

May/June 2014



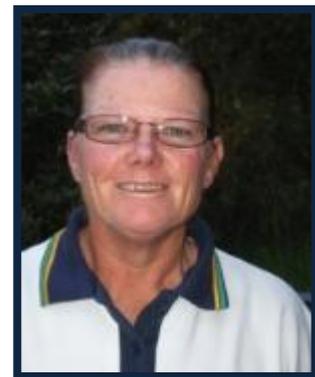
## National UIC's Call

With Tricia Sibraa

### **DIANE WALLER CALLS IT A DAY**

One of Australia's leading female umpires has announced her retirement. Diane played softball for 13 years, and with husband Phil was involved in the committee for Oakwood Park Softball Club, Dandenong, Victoria. As a club coach of their Under 14 and B Reserve teams, Diane wanted to improve her rule knowledge as she thought this would help her become a better coach. In 1988 she started to undertake their club's umpire duties each week.

In 1989 Diane attended a Level 1 umpiring course conducted by Lyn Bishop, Victorian Umpiring Committee and this is when she started her umpiring journey. Di has been a member of the Victorian Umpiring Committee for a number of years undertaking many roles like the Allocations Manager and also been a member on their Examinations Sub-Committee. Diane has attended Victorian State Championships since 1990 and Australian National Championships since 1997, where she was Skill share umpire. Diane went to attain her Level 5 in 1998, her 6 in 2001, her International Softball Federation certificate in 2004. Di was the State Director of Umpiring for Victoria from July 2007 until July 2008.



Diane Waller

Nationally, Diane has been a Tournament Chief Umpire or Deputy/Examiner since 2002, and umpired her first every Grand Final plate was at the 2003 Under 19 Women's National Championship in Canberra, while her first plate at open women's was at the Gilley's Shield in 2007. Between 1997 and 2010 Diane has umpired anything from 1 to 3 National Championships each year.

Diane's service to Softball Australia has been 27 years attending over 33 nationals, and over 200 International games including multiple World Championships and the 2008 Olympics. Some of Di's career highlights are as listed below:

- First Plate on an International Game – Waverley, 2001 – Australia vs. New Zealand;
- World Master Games, Melbourne, 2002 – Plate umpire – Women's "A" Gold Medal Game;

- World Master Games, Edmonton, 2005 – Plate umpire – Women’s “A” 45 & over Bronze Medal Game;
- Umpired at the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> World University Games held in Florida in 2004 and Taiwan in 2006;
- Canada Cup in 2003 and 2005;
- XI ISF Women’s World Championships, Beijing, 2006 – Plate on the Play Off game – China vs. Japan – (full capacity crowd)
- Olympic Qualifier, 2007, Taiwan
- Olympics, Beijing 2008 and being announced as the 1<sup>st</sup> base umpire for the Gold Medal game (BIGGEST HIGHLIGHT)
- XIII ISF Women’s World Championships, Yukon, Whitehorse (Canada)
- 1988 - Life membership to Oakwood Park Softball Club, Dandenong, Victoria
- 2007 - The Margo Koskelainen Umpire of the Year Award (Victorian umpire of the year)
- 2009 – The Margo Koskelainen Umpire of the Year Award (Victorian umpire of the year)
- 2009 - Joint Winner - Softball Australia’s Vivienne Triplett Umpire of the Year



**Diane in action at the 2008 Beijing Olympics**

Personally, I want to acknowledge and thank you for your years of dedication to softball in Australia, support and friendship that you have given not only me but also to umpires throughout the world.

A Jesse Owens quote sums you up Di – “We all have dreams. But in order to make dreams come into reality, it takes an awful lot of determination, dedication, self-discipline, and effort”

*And from Debbie Grove:*

Di, you are a friend forever and an umpire colleague, we have experienced so much together. I would like to express these words to thank you Di for all the great times we have had on and off the diamond.

We have had some amazing experiences culminating in umpiring at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. There have also been some crazy things we have done together such as crossing the busiest 8-lane way highway in China on foot and walking for hours and getting lost in an unfamiliar country.

Our whole journey was a once in lifetime experience that will stay in our memories until the day we die... What an experience- “One World, One Dream”

Thanks Di, your friend Debbie Grove.

## News Flash from Leigh Evans, UIC Technical:

### *SAL Rulebook*

The next rulebook and exam delivery is now in discussion with Softball Australia, and some exciting new advances and platforms are being explored, including the current National Rules Exam delivery.

SAL will have an online rulebook viewable in PDF. Plans for an Online Portal are being worked through and will be made available to registered members, giving access to the SAL Rulebook with hyperlinks and also the feature of being able to print your own copy, rather than the expense of purchasing a printed hard copy. Rulebook reference material, a separate printable casebook and rules points of emphasis (POE) will also be available. Online training manuals and more will be available, for example, long-term test exams, policies and instructional videos for rotations, signals and discussions around interesting plays.

Being able to sit the exam at home or in a relaxed environment will make the whole exam process more available and comfortable. The NUC and SAL hope the umpiring fraternity - or anyone interested in the rules or technical aspect of the game - will welcome this step toward flexibility.

These discussions are all still in their infancy and still require planning, approval and development; we expect to know more by the end of this year and will keep you posted.

Meanwhile please continue to use the 2009 - 2013 SAL Rulebook and Technical Bulletin SAL\_TB\_2014-01 ([click here](#)) for reference to rules implementation and interpretation.

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# What's the call, Blue?

With Leigh Evans – UIC Technical

Here is a question posed to me online through 'What's the call, Blue?' recently:

“I have an interesting situation from the weekend and would like to know your thoughts...

The score was 5 – 5, with loaded bases.

The scorers believed the count was 2 balls and 2 strikes.

The umpire had not verbalised the count before the next pitch, which was a ball and was taken by the catcher.

The umpire awards calls “Ball 4”, the batter-runner advances to 1<sup>st</sup> base and all other runners advance.

The fielding coach then calls “time” and questions the count.

After some discussion the umpire realises he has the wrong count and calls the batter back from 1<sup>st</sup> base, however the runners that advanced were not returned to their base – and the run from 3rd base scored.

The defensive team requested the runners be returned to their bases based on Rule 10, Sec 6:

*'The umpires, in consultation, may rectify any situation in which the reversal of an umpire's decision, or a delayed call by an umpire, places a batter-runner or runner in jeopardy, or places the defensive team at a disadvantage'.*

In this case the umpire let the run stand and the base runners advance. His reasoning was that the defensive team should have known the count.

It happens that the next pitch was a ball and the run would have scored but the situation left a lot of coaches and umpires “discussing” the play.

Your thoughts please. Thanks.”

### **Leigh's response:**

Hi, a very interesting situation. The outcome relies on a few important steps in this scenario.

As you stated Rule 10 Section 6 relates to an umpire reversing or delaying a call that puts a player in jeopardy or team or advantage to either team.

If a umpire calls a runner out and then changes their decision, or delays a call and this puts a runner in jeopardy then the situation can be rectified, however if it's a matter of judgement like a fair or foul ball, home run etc., then the players have to play the game as they usually would, the coaches' job is to control the players and runners and give advice on diamond.

In the case of the count the umpire is not usually responsible for the result. The Players and Coaches have a responsibility to know or question the count. Had the Umpire not awarded the base to the batter then the play would stand.

You see these situations from time to time, where a batter-runner runs toward 1st base for Ball 4 as soon as the next pitch comes as he thinks it is a ball; the batter may have just had the wrong count. The catcher has a responsibility to know the count or question it; the catcher should play the live runner in these cases. In a dropped third strike situation where the catcher throws to 1st base for a play on the batter-runner thinking it was a strike that is then called a ball, a base runner that advances on the throw can keep the advanced base.

As you explain the situation, this did not occur during a play. The umpire awarded the batter-runner to first, the other runners only advanced because of the force and the award by the plate umpire. In this situation I would return the runners as well.

I have added a few case plays regarding Rule 10 Sec 6.

- R3 on 2nd with two out. B4 has a 1-1 count, when the plate umpire calls the next pitch a strike, pumping B4 out. R3, thinking B4 is out, steps off the base and is tagged by F6.

*RULING: This would not be a reversible decision. Even though the plate umpire was in error with the call (it should only have been strike 2), both R3 and the coaches should be aware of the count and number of outs.*

*R10-6a*

- With none out, B3 hits a long fly ball to centre field. The base umpire goes out and signals a home run. On seeing this, B3 slows down rounding 2nd. The ball does not go over the fence, so F8 picks it up and throws to the infield for a close play on B3 at 3rd. The umpire calls B3 out.

*RULING: Although the umpire made an incorrect signal, B3 and/or the coaches should have seen the action by the outfielder. No reversal of the decision should be made.* *R10-6a*

- With one out, R1 steals 2nd on the pitch. F2 throws to 2nd, as the plate umpire calls ball 4. The throw is in time so the base umpire calls R1 out. When he leaves the base to start for the dugout, the defence tag him again. The base umpire now realises B2 has ball 4 and that R1 is entitled to 2nd. Had the umpire not called R1 out, he would not have left the base.

*RULING: The call is reversed, due to the base umpire calling R1 out in error and placing him in jeopardy. R1 remains on 2nd and B2 on 1<sup>st</sup>.* *R10-6d*

- R2 on 1st, with a 3-2 count on B3. The plate umpire calls ball 4 on the next pitch, so R2 advances slowly toward 2nd. F2 asks the plate umpire to check with the base umpire on a 'checked swing' and the base umpire responds with a strike signal. F2 immediately throws the ball to F6, who tags R2 before he reaches 2nd.

*RULING: Because the umpires put R2 in jeopardy on the reversed decision, B3 should be declared out on 3 strikes and return R2 to 1st.* *R10-6d*

Hope this helps,  
Regards Leigh

# Training Course in the Top End

## With Debbie Grove – UIC Development

On the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> May I travelled to Darwin and then down to Alice Springs on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> May to conduct training courses to the Northern Territory Community Umpires and to run two Level 1 training courses.

Umpire attendees in Darwin were Suzie Long, Jane Blunden, Amanda Stuart, Teri Cubillo, Kaara Ainslie, Garry Lambert, Zoe Webb and Brady Webb and the Softball NT Development Officer, Nicky Baldwin.

It was terrific to see attendees from NT Sport, Recreation and Racing - Andrew Ellison, Richard Hall, Kurt Wilson, Deanna Tunack, Anna Mullumbuk and Gowan Bush who were keen to learn all they could about softball and umpiring the game so they could promote the game to outback communities.



**Darwin Attendees (L-R):**  
**Back Row:** Tania Liddle, Nicky Baldwin, Andrew Ellison, Richard Hall, Kurt Wilson, Garry Lambert  
**Middle Row:** Teri Cubillo, Deana Tunack, Jane Blunden, Brady Webb, Gowan Bush  
**Front Row:** Anna Mullumbuk, Suzi Long, Debbie Grove, Zoe Webb, Amanda Stuart

This was a great turn up of Community Umpires and Umpires wishing to obtain their Level 1 Accreditation. The evening started with everyone introducing himself or herself and telling lots of interesting stories about their backgrounds.

We then went outside to do some drills (in the car park). All attendees were surprisingly good with their signals and listened very attentively with everything I had to show them. We then returned inside for the last hour going through the rotation of the 2 Umpire system.

The following evening we lit up the softball oval and went outside to do some drills practicing the 2 Umpire system. The evening off back inside, giving participants their last paper work for them to become accredited Level 1 Umpires.

There were a smaller number of attendees in Alice Springs - Faye Strachan, Michelle Krauer, Jeff Guthart, Denise Foster, Vicki Trindle and Cathie Allen. All agreed they got lots out of the evening lecture.



**Alice Springs Attendees (L-R): Michelle Krauer, Denise Foster, Faye Strachan, Debbie Grove, Vicki Trindle, Jeff Guthart, Cathie Allen.**

On the Saturday morning we did some practical drills of the 2 Umpire system which was followed up with two games during their afternoon local competition. Michelle, Jeff, Vicki and Denise were able to go onto the diamond with the skills that they had just learnt and to try to put it into practice.

Cathie Allen was off diamond, assisting me with feedback to the umpires and completing the paper work. I also went onto the diamond behind the base

umpire to assist and show them where to rotate and the best position to make a call. They all thoroughly enjoyed this and all commented that this was the best way to understand the theory side of the 2 Umpire system.

All participants received Rules in Pictures and lots of one-page handouts with helpful information. Umpires that were doing their Level 1 accreditation received a Level 1 Manual and the Community Umpires received the Community Manual.

I believe they all took away something and having individual chats to each of the umpires they all said they would continue umpiring.

I thoroughly enjoyed this whole experience and look forward to following this course up again with the NT umpires. I would also like to thank Softball NT very much for asking and arranging my travel and accommodation to help present the Community and Level 1 Umpires Course.

# Victoria

## 2014 Victorian U/15 State Championships, Knox 1-2 February

The Victorian U15 State Championships were this year held in early February at the sunny Knox Association in extremely hot conditions. This was a testing weekend for all concerned due to the severity of the heat, especially when considering the age of the participants. It was a very successful tournament, where the organisers, the 18 teams and the 29 umpires all worked together to come up with changing draws and tournament rules that worked extremely well. Shortened games, more frequent drink breaks, moving games from skinned diamonds to grassed diamonds, early starts and an early finish with the closing ceremony held under the shady trees were some of the many points that made the weekend work well. The weekend also provided another stark reminder of the importance of hydration for umpires, and the importance of taking care of ourselves physically. Richard Barrow, as the TCU, did a great job organising the umpires for this tournament which is often the initiation for many umpires to a more formal level of umpiring; he was ably assisted by deputies Dave Addlem and Chris Trengove.

The Future Umpires Program (FUP) was again run very successfully in conjunction with this tournament by Richard Dodds. Under the big top initially, he took eight green shirt umpires through a broad range of umpiring basics as their first introduction to the umpiring world. They then got practical time on the diamond in real games with support from a number of more senior umpires to give them greater understanding. The enthusiasm of all involved is a real credit to this group. Combined with the supports at the U12 Spectacular program and Victorian Masters tournament, the Future Umpire Program is another very successful initiative to bring junior umpires into our ranks.

The annual Zieran Cup memorial game between the East and West open men's teams was run in the evening at the end of the first day of the tournament. As always it provided a great opportunity for young players and umpires to see some of the greats of Victorian softball competing against each other whilst having some of our top umpires officiating, in slightly cooler temperatures. All in all, another very successful State Championship tournament.

Congratulations to the grand final allocations:

- Boys Cup – Brett Tyler (P), Stan Tolmie (U1), Aaron Wallace (U3)
- Boys Plate – Ken Evans (P), Colin Watkeys (U1), Kian Privitera (U3)
- Girls Cup - Rhonda Rowe (P), Bernard Vella (U1), Darren Spencer (U3)
- Girls Plate – Helena Hapeta (P), Mark Williams (U1)



**Boys Cup GF Crew (L/R) – Stan Tolmie, Brett Tyler,  
Aaron Wallace**



**Boys Plate GF Crew (L/R) – Kian Privitera, Ken Evans,  
Colin Watkeys**



**Girls Cup GF Crew (L/R) – Darren Spencer, Rhonda Rowe,  
Bernard Vella**



**Girls Plate GF Crew (L/R) – Helena Hapeta,  
Mark Williams**

## 2014 Victorian Open State Championships, Casey 5-6 April

A crew of 28 umpires gathered at Casey Softball Association in the South-East Melbourne suburb of Berwick for the 2014 Victorian Open State Championships held at Sweeney Reserve. A mild weekend was forecast and the weather was as expected – cold, warm, windy, still, sunny, cloudy; thankfully there was no rain.

Able led by our Management Crew – Stacey Loveridge (TCU), Richard Barrow (DTCU) and Debbie Grove (TAO) – all umpires had fun on and off the diamond. The Casey facilities for the umpires were the expansive football clubrooms and thus the travel distance to the diamonds was slightly extended, enabling pre-game discussions while walking. The crew comprised a broad collection of experience and youth, and as always, when a large contingent of umpires gathers in one place, the laughs and the learning never stop. Many of the crew kept themselves fed on cookies and snakes in between games, as well as some of the healthier options available.

With 65 games over the two days, all umpires did a great job providing service to the sport. Thank you all. Two umpires completed their assessment games for Level 3 accreditation and one candidate was assessed over the weekend for Level 4. Congratulations to the successful umpires – Jono Sassella, Alex van Kesteren and Brett Tyler.

Congratulation to the grand final allocations:

- Men Cup – Jason Carter (P), Leigh Evans (U1), Phil Waller (U3)
- Men Plate – Richard Barrow (P), Debbie Grove (U1), Stuart Tyler (U3)
- Women Premier – Trevor Murphy (P), Diane Waller (U1), Chris Trengove (U3)
- Women Plate – Richard Dodds (P), Dave Addlem (U1), Alan van Breda (U3)
- Women Trophy – Aaron Wallace (P), Angela Broadbent (U1)



A collective shot of most of the Grand Final Crews (L-R): Trevor Murphy, Dave Addlem, Chris Trengove, Richard Dodds, Jason Carter, Debbie Grove, Alan van Breda, Leigh Evans, Phil Waller, Richard Barrow, Stuart Tyler



Successful candidates - Jono Sassella (L3), Brett Tyler (L4), Alex van Kesteren (L3).

## Waverley Easter Tournament 18– 21 April 2014

Another Easter, another tournament at Waverley. It was great to see many new faces around the umpire's room, especially those coming from interstate.

There were green shirts galore down at the grounds over the weekend; for many this was their first tournament and hopefully it was a blast for them. It was great to see a new face from Tasmania; young Connor had planned to only watch over the weekend but instead pulled on the green and tested out his umpiring skills. With help and advice from our senior umpires Alan McAuliffe, Chris Trengove, Lucy James, Jacquie Crafter, Mark Gallaher, just to name a few, I'm hoping that many are able to take away their feedback comments and improve on their game throughout the year, then return after implementing their newly developed skills.

Four of Waverley's own green shirts over the weekend were also getting assessed towards their Level 1, Kalin Ropata, Micah Ropata, Daniel Beattie and Mathew Carolan.

Weather made things difficult with a couple of diamonds being rained out. There was a flurry of activity to get all games going on the free diamonds. The Waverley management and ground crew did a terrific job so that games were only delayed by a few minutes.

There were rave reviews from many of the coaches about our green shirts and the program, especially from the New Zealand teams who was very impressed by many of them over the weekend. Their coach remarked that it was a great way to get younger kids into umpiring, and too true he is.

Who else would you expect on the BBQ but Brett Atkinson I ask? No one, that's right. With plenty of snags to cook up he was set up at the BBQ through the long days to feed the camp.

With the job of TCU set upon me for the first year it was great to have help from Stuart Tyler with the allocations prior to the tournament start, and my two Deputies, Brett Atkinson with allocations during the tournament and BBQ Duties, along with and Dylan Murdoch overseeing the games throughout the weekend – Great job fellas.

Grand Final Crews:



**U13 Plate: Brayden Edwards and Mark Tosolini**



**U13 Cup: Loki Sangalli and Michael Round**



**U15 Plate: Stan Tolmie, Kian Privitera and Adan Penfold**



**U15 Cup: Daniel Beattie and Rhett Eldred**



**U17 Plate: Trai Hilderbrand, Myles Lego and Michelle Hawksworth**



**U17 Cup: Bernard Vella, Jill Williams and Andrew Dickson**



**Under 19: Brett Tyler, Jacqui Crafter and Mark Gallagher.**

Thanks to everyone involved in another great Waverley Easter Carnival.

Writer: Brett Tyler

# New South Wales

## New and seasoned blues hit the diamond at U11s - 8 April 2014

Not even the wet weather could dampen the enthusiasm and commitment of the 47-strong umpire crew at the [2014 SNSW U11 State Championships](#) at the weekend. The crew of umpires, led by George Norrish, saw a few state championship debutantes take to the diamond.

“We were really lucky to have some new Level 1 umpires join us for the weekend. They performed very well on the diamond – and even managed to stay afloat in the wet conditions on Sunday,” a laughing Norrish said.

A total of 20 teams of softball’s rising stars took to the diamonds under sunny skies on Saturday morning, only to return Sunday to find the grounds incredibly wet under foot. “Umpiring in wet weather is never great but the crew adapted to the conditions and we were able to complete 22 games.”

It wasn’t just rain on the horizon for the blue crew but also Easter, so the Easter egg guessing competition was a popular time-filler as the diamonds were prepared following delays.

“I’m always one to encourage the umpires to have some fun so the Easter egg challenge was one way of adding to the weekend’s experience,” Norrish said.

“Congratulations to Maryke Gyzen for correctly guessing that 87 Easter eggs were in the jar. Now I just hope that there are still some left come Easter!”

The hard work of Newcastle District Softball Association ensured that the weekend was enjoyable for all and that the championship finals could be played.



Girls Grand Final - Manly Warringah (17) def North Shore (3)  
Alex Oberg (Card), Aiden Kelly (1<sup>st</sup> Base), Mac Reith-Snare (Plate), Rod Bailey (3<sup>rd</sup> Base)

Congratulations to the following umpires who were appointed to Grand Finals:



Girls Grand Final – Penrith City (22) def Macarthur (3)  
Phil Wardley (Card), Tom Ryan (1<sup>st</sup> Base), Jennifer Womsley (Plate), Joe Kellermeier (3<sup>rd</sup> Base)

Photos courtesy of *Tom Ryan Photography*.

Click here to [submit your umpiring](#) news articles

## Level 3s reign supreme at U19 Women's - SNSWUA - 3 June 2014

The weekend's U19 Women's State Championship may have fallen victim to bad weather but in no way did it dampen the jubilant spirits of our three successful candidates: Lindy White (Central Coast), Craig Oberg (Sutherland Shire) and Tom Ryan (Hornsby).



Photo L-R: Craig Oberg, Lindy White, Tom Ryan

White, Oberg and Ryan joined an experienced umpire crew at Blacktown International Sportspark on Saturday 31 May and Sunday 1 June as they stared down six assessment games.

The build up to this assessment was long and involved for all three candidates, with the successful results coming on the back of much preparation.

"Leading up to the tournament I attended the Intermediate Academy for 6 sessions, umpired a few Winter League games, and I also spent 7 days umpiring at the School Sport Australia U19 Girl's Championships in early May," White said.

"It was also great to have the Rules Exam so close to the assessment weekend as I was studying hard in the weeks prior which really kept me focused," she added.

Across the weekend, though, it was the support and camaraderie of the crew that the candidates most appreciated.

"The atmosphere of the entire crew, irrespective of experience, was a fantastic support network for all of us," Tom Ryan stated.

Sutherland's newest Level 3 umpire, Craig Oberg, also expressed his thanks to those who helped him perform on the diamond at the weekend.

Under the guidance of TCU Andrew Rindfleish, the three candidates completed their final assessment game on Sunday under threatening skies. "We were pleased that the candidates were unaffected by the bad weather but disappointed for Sutherland and Macarthur who were unable to play their championship final. I congratulate and thank the entire crew, particularly the candidates, on their efforts across the weekend and look forward to doing it all again soon at the U19 Men's," Rindfleish said.

Congratulations to those who were appointed to the Grand Final:

Plate: Robert McIntosh  
1st Base: George Norrish  
3rd Base: Paul Bourke  
Left Field: Andrew Compton  
Right Field: Krissi Travers

Sutherland Shire and Macarthur were declared joint winners as a result of inclement weather.