



National UIC's Call with Tricia Sibraa

As we approach the end of another year, I want to thank you all for your tremendous efforts and achievements within your own States during the past 12 months.

This has been another demanding year, and you have all contributed immensely to the further enhancement of the services we offer to the International, National, State and the wider softball community. I am grateful to you all for this, and for your continued support for the work we do.

I wish you all a restful and enjoyable break, and send my good wishes for Christmas and for 2010.

My warm regards, Tricia Sibraa (National UIC)



Tricia has given us all a timely reminder that Christmas is only around the corner.

We are all caught up in the busy day to day business of our own work, then devote time to our own families and try and find some time to put into on diamond work as well.

Then add hours of administration time and it doesn't take long to realise there isn't much time left to take a step back from day to day work, both work and softball on and off the diamond, take breath and take time to thank and appreciate others.

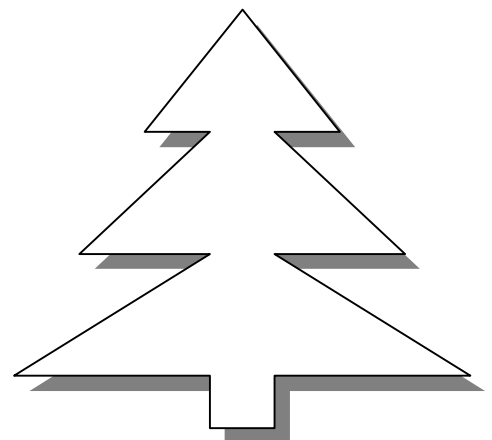
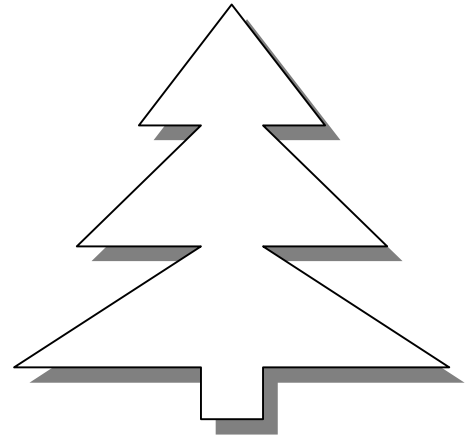
So THANK you to you all for devoting time to this great game and for the passion it takes to take on extra roles.

Merry Christmas to you and your family.

See you on the park. Leigh Evans (National UIC - Rules)

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Aust. Capital Territory

www.suaact.softball.org.au

ACT Slow Pitch season in full swing by Michael Hill

The ACT Slow Pitch season traditionally starts the first week in October. This season, however, the ACT Government decided to replace the outfield grass on the three main diamonds at the Hawker International Softball Centre with new couch grass, which requires less water and less maintenance. This meant that the start of the Slow Pitch season had to be delayed by six weeks, with two diamonds available for play on 9 November and the third diamond becoming available the week of 22 November. When only two diamonds were available, we played games in three timeslots to get as many games in as possible - we're back to normal now.

Like last year, the ACT Slow Pitch League has 12 teams this season. Official "blues" have covered all games so far this season, thanks to the training and support of Slow Pitch umpires provided by SUAACT. Currently there are 11 official Slow Pitch umpires: nine ACT Level 1 accredited umpires, one Fast Pitch umpire training as a Slow Pitch umpire, and one Slow Pitch trainee. Planning is underway to expand the ACT accreditation system to include Levels 2 and 3.

This season SUAACT have introduced a new uniform for Slow Pitch umpires. This was done because Slow Pitch umpires are accredited only in the ACT, and it would not be appropriate for state-only Slow Pitch umpires to wear the national uniform and Softball Australia logo. The new uniforms are more casual than the Fast Pitch ones, recognising the more social aspect of Slow Pitch. The uniform is a light and navy blue shirt with dark blue trousers or shorts, and the SUAACT logo



The happy smiling blues modelling the new uniform are (L-R): Dick Gallagher, Michael White, Sandee Southwell, Michael Hill, Danielle Pring, Patrick White, and Bob Miles.

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New Level 4 Umpires

SNSWUA welcomed three new Level 4 umpires to its ranks following the end of the 2009 State League Final Series. Congratulations to the following umpires on their recent achievements:

Sue Allison (Hawkesbury)

James English (Georges River)

George Norrish (Newcastle)



We congratulate all three umpires and wish them all well for their umpiring futures!

SNSWUA Annual Award Winners

On Sunday 22 November a special luncheon was held for all umpires ahead of the 2009 State League Final Series at Blacktown Olympic Park. During the special luncheon a series of SNSWUA Annual Awards were presented. Andrew Rindfleish also presented Geoff White from Peps Auto Spares, our State League sponsor for many years, with a plaque in appreciation of his continued support of the SNSWUA.

SNSWUA would like to congratulate the following award winners for 2009:

Director's Award for Service to Umpiring: Scott Rindfleish (Sutherland)



Scott's contribution to the umpiring program in NSW has been extensive in 2009. Scott has not only serviced many championships and tournaments as an umpire and/or member of the management crew, but has also been involved in developing the SNSWUA Strategic Plan, delivering clinics and mentoring young umpires.

Scott possesses determination, commitment, creativity and enthusiasm for umpiring. He is a role model for many young umpires in NSW and continues to play a pivotal role as our Training Coordinator.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment and service to the NSW umpiring program, Scott!

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Individual Award for the Development of Umpires: Adrian Rampoldi (Hornsby)

This award was presented to Adrian Rampoldi in recognition of his outstanding leadership of the Hornsby District Softball Association Umpire Program. As Umpire In Chief, and one of the senior umpires at HDSA, Adrian has embraced his role as UIC and, with innovation, passion, commitment, enthusiasm, humour and care, has implemented initiatives that can only be described as exceptional.



The commitment and enthusiasm each umpire at the grass roots level demonstrates is amazing. This is a direct result of the time and effort invested in promoting a 'team' environment, one that strives to focus on fun and achievement. It is Adrian's leadership and personal style that welcomes all umpires with a remarkable sense of inclusiveness and encourages behaviours that achieve success. His positivity, rapport with the kids and caring nature is noted by his crew, and this alone is worth celebrating.

The recognition demonstrated via the Hornsby Blooz Newsletter is wonderful public praise. This newsletter is also evidence of how Adrian has a vision of appreciation and a focus on the management of, and care for, people.

Adrian should be thanked for his ongoing commitment to the Hornsby District Softball Association and to the broader umpiring program in New South Wales. His dedication, energy and performance are recognised as one of the best in NSW.

Affiliate Award: Hornsby District Softball Association

This award was presented to Hornsby District Softball Association for their achievement of outstanding results in 2009.

The successes achieved by Hornsby District Softball Association are nothing short of extraordinary and are unparalleled by any Affiliate of Softball NSW.

Under the leadership of Umpire In Chief and Vice President, Adrian Rampoldi, Hornsby District Softball Association have covered all the bases, with successes in membership growth (65 umpires), recruitment (10 new male umpires), umpire development (mentoring programmes and video analysis), communications (Umpire Blooz Newsletter) and recognition.

Congratulations to all umpires at Hornsby District Softball Association on your great achievements in 2009.

Encouragement Award: Andrew Cocks (Manly Warringah) Congratulations to Andrew Cocks, from Manly Warringah Softball Association, for winning the 2009 Softball NSW Umpires Association Encouragement Award. 2009 has been a very successful year for Andrew, not only being the recipient of this award but also achieving on-diamond success by receiving his Level 3 National Umpiring Accreditation at the Under 19 Women's State Championship in June.

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Andrew receives this award for his quality on-diamond and off-diamond performance. Andrew has displayed excellent commitment to his own development throughout his level 3 examination via goal setting and umpire training. During his exam, in the face of adversity, Andrew demonstrated resilience and great character.

Andrew's personal awareness and self evaluation skills are excellent. These skills, coupled with commitment to development and the ability to learn and grow will form the foundation to build a top quality softball umpiring career.

Congratulations on this achievement and, on behalf of all members of the Softball NSW community, we wish you great success as a softball umpire in the many years to come.

NSW Umpire of the Year

The 2009 Andrew Rindfleish Umpire of the Year Award was presented at the State Team's Dinner at the Rooty Hill RSL on Wednesday 9 December. The Umpire of the Year is awarded to a softball umpire from NSW who has excelled in umpiring at the national and international level of our sport. The award is based on achievements in officiating games at these levels as well as contribution to umpiring within NSW and Australia, generally.

The 2009 Andrew Rindfleish Umpire of the Year - Darrell Shephard.

Darrell was selected to represent the Australian umpiring program at the 2009 China National Games. Whilst these games are only national games, to many of the athletes competing, they are as important, if not more important, than the Olympic Games. Darrell can share many interesting stories about the passion and "win at all cost" approach to softball at this competition.

Darrell also umpired at the Open's National Championship in February and at many State championships and tournaments throughout the year.

Selection of Darrell as this year's Umpire of the Year is most fitting as 2009 sees the close of Darrell's 18 year reign as the leader of the umpire program in NSW.

Darrell's contribution to softball umpiring in NSW, not just in 2009, but over 18 years, makes him a truly worthy winner of this year's 'Andrew Rindfleish Umpire of the Year'. Congratulations, Darrell!

A special presentation was also made at the 2009 State Team's Dinner to Darrell Shephard, as the retiring State Director of Umpiring. The following is a transcript of the presentation made by Scott Rindfleish, on behalf of the NSW umpiring community, to our departing State Director:

"It is my privilege on behalf of all umpires in NSW, past and present, to publicly recognise and thank Darrell Shephard for his outstanding contribution to Softball Umpiring in NSW.

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Since 1991, Darrell has been the NSW Umpire In Chief, NSW Director of Umpires and President of the NSW Softball Umpires Association. Darrell is not seeking re-election at the upcoming Umpires' Association AGM, and after 18 years this marks as a record term, and ranks as one of the longest across all States and nationally.

Tonight we celebrate and show our appreciation for Darrell's leadership, commitment, passion, integrity and character. Darrell personifies all that is fair and good when it comes to managing umpires and is to be credited with leading a highly successful umpiring program. We are not farewelling Darrell, he will continue to be involved on and off the field throughout NSW, Australia and Internationally.

Darrell, 18 years, is an amazing tenure, you will be missed at meetings and in planning sessions, but I am thrilled we have had the opportunity to formally recognise your outstanding contribution to Softball NSW! Thank you!

New Level 7 Umpires for NSW



As recognised in the previous edition of Blue's New Online, NSW was fortunate enough to have two umpires awarded their Level 7 Umpire Accreditations at the Softball Australia Awards of Excellence. We would like to take this opportunity to once again recognise the achievements of Scott Rindfleish and Sue Itzstein, and the contribution they have both made to the umpiring programme in NSW.



For Scott and Sue, both household names amongst the NSW umpiring family, this achievement comes at different stages of their careers: Scott becoming the youngest active umpire in Australia to attain this honour, whilst Sue has just retired from the sport. Both Scott and Sue have made a significant contribution to the programme at a state and national level, with Sue being the SNSWUA Secretary for many years, as well as a National Staff Member, and Scott holding the Training Coordinator's portfolio and serving as a National Staff Member for a short period. The programme in NSW would not have been the same without these two very dedicated and committed individuals.

Upon receiving his award, Scott reflected:

"To receive my Level 7 Accreditation alongside Sue is an honour for me. She, along with many others, has given me great support throughout my career and I am proud to share this moment with her. Umpiring is a significant part of my life. It has presented me with many wonderful opportunities that I otherwise would not have encountered. It is something that I am very passionate about."

On behalf of the SNSWUA and the entire SNSW umpiring community, we would like to congratulate both Scott and Sue on this very significant achievement and thank them for the contribution they have both made to the umpiring programme in NSW.

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State League Finals

The Final Series of the 2009 State League competition was played in extremely hot conditions at Blacktown Olympic Park on Sunday 22 November. In very difficult conditions, players battled it out against each other to see who would be crowned State League Champions for 2009.

The Women's Grand Final was a very close game: Northern Storm defeated Manly Eagles in a 2-3 ball game. Congratulations to the following umpires who were appointed to the game

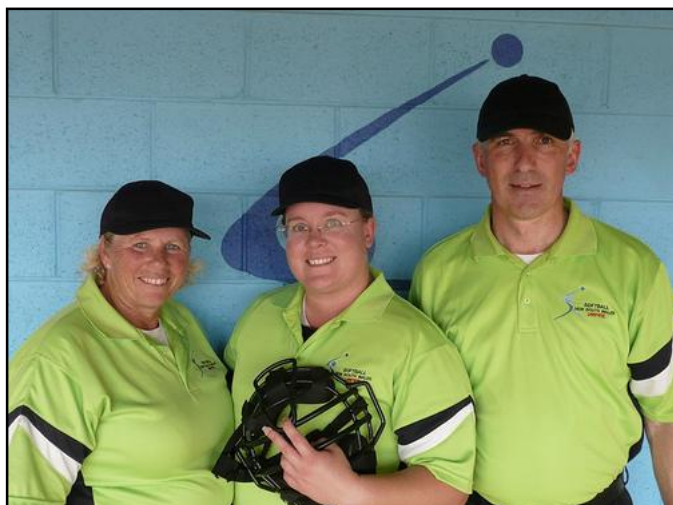
The Men's Grand Final was over in just 5 innings, with United proving too strong for Demons winning 9-2. Well done to the umpires appointed to the final.



Andrew Rindfleish (Plate), Scott Rindfleish (1st), Nick Beashel (2nd), Col Davis (3rd)

On behalf of the SNSWUA, a big thank you must be extended to **ALL** umpires who generously donated their time to service the 2009 State League and Waratah League competitions.

Your time and commitment to servicing these competitions does not go unnoticed. We thank you for your ongoing co-operation and support. Hopefully we will see many of you return next year for another successful season.



Amanda Houison (Plate), Sharyn Girdler (1st), Andrew Cocks (3rd)

Seasons greetings!

On behalf of all umpires in NSW, I would like to take the opportunity to wish our friends and fellow umpires across Australia a very safe, enjoyable and Happy Christmas and New Year period.

I hope the weeks ahead provide everyone with a time to enjoy celebrating with their family and friends. We look forward to working with you all in the New Year.

Best wishes,

Darrell Shephard - State Director

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Queensland

www.umpires.qld.softball.org.au

Queensland Open Men's Championships by Mark Toft

The 2009 Queensland Open men's State championships were held at the Toowoomba Softball Association grounds.

The competition was very keen which was highlighted by no less than eight of the World Champions Steelers taking part.

The State's senior umpires were kept busy with more than 17 teams competing.

The Crew - Tricia Sibraa, Darren Sibraa, Mark Toft, Ron Trow, Ian Frame, Helen Strauss, David Casey, Jesse Smith, Jay Gibson, Bridget Cameron, Sally Crawford, Norelle Thomas, Dave Andrews, Ron Yardley, Yvonne Kahler, Daphne Bickle, Matt Blake, Ian Bunston, Jana McCaskill, and Anita Ryle.



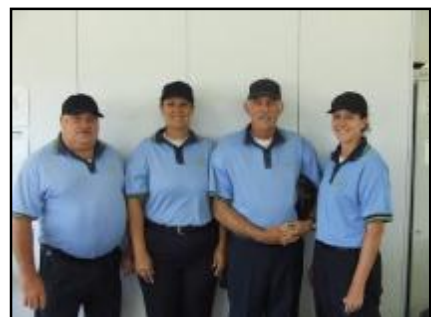
World champions contested Queensland Open Men's Championships: Back L to R David Metekingi, Zenon Winters, Josh Davison and Tyron Bartorillo. Front L to R, Adam Folkard, Terry Downes, Mick Tanner, Aaron Cockman.



Queensland Cup Final Crew:
L to R, Mark Toft, Ian Frame,
Darren Sibraa, Trevor Pascall.



Open Championship Final Crew:
L to R, Bridget Cameron,
Norelle Thomas, Yvonne Kahler,
Matt Blake.



President's Cup Final Crew:
L to R, Ron Yardley, Sally
Crawford, Steve Gutteridge,
Jana McCaskill.

In what was a great development/training move Tournament Chief Umpire, Tricia Sibraa in conjunction with State Director, Darren Sibraa arranged with Toowoomba Umpiring Coordinator to have two local junior umpires sit in on a pre-game discussion and a post-game debrief after watching the game with senior umpires. Toowoomba Level one umpires Dell Bellchambers and Cameron Ryle gained valuable experience.

Following the tournament, Terry Downes and Scott Sunley announced their retirement from Queensland representative duties. Both were awarded with a Queensland Cup swan song victory, playing for the Championship team, Redlands.

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Wishing Everyone a Merry
Christmas and a Happy New
Year

From
South Australian Umpires

Season Greetings to all
Umpires

Wishing you a Merry
Christmas

The Gang in Tasmania

Merry Christmas to all!

Wishing you and your family
a prosperous New Year.

Western Australian Blues
Team

We wish you a Merry Xmas
We wish you a Merry Xmas
We wish you a Merry Xmas
And a Happy New Year

From
The Northern Territory Blues

Wishing a Christmas filled
with Joy

May the New Year bring you
Happiness

From Victoria's Blues

Wishing all umpires across
the country

A Merry Christmas
and Good Calling in 2010

New South Wales Blues

Merry Christmas Everyone

Hope 2010 brings you
prosperity and Happiness

The Blues from ACT

May the Christmas Season
bring you Joy and Happiness

Merry Christmas to All

Queensland Blues



Canberra Skins

Canberra Skins 2009 by Trevor Murphy

As many of you would be aware, coinciding with the onset of the December silly season arrives the time for the Canberra Skins. Yes, the Canberra Skins is always scheduled for the first weekend of December and that saw them commence this year on Friday, December 4 and run through to the afternoon of Sunday December 6. This was my first Skins and presumably the



2009 Skins Crew: Standing L to R, Scott Rindfleish, Leigh Evans, Nick Beashel, Kevin Tannebring, Debbie Grove, Rod Dawson, Jesse Smith, Kevin Broomhall, Garry Grimes and Sarah Houston. Front L to R: Trevor Murphy, Mark Gallagher, Di Kropp and Jason Carter.

rooky gets to write the submission to BNOL (so I am told - or was I railroaded).

The umpiring crew for the series included personnel from ACT, SA, NSW and VIC. Most of those travelling from interstate concentrated at the Belconnen Way Motel on the Friday morning of the Skins. The crew included local ACT umpires Rod Dawson, Sarah Houston, Mark Gallagher and Di Kropp; and visiting umpires Kevin Tannebring (SA); Scott Rindfleish, Nicholas Beashel, Jesse Smith and Garry Grimes (all NSW); Debbie Grove, Leigh Evans (VIC), Kevin Broomhall, Jason Carter and myself (All VIC).

The Hawker Softball Complex where the Skins were held and the Belconnen Way Motel are only few blocks apart making the Motel a good choice. I found it very comfortable and with shopping complex, pub and eateries adjacent it meant that we needed for very little else.

This year the Skins drew entries from seven A grade teams and five in B grade. For those that are not familiar with tournament schedule, games commenced mid-afternoon on the Friday and ran through to finals on Sunday afternoon. As is common place with any tournament the days are busy with a full schedule of games running late into the evening.

I drew the late game Friday night and then had to find a place to get a feed. I presumed that with the eateries adjacent to the motel finding a place to eat would be easy. I was told there

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Canberra Skins

were numerous places but those that had attended Skins previously suggested the Chinese restaurant. So I went for a walk and found that all were closed. Fortunately, with my good looks and charm I was able to have the owners of the Chinese restaurant open for me. (Never let the truth get in the way of a good story). They were waiting for the last of their patrons to leave and rushed to let me in; luckily so for my crew mates as Scott, Jesse, Nick and Gary showed up a few minutes later. They asked me to join them but I had already ordered take away and intended to return to Room 104 (the party room). However, my return was delayed somewhat when I was invited to join the other patrons for a discussion about the Arafura Games in Darwin last May (but that's a story for another time).



A Grade crew: L to R, Kevin Broomhall, Scott Rindfleish, Debbie Grove and Leigh Evans.

So the party continued in Room 104 and people came and went until around midnight both Friday and Saturday nights. However, some of the players were having a party adjacent in the games room and I have been informed that the occupants of 104 could have done without that until the early hours each day. The umpires change rooms at Hawker were uneventful expect for, I believe, the usual contenders spreading out and misplacing bits and pieces. Typically, by the end of the weekend all had located same and all went home with what they brought with them.

For those interested in results, in the A-Grade the Skins final score was 2-0 Southside Mariners over Upstarts. The Final was played in a record time of 1 hour 12 minutes for Skins. Adam Folkard was the winning pitcher for Southside Mariners.

Adam was the first batter to get a hit at the bottom of the fifth innings and was batted around by Aaron Boccardo to win the innings and the jackpot of \$1,000. They went on to win the sixth innings with one run and tied the last innings. Winning the game and another \$500 to Southside Mariners. Prize money won in total was just over \$10,000 for A grade and \$2450 for B grade. Southside Mariners collected \$3,500 for the Tournament. Most teams won their entry fee back.



B Grade crew: L to R, Nick Beashel, Trevor Murphy and Kevin Tannebring.

With the tournament wrapped up, after a few refreshments the locals dispersed and the interstaters made tracks for the airport or hit the road for the long journey home. I had another umpiring commitment and headed for Newcastle and the Annual Australian Defence Force Championships.

Finally, on behalf of the 2009 Skins umpiring crew I pass on sincere thanks and congratulations to Jeff Tutt, the grounds crew and the organisers for a job very well done. We all enjoyed ourselves and I am sure most will be back next year time permitting.

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Defence Softball



Australian Defence Softball Championships

by Trevor Murphy

Annually the Australian Defence Force (ADF) conducts a National Tournament which draws military teams and players from all States and regularly includes teams from either the New Zealand Army, Air Force or Navy.

Unfortunately, with many Australian military personnel deployed in regions around the globe, this year's tournament was somewhat depleted but players came together to form three men's and two women's teams. The New Zealand Air Force sent a contingent of Men and Women and the competition was played over four days from 7 - 10 December at the RAAF Williamstown Base near Newcastle.

I am the current UIC for ADF and was fortunate to have a good crew of umpires join me to officiate at the tournament. My crew included NSW umpires Lisa Mossman and Debra Skeen from Newcastle, and Courtney Sands from Berowra; Aaron Wallace from Sunshine, VIC and from NZ we were very fortunate to have John Hickman join us. (John, who is in the NZ Air Force, has officiated at numerous SAL tournaments over the last couple of years.)

The crew worked very well together for the week and I was pleased with the effort and improvement that each umpire made over the week. In particular, the enthusiasm displayed by Lisa was exceptional and should she continue to pursue the goal, I believe she is sure to attain whatever desires from umpiring. Go for it Lisa!

As UIC and having to fulfil the role of umpire as well it can be difficult to watch other crew members and provide the valuable input they may need or desire to have. In this regard I was very fortunate to have John by my side to take up the slack when I was on the field or otherwise detained with other administration.

Men's teams competing this year were NZ, Southern States, NSW and QLD. Women's teams competing were NZ, NSW and QLD. The two QLD teams won the Australian Championships. Also, Australian National teams were selected and competed against the NZ teams. The Aussie teams won both these matches in a close contest.

For those of you who are hoping to climb the umpiring ladder and are seeking good quality games around November 2010 please do not hesitate to contact me for the opportunity of a lifetime. The games are of a good standard, the teams and atmosphere are friendly, the food is great and the after hours camaraderie and entertainment is what you choose to make of it. Don't take my word for it ask any of those I have listed in this article. I anticipate Canberra or Sydney for 2010.

Special thanks to John Hickman (even though he is a Kiwi), he is a humble team member with great skills and plenty to offer the up and coming umpires of the future. Finally, thank you to my crew for their cooperation and a great week and good luck for the future.

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