



National UIC's Call

With Tricia Sibraa

Softball Western Australian has announced that Roy Cox will be taking over the State Director role. Roy has a long involvement with Softball WA going back to the 90s. Roy received a Softball Australia Service Award in 2010.

Kevin Broomhall will be experiencing a first when he attends the 2012 ISF IX Junior Men's World Championships in Argentina later in the year with Argentina, Australia, British Virgin Islands, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, India, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, United States and Venezuela all attending. This is the most countries to ever take part at a Junior Men's Worlds.

The National Girls Secondary Schools championship was held at Hawker International Softball Grounds with the following umpires participating: Tournament Chief Umpire was Dan McKay (ACT) along with Matthew Camp, Jarrod Bradbury, Josh McGovern, Leigh Beswick, Luke Jennings, Josh Goynes, Mark Gallagher, Di Kropp (ACT), Myles Lego, Elizabeth Leipa, Dylan Murdoch (NSW), Brett Tyler (VIC) and Cameron Ryle (QLD). School-based appointed umpires were Cameron, Elizabeth and Myles. The grand final was played between Queensland and New South Wales with Jarrod Bradbury, Brett Tyler and Elizabeth Leipa appointed to this game. It is pleasing to see our junior umpires travelling through the umpire's development path.

Planning has already commenced for the 2012-2013 National Championships and the availability form has been posted on the website. Championships will be held in New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia.

Three States will be very busy this coming Queen's Birthday weekend, with the 21st South Brisbane Club Classic at South Brisbane Softball Grounds, Queensland. Twelve teams have nominated and visiting umpires Mark McFarlane, Jeremy England, David Beaumont, Bob Jones and John Hickman (New Zealand); Leigh Evans and Debbie Grove (Victoria); Dale Kaimoana, Andrew Compton and Krissi Travers (New South Wales) will be in attendance. Local umpires will be led by Darren Sibraa, David Casey, Helen Strauss, Yvonne Kahler,

Mark Toft, Jana McCaskill, Bridget Cameron, Martin Turnbull, Ron Yardley, Norelle Thomas, Matt Blake, Janelle Hicks, Ross Winn and Alan Walsh.

New South Wales umpires will be busy with their Over 35's State Championships been conducted at Blacktown International Sportspark and the Victorian umpires looking after the Victorian Masters Championships being held at Shepparton. Reports on these events will be highlighted in later editions of BNOL.

Finally, best wishes (and excellent calling!) are extended to our umpires travelling abroad in late June/early July with the Aussie Spirit Women's Team on their World Championship Tour. Ron Houison (NSW) will travel with the team as they attend the World Cup of Softball VII, held in Oklahoma City. Aussie Spirit will then travel on to Canada, where Debbie Grove and Di Waller (VIC) will call games at the Canadian Open Fastpitch International Championship, held in Surrey, British Columbia and the 2012 ISF XIII Women's World Championship, held in Whitehorse, Yukon.

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Cathie Allen - Retirement

In early May, Cathie Allen (NT) announced her retirement from active umpiring and her position as State Director of Umpiring (SDU) for the Northern Territory. BNOL sat down with Cathie recently to ask about her involvement in both Softball and her focus on umpiring.

When did you first become involved with Softball and in what capacity (player, umpire, etc.)?

I first got involved with Softball in 1981 when a friend suggested I come and have a look at the sport. From that training night I joined the C grade team and started playing.

As umpiring wasn't your first involvement with softball, why did you decide move to into umpiring?

During my first two seasons of playing, the teams also had umpiring duty and all players umpired for their team duty on a roster basis. In 1983 I attended a Basic Clinic as two members from each team were required to attend and that year I sat the Australian Rules Exam (as that was the only option back then) and passed to achieve my Level 1 mark. My assessment was with Marj Dwyer during the NT Championships and it was a very nervous one, as anyone who was assessed by Marj would know that she did not miss a call or a movement! From then until 1992 I was a player and an umpire, slowly gaining my next levels as I still enjoyed playing. In 1992 I decided that I wanted to just umpire.

When did you become SDU for Northern Territory and why did you become involved in this role?

In 1989 I became involved in the Darwin Association as the Umpires Delegate; then in 1990, when Sharon Smith retired, I took on the role of Director of Umpiring for two years until 1992 when Margaret Lee took on the role. In 1994, with the semi-retirement of Margaret Lee due to personal reasons, I again took on the role of SDU and have been in this role since.

What have been your greatest achievements in umpiring?

My greatest achievements whilst umpiring could be a toss-up between three totally separate events; the first was umpiring the first ever Men's Plate in the Arafura Games in Darwin in 1991 between Northern Territory and Papua New Guinea; the second was achieving my Level 5 at the U16 Girls Nationals 2004 in Perth and subsequently being awarded the Northern Territory Official of the Year at the Northern Territory Sports Awards the following April; the third was umpiring the plate of one of the Over 45 Women's Gold Medal games at the 2009 World Masters in Sydney.

What have been some positives that have occurred during your time as SDU for Softball NT?

We have been able to have umpires from all over Australia, the likes of Alan and John McAuliffe (SA), Kevin Broomhall (VIC), Debbie Grove (VIC), Margo Koskelainen (VIC), Neville Lawrance (SA), and Toulia Connolly (SA) come to Darwin to run clinics, to act as TCUs at NT Championships and Arafura Games, as well as work with and mentor umpires. Without this assistance and mentoring I for one would not have been able to get where I have.

Another positive has been the introduction of the Blues Program, we have been able to gain the financial backing of Softball NT, that provides for umpires within this program that wish to advance to national level by paying for the travel and accommodation costs, as well as assisting with uniforms and equipment.

Having players in remote communities where English is a second language and resources are scarce, sitting for their umpires' exams and gaining their Level 1 and Community Based Certifications, has been hugely positive; now we are able to have those umpires attend the NT Championships and run the bases for further experience.

What would you like to see Softball NT, and in particular, the umpiring program of Softball NT, achieve in the future?

I would like to see the Umpiring Program in the Northern Territory rebuild and be able to retain umpires, something that we have not been able to do very successfully as most softball participants wish to remain playing or coaching and we find it very difficult to get participants that just umpire.

It would also be great to have the Northern Territory Umpires at a level and standard where if a National Championship was to be held here again we could say that we had the umpires to cover at least half of the officials required.

It would also be wonderful to see a Northern Territory Umpire advance to attain their ISF qualification.

Some closing thoughts from Cathie...

Over the 30 years I have been involved with softball I have enjoyed every aspect of the game from playing, gaining my Level 3 Scoring Accreditation, to umpiring, and especially working with the National umpires both on and off the field, however it has become increasingly difficult to retain the on-diamond work and level required to remain at a National Level standard. It has been with the backing and support of my family that I have been able to get as far as I have and I owe them a great deal for this support, as well as the support from Softball NT and the National Umpires. I have gained a lot of great friends within the Umpiring fraternity and I will keep reading all the great stories in the BNOL each month to see who has been achieving what.

Australia vs. Japan Test Series

Hawker International Softball Centre, Canberra, hosted a test series between Australia and Olympic champions, Japan in late March. Japan won the Test Series, five games to two. One of the appointed umpires, Howard Watt (NSW), submitted this report about the umpires' experiences.

We all arrived in Canberra on Wednesday 21st March, 2012, some earlier than others, with Warren travelling for over 14 hours to get from Perth to Canberra, ready for some great games.

We were accommodated at the Belconnen Way Motel, which is just a very short distance away from the grounds. This made it very convenient from travel and also had restaurants and shops in easy walking distance.

An umpires meeting was held prior to the start of the series and Leigh made the effort to give feedback to all the crew that allowed us all to benefit from tips and advice.

The series was played over four days and was intended to give both the Australian and Japan national teams an opportunity to prepare for the upcoming World Championships later this year.

The crew consisted of: Leigh Evans (TCU - VIC), Jason Carter (VIC), Warren Duff (WA), Darrell Shephard (NSW), Phil Waller (VIC) and Howard Watt (NSW).

There were two games per day and we used four and five umpire systems. In these games, the 20-second clock was monitored and results fed back to the team's management although no penalties were enforced, it was used as a learning experience for the coaches, players and the umpires.

The weather was kind to us, although some of the games were played in very cold conditions. Lucky for us we wore jackets but we felt sorry for the players on the diamond with only their playing uniforms.



Test Series Crew: (L-R): Darrell Shephard, Warren Duff, Phil Waller, Jason Carter, Howard Watt

Although Japan won the series, there was no shortage of great games and outstanding individual plays. It was a fantastic opportunity for all of the umpires to officiate on an international level and take away some great feedback provided to us.

As usual, no tournament is complete without the social interaction between the umpires themselves and also with other officials. With the games scheduled late in the day, breakfast was the usual meeting place with many stories being traded.

It was a great crew, thanks to all for their friendship and support during the series. Margo Koskelainen was in attendance in an official capacity as the Technical Delegate, and she found herself socialising with the umpires a lot of the time. Thanks for your company Margo.

Thanks also to Leigh, who did a very good job keeping us focused and the feedback was very much appreciated. The small pieces of advice were very helpful and will definitely find their way into our games.

Website Update

2011 Basic Rules Exam Now Available

With the 2012 National Rules Exam and the 2012 Basic Rules Exam being completed by umpires around Australia on Monday 28th May the 2011 Basic Rules Exam and Answers have been placed on the website for all to view [\[click here\]](#). The 2012 National Rules Exam will be made available once all papers have been submitted and marked.

Australian Level 6 Accreditation History Page

The Umpiring Committee have been working hard on creating a history section on our website and are happy to launch the first stage - Australian Level 6 Accreditation. This page provides a list of all the umpires in Australia past and present that have achieved the highest accreditation available in Australia. To view this page [click here](#)

New South Wales

Umpires Schooled at Basic Clinic - SNSWUA - 10 May 2012

“Rotations, hustle, angles, timing, signals, rules” - these were the buzzwords floating around the corridors of Penrith Anglican College on the weekend as the SNSWUA Basic Clinic took place.

A total of 19 umpires and 6 facilitators participated in this year’s clinic, which proved to be one of the most popular basic clinics in recent years.

“It was very exciting to learn we had so many umpires wishing to attend the clinic that we had to move to a bigger venue,” Ron Houison, Clinic Facilitator and Chair of the Umpire Development Sub-Committee, said.

“We transformed Penrith Anglican College into our very own umpires’ school.”



Front Row L-R: Katrina Bulmer, Darren O’Neil, Lindy White, Jennifer Womsley, Tom Ryan, Josh King
Middle Row: Rebekah Edwards, Georgia Hill, Duncan Lapsley, Megan South, Steve Lindsay, Joe Kellermeier
Third Row: David Brown, Brianne Watt, Andrew Martin, Rhett Eldred, Glenn Hangan
Back Row: Jake Cassel, Maryke Gyzen
Facilitators: Leanne Gearside, Kyira Cox, James English, Vicki Lansley, Amanda Houison, Ron Houison

The 19 participants were presented a series of classroom and practical sessions covering a myriad of topics relevant to budding Level 2 umpires, with particular attention given to learning the 2-umpire rotation.

“For the first time in NSW we presented the 2-umpire rotation to the participants using the latest SAL umpiring manuals.”

“The participants and facilitators are to be congratulated on the way they responded to and engaged with this new content,” Houison said.

For some the content was very important, as they will soon present themselves as Level 2 candidates where they will be assessed on their ability to use the 2-umpire rotation.

Other important topics were also covered at the clinic, including signals, rule knowledge, the accreditation process and uniform and presentation requirements.

“Thank you to everyone involved in making the weekend’s clinic a success – the participants and facilitators – as well as Penrith Anglican College for providing us with the venue.”

Victoria

Victorian Umpires awarded at State Dinner 2012

The annual Softball Victoria State Dinner was held on 12th May at Moonee Valley Racing Club to recognise the achievements of the Victorian Softball community over the past year.

State Director of Umpiring, Richard Barrow presented certificates of recognition to all fourteen Victorian umpires that performed at National Championships this year. Further presentations were made to our recent successful national candidates: to Richard Dodds, recognising his attainment of Level 5 at the U17 Boys' Nationals and to Trevor Murphy, celebrating his achievement of Level 6 at the U19 Men's Nationals.

Margo Koskelainen joined Richard to make two special awards of umpire recognition and achievement:

“Via a trust fund, Softball Victoria awards the Marj Dwyer Memorial Scholarship to assist an advancing umpire to continue their progress. Pleasingly, the trustees received two applications this year. The Marj Dwyer Memorial Scholarship for 2012 is awarded to Brett Tyler of Waverley. Unfortunately Brett couldn't be here tonight, but I would ask one of his mentors, Diane Waller, to receive the award on behalf of Brett.

Brett has been umpiring at Waverley for a number of years, and has shown strong commitment to advancing his umpiring skills both locally and interstate. This year's highlights saw Brett umpire at all three junior State Championships, the Adelaide Labour Day tournament, the Canberra Australia Day Carnival, the Waverley Easter Carnival and the Victorian Masters. Brett's efforts at improvement saw him successfully attain his Level 3 this summer.”

“The other of these awards is the Margo Koskelainen Victorian Umpire of the Year award, which recognises an umpire for their high level of officiating skill and commitment to the Victorian and National Umpiring Program. The recipient of the award is an umpire who presents a positive image of umpiring and the role of the umpire and demonstrates a firm commitment to softball and umpiring. The nominees this year are Jason Carter and Phil Waller, both very worthy nominees.”



Photo: Jason Carter receiving his Victorian Umpire of the Year Award from Margo Koskelainen

“This year’s winner is Jason Carter. Jason has been involved with the Victorian Umpires Committee since 2006, playing a leading role in umpire training and development. Jason was the lead driver in the formation of the current Judiciary Regulations, and achieved his International Accreditation in 2011. This year’s highlights saw Jason as the UIC at the U15 State Championships, training of junior umpires at the U12 Spectacular, umpiring at Gilleys / Edebone Shield rounds 1 & 3, umpiring at the Canberra Skins, and appointments to umpire at both the Australia vs. New Zealand and Australia vs. Japan international women’s Test Series.”

Richard finished his presentation by wishing Diane Waller and Debbie Grove all the best as they journey to Canada in July for the ISF XIII Women’s World Championships, and was also delighted to announce the appointment of Kevin Broomhall to umpire at the ISF IX Junior Men’s World Championships in Argentina in November.

Waverley Easter Tournament 2012 – 6-9 April 2012

The annual Waverley Girls Easter Softball Carnival took place from 6-9 April. We had plenty of umpires helping out this weekend from all over the country with a great mix of young and senior umpires. A high number of three-umpire games were run over the weekend, with lots of practice going to those umpires in need of the on-diamond experience; this wouldn’t have been available without the great turn out that we had. There was a wide range of ages out on the diamond with the youngest of our umpires being an

impressive 9 years old and plating the Under 13 girls.

The weather was grand, until the last day of course, when it hailed for a couple of minutes on the Grand Finals. Stuart Tyler did a great job with his role as the UIC, managing to keep the coaches’ calm and the umpires happy on and off the diamond. Very few hiccups arose thanks to DUIC Haydyn Wood (SA). Beautiful cakes were supplied by Mrs. Tyler over the weekend and sausages were sizzled for the umpires during lunch time. The countdown has now well and truly started for next year’s carnival.

By Brett Tyler



Photo: Brett Tyler in action at the Waverley Easter Carnival

International Youth Cup & U15 Championships

The International Youth Cup and the Australian U15 Regional Championship will take place in July 2012. Below are details about both competitions, which provide excellent development opportunities for all people involved in softball – especially umpires! If you are interested in umpiring at either competition, please contact the appropriate TCU via email.

International Youth Cup

This event will be held at Blacktown International Sportspark, Sydney from **2-6 July 2012**.

This event targets elite youth teams with the focus on the 19 and under age group. Softball Australia will be entering U17 Girls' and Boys' National Development Squads and the U19 Women's National Development Squad to compete in the event. Past events have attracted teams from; USA College system, NZ Junior Development teams, PNG National team, Schools Sport Australia, State Academy teams and Australian Association teams.

If you are interested in umpiring at this event, please contact Leanne Gearside (TCU) at: leanne.gearside@bigpond.com

Australian U15 Regional Championship

The Australian U15 Regional Championship will once again head to the Rockhampton & District Softball Association from **10-14 July 2012**. In 2011 the event attracted 15 teams from around the country and Softball Australia is looking to increase numbers at this year's event.

If you are interested in umpiring at this event, please contact Alex Turnbull (TCU) at: alex_turnbull87@yahoo.com.au