



March 2013



National UIC's Call

With Tricia Sibraa

Welcome to March's edition of Blues News Online. Included in this edition is our report from the 17 Boys National Championships, held in Launceston in January, as well as reports from both Queensland and Victoria.

Queensland's articles highlight some upcoming events and the call is out for umpires to head north and join the crew.

Congratulations to the newly-accredited umpires in Victoria; read about their successes on pages 6 and 7.

As March has now drawn to a close, the SAL Rules Exam is on the horizon. This year, the exam will be on Monday, 27th May. Please check with your local association or state body to ensure your exam papers are ordered.

Remember, Softball Australia has merchandise on sale for all umpires across the country. With winter approaching, you may want to think about an on-diamond jacket. Sizing details, prices and ordering instructions are available by following this link: [Click Here](#). This link also directs you to information about on-diamond shirts and bat rings.

Both the International Youth Cup (IYC) and Australian U15 Regional Championships are coming up again in 2013. The IYC will be from 1st-5th July at Blacktown International Sportspark and the U15s will be from 9th-13th July at Lismore, New South Wales. If you are interested in umpiring at either event, please contact Debbie Grove, UIC Development at deblus@aapt.net.au.

Lastly, for our female umpires, the ASC has opened grants for 2013-14. We've included some information and web links on page 2 if you're interested in these grants.

Keep the articles rolling in – it's great to hear news from across the country! Wishing you all the best for the coming month and good calling out on the diamonds around the country.

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Sport Leadership Grants and Scholarships for Women

Minister for Sport Senator Kate Lundy and the Minister for the Status of Women Julie Collins announced the opening of the 2013-14 grant round to highlight the contribution of women in sport. Under the Sport Leadership Grants and Scholarships for Women program grants of up to \$5,000 for individuals and \$10,000 for organisations are available to assist women to undertake accredited sport leadership training in the areas of coaching, officiating, governance, administration and management, and communications, media and marketing. Sport Leadership Scholarships of up to \$10,000 per annum for three years are also available.

Applications will close at 11:59pm on Friday 26 April 2013.

To apply for a grant or scholarship, potential aspiring female leaders must be supported by a sporting organisation affiliated with a national sporting organisation that is recognised by the ASC.

For more information on the program and to apply, please visit the [Sport Leadership Grants and Scholarships for Women](#) webpage on the [ASC website](#).

National Championships

Under 17 Boys - Launceston

The crew: Debbie Grove (TCU), Ron Houison and Jason Carter (Examiners), Bridget Cameron, David Casey, Kyira Cox, Richard Dodds, Mark Gallagher, Jamie Harries, Norelle Thomas, Ryan Thorneycroft, Steve Wallace-Yarrow.

This year's Under 17 Boys event saw the umpiring crew gather in sunny Launceston with some umpires arriving early. The second group were met at the airport by our local helper, Annette or 'Chucky' in a Toyota van, which we later learned was our transportation for the week. The nickname Chucky, remains a local mystery but by the middle of the week we were all referring to her that way.

After settling in at our accommodation the crew headed to the ground to begin the task of undertaking bat and diamond checks. The quality of the grounds was fantastic. One issue was the incredibly tall horses hair marking the batters boxes. The markers seemed to be well over 10 centimetres high. As you can see in the photo even after a 'hair' cut they were still pretty high. Later in the tournament they almost contributed to an embarrassing moment on the diamond with an umpire nearly tripping over whilst trailing the batter runner to first.



As a consequence of the thin ozone layer over Launceston the short walk around the diamonds drove home the need to focus on the old 'slip, slop, slap' approach for the week with the sun burning a few of the crew quite quickly.

Upon completion of these duties the crew headed to the umpire rooms. Unfortunately, the location, although roomy was not quite up to standard. After some quick consultation with Chucky and the grounds staff, we were moved to the main ground complex and some quite luxurious rooms. Although, slightly smaller the new change rooms were a real improvement and ideal for the week.

After leaving the grounds we met up at a local pub, a stone's throw from the main accommodation. Quality food, especially the steaks, and a couple of quiet drinks were had by all. It was particularly nice to have Alan McAuliffe join the crew on the night.

With the first day out of the way, it was time to start the championship proper. The first morning of the tournament was now underway with the first games, Victoria vs. Qld and ACT vs. SA, kicking the tournament off in fine style. With no candidates this tournament was an opportunity for the 4-Umpire system to be used from the outset. Although not every game had four umpires, most did which added to the challenge keeping us all on our toes.

Day One also identified the caffeine friends within the crew with the obligatory stop at the coffee shop on the way to the ground. Unfortunately, the cafe did not live up to its potential with some of us even tipping the contents out after only one mouthful. Luckily for us the entrepreneurial locals had organised a coffee van to be at the ground, we were saved!

Back on the diamond, Wednesday saw the games hot up. The second timeslot of the day saw David Casey (P), Norelle Thomas (1st), Bridget Cameron (2nd) and Ron 'tiebreaker' Houison (3rd) reside over the first of two tie breakers for the tournament between ACT and Victoria. These two teams played out a thriller with ACT coming back from being 3 runs down in the bottom of the 7th to take the game into the 8th. Victoria then scored 3 runs in the top of the 8th only to have ACT then put on a further 4 to take the game. Suddenly the games had heated up.

One of the off diamond highlights also came on Wednesday with some skilful driving from Kyira Cox who got driving duties on the way to dinner. Some clever road choices and snappy parking gave Kyira the driver of the week award.

Thursday's games brought further tournament highlights with the game of the day being the NSW vs. Qld game. With the crowd extremely loud, the teams traded blows throughout with Qld getting the drop on NSW and taking the game 7 runs to 6 with Qld hitting a 3 run homer in the top of the 7th and holding out NSW. The game was a real thrill for the crew with Richard Dodds on the plate with Mark Gallagher and Jason Carter on bases.

Friday saw the tournament ramp up another level, with the competition between NSW and Qld continuing as well as ACT and Victoria again going head to head in the playoff games. The replay of the previous day's thriller saw the 2nd tie-breaker of the tournament. With Jason Carter on the plate and Richard Dodds, Mark Gallagher and Ryan Thorneycroft manning the bases the game not only went into a tie breaker but actually went out to 9 innings with NSW reversing the outcome from the previous day and taking the game in the 9th after teams were equal for 4 innings.

In the other preliminary final, the Victorian side pulled out all stops producing enough to push past the ACT team 5 runs to 3, with Ron Houison, David Casey, Bridget Cameron and Kyira Cox umpiring yet another entertaining encounter between these two sides.

Victoria again stepped up and pushed the more fancied Qld side all the way in yet another top game on the final day of the championship. Super Saturday had come with a bang. Kyira Cox, Ron Houison, Jamie Harries and Mark Gallagher had the best seat in the house on a game that provided plenty of highs. The Qld team jumped out to a 3 nil early lead in the 2nd only to have the Vic boys come back and actually take the lead in the top of the 7th with a 6 run inning. With their backs to the wall the eventual tournament winners then stepped up a gear with 4 runs of their own to will the game 9 runs to 8.

With that game over the tournament attention turned to the final game between Qld and NSW. The two teams had traded blows throughout the completion with the last two games evenly split. Qld went on to take the final in another scorcher with the Queenslanders winning 6 runs to 3. Congratulations to the umpires who presided over this game: Jason Carter (P), Ron Houison (1st), Mark Gallagher (2nd) and Bridget Cameron (3rd).



L-R: Mark Gallagher, Jason Carter, Ron Houison, Bridget Cameron

After the closing ceremony the umpires and teams gathered at the final night dinner at the local country club. The dinner and company was excellent with the players and umpires being treated to an impromptu magic show from the NSW Head Coach.

With umpires departing at a variety of times from late Saturday through till mid-morning on the Sunday our farewells were made early with everyone looking forward to next round of Nationals in 2014.

Queensland

Southern Cross Softball Challenge

The 2013 Southern Cross Challenge is being held at Redlands Softball Association from 25 to 28 April 2013 inclusive.

The Southern Cross Challenge is an international event owned jointly by Softball Queensland and the Canterbury Softball Association, New Zealand. It is hosted annually in either Christchurch or Brisbane (Redlands).

This year will include interstate teams participating in the event.

If you are available to umpires for the event please contact Darren Sibraa. Interstate umpires will be accommodated by local umpires.

South Brisbane Classic

The South Brisbane Classic will be held over the Queensland Queen's birthday weekend from Saturday 8 to Monday 10 June 2013 at the South Brisbane Softball Association, Carina.

The South Brisbane Classic attracts State, Interstate and International Men's sides that compete for this prize money. The championship also includes a master tournament.

Umpires who are available for this event should contact Darren Sibraa to express their interest. Interstate umpires will be accommodated by local umpires.

Victoria

Victorian Future Umpire Program 2013

With the Victorian Under 12 Spectacular finished, the Victorian Umpire Training moved to the next event on the calendar. The Future Umpire Program or 'FUP' arrived in conjunction with the Under 15 State Championships at Geelong.

The program, this year run by Richard Dodds, aims to assist developing umpires to move from the breeding ground of the Under 12 Spectacular where participants may be getting their first taste of umpiring, to the formality of classroom training and participation in championship games and hopefully see them gain their Level 1 Umpire Accreditation.

This year saw four participants attend the program; Alexandra Bradstreet (Northern Districts), Peter Samuels (Casey), Callum Carter (Werribee) and Hohepa Tauwi (Werribee).

Over the weekend this group of enthusiastic newcomers undertook a range of classroom and practical lessons, a session dedicated to completing their basic exam and on-diamond umpiring.

This weekend also saw the introduction of the 'Green Shirts' on the diamond for the trainees. These distinctive shirts highlighted to all that although these developing umpires were more than competent they were still learning. The initiative was very positive with the crew that umpired the Zeiran Cup exhibition match on the Saturday night of the championship also wearing them.

At the end of the weekend Alexandra Bradstreet and Peter Samuels were successful in attaining their Level 1 accreditation, meaning they were able to be presented with their certificates at the Under 15 Championship closing ceremony. Unfortunately, the other two participants were unable to sit the test otherwise the success would have been 100%. Thanks to those who assisted with the training - David Addlem, Hayden Croft, Richard Barrow and Brett Tyler and the other umpires who helped with on-diamond assistance

Victorian U/15 State Championships – 23-24 February 2013

The 2013 Victorian Under 15 State Championships were held recently at Stead Park, Geelong on the 23rd and 24th February. Along with a crew of 18 umpires', there were also 4 Future Umpires and 9 senior umpires in attendance helping with their development.

Grand Final Allocations:

- A Girls – Louise Trickett (P), Adrienne Hnatjuk (B)
- A Boys – Hayden Croft (P), Brett Tyler (1B), Mark Williams (3B)
- B Girls – Tony Black (P), Tyler McPherson (B)
- B Boys – Lachlan Swann (P), Kian Privitera (B)

Successful Level 2 candidates: Andy Johns (Waverley) and Jenny Joynson (Casey). Congratulations!

Newest Level 1 umpires: Alexandra Bradstreet (Northern District) and Peter Samuels (Casey). Congratulations!



Photo: Andy Johns and Jenny Joynson



Photo: Alexandra Bradstreet and Peter Samuels

The crew: Tony Black, Hayden Croft, Tazmin Dodds, Adrienne Hnatjuk, Andy Johns, Jenny Joynson, David Luisetto, Tyler McPherson, Kian Privitera, Brendan Shatwell, Lachlan Swann, Naisie Tauwiwi, Brett Tyler, Louise Trickett, Bernard Vella, Colin Watkeys, Jill Williams, Mark Williams.

Future Umpire Program: Alexandra Bradstreet, Peter Samuels, Callum Carter, Hohepa Tauwiwi.

Management Crew: Stuart Tyler (TCU), Ryan Thorneycroft (DTCU), Richard Dodds (FUP Facilitator), Debbie Grove (TAO).

Also thanks to Dave Addlem, Richard Barrow, Jason Carter, Kevin Offer and Rhonda Scammell for their assistance with assessments and the provision of feedback. Much appreciated!