

February 2014



## National UIC's Call

With Tricia Sibraa

As we know January is our busiest month for National Championships. The combined Gilley's Shield and Under 17 Women's commenced first, followed closely by the Under 17 Boys and finishing with the combined Under 19 Women's and Men's. A total of forty-seven umpires officiated these championships.

Congratulations are extended to Mat Smith (Western Australia), Robert McIntosh (New South Wales) and James English (New South Wales) and Mark Gallagher (Australian Capital Territory) for attaining their Level 5 and Level 6 accreditation.

I would also like to acknowledge Roy Cox, State Director of Western Australian for working hard over the last 14 months to develop their umpires to be able to send two skill-share umpires (Ian Helliwell and Mark Wareham) in addition to one candidate for Level 5.

New Zealand umpire, Tony Kaiaruna attended the Gilley's Shield and Under 17 Women's as part of Trans-Tasman umpire exchange program.

The national championship reports are listed in this issue and you some wonderful stories have been told – it is really hard being a part of this wonderful group of people!! Enjoy the read.....

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# Open Women's & U17 Women's National Championships

Gilley's Shield & Esther Deason Shield, Blacktown International Sports Park

Well, one has to state the obvious to begin with and say it was a very busy 9 days, with most umpires working 20-21 games.

## Our Crew

Patricia Sibraa (TCU), Leigh Evans, Amanda Houison, Darren Sibraa, Diane Waller (Assessors), Leanne Gearside, Janelle Hicks, Yvonne Kahler, Vicki Lansley, Jesse Smith, Mathew Smith, Helen Strauss, Kevin Tannebring, Norelle Thomas, Stuart Tyler, Phil Waller, Mark Wareham, Haydyn Wood and our new friend from New Zealand, Tony Kaiaruna.



The spread

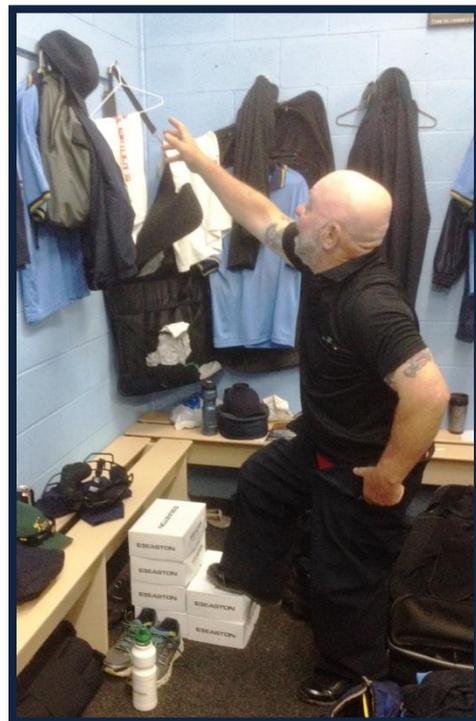
## New Level 5 and 6s

We welcomed Mat Smith to the National Championships where he gained his Level 5 accreditation. Norelle Thomas and Haydyn Wood were also successful in gaining their Level 6. Congratulations to all three very worthy successful candidates.

## Weather

Hot.

Accommodation was at the Astina Serviced Apartments, Penrith, and they were perfect for what was needed, with everyone agreeing that they would be very worthy for using in the future. It is only a 20 minute drive to the Blacktown International Sports Park.



Phil was heard to say, "Who is the sadistic mongrel that put these hooks up so high".

Moments to cherish (Thank you Helen)

Nutbush City Limits rocking Phil Waller, the great cooking done by Room 1 under Stuart's watchful eye (see photo) and celebrating Kevin's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Finals Allocations:

*Under 17 Girls:*

Helen Strauss (P), Jesse Smith (1), Stuart Tyler (2), Phil Waller (3)

*Open Women:*

Leigh Evans (P), Diane Waller (1), Amanda Houison (2), Darren Sibraa (3)

It is always a special time at Nationals. Sometimes it gets a bit tough on the field with some comments less than complimentary. However, it is great to be part of a crew which encourages and praises each other during the championship. I thank you all for being such special people both on and off the diamond.

*Report by: Darrell Shephard*



Helen helping Kevin celebrate his 70th Birthday, carefully chaperoned by Darren



Darrell and Kevin

# U17 Men's National Championship

Arthur Allsopp Shield, Hawker



Crew Photo: Dale Kaimoana, Mark Gallagher, Richard Dodds, Stacey Loveridge, Jamie Harries, Debbie Grove (TCU), Ron Houison (Assessor), Steve Wallace-Yarrow, Neville Lawrance (Assessor), Brett Atkinson, Ian Helliwell, Robert McIntosh

The best things about going to softball Nationals: great games, catching up with old friends, watching the elements come together on that bang-bang play, meeting new friends, learning something new, or seeing something from a new perspective, the camaraderie between the players, coming off a game on an adrenaline high. At the U17 Men's Nationals we were lucky to have all that & more!



Ian Helliwell, Robert McIntosh, Mark Gallagher, Richard Dodds, Brett Atkinson, Dale Kaimoana

The draw was set out 'afternoon shift' style, allowing for morning coffee trips (or hot chocolates for Deb, and she had even converted Nev by mid-week), brunch, walks to the market, shops or down to the lake, trips to the pool & spa, even some sightseeing for the out of towners - taking in the National War Museum & National Gallery of Australia.

At Hawker, the teams set the scene on day 1, bringing all their bats out in some very high scoring games. This trend continued throughout the week, with the end score not always reflecting the intensity of play by both teams - each game was hard fought.



Inspirational fruit platter skills on display



**Nev makes the switch to hot chocolate**

The 6pm game on diamond 2 enjoyed all of the glory of the sunset, resulting in some games being suspended until the sun dipped below the tree line. The boys made the most of this - garbage bins made their way onto the field & an impromptu game of cricket commenced. Watching the boys from NSW & SA mix together to form the field demonstrated the camaraderie sport can bring.

Some of the highlights included our indoor BBQ (we didn't have an outdoor one) to cook our sausages, burgers & Steve's 'I can't believe they're not sausages' on an electric portable stove in one room & the oven/stove in the other. Some of the guys whipped up sautéed mushrooms, others threw together a couple of salads & by the time the last crew were back we had everything sorted... But where were the bosses? Locked inside the club rooms with the alarm on & gate padlocked...



**Jamie Harries ready for the tag play at home**



**Grand final allocations: Neville Lawrence (P), Stacey Loveridge (1B), Steve Wallace-Yarrow (2B), Ron Houison (3B)**

Snacks were also well organised at the grounds - the "Master Chef" inspired fruit platter, Allen's lollies (frogs, snakes, killer pythons - and the red ones always went first), and yummy umpires dinners served from the canteen.

We had a fantastic week at the tournament, and on behalf of the crew send a big thank you to the TCU Debbie Grove & Assessors Neville Lawrence & Ron Houison. Congratulations to Robert McIntosh on successfully achieving his Level 5 accreditation.



**Debbie Grove (UIC) with successful candidate Robert McIntosh**

*Report by: Stacey Loveridge*

# U19 Women's & Men's National Championships

Elinor McKenzie Shield & Nox Bailey Shield, Hawker



The Crew: L-R Standing: Jason Carter, Chris Trengove, Mark Gallagher, James English, Neville Lawrance, Kevin Broomhall (TCU), Darren Sibraa (Assessor), Brett Atkinson, David Addlem, Ryan Thorneycroft, Stephen Gutteridge, David Casey  
L-R Sitting: Kyira Cox, Jay Gibson, Alex Turnbull, Richard Barrow, Trevor Murphy, Peter Chalapan, Kevin Tannebring, Phil Waller (Assessor)

The crew gathered in Canberra on Wednesday afternoon — an unusual starting time — ready for the first ever combined Under 19 Women's and Men's Nationals. At the initial crew meeting we learned that our numbers had been boosted by the late addition of Brett, Neville and Kevin, most welcome given the hot weather being forecast for the next few days. We then proceeded to settle into our accommodation and discovered that:

1. we were to be provided with breakfast vouchers for each day of the tournament (good!), and
2. not one of the rooms had any laundry facilities (not so good!).

The tournament kicked off on Thursday, and owing to the anticipated 40 degree temperatures, the timetable was adjusted to shift games away from the 2pm time slot and into the evening. Apart from anything else, this made for some quite long days, with the crew on the ACT v QLD game walking off diamond 1 at 11:45pm. Umpires Gutteridge, Lawrance and Tannebring had it a little easier on diamond 3, with their game being interrupted mid-flight by the automatic sprinkler system.

Thankfully, during the day a two bedroom apartment — *with laundry* — had been made available, and Casey, Murphy, Gutteridge and Trengove abandoned their single rooms to move in. Naturally, over the next few days this apartment became the de facto "party room", as 20 umpires attempted to keep up with their laundry needs. Most corners of the apartment became festooned with drying clothes, and it became common to see new arrivals well into the late evening, refreshments and washing in hand.

It was apparent to all that our two candidates were going well right from the start, but some of the real umpiring highlights were provided by the examiners. Those stories can be shared by those concerned... if desired! By Sunday afternoon, most difficulties were behind us. The weather had cooled off, with the remainder of the tournament played in comfortable conditions. And, most importantly, another laundry-equipped two bedroom apartment had been made available, allowing the party room to be re-located, and permitting the occupants of the original facility to get some much-needed sleep.

This new apartment was the venue for a get together, over takeaway Indian, on the eve (Tuesday) of the final day of the tournament. Various speeches and presentations were made, including one by Peter Chalapan, our PNG visitor. Many of us had the pleasure of umpiring with Peter over the week, and found him enthusiastic and eager to learn. He acquitted himself well on the diamond, in what must have been a strange and daunting environment. Hopefully the experience will be of benefit to PNG umpiring, and more such visits will follow.

Grand final day followed with two most interesting games. The Men's final was umpired by the crew of Waller, Sibraa, Thorneycroft and Barrow, and saw NSW edge in front of ACT late in the game to take the title. In the Women's final, the crew of Turnbull, Murphy, Gutteridge and Trengove found themselves part of a rare occurrence, as QLD pitcher Laura Coulter produced a perfect game (no base runners) to take the championship away from NSW. The closing ceremony then saw the presentation of the Level 6 certificates to our successful candidates, James English and Mark Gallagher — a most well-deserved outcome.



The successful candidates, Mark Gallagher and James English, with the management crew.

After the finals, we returned to the venue of our opening night dinner — the nearby Canberra Labor Club — where we were joined by the tournament statisticians, who had themselves flown in from various parts of Australia and New Zealand. An evening of umpiring and scoring tales ensued, and we were to discover that the statisticians had found time to decide upon a variety of "awards", including some coveted, controversial awards!

A final thanks to our management crew of Kevin, Darren and Phil for running the show so efficiently. Thanks also to local ACT umpires Brett, Kyira and Mark for helping out with the driving and keeping us well supplied with lunches, water, etc. And a special thanks to Alex who master-minded the whole thing from the ACT end, and made sure that we all had a great time.

*Report by: Chris Trengove*