

BLUES NEWS ON LINE

Contributions to mtoft@ozemail.com.au

December Edition Vol 11 of 2003

International Softball Federation Clinic in Brisbane

Unless you have been under a rock or were food for the next season's mushrooms you should know that there will be an International Softball Federation Clinic being held in Brisbane between December 27 –31 followed by on-diamond assessment of our International Development Squad.

Talking to a few of the squad members over the past weeks I have found them to be calm, excited and really looking forward to the experience. Other members of the umpiring family have also been invited to sit in on the clinic.

Following the clinic the Squad members, Matt Gowty and Scott Rindfleish will officiate at the 2004 Open Women's Championships at Downey Park.

The Squad Members are Leigh Evans, David Crowe, George James, Sue Itzstein, Darrell Shephard, Debbie Keogh, Bruce McCahon, Dianne Waller and Lindsay Whitehead.

Margo Koskelainen (UIC), Matt Gowty and Tricia Sibraa are examiners, for the Level 6 candidate, Scott Rindfleish.

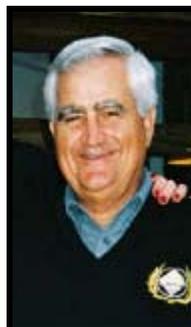
The Clinic will be run by ISF training officer, Henry Pollard (Pictured). A profile on Henry is published on the next page for all those who are interested in one of the true gentlemen of international softball.

I also take this opportunity to thank Henry's wife, Julie for the picture which was taken on the Thanksgiving Holiday (only last week) and I extend a warm Australian welcome to Henry and hope his stay in Australia is an enjoyable one.

I will be doing an in depth interview with Henry while in Brisbane and will have that interview in the January edition of BNOL.

In what will be an exciting two weeks I take this opportunity to congratulate the squad members for the work they have done to get to this point in their careers and wish them well in obtaining ISF accreditation.

Mark Toft - Editor



Who is Henry Pollard?

HENRY POLLARD was appointed National Deputy Director of Umpires in 1989 after being on the National Umpire Staff Region (03) from 1977-89.

He has served as tournament UIC for 63 national tournaments and 16 interservice championships. He has represented the ASA as a clinician in Holland, England, Spain, Germany, Greece, Turkey and Canada.

He received his ISF certification in 1982, and in 1987, was selected to umpire in the first Men's World Slow Pitch Championship. He is an active umpire, officiating more than 350 games yearly and more than 7,000 since walking on to a softball field for the first time in 1969.

He also serves as Deputy Director of Umpires for the International Softball Federation and is responsible for training. Pollard has received many honors including being inducted into the Central Virginia ASA Hall of Fame (1988), the Wilson National Umpire Award of Excellence (1991), the Tom Mason Central Atlantic Award (1991), and was inducted into the ASA National Softball Hall of Honor in 1992.

He was selected to the National Indicator Fraternity in 1986 and is a member of the Medals program. Pollard is considered the foremost authority on slow pitch softball. He is a retired firefighter in Richmond, VA. Henry and his wife Julie live in Highland Springs, VA.

Season's Greetings from Margo



I would like to wish all the Blue's and their families a happy and safe festive season with a healthy and prosperous 2004.

Margo Koskelainen (Margo's Memo is on back page)

What's in this Edition

- Find a great Mentor
- Christmas Message from ASF President
- Bat Recall
- State Wrap and seasonal messages
- Someone got married!
- Article from ISF President - Merle Butler
- New Accreditations & more
- Who is Henry Pollard?

President's Message

As President of the Australian Softball Federation I am delighted to have an opportunity to congratulate our umpires for their work and dedication throughout 2003.

A special mention must go to Margo Koskelainen and Alan McAuliffe on their induction into the International Softball Federation Hall of Fame recently. Margo and Alan's work has been tireless and inspirational over many years of service and they are both worthy recipients of such a prestigious honour.

It is a fitting climax in the 'Year of the Official' that we see two of the most prominent umpires in Australia receive an international accolade such as this.

I want to wish the umpires who will be officiating at our upcoming National Championships good calling. I know you will represent the umpiring fraternity with distinction and on behalf of the players and officials involved I thank you for your continued support of these important Championships.

To our State and Association umpires who are the backbone of umpiring in this country I wish you well in your efforts to make your contribution to our sport and to improve your levels. I look forward to seeing some of you on the National and International stages in the future.

In what is sometimes a difficult and challenging position, on behalf of the Softball community can I commend all our umpires for their commitment to their tasks and acknowledge that our game would not be as great without your participation.

I also take this opportunity to wish you and your families and friends a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous 2004.

Darryl Clout
ASF President



Higher Accreditation

Western Australia - Level 4 - Jason Carter

Queensland - Level 4 - Mick Gorman, Level 3 - Rick Gill, Boyd Davison, Adrian Ralph, Matt Blake, Heather Brown, Sally Crawford, Level 2 - Neville Baggow, Joe Lawton, Emily McBride, Ken McIntyre

Northern Territory - Level 2 - Leah Schwartz, Mark Bentley and Ian Lee.

Tasmania - Level 2 - Denis Law, Cindy Clarke, Leanne East, Kelvin Clarke.

New South Wales - Level 3 - Vicky Lansley, Ben McCall, Greg Zucchetti, Keith Compton, Level 2 - Wendy Boyd, Peter Medbury, Dave Barker.

Victoria - Level 4 - Richard Loveridge

Could all other States please send their most recent accreditations so we can recognise their umpires.

UMPIRES NEEDED

The following was omitted from the December edition of Counterpoints (Queensland's Umpiring Magazine)

Queensland's Special Events Co-ordinator Ron Yardley has requested the services of any umpire who wants games in the New Year.

He has the Coast to Coast Tour (age group U/19 and U/16 playing a tournament) and Messiah College wanting to play a double header both between of January 1 and 5 while the Women's National is on. These games could be at Downey Park as well. Please contact Ron Yardley ASAP on 0407 592 138 or e-mail bryardley@bigpond.com.au

Queensland

On behalf of the Queensland Umpiring Committee I take this opportunity to wish all umpires throughout Australia a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Darren Sibraa



New South Wales



To all umpires,

**Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year**



From Darrell Shepherd
& the NSW Umpiring
Committee

Victoria



Merry Christmas

&

Happy New Year

From Kerry Franklin

&

The Victoria Umpiring Committee



Perth Super League

The 2nd Annual Perth Super League tournament was conducted over the weekend of 14th, 15th and 16th of November 2003. With the best of WA Female softballers and a mixture of international players, 5 teams were selected to compete for the title.

Umpires who were appointed to the tournament were:

Peter Richardson	(Tournament Umpire in Chief)
Julie Richardson	
Peter Baker	
Graham Bancroft	
Warren Duff	
Betty Maass	(Off Diamond Examiner)
Bill Kilmurray	
Danny Wikitoa	
Allen Cheesman	
Jason Carter	(Level 4 Candidate)
Rob Harris	
Kathy Garbut	(Level 3 Candidate)

In a rare occurrence, the Grand Final allocation saw three generations of State Directors / State Umpire in Chiefs on the diamond at the same time. Julie Richardson (Plate), Peter Baker (1st base) and Warren Duff (3rd base) officiated over the grand final which was played in excellent spirit.

The games flowed extremely quickly, as the umpires enforced – with the full support and cooperation of the teams – the recently released Technical Bulletin regarding length of games.

Thanks to Peter Richardson for acting as TUIC and to Julie Richardson for arranging the examinations.

Australian Capital Territory

Merry



Christmas

&

**Happy New
Year**



Martin Turnbull & ACT Umpiring
Committee

South Australia

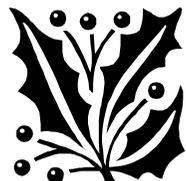
To All,



Merry Christmas

& Happy New Year

From



Neville and the
South Australian
Blues

Grand Prix Series - Geelong 2003

Question: Can any one name the three Kevin's who were on the diamond at the same time on the Geelong Grand Prix Series?

Rumor has it that the reason it was done so not as to confuse the umpires on the diamond or the teams!

Answer: Kevin Broomhall (Vic), Kevin Tanerbring (SA), Kevin Offer (Vic).

WA umpires contribution recognised

At an awards ceremony in front of a large crowd at the Perth Super League tournament, four long serving members of Softball WA were recognized for their outstanding service to softball. Three of the Australian Softball Federation Service Awards were umpires heavily involved in the National and WA Umpiring Program.

Western Australia

On behalf of all the umpires in WA, I would like to extend my congratulations to: Peter Baker, Julie Richardson, Peter Richardson

Peter, Julie and Peter have each contributed to developing softball – and softball umpires – in WA for a number of years. We all look forward to your involvement for many more years to come.

Warren Duff
State Umpire in Chief

WA has a new Level 4! Jason Carter. Well done! Thanks to Julie Richardson (State Examining Coordinator) for arranging the examinations and the examiners - Peter Richardson, Graham



National umpire's cap presentation

At the annual Softball WA Cap Night for the U16 Girls, U19 Women, Open Women and Western Arrow teams, the WA umpires attending female nationals were presented with a state cap, to acknowledge their contribution to the ASF National Championships.

Appointed to the Under 16 Girls are:
Graham Bancroft, Warren Duff, Betty Maass, Allen Cheesman (candidate)
Further cap presentations to those umpire's attending male tournaments will be made at a later stage.

The highlight of the evening for players, parents and umpire alike, was the motivational speech given by dual Olympian Brooke Wilkins. Brooke provided an insight into how she has managed to obtain such great success and the importance of strong mental preparation in order to achieve her "to do list" – this is Brooke's way of setting goals for herself.

Congratulations to all players, team officials and umpires attending the 2004 National championship series.

WA umpires make the long trek east

Three Western Australian umpires are attending tournaments in the east over the course of the next two weeks.

Attending the Geelong leg of the Grand Prix series is Warren Duff, over the weekend November 28 - 30. The Grand Prix Series is an initiative of softball Australia to provide an even and elite domestic level of competition for Australia's leading women softballers.

The Grand Prix series forms an important part of the selection process for the 2004 Olympic Campaign.

On the weekend of December 5 -7, Australia's best male softballers will be competing at the annual Skins Tournament, in Canberra. The Skins event is a great lead up to the Men's World Championships to be held in New Zealand in January 2004.

Julie and Peter Richardson will both be attending this quality tournament.

Best of luck to all traveling umpires!

Western Australia

On behalf of my
committee and
umpiring staff I



wish everyone a very Merry
Christmas and hope 2004

brings you every
happiness.

Warren Duff



We could always do with more umpires

How do we get more people interested in umpiring? I don't know nor do I care! Hang on a second! If you are an umpire and you are reading this Magazine then you do care.

Have you ever thought that you would love to have a few more umpires around the park? It could be for a wide range of reasons.

So you don't have to go back-to-back-to-back or even back, so you can do more base work because there is only a few umpires that can do plates, and you're one of them.

Go out and look for others to share the fun and excitement of officiating Softball. Don't talk about the small negative things, talk about the State and National Championships trips, the fun in the dressing room, the mateship the friends you've made.

You never know unless you ask someone, go on, ask someone today.

What have you got to lose!

Two Runners On The Same Base

Some questions have recently been asked in connection with Case 511 of the Casebook, which reads:

R1 on first, when B2 hits safely. Both R1 and B2 advance to, and occupy, second. When the ball is returned to F1 in the pitcher's circle, he claims that either or both of the runners should be called out, since 2 runners cannot occupy the same base at the same time. RULING: F1 is correct, but no one is called out automatically. A play must be made on the runners. If both runners are tagged while standing on the base, B2 will be called out. R1 is safe, being the person to legally occupy the base.

The questions raised are:

1. What happens if the pitcher, standing in the circle, receives the ball with two runners on 2nd base and he makes no play on them?
2. Are the runners committed to leave the base due to the 8 foot circle rule?
3. What happens if one, or both, take off ~ one to third and the other back to first?

Answer:

First of all, Case 511 assumes a play will be made on one of the runners. Should the defensive team not make a play, then the umpire would be legally within his right to declare the runner, who is not entitled to the base (R2), out. However, common sense says the umpire should not be too hasty in making this decision, as the offending player must be given a reasonable opportunity to return to first in this type of situation.

If, after a reasonable time, both runners are in contact with second while the ball is in the circle and R1 takes off for third, then a dead ball should be ruled, with R1 declared out under the 8 foot circle rule. This would then make R2 a legal runner at second who would be entitled to the base.

The same situation would apply if both runners left second at the same time, with R2 attempting to return to first. You can only have one out when 2 runners contravene the rule (leaving base when the pitcher has possession of the ball in the circle), so it should be R1 (the lead runner) who is declared out, with R2 legally remaining at second.

I take this opportunity to wish all my fellow 'Blues' the Compliments of the Season and trust you and your families have a Happy & Prosperous New Year.

"Big Al"

Important information Re: softball bats

Hi Everyone,

Official information circular from ASF for your information. Please forward the information to all umpires in your State as a priority matter.

Please note also that there is the possibility ASF will be required to ban the bat for Risk Management purposes, but I will let you know if and when that happens.

Contact me if you have any questions.

Regards, Margo

Dear All,

For your information, the Easton Synergy SCX bat has been recalled by Easton in Australia and a new "Synergy mark 2" bat will soon be released in Australia to replace this bat. The new Synergy bat will be available by the end of 2003.

Whilst the Easton Synergy SCX bat is not yet officially banned by the ISF, the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) and other associations in the USA will be banning this bat effective from January 1st, 2004.

Addlon Trading, the agents for Easton product in Australia, have consulted with Softball Australia on this decision, and we are in agreement that it is in the best interests for all softball players in Australia that this bat be removed from the market place.

If you have any queries relating to this product recall, please either contact myself or :- Tony Zucconi, Easton Product Manager (02) 9807 7282 tony.zucconi@addlon.com.au

Regards,

Neil Dalrymple
Chief Executive Softball Australia

Suite 4, Ground Floor,
38 - 40 Prospect Street,
Box Hill, VIC, 3128.

Ph: (03) 9890 8200 Mobile: 0413 020002

Email: Neil.Dalrymple@softball.org.au

Can you Help with a survey?

How effective is Blue's New On-Line?

If you receive an Email from Matt Gowty saying that the next edition of BNOL is available through the Resource Library on the NUC Website that's great. You do not have to continue with the survey.

If you don't receive the Email from Matt Gowty that means you are not on the mailing list and that's bad!

Just take a moment to work out how you are reading this edition.

- A. Did you go to the Website like you do every month and download it?
- B. Did you hear it was out and then went to the Website to download it?
- C. Did someone give you a hard copy?

If you answered Yes to any of the above send me an Email at mtoft@ozemail.com.au and I will ensure you are put on the mailing list.

Questions -

Are you seeing your State or Association represented in Australia's National Umpiring Magazine, with articles, recognition of higher levels or pictures? If not send me an Email and I will forward it on to the correct person to take action!

Do you have any interesting things to share with other umpires? If so, send them direct to me by Email!

Don't get left out in the cold. Get yourself on the mailing list and get you and your fellow umpires in the only National Umpiring Magazine.

Blue's News On-Line

mtoft@ozemail.com.au

DO IT NOW!

Merry Christmas

On behalf of BLUE'S NEWS ON-LINE I take this opportunity to wish the entire BLUES FAMILY a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year. Good calling.



DEADLINE FOR JANUARY'S EDITION - JANUARY 4

Publication date - January 7

Get your articles in early.



New Level 4: Victorian Umpire Richard Loveridge cleans his shoes before his final examination at Knox at the Open Championships in November.

What is he saying...

As you can see Richard is deep in thought.

What do you think he is thinking ?

Why not send an Email to Blue's News On-Line with your response.

I am sure we can come up with some good ones, just for Christmas.

Maybe Richard may send his response in!

Answers published in January's Edition.

Risk Management

These notes are provided as reminders only. No responsibility is taken for the accuracy of any implied advice contained therein. It is your responsibility to check with your legal advisor on any question or issue of concern. For details on this presentation, refer to the paper provided by Ian Fullagar to Neil Dalrymple.

Main Points of Presentation

- On-going area of concern – last addressed in 1992
- Do officials owe a duty of care to persons involved in the game? Yes
- Officials have a duty of care to
 - Enforce rules to ensure safety (sometimes spectators), and any by-laws in-so-far as they apply to the conduct of the game.
 - Protect participants
 - To warn
 - Anticipate reasonable foreseeable dangers
 - To control and supervise the game
 - Inspect the playing field
 - Cancel a game because of increment weather
 - Control players and use of equipment
 - Clear playing field (of people) (when danger occurs)
 - Provide first aid (when you know what you are doing – competence and certification) – otherwise call for medical staff.
- Once game commences umpires have this responsibility – can't pass it to anyone else (which they may be able to do prior to starting the game)
- Q: If the umpire advises not to continue, but participants agree to go ahead, have we fulfilled our responsibility? Probably, but there are always questions of degree. Also documenting action in writing is an excellent idea. Eg – we noted the danger (specify), we informed the At this time. They decided to proceed. BUT if you consider it is so unsafe, then stop game.
- Failure to enforce rules which result in an injury – umpires can be found responsible. But not the result of the game – a number of cases in European football – these cases have not been successful as there are too many factors which impact on the result.
- Q: What is the situation when night games had to be scheduled after an edict that they were not to be played due to lights not up to standard. Would have to weight up the risk – how many times has there been an injury happened before due to lack of light? We've been playing night games prior to any lighting standards. Any decision would be based on a balance of probabilities.
- Should not assume control of game until field has been made safe.
- Q: If a risk has been identified, and you have alerted responsible authority (council, etc) you have transferred the risk. Players need to be made aware of the risk, and given the option to play. It is becoming more com-

mon to have athlete briefing.

- Q: case in Brisbane softball when player injured sliding into base. Umpires now advised that they have to warn players of risks such as pegged bases.
- The law is changing to favour not-for-profit organizations (softball is in this category). Putting responsibility back on to end user. More court judgments coming along these lines.
- Checking of bats: if it is in the rules that all equipment is presented, and a team introduce new equipment after the check, then it is probably the team's responsibility.
- Q: re illegal pitching (not called) resulting in a hit batter.
- Q: inexperienced pitcher who can't control ball hits several batters. Umpires probably has responsibility to have pitcher taken off.
- Having first aid available is not responsibility of umpire, but is responsibility of game organization.
- Q: who makes the call when a person can be moved – the medical staff. If none present, can transfer to coach.

Breach of Duty

Whether an official has breached or failed to discharge his or her duty will be judged against the standard of care owed by the reasonable sports official in the particular circumstances of the sport and the particular incident.

- Of whatever level of qualification. Eg Olympic official will be judged to a much higher standard than the local lower level official.
- Organization responsible that official's level of competence is matched to level of game.
- Allocation of people by teams to a game at which they should not be allocated. Who is responsible??? Probably the club. Should however make sure the organization has explained that they should allocate only someone who is competent to do the job.
- Note the legislation re volunteers and their liabilities and protection whilst they are doing their job. Note that reasonable umpire payment can be considered reimbursement of expenses, and they could still be considered volunteers.
- What about a player playing out of their competency level – parents would need to consent.
- Pregnant players – have to advise ASF.

Smolden's case

"The ... duty of care... takes into account the circumstances of the sport, which will include the rules, customs and the inherent risks. The riskier the sport, the (higher) the standard of care might be expected to become"

- Failure to enforce a safety rule can result in an umpire being sued and losing.
- Risky for an umpire not to knowingly enforce a rule.

Continues Page 8.....

..... From Page 7

Anderson's Case

The relationship between Ms Anderson and the Association gave rise to a duty of care in that the Association was required to take reasonable care to avoid foreseeable injuries to its referees.

- Anderson was refereeing a higher game than usual, and was not told about the risks. She fell over running backwards and broke arms. She won.

Risk Management

The following are examples of risk management which officials

- Always inspect for reasonable dangers
- Cancel the contest if there is inclement or dangerous weather. If during an inspection it is possible that a competitor may be injured due to the ground's condition delay the game
- Inspect equipment
- Take all reasonable steps to keep spectators off the playing arena
- Enforce the rules of the game
- Warm players of any particular risk of which the official is aware
- Control the conduct of the players
- Be able to provide first aid if required and to deal with potential and actual injuries.

Conclusion

Risk management and insurance are protective mechanisms against liability. The first can be undertaken by an official taking practical steps to identify risks to which he or she is exposed and taking appropriate action to reduce/remove those risks. A risk management program should be tailored specifically to the sport, the official's role and activities within it. The second is essential but should be tailored specifically to the official and his or her activities.

- Should make sure umpires are specifically mentioned in waivers.
- Have a good risk management program showing you have done all you're

BNOL DEADLINES AND EDITION RELEASES

The **deadline** for **January's** edition of BNOL is **JANUARY 2, 2004**

The **publication date** for **January's** BNOL is **JANUARY 9, 2004**

Get you articles and pictures in before the deadline. Send them direct!

Email: mtoft@ozemail.com.au

Do it now!

Tassie umpires still hard at it

As usual our umpires are working hard covering games from Teeball, U14, U16, B Grade and Senior Men and Women as well as State League Fast Pitch and State Championships.

We conducted our State League finals on November 30 which were held in Ulverstone and our Blues performed to their usual high standard.

David Lipscombe (UIC), Sam Malliotis, Peter Clarke, Wayne Clarke, Cindy Clarke and Denis Law officiated.

The Under 16 State Championships will be held in Hobart on December 7 at the Southern Softball Association. We will have four umpires being assessed for Level 2, Denis Law, Cindy Clarke, Leanne East, Kelvin Clarke.

Yes, the Clarke family do feature strongly in our umpiring brigade.

Many of our umpires are looking forward to watching and learning from the World Class umpires that will be officiating in Hobart, December 11-14 at the International Series between Japan and Australia.

These types of tournaments are invaluable for the development of Blues in Tasmania.

The Under 16 Boys Australian Championship in January will again offer another learning opportunity for us wee folk down here.

Director of Umpiring, Tasmania.

David Lipscombe

Tasmania



I hope this Festive Season brings you every happiness while with family and friends.

To those umpires officiating in Hobart at the Under 16 Boys we will catch then.



Merry Christmas to all from David Lipscombe and the entire Tasmanian Umpiring family.

NT boss sends apology

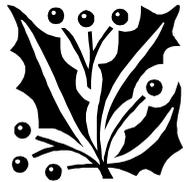
The State Director of Northern Territory, Margaret Lee is still in Adelaide and apologises that she does not have any information on Northern Territory Blues at this time.

She has asked Blue's News On-Line to send her best wishes and as you can see to the right a Christmas greeting.

On Behalf of all the Blue's we hope Ian is on the road to recovery and we will see the Lee's back in the Territory real soon.

Hey guys we are thinking of you!

Northern Territory



We wish you a Merry Christmas,

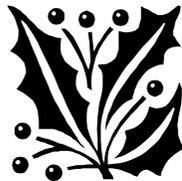
We wish you a Merry Christmas,

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

You have to supply your own rhythm and music

All the best for 2004, hope to catch up real soon.

Margaret Lee



For me it came down to these key points:

1. Fit umpiring in with work & family commitments – sometimes hard but priorities have to be right.
2. Work as many games as possible with other Blues & get as much feedback as possible – treat each game as a chance to learn.
3. Talk to the other Blues, particularly the senior ones about umpiring issues - whenever there is a chance - ask that question - the only silly question is the one that doesn't get asked.
4. Participate in as many Tournaments as you can – play & umpiring is generally a much higher standard than in local Club Competitions.
5. Read anything relevant to umpiring you can – softball or baseball – there might be something useful.
6. Practice everything you can – there is a lot you can work on even when you aren't actually umpiring a game

It meant I had to travel – less than 40% of my umpiring experience has been gained in our Orange Competition – the rest has been at tournaments, invitationals & the like. I've been lucky – both my son & daughter play & often my travel has fitted in because they've been playing at the same venue.

I've had a lot of help from Blues in Orange, particularly Geoff Fox & Steve Hare – I needed their knowledge, tolerance & guidance. Many other Blues – too many to mention have helped too - always willing to pass on their knowledge.

I've also had a lot of support from my family. They put up with the absences, they've helped with strike zones at home, practicing rotations, timing & a myriad of other things as well.

But I wasn't really prepared for the assessment process itself – I didn't really know what to expect so I decided that regardless of what happened I would use it as a learning tool as well. And that is exactly the way it worked out – yes I passed my assessment – and things I learnt that week-end have been a tremendous help since then.

Article thanks to NSW's "On the Diamond Newsletter" November 2003

Preparation for Level 2 Assessment

By Peter Medbury

Recently I have been attending the monthly Umpires Clinics being conducted by the NSWSUA. I'm from Orange & that means a 3½ hour drive to Blacktown Olympic Park so there was some surprise to see me there the first time. When I said it was a too good an opportunity to miss, Scott asked me just how, coming from the country, I had prepared for my recent Level 2 Assessment at the Under 16's State Championship.

Orange & District Softball Association is not a large organisation although we did manage to run 16 matches each week during our last season. We had 8 Blues (2 Level 3 & 6 Level 1).

Our Association doesn't have a training program to develop umpires, but the Blues will discuss issues that have occurred & suggest changes to mechanics or game management where they see a need. Our UIC also runs excellent Rules Discussions Nights prior to the exam.

Most Blues coach & some play so there are not many opportunities to work with other Blues - usually you work with club umpires. Our 2 adult A-Grade Games each week were umpired by Blues but it still wasn't much, especially when our season ended 3 months before my examination.



Wedding of the Year

If anyone was wondering what our National Director of Umpiring has been doing since she came back from the ISF Congress these pictures can tell the story.

Margo and Karl's daughter Trudi has tied the knot with fiancée David Skinner at a lovely ceremony in Shepparton on November 15.

Of course you will agree that mum, dad, bride and groom look great on the day after months of planning.

Right: Sisters Trudi and Erika on wedding day in a lovely portrait at the reception gardens.



Need more contributions

[Important Dates for next edition](#)
[Deadline - January 4](#)
[Publication - January 7](#)

Get your Photographs, articles, jokes, absolutely everything into BNOL by the above dates.

Just remember there are lots of things going on in January including National Championships.

I would like to get January's edition out before I go to Hobart.

Let's work together and make it a bumper issue, thanks.

Tofty

3 CLINCH MEN'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP BERTHS

The 7th Asian Men's Softball Championship, played at Rizal Memorial Stadium in the Philippines, saw Japan, the host country, and Chinese Taipei finish first, second, and third, respectively, meaning those three teams will represent Asia at the ISF's XI Men's World Championship next month.

Japan beat the Philippines, 3-2, for their second straight Asian Men's Softball Championship title. The winners got two home runs to support winning pitcher Nobunori Nishimura. Mark Rae Ramirez took the loss for the Philippines, who had earlier beaten Chinese Taipei 12-0 to advance to the grand final.

Five other teams participated in the event: Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, and Thailand.

ISF Director of Competition Laurie Gouthro attended the event, and said, "ASAPHIL and SCA did a great job hosting (it)." (ASAPHIL is the Amateur Softball Association Philippines and SCA is the Softball Confederation of Asia.) She noted that "at least four major TV stations" were there covering the Japan vs. Philippines playoff game.

The ISF Men's World Championship will take place from January 29 – February 8 in Christchurch, New Zealand. Japan, Philippines, and Chinese Taipei join the following 13 teams at that event, who had already qualified: Argentina, Australia, Botswana, Canada, Czech Republic, Great Britain, Mexico,

GOT IT COVERED (On the Diamond November 2003)

Get locked into your plate stance as the pitcher begins the windup. If you go down too soon, it's uncomfortable to maintain that position for very long. If you go down too late, you will not have time to establish your frame of reference at the top of the strike zone, worse still your head may move as the pitch arrives, adversely affecting your ability to call it correctly. Before going into your stance, take a breath and relax. Use your body language to give an appearance of calm confidence.

ATTENTION UMPIRING CO-ORDINATORS

Get your umpires recognised in the official Australian Umpire's Magazine, Blue's News On-Line" send your information now for the next issue.



YOUR ATTITUDE AND WHY YOU OFFICIATE!

By: Merle Butler – (Courtesy of the ISF Website)

The late broadcaster Mel Allen often said, "How About That!" Do you understand attitudes and the power they hold? Well, how about your attitude? Why do you umpire?

Do you unnecessarily put down the level of your game, the skills of the players, or the strategy (or lack thereof) of the managers? Do you complain about the condition of the field, the distance you had to travel, or the rate of pay (if you receive pay)? Ultimately, your attitude will affect your performance. Now what about your attitude toward yourself? You can't manage others until you can manage yourself.

Each person is unique with different physical and mental capabilities. We have different needs, capacities, and goals. Some umpires want recognition while others prefer not to be noticed. Most people have a genuine desire to be wanted, accepted, and liked. As a sports official, if you weren't wanted, there would be no games for you to umpire. A few of us just want to walk away from a well-officiated game without comment, fuss, or fanfare.

WHY DO YOU OFFICIATE? Many umpires claim they officiate because of their love for the game. Some players become umpires to stay involved with the game when their playing days are over; a few start while they are still playing. Umpires who were players sometimes possess a deeper understanding of the game.

Learning the rules and mechanics is often easier for a former player. This can help their attitude when they can visualize the game from a player's perspective. Ex-players often have that invaluable feel for the game. There is, however, an accurate old saying, "A player learns the rules when he becomes an umpire." As you know, this is very true.

Then there is the social need, wanting to belong, to associate with others, to make new friends and gain acceptance. Association umpires have more opportunities to work a variety of games, travel to other areas to officiate, and to participate in local, regional, national, and world championships.

Association meetings also enable umpires to get to know each other and improve their own skills and attitudes. Having the proper frame of mind and knowing your partner personally can be an enormous help when confrontations develop on the field. Your attitude and confidence will improve when you successfully manage difficult field problems.

Self-actualization is the attitude and desire to reach the top, to excel, to have that perfect game. After being an umpire for 5-6 years, I accepted the opportunity to become a member of our local training committee. I learned the rules inside and out. I had to be prepared to answer umpires' questions in training sessions. After fielding tough questions from umpires, responding to managers and players was a piece of cake.

Perhaps you have the qualifications to become a leader in your group. Take that first step and seek the rewarding opportunity to do something positive for your association. It starts with your attitude toward yourself.

I WANT TO THANK Softball Australia for the following umpire tips from their official Umpire Training Manual. Features of a good umpire are:

- 1) A love of and feeling for the game.
- 2) A good sense of humor.
- 3) A very thick skin.
- 4) 20/20 vision.
- 5) The capacity not to criticize, but to be criticised.
- 6) An understanding of the participants involved.
- 7) Fairness, firmness and consistency on field decisions.
- 8) Fitness to match the demands and the requirements of the game.
- 9) An ability to communicate with managers, coaches, and players.
- 10) The courage to believe in your decisions.
- 11) The concentration to remain alert during the entire game.
- 12) The motivation to perform well and to strive for improvement.
- 13) Self-confidence which allows you to take control of all aspects of the game.
- 14) The ability to be a good partner.
- 15) To be humble, as even the best and most respected umpires sometimes get it wrong.
- 16) Keep things in perspective. "You're only as good as your next call."

Try to stay on top of your game until the last player is out. Remember, a proper attitude will help you achieve your goals and ease you along the rough road of sports officiating.

***Merle Butler is the ISF's Umpire-In-Chief
and a member of the ISF Hall of Fame.***

(This article appeared in the May-August 2003 edition of World Softball Magazine, (Volume 31, Number 2)

Want a Successful Umpiring Career? Find a Great Mentor!

According to many experts and successful umpires, anyone who hopes to have a successful umpiring career should have a mentor. Why? Because a positive mentoring relationship is very beneficial to both the mentor and the protégé.

Since a mentor is typically more experienced than his/her protégé, he/she possesses the wisdom that only experience can provide. The protégé receives guidance and helpful advice, and the mentor benefits from the opportunity to strengthen his or her leadership skills.

Some helpful tips on how to find a great mentor:

- *Get to know yourself.* Identify what type of personality you have to help you determine what personality styles will complement your own.
- *Think about what you are looking for in a mentor.* It is important to choose a mentor whose goals are similar to your own, as well as someone who is on the same career path. Think about someone who has the same skills and traits that you want to adopt.
- *Keep an open mind.* A mentor is simply someone who will help you grow – he/she does not necessarily have to be someone with higher accreditation than you.
- *Think about people who have been mentors to you in the past.* Whether or not you considered them to be mentors, each of us has looked toward a role model at one point or another. Think about the qualities they possessed, and why you appreciated them.
- *Take the initiative to find a mentor.* Whilst some mentoring relationships for naturally, others require intentional contact for a connection to be established with a potential mentor. Consider a mentor from your own umpire association or other umpires within your State whom you admire.
- *Ask for “referrals”.* If you don’t already have a mentor in mind, use your network of friends and umpiring colleagues to expand your reach and broaden your range of prospective mentors.
- *Know what you want to achieve from the relationship.* You and your mentor will benefit more if you both clearly understand and identify the purpose and desired end result of your relationship. You can avoid

Margo's Memo



confusion in the future by clarifying your roles and expectations upfront.

- *Choose a mentor who has time to give to this relationship.* Likewise, you must dedicate time to participate and make the relationship worthwhile.

Work hard to maintain the relationship. Since relationships are a two-way street, you must do your best to give, as well as receive. Mentors are most beneficial when they are simply used as a guide down your road to umpiring success. You must still take the wheel and drive if you want to get to your final destination.

UMPIRES SELECTED FOR ATHENS OLYMPICS

The twelve umpires who will work the softball competition at the 2004 Summer Olympics were named recently.

International Softball Federation (ISF) President Don Porter announced that the ISF Executive Council affirmed the appointment of the group nominated by ISF Umpire-In-Chief Merle Butler. The appointments include six female and six male umpires. There will also be three alternate umpires in the event that any from the initial selection become unavailable.

Mr. Butler, who at various ISF events including World Championships, World Cups, regional games, and other major international competitions, has observed all the umpires nominated, said, [“I feel we have provided to the ISF the very best umpires available, who have extensive experience at the international level.”](#)

Those chosen are as follows:

Haruhi Goto, Japan, Kelly Hunter, Canada, Debbi Lauderback, United States, [Neville Lawrence, Australia](#), Marty Makar, United States, Vincent Maoeng, South Africa, Leilani Okuda, United States, Leanna Pacini, Canada, Wayne Saunders, New Zealand, Santos Vasquez, Puerto Rico, Pavel Vychodsky, Czech Republic, Yang Yi, China.

Alternates - Augustine Brea, Dominican Republic, Weng-Meng LIN, Chinese Taipei, Nicola Ogier, New Zealand.

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