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## Season's Greetings to the Blues

By Mark Toft

I take this opportunity to wish all our readers and their families the very best for the festive season.

I must thank all the contributors in our little magazine which has grown to be a great medium for all umpires in this great country of ours.

It must be remembered that your contributions are the key to the success of Blue's News On-line, so keep them coming.

It is anticipated that the December issue of BNOL will be published on December 21 so that means the contributions deadline moves forward to December 14. (I know there are a lot of Christmas Parties to go to and there is not much time to worry about anything else.)

To all those umpires attending National this year, good luck, especially those 10 umpires attending the International Development Clinic in Canberra. To those umpires who have been named as candidates a very special mention. Just remember it is the performances you put in which gained you a nomination, so go out and enjoy the experience and have some fun doing it.

I hope to catch up with many of you in Melbourne and Perth. Merry Christmas.



### What's in this issue???

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### Reminder

**Don't forget the Men's Skins tournament in Canberra on December 7-9. It should be the next best thing than going to an Open Men's Nationals. Good luck to those who officiate. Contact Denise Culpitt for more information.**

### THANKS

**BNOL take this opportunity to thank the TOOWOOMBA CHRONICLE NEWSPAPERS for the use of the photograph featured on page 6.**



## 2001 ISF CONGRESS REPORT

Some extremely interesting results have come from the 2001 ISF Congress, held this month in Tampa, Florida.

The Playing Rules Commission, [two delegates from each of the six regions, Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America and Oceania] deliberated on 103 rule change proposals. While the majority of changes were for clarification of language or placement in the rule book, some will have a definite impact on our game, and, more to the point, on the way the game is umpired.

Also, the Athletes Commission requested special consideration be given to a number of rules including blocking the base, introduction of the intentional walk where no pitch needs to be thrown and the number of warm up pitches at the start of each half inning.

Some of the more notable rule changes that were accepted are:

- ◆ The pitching distance for adult women increased to 43ft for the World Championship and Olympic Games.
- ◆ Intentional Walk for World Championship and Olympic Games.
- ◆ Three [3] warm up pitches only after the first inning for World Championship and Olympic Games.
- ◆ The distance of the home run fence for female play increased to 220ft.
- ◆ The distance of the home run fence for male play increased to 250ft.
- ◆ Change in the Obstruction rule where the fielder must have possession of the ball ready to tag to be able to block the base.
- ◆ The DH has been replaced by the DP.

It should be noted that a summary of the detail of all the rule changes is currently being prepared as a Technical Bulletin and will be available through State Associations and State Directors in due course.

Rule changes will now go into a four year cycle with the next formal proposals being put forward in 2005 for implementation in 2006. However, a "special urgency" clause exists to enable the Regional UICs the opportunity within this period to discuss and amend any rule that is found to be flawed.

Delegates from thirty-three [33] countries attended the Umpire's Commission which discussed the possibility of using Web pages as classrooms with the inclusion of home study rules questions, case plays and video clips of umpire mechanics etc. As one of the few countries with an Umpire specific Web page, Australia is to be a part of a pilot program for these innovations.

Cont....Page 8

The NSW State League, for Men and Women was conducted between September 2 and November 18. There were seven Men's teams and only five Women's teams. The Men's competition was strengthened by the importation of a number of interstate players, mostly with international experience. Three such players were pitchers. In the Women's final Bankstown Sports Bandits defeated Hills by 3 to 1 and in the Men's final, the fourth team into the finals, Mounties were victorious over Bankstown Sports Bandits, 3-0, despite Bandits having two of the above mentioned pitchers on their roster.

The League was staffed, from an umpiring point of view, by as many as 33 umpires, with Level 2 the minimum level used. However, the number of regular umpires (more than 6 games umpired) was only 21. Of the 95 games, prior to the Finals weekend, 25 were umpired by a 2-umpire crew.

The umpires with the most games during the League (including Finals) were Heather Randall (Level 3) 25; Scott Rindfleish (4) 22; Greg Baker (5), Amanda Greggs (5) and Ben McCall (2) 17 each; Michael Leach (3) and Bruce McCahon (5) 15 each; Sue Itzstein (6) and Andrew Rindfleish (7) 14 each.

#### The allocations for the finals were

Men: A Rindfleish S Itzstein G Baker  
 Women: B McCahon S Rindfleish A Greggs

The timing of the League was ideal as preparation for Level 4, 5 and 6 candidates. All the four Level 4 candidates took advantage of the high standard games in preparing for their examinations at the Women's and Men's State Championships in October and November, respectively. Unfortunately, only one of our four Level 5 Candidates was able to do games on a regular basis leading up to the Nationals.

On behalf of the League and the competing teams, I'd like to thank those umpires who gave up considerable time to officiate during the 2001 State League. Your time and efforts are certainly appreciated. I hope you all took away something from your games and look forward to seeing you same time same place next year. My thanks are especially extended to Sue Itzstein for "holding the fort" when I was unable to be present at the Softball Centre.



Some of NSW umpires in their State League shirts. They sure do stand out, don't they!

Left: Sue Itzstein (alias Ray Charles), Andrew Rindfleish and Greg Baker.

Right: Scott Rindfleish, Bruce McCahon and Amanda Greggs.



Presented at the Annual Dinner that follows the NSW SUA AGM.

- Andrew Rindfleish Umpire of the Year – **Lesley Steedman**
- Director's Award for Services to Umpiring – **David Baker**
- Encouragement Award – **Steven Morgan**
- Affiliate Award for Umpire Development – **Georges River SA**
- Individual Award for Umpire Development – **Graham Boyle**

## DANDENONG SOFTBALL ASS. INC. VICTORIA

### **Easter Challenge 2002**

30 March to 1 April, 2002

Primary, U/14, 16 and U/19 male teams

Dandenong Softball is again seeking teams from Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory that are interested in competing in a competition that brings together the best Primary, Under 14, 16 and Under 19 (note 1) male teams.

**The competition is open to any club or association team.**

**The entry fee is only \$50 per team and a nominated umpire.**

Teams will be competing for perpetual trophies.

Entries close March 1, 2002

**For further information and entry forms contact Robyn de Sachau, Secretary, Dandenong Softball Association on Phone 03 9546 9826, Fax 03 9546 9825**

**E Mail - [desachau@bigpond.com](mailto:desachau@bigpond.com)**

**Web Site - <http://dandenong.softball.org.au>**

(Note 1. As this is the first year for the under 19's, the competition is subject to team entry numbers. If you are considering entering a team please make contact as early as possible)

### Apology

Due to the new privacy Act which will be in place in a couple of days I have been advised to can the Birthday Call section of this magazine. Until we get the OK from everyone we can't print personal details of our umpires. For all those who are having a birthday in December, Happy Birthday to you. **Sadly signed Mark Toft**



# Big Al's Tester

**The Scenario:**  
 Bases loaded, 1 out.  
 A mis-hit lands a metre or two in front of the pitcher, who fields the ball and throws to the catcher for the force out at home.  
 The catcher is standing with one foot on either side of, but not in contact with, the home plate. The catcher, believing he has made the out, throws to 1st for the double.  
 The runner from 3rd, thinking he is out, runs behind the catcher, misses the plate and heads for the dugout. The batter-runner is called safe at 1st.

**Result:**  
 The catcher has not made the out, so no "Out" is called. The runner missing home plate cannot be called "Out", as this is an appeal play. An appeal is not made before the next pitch, so the run scores. All hell breaks loose.

**The Question:**  
 What are the correct mechanics for the plate umpire in this situation? Should there have been a "Safe" call at the plate after the throw and after the runner passed home plate to let people (scorers, spectators) know what was happening, as it was clear the players didn't?

**Have a think about it ! Answer on Page 6**

**Australian Masters Championship**  
 Easter 2002  
 Keilor Park Association is hosting the Australian Masters Championships and all Umpires are welcome.

If you know of any umpires that would like to umpire at this event, perhaps you could suggest they contact Lindsay Whitehead in the first instance.  
 Lin\_P\_Whitehead@allegiance.com.au

**Victorian Masters Championship**  
 June 2002  
 The Victorian Masters Championship will be held, at Keilor Park Association.

Umpires who would like to umpire at this event are welcome to contact Lindsay Whitehead.  
 Lin\_P\_Whitehead@allegiance.com.au

**REMINDER TO ALL BLUES** — Don't forget the World Masters Games in October. Blues needed. If Brisbane 1994 is anything to go by there is a lot of fun to be had. Email — jonvon@ozemail.com.au

## Victoria

### Foooooouuuurrrrr X 2 = Great

Kevin Offer (Horsham Softball Association) and Matthew Poynter (Waverley Softball Association) were both successful in gaining Level 4 accreditation at the Victorian Open State Championships held at the Werribee Softball Association on November 17 and 18. Conditions on the Sunday were terrible with driving rain and 40 Kph winds. Neville Laurence, Kevin Tannebring and Rod Dawson travelled over from South Australia to help boost the number of umpires as did David Lipscombe from Tasmania. There are 5 umpires going for Level 2 accreditation, at the Under 16 State Championships to be held at Berwick-Casey Association on 1-2 December.

### How are the umpire numbers, Lindsay????

It looks like a very busy Easter in Victoria. Girls Tournament at Waverley, Boys Tournament at Dandenong and ASF Masters at Keilor Park all at the same time. Could be very interesting.

## NORTHERN TERRITORY

### Strike two, ball two, storm three....

Thunder, lightning, change of jobs with a trip to Alice, new grandson – these are a few of the activities going on in the Top End at present. The Blues are continuing to umpire the Men's competition amid thunder and lightning and heat and humidity on Saturday afternoons. A very watchful eye is kept on the weather as we are having quite a few storms early on in the season but all are enjoying the games which are being played in a very friendly atmosphere. As you can imagine a great deal of water is consumed both through the game and after.

Ando and Marg changed hats last week and became NT selectors and travelled to Alice to look at some junior players. As Marg had lived there for more than 22 years there was quite a bit of catching up to do. The trip began with excitement as a message was relayed to Ando's mobile before they reached Katherine.

Marg had to ring Kalgoorlie urgently as Flynn John Warrilow had decided to enter the world earlier than expected! However all is well. A little bit of umpiring was done in Alice as they went to watch the Year 7s and 8s play a competition. Ando kept count of all the times Marg got hit! A good bit of fun though. Now it's back to umpiring on Saturdays again.

In Tennant Creek they caught up with Jenny Kitching a past Director of Umpiring and plan to have a Christmas get together next weekend when Kitch comes up to Darwin.

On behalf of all the NT umpires I would like to wish everyone a Great Festive season. Marg will be at the Under 16 Boys National and is looking forward to catching up with people again.

Marg Lee

## Masters in Newcastle—By David Crowe (Umpire in Charge)

They came from the South...they came from the North...even the East and West. Umpires came from the four corners of the mainland (sorry Tassie) to officiate at the 8th Australian Masters Games in Newcastle.

Over forty blues ensured that each of the 455 games were covered. That's right 455 in eight days!

It was a great effort by the umpiring crew to continually back up day after day for four games a day. Of course there were player umpires who assisted as well, but the majority of the work load was covered by just a few.

It would be unfair to single out individual performances however a number of people deserve special mention such as the player/umpire from Sydney who rotated to three, totally wiping out the catcher who decided to change course mid-stream, and still made a call on the runner!

As per normal, much laughter and frivolity (sp??) was to be had in the umpires room. Much had to do about the exchanging of business cards and who already had some??? But as Tofty says, what happens on tour stays on tour!

While eight days of softball was hard work all involved I am confident that many of the same people will be booking accommodation for the 9th Australian Masters Games to be held in Canberra in 2003.

I am also sure that many will be making the trip to Melbourne for the World Masters next year. If you have ever contemplated going to the Masters', contemplate no more...just do it!

On behalf of the players and the organisers of the softball, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who umpired during the event.

### The 8th Australian Masters Umpiring Crew

NSW - Crowe (6), Itzstein (6), Davis (4), Lamond (4), Compton (2), Bell (2), Cate (2), Lansley (2), Kimpton (2), Loats (2) Jones (1), Quinnell (1), Murphy J (1), Bate (1), Hailstone J (1), Walker (1), Said (1), Norrish (1), Murphy M, Hailstone V, Rudd D, Halpin. QLD—Bichel (7), Toft (5), Gross (5), Rickson (4), Sibraa (4), Harries (3), Griffiths (3), Goodman (3), Trow (3), Hoeta (3), Ringrose (3), Walsh (3), Lamb (3), Dyer (2), Wallwork (2), Ralph (2), Lewis (1), Harding B, Molyneux. VIC—Waller (6), Keogh (6), James (6), Poynter (3), Offer (3), Matene (2), Stone (2), McGrath (2), Beard (2), Stanfield (2), Hunter (1), Freeser (1), Ziola (1), SA—Wallace (3), Fulton (1), Ladd, WA—Beswick (2). **NOTE: A number of player/umpires assisted over the week.**

## 2001 LABOUR DAY JUNIOR SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT

**South Australia**

The sixth annual Labour Day Junior Softball Tournament was held in Adelaide over the long weekend from September 28 to October 1.

Over the course of the weekend, 157 games were played utilising 39 umpires, including 11 from interstate. The majority of games were officiated under a 2-umpire system. Due to a lack of availability of umpires early in the tournament, some Under 14 games only had a plate umpire appointed and the teams were called upon to find volunteers for the bases. All finals were played using 3 umpires. By the end of the weekend, it was difficult to find an umpire looking for an extra game.

Thirty-two teams competed in three divisions; Under 19, Under 16 and Under 14 age groups. The teams consisted of local Adelaide clubs; SASA affiliates from Mt Gambier and Port Lincoln, and interstate teams from Canberra (5), Waverley (2), Knox Academy (2), Sydney Wanderers and Glen Eira. The collapse of Ansett just prior to the tournament meant that several other interstate teams were unable to make the trip to Adelaide.

The weather over the weekend was somewhat variable with cool, cloudy and windy conditions on Saturday, intermittent showers on Sunday and finishing with a warm, sunny Monday. The rain on Saturday required two games on the international diamonds to be transferred outside to the grass diamonds but fortunately no games were lost due to the weather.

The other inconvenience for the weekend was the need to use a second location on Sunday morning due to the running of the Bay-to-Birdwood Classic Car Rally. Sixteen games were played at the nearby Adelaide Airport Oval while 1600 cars parked themselves on diamonds 3 to 9 at West Beach. A great sight for car lovers, not so for the tournament organisers! Despite many assurances, the rally did not run to schedule and the start of one round of games was slightly delayed but this time was easily be made up.

Dave Roberts

### CONGRATULATIONS

Kevin Offer and Matthew Poynter, two Victorian umpires who recently gained a Level Four accreditation. Well done guys.

**SDU and Umpiring Co-ordinators are asked to send through your new accredited umpires so we can mention them in Blue's News.**

**Send to—[mtoft@ozemail.com.au](mailto:mtoft@ozemail.com.au)**

## Australian & Olympic Umpire

Kerry began her career as a player at the Frankston Softball Association at the age of 13 and represented the Association at the State Championships for over 10 years.

At 17 she began umpiring and traveled to the Melbourne Association where she came under the watchful eye of Marg Dwyer and her senior umpires.

“There were many senior umpires who taught me the basics of umpiring, not just the ‘how’ but the ‘why’. The first course I attended was a two day course run by Marg Dwyer. She made umpiring fun and by the end of that course I was hooked.”

Kerry continued on with her umpiring career attending both State and National Championships and attained her Australian Level 6 in 1993. She was a member of the 1994 and 1997 International Development Squads and her first International tournament was the South Pacific Classic in Sydney in 1994. The following year saw her involved with the Trans-Tasman exchange with New Zealand attending the Women’s Interclub Championships in Dunedin N.Z.

“There have been many people who have influenced my game but those that had the greatest impact were probably Marg Dwyer, Cathy Powers, John Larter and Alan McAuliffe. I have enormous respect for all of these people, sometimes the lessons were hard but definitely worth it.”

Since that time she has attended many International tournaments including the South Pacific Classic in 1998, the Women’s World Championships in Japan in 1998 and the South America Olympic Qualifier in 1999. The last two tournaments were instrumental in her achieving a place at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

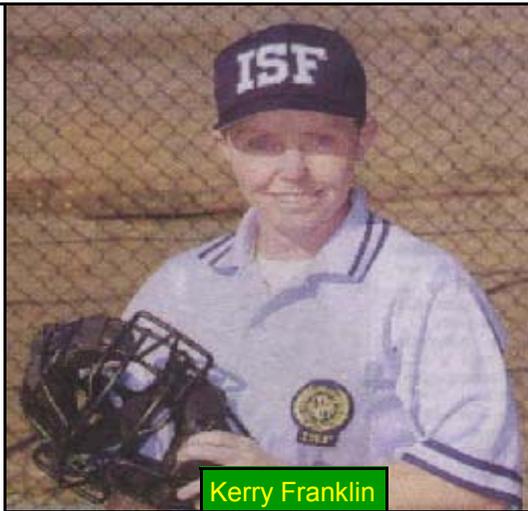
“Being appointed to the Olympic Games was the highlight of my career as an umpire. It was also the start of an intense training program. Preparation is the key to a good tournament. Knowing that I had done everything possible gave me the confidence I needed to umpire well.”

Kerry was appointed as the Home Plate Umpire for the Semi-final between Team USA and China that ended with a home run by USA’s Stacey Nueveman. USA went on to beat Japan for the Gold Medal with Japan the Silver and Australia the Bronze.

And now that the Olympics are over?

“Well there is always more to do and learn. I am constantly learning about both my game and myself. Umpiring can teach you many things, communication, negotiation and leadership are only a few of the skills that can carry over into your everyday life. If I thought that there was no more to learn I would have to give the game away, but there is no chance of that!”

**Story courtesy of the Victorian Umpire’s newsletter “Calling the Strikes”. Many Thanks.**



## WA still spreading the word

Western Australia

With Peter Baker (SDU)

I attended the North West Championships in Paraburdoo on the long weekend September 29 - October 1 at the invitation of the convenor John Hall.

This Championship is the highlight of the North West Women's softball calendar and is very competitive. The winner this year was Port Headland.

There were 16 Umpires in attendance which represented all the Associations in the North West.

The Clinic and training sessions were well received and I distributed a lot of information on 3-umpire rotation and Plate mechanics.

During games there were candidates who presented for Level 2 practical examination, with Kevin Rakich from Karratha was successful.

The umpires in the North West are keen to continue within the umpiring program. They have a strong Association and well organised.

John Hall as the Convenor and along with Secretary, John Lillywhite will continue to produce excellent umpires from the area.

I take this opportunity to thank the Paraburdoo Association for a very well run Championship and hospitality during my stay. I would also thank Barrie Sargeant for the effort he has put into these Championships over many years.

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## Umpire Management

The working group set up to organise the management for all Umpires in the State has presented the plan to WASA which ratified the document at the October Board meeting.

This now will bring the plan into operation and interviews are to be conducted for all the applicants for the positions on offer to form the Umpire Board of WA.

We hope to have the Board in position by the end of this year and begin operations in February 2002. This is a significant step for umpires in this State and will bring all umpires within the program under one Management system.

I hope to announce the elected Board members in the next edition of BNOL..

Larter .....  
the best  
Medicine



There is al-  
ways time  
to laugh!

## Winners v Whingers (Which one are you?)

The winner is always part of the answer:  
The whinger is always part of the problem.

The winner always has a plan:  
The whinger always has an excuse

The winner says "Let me do it for you":  
The whinger says "That's not my job"

The winner sees an answer for every problem:  
The whinger sees a problem in every answer.

The winner says "It may be difficult, but it is possible":  
The whinger says "It may be possible, but it's too difficult"

A winner listens;  
A whinger just waits until it's their turn to talk.

When a winner makes a mistake, they say "I was wrong":  
When a whinger makes a mistake, they say "It wasn't my fault"

A winner says "I'm good, but not as good as I could be":  
A whinger says "I'm not as bad as a lot of other people"

A winner feels responsible for more than their job:  
A whinger says "I only work here"



Action from Toowoomba, QLD

BRUSH BACK: In Your Face!!!!!!!

## Answer to Big Al's Teaser (How did you go?) From Page3

### The Correct Mechanics:

As soon as the catcher received the ball and threw to first, the umpire should declare the runner "Safe" and indicate, either verbally or visually, that the catcher was not in contact with the plate.

The verbal would be, for example, "Safe - no contact with the plate". The visual call and signal would be "Safe" followed by a tap to the foot, or a two handed sweeping motion away from the plate to indicate the plate was missed by the catcher. (Similar to when the first base player pulls the foot on a play at first base).

It is necessary to call "Safe", even though the runner missed the plate, because there was a play made. If you do not make the call you could be accused of 'coaching' the defensive team. However, if no play was made at home on the runner and he missed the plate, no call is necessary.

By making a strong call and/or visual signal, you eliminate any confusion by both players & spectators alike. You also make life easier for yourself in the event the defence challenge as to why the runner was safe.

Although the runner missed the plate, he is assumed to have touched it until such time as the defence makes a legal appeal, at which time the umpire rules on the play. It is up to the defence to 'know' whether the plate was touched by the runner or not.

Remember also that the runner, once he enters the dugout area, forfeits the right to return to touch the missed plate, if he subsequently becomes aware that an appeal is to be made.

This is another of those situations where making a good, strong call allows all participants to know that you are aware of what is happening and have total control of the game.

**Wanted**  
**Full time position.**  
**Experienced print**  
**journalist. Will relocate**  
**to any State.**

[mtoft@ozemail.com.au](mailto:mtoft@ozemail.com.au)

**Genuine request!!!!!!**

### DATES TO REMEMBER

Dec 11— Sarah Gowty—3rd Birthday  
Dec 23— Adam Gowty—5th Birthday  
Dec 25—Dec 26 Christmas/Boxing Day  
Dec 17—Tricia Bichel—Birthday  
Jan 1-4—Int. Development Clinic Canb.  
Jan 6-12—National Open Women Canb  
Jan 6-12—National Under 19 Men Melb.  
Jan 6-12—National Under 16 Boys Syd.  
Jan 13-19—National U19 Women Adel.  
Jan 13-19—National Under 16 Girls Hob.  
Mar 10-16—National Open Men Perth

## Letter to the Editor

The Western Australian Softball Umpires Association Inc. is currently undergoing a name change. We will be now known as "Azul Umpires Association Inc."

**(AZUL (Spanish) = BLUE )**

As the newly elected President of the Association, I would like to thank the efforts of the executive of WASUA and the Department of Sport and Recreation (WA) who have been instrumental in moving us towards a resolution that has enabled us to become affiliated as an associate association with the Western Australian Softball Association.

In particular, Julie & Peter Richardson and Jason Carter whom have put in a great deal of their own time in working with the various government departments seeking relevant information.

I would like to wish all our members, and those that are members of the softball fraternity, a very Merry Christmas, and safe, prosperous New Year! *See you on the diamond!* **Betty Maass—President**

## Western Australian 2001 Winter Competition

The following report in brief, was submitted by the UIC, Mr Jason Carter. The Winter Competition 2001 regular season ran from May 6 to September 2 with finals being held from September 7 to 23. All umpires during the regular season were provided by WASUA.

Eighty-nine percent of the games rostered were covered by a minimum of two umpire systems that resulted in some very positive outcomes.

During the season, Dave Searle attained his Level One ASF Umpires accreditation. Dave shows much promise as an umpire.

Ejections were few and in the main, was the result of poor conduct.

Thanks to all umpires that assisted during the finals but most especially the fulltime umpires on the roster that were willing to commit their time.

Congratulations to those umpires who plated the grand finals: J. Richardson (Div 1), B.Maass (Div 2), P. Richardson (Div 3), J. Mooy (Jnr), D.Paul (Div 4), W. McDonnell (Div 5), B. Kilmurray (Div 6), R. Harris (Div 7), D. Vince (Div 8), P. Hutchinson (Div 9), J. Whelan (SubJnr A), S. Whelan (SubJnr B)

Special thanks go to the Winter Competition Committee who were a pleasure to work with.

## WHY DO WE SAY THINGS.....

Contributed by P.J.B.

**Once upon a time ....** Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with a high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning and death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous.

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Most people did not have pewter plates, but had trenches, a piece of wood with the middle scooped out like a bowl. Often trenches were made from stale bread, which was so old and hard that they could be used for quite some time. Trenchers were never washed and a lot of times worms and mould got into the wood and old bread. After eating off wormy, mouldy trenchers, one would get "trench mouth".

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Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or "upper crust".

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Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock them out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up - hence the custom of holding a "wake".

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England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a "bone-house" and reuse the grave. When reopening the coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realised they had been burying people alive. So they thought they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the "graveyard shift") to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be "saved by the bell" or was considered a "dead ringer".

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**Continued on Page 8**

A great deal of time was spent discussing ways to speed up the game with many suggestions being offered. It seems that the ideal length of a game is between 1hr 30mins and 1hr 45mins and definitely no longer than 2 hours. Countries were asked to consider other possibilities for the future.

A highlight of the Congress was attending the Opening Ceremony of the Under 16 Girl's World Cup at the ISF Stadium in Plant City, a 45 mile drive east from Tampa. Some 39 teams participated with 40 umpires [13 from outside the US and 27 from the US] in attendance.

One of the more interesting events that night was participating in a wedding ceremony. The bride and groom were from Newfoundland, Canada, and decided that Home Plate at the ISF Headquarters Stadium was the ideal place to exchange their vows. They were 'attended' by the North American Vice President and Softball Canada President, the Softball Canada Executive Officer and the ISF Development Commission Office staff. The 'fans' in the stadium were the wedding guests. The marriage celebrant was sartorially splendid in his oversize board shorts, softball T-shirt and sneakers. Skeptical, I was assured that according to Florida laws the ceremony

**Crew Signals** **Goals and Goal Setting** By Leigh Evans

Instead of starting with game management as stated in last month's issue, which is such a complex issue, taking in different areas dependent on the level and standard of play, I would like to break it down, starting further back with planning and goal setting. It starts with, interest, attitude, commitment, focus, and aims of each and every umpire.

Recently I was asked by an umpire why I umpire and what I hope to get out of umpiring. After giving the umpire my answer it dawned on me, there were umpires out there in the same situation.

A week later I was planning for a lecture at our candidates' course and decided I would give a session on goal setting and how to be a successful candidate and umpire. I started by asking the candidates as a group.

Why do they want to be a candidate? What do they hope to get out of this course? What do they enjoy most or least about umpiring? And is there a particular goal they want to achieve in the near future.

They will need to know how to measure success? How will they plan for training? Who do they ask for feed back? When will they need to reevaluate the goals?

When will they be satisfied? And what do they want to achieve this year and in the next five years.

Rules to Goal Setting.

1. The goals must be realistic.
2. They must be measurable.
3. They must consist of short term and long term goals.
4. You must be able to except failure.
5. It must be reevaluated constantly.
6. It must have logical steps for criteria.
7. It should list strengths and weaknesses.

Setting goals like, I want to be the best umpire in the world has several problems. It is not realistic, it may happen but usually this is reserved by umpires that have started with goal setting, planning and worked their way up.

This type of goal also has no measure. Measures can come in the way of achievements like levels, certificates, finals selections, state competitions, national, international selection, and so on. Assessments after championships, feed back from peers, UIC's and even coaches and players.

This statement is also a long-term goal; it has no short-term aspect. Short-term aspects are important because it's a way to measure achievement or failure, to reassess your training, game style and approach. I prefer not to use the word failure. I use words like I didn't meet the criteria or I did not make the grade.

If you meet your short-term goal it's a way to give yourself a pat on the back and it reinforces you're on the right track. If you did not meet your goal, its time to reassess your direction, training and feedback etc.

I once didn't reach the standard when going for my level 5 and was devastated, however after reassessing, I made it and in fact I believe it made me a better umpire. I also had to list why and what I got out of umpiring and noted I enjoy the game, the challenge, camaraderie, and the feeling of success.

Using this type of approach along with truthful self-analysis, especially after possible confrontations with coaches or players will go a long way toward progressive improvement.

Asking yourself could I have handled it better or could I have avoided the confrontation or ejection while still controlling the game/situation, will gain you respect and help you achieve your goals.

Find an umpire or umpires you respect and who is respected by others and model your self on aspects of their game.

**Next Month — Self Assessment**

### State Forum

Queenslands Annual Softball Umpires Forum was held on the weekend of 24-25 November 2001 and was attended by 21 umpires representing the State's District Associations. One pleasing aspects was the refreshing viewpoints openly expressed by newcomers to the forum.

A number of incentives to support the development of umpires were discussed including:

- Regular contact from Queensland Umpiring Committee members with District Association Coordinators;
- District Association Handbooks;
- State Umpire Awards; and
- Maintenance of the State Data Base.

The State Director of Umpiring, Tricia Bichel, addressed the forum on umpiring program developments and a number of issues.

State Training Officer, Frank Thomas also reported on Queensland Training Program, which has seen a number of regions benefit from hands on training.

### State Director Finalist at Awards Night

State Director of Umpiring, Tricia Bichel was again recognised for her service to the sport of softball through nomination in Queensland's prestigious Sports Awards held at the Queensland Convention Centre on November 26, 2001.

Tricia passed through the preliminary judging to be presented as a finalist in 2001 Premier of Queensland Service to Sport Award.

The eventual winner was Stephen Hinchy (Rowing), but the quality of the six finalists reflects the commitment Tricia continues to demonstrate in her chosen sport.

### Wedding on the Diamond

**Andrew Cameron (Level 2) and his fiancée, Ella Horne (Rookie umpire) recently 'tie the knot' on the diamond. After the wedding vows they both ran the bases in separate directions, only to have Ella call Andrew out at the home plate for running bases in reverse order. (It is not sure if Andrew was intentionally bringing the game in disrepute).**

**One onlooker suggested a double forfeit be declared because both teams were aware of the proceedings about to take place.**

**Congratulations to Andrew and Ella.**

### **Christmas in Oz** By Mark Toft

In the middle of summer you would expect no one would want a hot roast Christmas lunch, but the traditionalists still do. Many however have the colder version with all the trimmings. As the temperature rises above 35 degrees Celsius (100 Fahrenheit) and the flies gather for the festive season, the two-legged males arrive at the 'in-laws' with a slab (carton of 24 cans) of beer in hand.

The female family members have the bits and pieces to add to the smorgasbord of food which is laid out in a meticulous order. Grandma makes a check of the meats as they are placed on the table. Ham, turkey, chicken, lamb, beef.." That should tame the hungry beasts," she says with a smile.

Salads galore are added: Coleslaw, potato salad, bean salad, rice salad, pasta salad, in fact anything with mayonnaise and is made for Christmas is now called....salad. "Grandma, where's grandad?" "Oh! He's probably around somewhere dear, just go and play with the other kids."

"Ho! Ho! Ho! Merry Christmas!" In walks an elderly man dressed in a Santa suit. The pillow at the front is visible and the beard and wig don't cover granddad's dark hair.

All the kids are excited as there are plenty of presents around the Christmas tree. Some have bits of paper torn from the corner. "Come on everyone gather around the Christmas tree and we will open presents now," calls Grandma.

The angel has a lean, in fact the tree has a lean, but no one cares, as all eyes are focused on the gifts at the base. Grandma makes a head count on children, but everyone waits for Uncle Bob who walks slowly into the lounge room. He struggles to open his eyes as it seems just minutes ago that he had gone to bed.

Grandad (oops Santa) starts handing out presents. The paper flies high into the air as if it's going through the paper shredder. Ooh! Ahh! Wow! Gee! Are the calls as presents are revealed from beneath the pretty Christmas paper.

Once a toy is discovered by each of the children, their attention span is gone. Suddenly their name is called out again, and the ripping and tearing of paper can be heard once more. After all the presents are opened the women start the clean up as the children race off to play with their new toys.

As time goes by, a call comes from the kitchen... "Lunch is ready!" There is a mad rush to the table as the little ones fight to get the seat next to Grandma or Grandad. The bon-bons crack as they reveal the fashion statement of the day....the Christmas crowns made of coloured crepe paper.

There's so much food, it's hard to work out where to start, so the ladies start serving children while the men sit back and exchange a joke or two. After the festivities the male population adjourn outside, drag the rubbish bin (the wickets) to the middle of the backyard to play the traditional cricket game.

There's no room to swing a cat, but plenty of room for 10 fielders to huddle around the batsman as the bowler commences his approach. "How's that!" Is the cry as the ball whizzes past the batsman head. The bowler thumps in again, to release another thunderbolt and there's contact with the bat... catch it, catch it, but don't spill your beer, they all scream!

As the sun beats down, the men resemble lobsters in shorts and t-shirts sweating like pigs.

The females finally arrive in the backyard after the huge wash up. Some join in, others sit sipping their favourite thirst quencher and watching the game.

"What's for dinner?" Comes a cry...as the evening meal is being prepared. Yes! The tradition continues.

"Merry Christmas"