

Blue's News On-Line

Official Australian Softball Umpire's Magazine

Contributions to mtoft@ozemail.com.au

March/April Edition 3 of 2005

STOP PRESS

For those of you who may be preparing pre-exam study sessions, I advise that the 2005 Australian Umpire Exam will consist of 100 TRUE / FALSE or YES / NO statements and questions.

There will be no multiple answer 2-part or 3-part questions in the paper.
Cheers,

Alan McAuliffe

National Rules Interpreter

What's inside this issue?

- **Julie's off to Canada**
- **National Men's report**
- **Six things to think about**
- **NSW archival research**
- **Leigh handles intruder**
- **National examination**
- **National UIC Message**
- **Victorian Under 19 report**

CHECK SWING

In the February edition of Blue's News On-Line it was mentioned that we would have an article on Check Swings.

Thank you for those who contributed their thoughts on the issue and I am glad to say that the final draft is in the hands of the National Committee and will be released in the next issue

Thanks for your patience.

A couple of questions that will be covered in the article in next month's edition.

- **Why does the plate umpire sometimes miss the check swing?**
- **What should the base umpire be looking for in a check swing situation?**
- **What is the correct mechanic to be used by -**

A. The Plate Umpire

B. The Base Umpire

STAY TUNED ALL WILL BE REVEALED



Andy's Address

April sees the conclusion of the 2005 National Championships. On behalf of the Australian softball community, I'd like to thank all umpires who made themselves available for this year's nationals, particularly those who were available for more than one tournament. For those statistically minded, there were 97 appointments, including 8 Tournament UICs, 72 appointed umpires, 12 candidates and 5 skill share umpires. The most startling statistic is that we only had 47 qualified, on diamond, umpires to appoint this year.

On a more positive note, though, we do have three more Level 6 umpires. Darren Sibraa (Qld) and Warren Duff (WA) gained their Level 6s at the Men's Nationals in Launceston in March and Ian Frame (Qld) was successful at the Under 23 Women in Melbourne in April. Congratulations to all three. These three bring to 10 the number of successful Level 5 and 6 candidates at the 2005 nationals.

On the International front, Softball Australia have a number of tours to the northern summer. The following umpires have been selected to travel with the following teams:

Leigh Evans - World Championships at Prince Edward Island, Canada.
Sue Itzstein - Pacific Rim Sports Summit, now to be held in San Diego.
Julie Richardson - Canada Cup in Vancouver, BC, Canada.

Congratulations to all three.

Registration of umpires with the National Officials Accreditation Scheme (NOAS) is progressing well, since the launch of the registration drive at the National championships in January. A number of States have used events such as State championships to register their umpires. The May Theory examination provides a very good opportunity to continue this registration process and I know a number of States will avail themselves of this opportunity. The registration form and instructions can be found on our web site.

A milestone in Softball umpiring was celebrated during the International series in Sydney on 29 March. Ken Culpitt officiated in his 200th full International softball match when New Zealand played Australia. Ken, whose international career began in 1985 and includes appointment to six World Championships, is Softball Australia's most capped umpire. Ken's contribution, on and off the diamond, has been pivotal to the development of umpiring in our country for the last 25 years. Well done Ken.

To all umpires sitting the Theory Examination at the end of May – good luck.

Andrew Rindfleish (National umpiring Director)

Victorian Under 19 Championships

The U19 Victorian championships were held at Casey Association recently.

There were 29 umpires who attended and they performed exceptionally well - I could have appointed any of them to Grand Finals (and would have liked to).

The ones actually appointed were:

A Men: D Waller, K Broomhall L Evans

A Women: J Carter, G James R Barrow

B Men: A Turnbull, K Offer, S Evans

B Women: T Murphy, R Loveridge, J Ryan-McPhee.

Not only were there no protests, but I didn't have to speak to (hardly) anyone about their game! If I missed anyone, you can still call me to confess what you did wrong..... Well done to all the umpires. PS: I received good feedback from coaches too.

The grounds were prepared very well, with five diamonds having an outfield fence, and two being open fields.

The new umpire shirts looked very good also, and impressed many players and spectators who had not seen them before.

Casey Association's rooms were a little cramped, but to compensate, they gave all umpires a lunch voucher - for which we were all very thankful.

There were three successful candidates in Roy Arscott, Stan Tolmie and Stuart Tyler who attained Level 3 Accreditation. Congratulations to each of them.

Lindsay Whitehead (Victorian State Director of Umpiring)

May 30 May 30 May 30 May 30 May 30 May 30 May 30

NATIONAL UMPIRING EXAMINATION

Just incase some of you had forgotten the National Umpiring Examination will be held on Monday, May 30 2005.

Check with your State Directors for Papers.

Under 19 Men - Canberra 2005 - Umpiring Crew



WHAT A MOTLEY CREW: Back L to R: Mark Toft, Graham Boyle, Nathan Levy (Liaison Officer), Ron Trow, Greg Baker. Front L to R: Phil Waller, Ross Harrison, Neville Lawrance (UIC), Frank Thomas, Kevin Broomhall.

BLACKTOWN AT ITS BEST - GRAND PRIX 3



The following is a reproduction, in part, of a 1996 article taken from *Referee Magazine*.

Six Things To Think About

1. Think before the game.

Time and time again, you've heard it is important to hold a pre-game conference with your partner(s). Why? The time before the game is the time to sort out problems that could occur during the game. By having a quality pre-game discussion about rules, coverage, mechanics, philosophy, context, etc., you're ready when something happens.

First, you must really believe that a pre-game conference is a good thing. If you're just going through the motions and not thinking about what's being discussed, you're likely to go through the motions during the game as well.

Don't fool yourself into thinking your pre-game can solve all the problems you may encounter during your game. Your pre-game should hit the high points and get you and your partner(s) thinking alike.

2. Think before the play.

The best officials always seem to be in the right place at the right time. Wonder how? They think about a play just before it happens. They anticipate the action, but not the decision.

Your brain must process a ton of information in an instant to make a call. Give your brain a little help by thinking about what may occur ahead of time. Talk to yourself about each play and run through possible scenarios.

Here's an example. "Tie score, runner on third, late in the game. What could happen? The runner at third has good speed and the hitter is the best bunter on the team. A possible suicide squeeze play; if it happens, here's what I am going to do ..."

Think about the rules that could be relevant to a particular play. For example, in the Infield Fly situation (ball easily handled by an infielder, ball deliberately dropped, ball stays alive, runners advance at own risk). Quickly whisk through the pertinent rules so that when the play happens, your brain has a jump start on sorting it out correctly.

3. Think like a coach.

To think effectively before the play, you must think like a coach. Ask yourself, "What are the coach's options in this situation?" You want to think like the coach *involved in the play*, not necessarily as if *you* were the coach. Why? If it's you doing the coaching, you're going to say, "Here's what I'd do ..." That's irrelevant! You should ask, "What is *he* going to do?"

What the coach does may be in stark contrast to what you'd do if you were the coach, but if you consistently second-guess the coach's moves, you ought to just become one. Second-guessing coaches hurts your officiating. You're not passing judgement on a coach's decisions; you're simply preparing yourself for different scenarios based on the coach's decisions.

4. Think like a player.

Some officials are very good because they were hellcats as players. Why? As a player, they worked hard at getting away with things when officials weren't watching. Now as officials, they understand that some players today will try to get away with the same things; only the hellcat-turned-umpire is ready for it.

You must think like a player as a villain, as a strategist and as a competitor. That way, you won't be surprised when something happens. Here's an example.

Fred Fleetfoot (the pitcher) hits a line drive toward shortstop who knocks the ball down, recovers and makes a great throw to Billy Bigman at first. On seeing that he is going to be thrown out, Fred veers toward Billy and brushes by him as he runs through the base. If Bigman is a smart villain, he'll retaliate at the first opportunity, most likely by laying a 'heavy tag' on Fleetfoot on a pick-off at the base. If he's a strategist Bigman will move quietly into Fleetfoot's base path in an effort to prevent an extra base hit. If Bigman's a competitor, he is going to try belt a home run from the pitching of Fleetfoot and be in his face in letting him know all about it.

The lessons for the umpire:

Watch the players intently after a hard play where contact has been made, anticipate that a fight may erupt and prevent it from happening by talking to the players, ensuring 'obstructions' are called, etc. Be ready for further retaliation by pitchers throwing *at batters* instead of *to the catcher*. The more scenarios you play in your mind, the more you'll be ready when they occur.

5. Think before you speak.

That sounds like something you were told in kindergarten, but it rings true. Speak to people like you'd expect to be spoken to. If you scream at a coach or player, what gives you the right to get upset when coaches or players scream at you?

Before you even open your mouth, think about whether what is being said needs a response. You don't have to respond to everything that's said to you. Let most of it go and react to the comments you think need attention.

Think about the tone of your own language and the manner in which you speak. Yelling, "Coach, shut your mouth!" with hands on your hips leaning forward will almost always earn a negative reaction (right now or later on). Saying, "Coach, I hear you and understand what you are saying," with your hands be-

hind your back in a less combative posture may turn the conversation in a positive direction.

6. Think before you penalise.

Think ahead to the possible outcomes of penalising players and coaches. During the games, the thought process is very fast when making judgements on close plays at the plate, etc., but mentally gathering information is still vital. Did the contact between runner and catcher impact the play? Was the contact severe or intentional? Is a gentle word better than a penalty?

Generally, you've got a little bit more time to think before doling out unsportsmanlike ejections. Think ahead to the possible scenarios. You've got to get something positive back when doling out a penalty. Ask yourself, "If I penalise that player for his behaviour, will it help the game?" Or, "If I don't penalise that player, will the situation escalate into something worse?"

Officials cannot carry crystal balls with them when they work games; thinking ahead is the next best thing.

You get what you pay for.....

An usher takes a man to his seat in the theatre. As he sits down he says to the usher

"My hearing is not good and as this show is a mystery I need to be closer to the stage. Find me a better seat and I'll reward you handsomely."

The usher moves him to a seat in the second row and the man gives the usher 5c.

The usher looked at the coin in dismay, lent over and whispered to the man,

"The wife did it."

CONTRIBUTIONS TO BLUE'S NEW ON LINE

BNOL IS AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL UMPIRE MAGAZINE WHICH IS WRITTEN BY UMPIRES FOR UMPIRES. ANYONE CAN CONTRIBUTE . IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING OF INTEREST SEND YOUR ARTICLE OR PHOTOGRAPH TO

mtoft@ozemail.com.au

Deadline for next issue is May 15

Here are few tips to ensure positive outcomes every time you interact, no matter with whom...

1. **Smile at strangers...**it costs nothing and can add a lot to your and their day.

2. **Refuse to get involved in "my story is worse than yours" contests...** after all, who cares anyway

3. **We were given two ears and one mouth....**Learn to listen twice as much as you speak. You'll be considered a great conversationalist!

4. **Be in the moment....**Keep your mind where your body is.

5. **Communicate acceptance with your eyes....**Keep your eyes on your conversation partner. Let them know you are involved with their words.

6. **Speak with a smile....**Open yourself to the conversation.

7. **Say please and thank you to every soul you meet...**Gratitude begets appreciation. Appreciated people feel happier.

8. **Bad moods can be contagious...**Deal with your mood before conversing.

9. **Be ready to laugh. Laugh loudly, laugh often....**On average, adults average 12 laughs a day. Children laugh over 400 times a day. And there is no law against it.



Straussy in full flight

Queensland umpire Helen Strauss was determined not to let the catcher beat her down the line during the Under 19 Women's Nationals. Helen was a successful Level 5 candidate at these championships.

STAY TUNED

In the next issue of Blue's News On-line we will be featuring New South Wales umpire Sue Itzstein who has been selected to officiate at the Pacific Rim Sports Summit in America this year.

We will be catching up on the Under 23 Men and Under 23 Women's National Championships with reports from two well known Blues.

Don't Forget the May 15 Deadline



we are trying to play a game of softball here?

Intruder: Yep!

Leigh: Tell me. How long will this take?



Intruder: Here mate this is a ball for you!

Leigh: Thank you very much.

Intruder: Would you like to play a game?

Leigh: Well.....



while your messing around with that parachute. I'm off!

Men's Nationals 2005 Launceston Tasmania

The Crew

TCU Ken Culpitt, Trevor Stratford NZ, Andrew Rindfliesh, Leigh Evans, Debbie Grove, Damien McCauley, Peter Richardson, George James, Bruce McCahan, Warren Duff, and Darren Sibraa

The Crew all flew into Melbourne (except Damien and the Kiwi) to catch the connecting flight to Launceston. We were waiting for our flight to be called and realized Debbie was missing. As the flight was called Debbie turned up blaming the long term car park for nearly missing the plane. This was not all Debbie problems as she boarded the plane she had the wrong boarding pass and when we got off the plane she left her sun glasses on the plane. On arrival in Launceston we were met by Bob Clueley who was going to be our liaison for the week.

Our accommodation was very good in the Lido Apartments, After catching up with the rest of the crew to headed to the grounds for the tech meeting. The grounds were very good considering there was only a paddock there a month before.

Day 1 Saturday

Unfortunately the first day was washed out, it was the only rain they had for 6 weeks. Bob kindly asked if we would like to go sight seeing, took us to see Catarac Gorge and the Red A monkeys. The Gorge was well worth seeing a beautiful place and the monkeys were just fun to watch.

That night we went for tea at The Royal Oak a pub that served very good meals, and all sorts of beer.



Leigh Evans and George James share a blanket in Tasmania

Day 2 Sunday

Because day 1 had been washed out it was decided to get the games in we would start at 8.00am this meant leaving the apartments at 6.50am. It can get quite cold in Tassy at that time. Day 2 was a bit of a forgetful day for Leigh, he was on the first plate on diamond 2 a bit of a walk from the clubrooms, and after a chat with the coaches, he watched a couple of pitches over and thought he was missing something. It was his box and his clicker. The clicker was borrowed from Debbie but the box had to come from the clubrooms, needless to say his plate stance was different for the first innings, he had to cover the drop balls. Bruce after having a bit of a chuckle about Leigh and his box had a surprise to come. He had left his box at home. Trevor the Kiwi had some interesting mechanics, the call was "balls in" and would give the count each and every ball, on a drop third strike would indicate to the runner on first with his hand which had a few 1st base umpires confused. Trevor a very jovial man simply said, " I am just reminding you where the run-

ners are” During the game on diamond 2 Trevor asked the base umpire “ what’s those growly things in the tree” which confused the umpire since there was no noise.

Peter Richardson was the plate umpire with Vic v Queensland and because Queensland were being hit around the park Peter was told that he was putting on a tee for them by a very friendly second baseman from Queensland. Dinner that night was Chinese back at the apartments.

Day 3 Monday

Again an 8.00am start, still cold in the mornings ask George and Leigh who were caught sharing a blanket together. Leigh not learning after his first forgetful day, went to do his second plate on diamond 1 and forgot his mask. Not a day that George likes to remember while umpiring a third, a hard hit ball took George out, hit on the knee. He was taken to hospital for x-rays and check up. It was not so bad and umpired the next day. On the way home that night Trevor was having a laugh with the boys and while trying to remember ken’s nickname came up with Kojiee Bear which filled the bus with laughter.

Dinner that night was in Room 6 were Peter cooked a spaghetti bol and a chilli con.



South Australian umpire Damien McCauley shares some quality time with all his friends between games in Tassie.

Day 4 Tuesday

The kiwi while on a Tassy game had to comment on how vocal one of the Tassy players was, the best being a pitch that the player thought was a strike was not called the player came up with “call the cops call the cops we have been robbed” Trevor had fun on that game with a lapse of concentration call the runner out on ball 4. On the way home Trevor in his kiwi accent could not remember the coach’s name and came out with Rolly Ball.

Dinner that night was in room 1 were Ken and Warren cooked Chicken Curry and Bacon Noodles.

Day5 Wednesday

Darren while being assessed on his plate, had a big slide at home which put dirt all over home plate. When the dust had cleared Darren went to clean the plate as he was moving the dirt around to find the plate the batter in the box “ the plates here blue “ no where near where Darren was.

That night we were invited for a sausage sizzle at Bob’s place. We meet Bob’s lovely wife Patricia who got on very well with George, so much so that she told him about two bunny that hopped, hopped, hopped.

Day 6 Thursday

We finally found out what the growly things were in the tree. They were crows which Trevor had heard the first day. Trevor and crew were close to the end of the game when the third out was given so as he was cleaning the pitchers

stripe he looked up to see the two sides coming in to shake hands a nice clean plate for the next game.

Dinner that night at The Royal Oak

Day 7 Friday

Uneventful day at the park everything went to plan. For the finals a four-umpire system was adopted

That night Room 7 went to the theater.

Day 8 Saturday

Finals day ACT was already though so it was a waiting game for the umpires to see who would be on the game since VIC and WA had to play each other. Victoria won in a trilling Final

Final Crew Andrew on the Plate Bruce on 1st Peter 2nd and Damien on 3rd

Final night dinner was held at the casino.



This was a great crew, every one got on very well with each other

2005 Umpire Exam

If you haven't already begun, now is the time to review your rule knowledge, as all umpires are advised that the 2005 Australian Umpires' Exam is to be conducted at 7.30 pm (local time) on Monday 30th May. The exam is based on the 2002-2005 rulebook and this year will consist of 100 TRUE / FALSE or YES / NO statements and questions.

Please be reminded that in order for individuals to apply for the opportunity to be assessed for a higher level of accreditation, it will be necessary to sit for and obtain the required pass mark at this exam.

Should you have any questions, or need to find the location of an examination venue near you, please contact your local association/affiliate or your State Director of Umpiring.

Good luck with your endeavors,

Alan McAuliffe
National Rules Interpreter &
Chairman, Examining Panel

Victorian umpire Diane Waller in action at the Under 16 Girls Nationals earlier this year.



Julie Richardson

Born: Brighton, Sussex England.
Mother: Patricia
Father: Douglas
Brothers: Terry and Phil

Married to Peter Richardson September 2, 1972 at the tender age of 18

Moved to Perth WA October 1973

Daughters: Samantha born 1975, Sarah born 1978

Interests

Softball, Tenpin Bowling, Badminton, and having a good time over a glass of wine or two.

How she got involved with Softball Umpiring.

Julie first started playing in 1985 when passing a local park and saw some women playing what she thought was rounders, so she stopped and asked a bit more about the game and found out that it was called Softball.

Julie started playing that year and of course there were people called "umpires". Julie had to do my turn at umpiring, and from there she never really looked back.

Julie sat her first exam in 1986 and started umpiring under the watchful eye of Albert Dumaresq. She was still playing and getting quite good, she worked her way up to A reserve and played first base.

Julie continued umpiring and received her level 2 in 1987. At this stage her daughter Samantha was playing for the Under 16's and she went along to see some of the scratch matches and started to take a bit more interest in the umpiring side of things.

Julie was still in a dilemma weather to play or umpire, as you all know its was more fun to play than to umpire and most of the time get comments that you did not really need, she decided to give up playing and achieved her level 3 in 1989.

Julie continued her umpiring still being watch by Albert, he said to her one day if you achieve your level 4 you will be eligible to umpire interstate. This interested her and so she really decided then that she was going to be a State Umpire, she achieved her level 4 in 1990.

In 1991 Peter and Julie went on a holiday to Singapore, and on one of the last days they walked past a park and heard that familiar sound of aluminum hitting leather, so they walked over and introduced themselves to the coach, and he told them that there was a game on the following day, Singapore V a Japanese



Julie in action
Adelaide 2005

club side and invited us to watch. After the game they were introduced to the president of Singapore Softball and he asked if they would like to come back and umpire three months later.

They did go back, and that's where Julie got her first taste of real softball.

Since there were a lot of umpires waiting in line to go to tournaments, Julie had to wait till 1993 to try and achieve her next level, she was appointed to the under 19's girls in Melbourne.

In 1994 Julie became the State Director of Umpiring for WA and held this position for 8 years.

" really enjoyed the job and I feel I encouraged a lot of umpires to go forward in their umpiring careers."

Julie achieved her Level 5 at the u/16's & u/19's men's in 1994 in Perth. Julie umpired at the U/19s girls in Perth as a Level 5 and then was appointed to go for her Level 6 at the Women's Open, which was held in Brisbane 1996.

The following year was her first Men's Open of which she really enjoyed. Julie attended the U/16's Girls in Perth 1997. That year Peter and Julie were on holiday in England where they met up with some Australian friends that were involved in Softball. They invited Peter and Julie up to London to do a couple of games and the following week to umpire at a European Championships, this was really fun as you had a couple of foreign teams and of course a language barrier.

Julie achieved my Level 6 at the Women's Open in Sydney 1998.

There was an International Men's series held in Perth 2000 of which Julie had the pleasure of being appointed the TCU.

In a distinguished career (which is still going strong) Julie has officiated in 400 State League Games.

She has umpired every year at Nationals except one in 2001 due to unforeseen circumstances, and has been appointed as a National examiner twice in 2000 and 2005.

"I feel very privileged to be appointed to the Canada Cup."

Well done Julie! Congratulation from all the readers of Blue's News On-Line.

You have been a model umpire for many years and an inspiration to so many.

Have fun in Canada. xx

NEW SOUTH WALES SOFTBALL UMPIRES ASSOCIATION - LIFE MEMBERS

Edna NASH	(1980)
John REID	(1981)
Dawn YOUNG	(1982)
Catherine VINCENT	(1985)
Peter HILL	(1992)
Rhonda BUCKLEY	(1992)
Andrew RINDFLEISH	(1992)
Kay THOMPSON	(1993)
Darrell SHEPHARD	(1996)
Michael HANNELLY	(1997)
Lesley STEEDMAN	(1998)
David CROWE	(2003)

New South Wales Umpiring History

Probably the biggest statistician of umpiring history and NSW Director of Umpiring, Darrell Shepherd, has put together a little bit of history regarding New South Wales umpires. For those who collect information regarding umpires across Australia add this to your archives.

BNOL thanks Darrell Shepherd for his efforts.

Once upon a time, a blonde became so sick of hearing blonde jokes that she had her hair cut and dyed brown.

A few days later, as she was out driving around the countryside, she stopped her car to let a flock of sheep pass.

Admiring the cute wooly creatures, she said to the shepherd, "If I can guess how many sheep you have, can I take one?"

The shepherd, always the gentleman, said, "Sure!"

The blonde thought for a moment and, for no discernible reason, said, "352."

This being the correct number, the shepherd was, understandably, totally amazed, and exclaimed, "You're right! O.K., I'll keep to my end of the deal. Take your pick of my flock."

The blonde carefully considered the entire flock and finally picked the one that was by far cuter and more playful than any of the others.

When she was done, the shepherd turned to her and said, "O.K., now I have a proposition for you. If I can guess your true hair color, can I have my dog back?"

NEW SOUTH WALES SOFTBALL STATE BADGES / LEVEL 4 UMPIRES

	Jean TOOTH
1965	Dawn YOUNG, Joan FITTON, Carol PEEL, Bev LAWSON
1970	Robyn PETERS
Pre 1972	Pat McCANN, Sandra SMITH, Cathy WESTAWAY (ELLIOT), Dot TUCK, Jenny VAN LENNEP, Catherine VINCENT (LLOYD), Di SMART
1980	Peg CUTTS, Barry CAMPEY, Robert CURRIE, Vicki GEARIN, Peter HILL, Garrick HOOPER, Kay THOMPSON
1981	Rhonda BUCKLEY, Andrew RINDFLEISH
1982	Alan BROWN
1985	Darrell SHEPHARD
1986	Lesley STEEDMAN, Ian LANGFORD-BROWN
1987	Robyn WHITTAKER
1989	David CROWE, Riini JARAM, David STANTON
1990	Mike HANNELLY, Sue SCREEN, Ken PULLEN
1991	Louise WHEATLEY, Keith WEARNE
1992	Robyn DRAPER, Lis HANNELLY, Bob BIGGS, Trevor PASCALL
1993	Lisa POCKRAN (FREEMAN), Ray RAMSAY
1994	Sue ITZSTEIN, Bruce McCAHON
1995	Ted NORRIS
1996	Greg BAKER, Adam COTTON
1997	Peter WATTS
1998	Andrew CHAPMAN, Julie LAMOND
1999	Col DAVIS, Amanda HOUISON (GREGGS), Ross HARRISON
2000	Nicole CROWE, Graham BOYLE, Scott RINDFLEISH
2001	Heather KENNEDY (RANDALL)
2002	David BAKER, Stephen MORGAN, DANNY WIKITOA
2003	Nick BEASHEL, Howard WATT

UMPIRE RECOGNITION

Umpire recognition is an important part of our National Program.

So if your local association or State recognise on of the umpiring family let BNOL know.