICO
AUGUST	23 - 24		<i>NATIONAL UMPIRING MEETING</i>	<i>Melbourne, VIC</i>
SEPT	14 - 19	JR. WOMEN	Pre World Championship Camp	Brisbane, QLD
SEPT	18 - 22		ISF Congress	Nanjing, CHINA
SEPT	24 - OCT 4	JR. WOMEN	ISF World Championship	Nanjing, CHINA
OCTOBER	25 - 26		ASF Annual Meeting	Sydney, NSW

NOVEMBER	28 - 30	WOMEN	NTC Challenge	Sydney, NSW
DECEMBER	1 - 5	MEN	Australian Squad Camp	Canberra, ACT
DECEMBER	5 - 7	MEN	Skins Tournament	Canberra, ACT
DECEMBER	10 - 15	WOMEN	International Tri-Series	Hobart, TAS

2004

JANUARY	3 - 10	WOMEN	Australian Championship	Brisbane, QLD
JANUARY	3 - 10	UNDER 16 BOYS	Australian Championship	Hobart, TAS
JANUARY	3 - 10	JR. MEN	Australian Championship	Adelaide, SA
JANUARY	11 - 18	UNDER 16 GIRLS	Australian Championship	Perth, WA
JANUARY	11 - 18	JR. WOMEN	Australian Championship	Sydney, NSW
JAN 29 - FEB 8		MEN	ISF World Championship	Christchurch, NZL
JAN 30 - FEB 1		WOMEN	AIS Induction Camp	Brisbane, QLD
FEBRUARY	13 - 15	WOMEN	ASF Challenge	Melbourne, VIC
MARCH	6 - 13	MEN	Australian Championship	Canberra, ACT
MARCH	25 - 28	WOMEN	International Tri-Series	Sydney, NSW
APRIL	TBC	UNDER 23 WOMEN	National Tournament	Brisbane, QLD
APRIL	TBC	UNDER 23 MEN	National Tournament	Sydney, NSW
APRIL	9 - 12	WOMEN	Australia Cup	Sydney, NSW
APRIL	22 - 25	WOMEN	International Tri-Series	Brisbane, QLD
JULY		UNDER 16 BOYS AND GIRLS	Friendship Series	Sydney, NSW
AUGUST	14 - 23	WOMEN	Olympic Games	Athens, GREECE