

Blue's News On-Line

Official Australian Softball Umpire's Magazine

Contributions to mtoft@ozemail.com.au November Edition 11/2004

Grand Prix One - Downey Park Brisbane

The opportunities for all Queensland National umpires to come together for a National Tournament are few and far between but when they do it is great for the State's umpiring program.

With the Grand Prix One being held at Downey Park it was important for Queensland's National Umpires to get in some quality games leading into the Nationals starting in less than a month. Darren Sibraa and Frank Thomas travelled to Canberra for the Skins and were not available for Grand Prix One.

This tournament was a great opportunity for Ian Frame (Level 6 candidate) Helen Strauss and Stephen Gutteridge (Level 5 candidates) to work with senior State teams before going to Nationals as candidates.

As you can see by the picture below the crew was able to wear the new on-diamond shirts. A closer look will see Ian Bunston in the long-sleeve variation of the shirt.

Brisbane turned on indifferent weather for the finals on Sunday with the Gold Medal game being played in very wet conditions.

Gold Medal - Mark Toft, Ian Frame, Helen Strauss
Bronze Medal - Martin Turnbull, Ron Trow, Stephen Gutteridge



Back: Martin Turnbull, Ian Frame, Mark Toft, Ron Trow, Stephen Gutteridge, Ian Bunston. Front: Garry Pittman, Robyn Pittman, Tricia Sibraa (UIC), Helen Strauss, Yvonne Kahler.



Andy's Address

(National Director of Umpiring Andrew Rindfleish)

It is with considerable pleasure that I announce the Board of Softball Australia has approved the appointment of two umpires to travel in early 2005.

Bruce McCahon has been selected to travel with the Aussie Steelers on their trip to Auckland and Rotorua in Jan/Feb. Darnell Shepherd has been selected to participate in the Tasman Exchange and will attend the New Zealand Men's Open Club Championships in February and North Shore in New Zealand.

Elsewhere in this edition of BNOL I'm pleased to release details of membership of our umpires of the NOAS, the Australian Sports Commission's officiating accreditation scheme commencing, January 1, 2005.

All softball umpires who wish to remain within our program and be recognised as umpires must complete the registration process and agree to abide by the revised Code of Ethics.

There is another article in this edition describing a revamped Umpire's Activity Log and the importance of Activity Logs going forward. Please be sure to read this article and be using the new format.

As advanced notice for all umpires who are contemplating nominating as candidates in June 2005 for the 2006 National Championships, there will be the need to prepare a developmental action plan (DAP) for yourself.

This DAP will be required to be submitted, along with your 2004/2005 Activity Log when nominating for Nationals and will cover the period between nominating and the examination at the national championship. Further details, including guidelines will be published in BNOL in early 2005.

Lastly, the new 'on diamond shirts' were "launched" at the Grand Prix in Brisbane and the ACT Skins on 3 December. From first hand experience in Canberra and all reports from Brisbane, the shirts were very favourably received by all in our game.

My personal thanks go to all those on the working group for their contribution toward development of this initiative and especially to staff member Sue Itzstein for her management of the initial orders and the liaison with Softball Australia's supplier and sponsor Greatrex.

Shirt orders can be placed through your State U-I-C (best to share postage and handling costs) or directly to Softball Australia through their web site.

Andy Rindfleish

TECHNICAL BULLETIN

Issue Date: November 2004

This Bulletin contains new base mechanics & variations to existing mechanics and comments on some mechanics not to be used.

Introduction

Following the very successful ISF Umpire Certification Clinic conducted by Henry Pollard, ISF Director of Umpire Training, in Brisbane in January 2004, it has come to the attention of the National Umpiring Committee (NUC) that several of the new mechanics that were introduced to the attendees have been put into practice by umpires of varying levels across the country without authorisation.

While accredited umpires of Level 6 and above may be seen to be using different mechanics, positioning etc from time to time (in trialling new methods or in preparation for International play), State Directors/UIC's, training officers and umpires in general are reminded that no mechanic change, or introduction of new mechanics, should be implemented by umpires of Levels 0 - 5 unless advised to do so through the issue of a Technical Bulletin authorising such changes.

It is stressed at this point that the majority of the mechanics introduced at the clinic were mainly for the benefit of those umpires being assessed for Certification to officiate in International play only, as they are the mechanics to be used at Olympic Games, World Championships and selected International Tournaments.

Following discussions with Henry Pollard, the NUC has determined that not all of the mechanics are suitable for use by developing umpires in this country; however, some changes to existing mechanics are relevant to our environment.

The following is a summary of the mechanics that (a) are to be modified/introduced from receipt of this bulletin and (b) are not authorised for use, or to be taught.

Vocals:

All umpires and trainers are to continue to encourage vocal communication between umpires on the diamond. However, one word vocals ARE NOT TO BE ENCOURAGED, e.g. (a) on a check swing umpires should continue to ask, "Did he swing" with a reply of "Yes he did" or "No he didn't" as the case may be, with the appropriate signal, rather than a one word ask of "Swing", with the reply of "Yes" or "No"; (b) If the plate umpire considers the batter did not 'check'

the swing, then he/she should point to the batter and continue to state "Yes, you went" or words to that effect rather than just "Yes".

Swinging Strike:

If the plate umpire considers that a left-handed batter has attempted to swing at a pitched ball and did not 'check' the swing, then the umpire should point to the batter with his/her **RIGHT** hand and state "Yes, you went" or words to that effect. With a right-handed batter the umpire will indicate with the **left** hand.

Position Between Innings:

All base umpires (regardless of level of accreditation) are to continue the current practice of taking a position just off the base line between home & third base or between home & first base between innings. The practice of 'grazing' between innings, i.e. taking a position in shallow leftfield, centrefield or rightfield, is NOT TO BE ADOPTED under any circumstances.

Brushing The Pitcher's Plate:

All base umpires should carry a small brush for sweeping the pitcher's plate or bases when working a game. The pitcher's plate is to be swept clean at the completion of an inning and BEFORE the incoming pitcher takes the warm-up pitches. In a 2-umpire system the base umpire will always be responsible for sweeping the plate. In a 3-umpire system when no runners have been left on base the third base umpire would normally sweep the plate. However, whenever runners have been left on base or the umpires have moved away from their positions in foul territory on the third out, it is the umpire who is closest to the pitcher's plate who shall sweep the plate.

Signalling An Outfield Catch:

When an umpire moves out to the outfield area on a fly ball and the catch is taken, the 'out' signal is to be given facing the fielder taking the catch, even if this means turning the body due to the fielder running past the umpire on completion of the catch (this will often happen on a third out catch with the fielder returning to the dugout). Do not give the signal facing a vacant field, i.e. with back to home plate when there is no fielder in front of the umpire facing the outfield area nor turn "to address" the infield to give the signal.

Home Run Signal:

The home run signal is to be given only by the umpire who has gone to the outfield on the hit. The remaining infield umpires DO NOT 'mirror' the signal.

Count Signal:

When giving the count, the count is to be verbalised and signalled to the pitcher and then the hands rotated 180 degrees to enable the count to be seen by all players and coaches.

Calls Close On the Outfield Foul Line:

The current mechanic for close fly ball calls near the foul line with an umpire at

second base is to CONTINUE. The umpire at second will 'go' and have responsibility of ruling on the catch, or 'no catch' as the case may be. The responsibility of determining whether the catch is taken in fair or foul territory, or whether an uncaught fly ball is fair or foul REMAINS WITH THE PLATE UMPIRE. This is one case when a shared call is acceptable.

Out and Strike Mechanic:

The one-part out and strike mechanic has been used by many senior umpires for a number of years now. More recently, it has been widely promoted for use by all umpires on a swinging strike.

The one-part out and strike mechanic is optional for use by all umpires at all levels in all situations and should be adopted by all Level 5 and above umpires.

Use of the one-part mechanic requires the umpire to go straight to the hammer position, with a firm clenched fist. The hammer should be formed with the arm from shoulder to elbow in line with or slightly in front of the body. The initial movement of the right arm extended high above the head, palm open, is not necessary.

Base Umpire Ready/Set Position:

The new ready/set mechanic introduced at the clinic will normally only be utilised by ISF certified umpires when preparing for International events. The current mechanic, as described herewith, is to continue to be used in normal competition play.

- a) With no runners on base the umpire should assume the erect 'ready' position and move a couple of paces toward the batter as the pitcher releases the pitch.
- b) With runners on base the base umpires should assume the 'ready' position by facing SQUARE TO THE BATTER. As the pitcher assumes the set position the umpire should then adopt the 'set' position by going into a slight crouch with the knees slightly bent, weight resting lightly on the balls of the feet and the hands resting lightly on the thighs. The umpire should then break from this position and be ready to move as the pitcher releases the pitch.

NOTE: Both umpires should assume the 'set' position simultaneously.

Positioning For Plays Made to First Base:

Whenever the base umpire is stationed at first base with no runners on base, or with a runner on first base only, or with a runner on third base only and the batter puts the ball into play, the umpire is to assume a position approximately 4-5 metres (12-15 ft) from the base and at a 90 degree angle to the throw when making a call at the base.

Mechanic For First Base Umpire:

A Technical Bulletin dated August 2002 detailed a new mechanic to be used as an alternative to the 'button-hook' at first base, in the 3-umpire system. This

mechanic was optional for use, but from receipt of this bulletin THE OPTION IS REMOVED and the mechanic now becomes mandatory for use and in the training of umpires.

The basis of the mechanic is that the umpire, rather than moving into the infield and button hooking to pick up the batter-runner at first base, moves down the line, in foul territory, toward home plate (See Fig. 1). The initial movement should not take the umpire any further than the front of the coach's box, i.e. 4.57m (15 feet) toward home plate from the base.

When to use: Any time with no runners on base or with a runner on first base only; or with 2 out and a runner on third base only; and the batter hits a ground ball through the infield (i.e. the third base umpire does not 'go', but stays within the infield area to cover any play at second base).

Benefit: Since the ball is through the infield, by moving down the line toward home it is considered easier to pick up the batter-runner touching first base than it is to cut into the infield (sometimes across the line of the runner from first base) and button-hook, especially if there is a possibility of a throw from the outfield to first base. (Many outs have been missed by umpires failing to observe batter-runners missing first base, due to incorrect buttonhook mechanics, e.g. turning the wrong way to pick up the batter-runner, or being too slow to move into the infield and turning as, or after, the batter-runner has reached first base).

From this position, it is also a simple movement to (1) bounce into the infield for a possible play-back on the runner who has rounded first base, or (2) rotate to home plate in event the plate umpire rotates to third base for a possible play. (See Fig. 2)

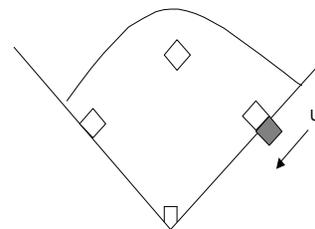


Figure 1

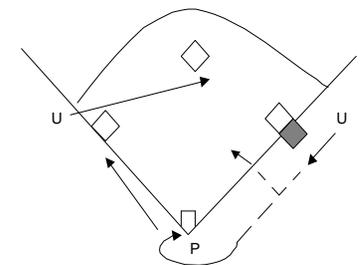


Figure 2

As previously stated, all mechanic variations are now authorised for use, where applicable, and become effective from the date of this bulletin.

Alan McAuliffe
National Rules Interpreter
Softball Australia

TECHNICAL BULLETIN

Issue Date: November 2004

TO: STATE DIRECTORS OF UMPIRING
SUBJECT: UNIFORMS – ALTERNATE HEAD WEAR FOR RELIGIOUS REASONS

Background - Australia is a diverse society. Many measures are in place for uniting and gathering the people of Australia as one. Australian values are about people sharing in the common goal of making Australia an even better place, building on their diverse heritages. Health and Sport issues play an important role in the life of most Australians and Softball has provided an exciting recreational activity for women in the Australian community for over fifty years and for men since the early 1980s.

Sikhs and Muslims within the Australian Community are showing an interest in the qualities that playing Softball has to offer. The playing rules concerning headwear is restricting their equal participation. There are reports that females wearing the Hijab have been prevented from participating in school sporting activities because the headdress contravenes "Uniform Rules" of the particular sport concerned.

Position Held by Softball Australia - Australian democracy guarantees us our civic freedoms with fundamental rights and equality. The institutions of Australian democracy enable diversity in our society to flourish. The Sport of Softball has provided an exciting recreational activity for women in the Australian community for over fifty years and for men since the early 1980s. The strong recreational base of female players has produced an elite team good enough to win Olympic Silver at the 2004 Games and our Men are currently ranked 3rd in the World after an outstanding performance at the 2004 World Championship.

Our community is culturally diverse and for Softball to continue to serve the entire Australian community Softball Australia recognizes that Softball must modify its uniform requirements to meet the needs of all cultures within the community. This includes allowing players to participate wearing traditional headdress such as the Turban and Hijab.

Implementation of Softball Australia's Position - Any player, male or female, in any division of our domestic programs, is to be permitted to wear traditional headdress, subject to complying with the safety requirements of our sport.

The support of all umpires in all divisions of our sport with regard to this issue is of paramount importance to ensure that no person, regardless of race or creed, is denied the opportunity to play softball in a friendly and healthy environment.

Alan McAuliffe
National Rules Interpreter
Softball Australia

November 28, 2004

With a computer generated world maybe some of us can relate to this problem.

Dear Tech Support,
Last year I upgraded from Boyfriend 5.0 to Husband 1.0 and noticed a distinct slow down in overall system performance, particularly in the flower and jewelry applications, which operated flawlessly under Boyfriend 5.0. In addition, Husband 1.0 uninstalled many other valuable programs, such as Romance 9.5 and Personal Attention 6.5, and then installed undesirable programs such as AFL 5.0, NRL 3.0 and Golf Clubs 4.1.

Conversation 8.0 no longer runs, and Housecleaning 2.6 simply crashes the system. I've tried running Nagging 5.3 to fix these problems, but to no avail. What can I do?

Dear Desperate,
First keep in mind, Boyfriend 5.0 is an Entertainment package, while Husband 1.0 is an Operating System. Please enter the command:

quote; "http: I thought You Loved Me. tm" and try to download Tears 6.2 and don't forget to install the guilt 3.0 update. If that application works as designed, Husband 1.0 should then automatically run applications Jewellery 2.0 and flowers 3.5. But remember, over use of the above application can cause Husband 1.0 to default to Grumpy Silence 2.5.

Whatever you do, DO NOT install Mother-in-law 1.0 (it runs a virus in the background, that will eventually seize control of all your system resources).

Also, do not attempt to reinstall the Boyfriend 5.0 program. These are unsupported applications and will crash Husband 1.0.

In summary:
Husband 1.0 is a great program, but it does have limited memory and cannot learn new applications quickly. You might consider buying additional software to improve memory and performance. We recommend Hot Food 3.0 and Lingerie 7.7.

Good luck,
Tech support

REMEMBER THIS AT CHRISTMAS TIME (One for the girls to boast about)

According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, while both male and female reindeer grow antlers in the summer each year, male reindeer drop their antlers at the beginning of winter, usually late November to mid-December. Female reindeer retain their antlers till after they give birth in the spring.

Therefore, according to EVERY historical rendition depicting Santa's reindeer, EVERY single one of them, from Rudolph to Blitzen, had to be a girl.

We should've known... ONLY women would be able to drag a fat man in a red velvet suit all around the world in one night and not get lost.

Victorian Open Championships 2005 - UIC Report

The event was hosted by Wellington Softball Association, at their ground in Sale, over the weekend November 20-21, 2004

Venue:

The grounds at Sale were in immaculate condition, and were well maintained during the event thus ensuring that no problem arose with the playing surface. The only need that I see from this event is to somehow define the limits of the playing field in relation to distance for home runs. It was noted particularly during the men's games that fielders were well beyond the legal limit of the field, with some estimated to be 300 plus feet from the home plate.

To reduce this problem, I suggest that cones be used on all diamonds not fenced, to show the home run distance, which will improve the opportunities for batters to display their prowess.

Umpires:

We had a crew of nineteen (19) people, including UIC and Deputy, plus the Horsham representative who was not accredited, and Phil Waller who was injured and unable to officiate, but was of great assistance in examining our candidate.

This was some 50% less than the optimum number and we will need to set in place some manner of improving the umpire numbers in Victoria to, hopefully, have sufficient people available for future events.

Weather:

The weather was kind to us over the Championship, with no extreme of temperature, and no rain – the wind was a little cool, but conditions for our crew were quite pleasant.

Accommodation:

The umpires were accommodated in the football club rooms, meaning that we had a considerable amount of space, partly due to the use of two rooms, and partly to the small number in the crew.

Tea and coffee were supplied, as was water and even biscuits, which were obviously appreciated, as the packets seemed to empty fairly quickly! There was also a refrigerator for our use, which was not greatly utilised due to the cool weather, but nonetheless was appreciated. A special thank you was extended to Bev Beard of Wellington, who acted as our liaison and kept the water supplies to us, and was most willing to assist in any other way that was asked.

Appointments:

All appointments were made by Diane Waller prior to the event, with some input from me, and there were very minor changes required during the Championships.

Protests:

There were no protests during the Championships, and this speaks highly of the quality of the crew.

There was one ejection for dissent, and this was dealt with by the Disputes Committee, resulting in the player concerned being suspended for one (1) game.

Candidates:

We had one candidate for Level 4 accreditation, and I regret to advise that the candidate was unsuccessful. Paperwork relative to the Practical Examination of the candidate has been forwarded to Debbie Grove, Examinations Manager.

My thanks are extended to all members of the crew, particularly Phil Waller, Diane Waller, Debbie Grove & Lindsay Whitehead for their assistance in the examination procedure.

I cannot speak too highly of Kev Broomhall in his role as Deputy Umpire in Chief – Kev's involvement began before the event, and continued through the event – his support, knowledge and enthusiasm were of great benefit to me, and I would be delighted to work with him again, at any time.

John Larter
UIC – 2005 Victorian Open Championships
22 November 2004.

WA Men's Tournaments

An open invitation to experienced umpires to attend a series of Men's State League Tournaments, to be held in WA on the following dates:

11th and 12th December 2004

29th and 30th January 2005

12th and 13th February 2005

The tournaments will feature a number of experienced WA players and invitational eastern states players and should provide a high level of men's softball. Accommodation can be arranged.

If anyone is interested in attending, please contact

Warren Duff
WA State Umpire in Chief
041 793 8468

Important Message!!!!!! Must Read - Umpire's Activity Log

We will be placing considerably more importance on the Umpire's Activity Log. All umpires at all levels should be using their Activity Log to record all facets of their involvement in softball umpiring.

At the national level, both qualified umpires and candidate umpires shall now be required to submit their Activity Log to the National Umpire in Chief, with their application form for National appointment. I shall be encouraging State UIC's to make use of Activity Logs when selecting umpires for appointment within their State and especially when selecting candidates at each level.

A revised Umpires Activity Log is available on the web site. Please download it from there and begin using it. National umpires should transfer all their games and other activities since June 2004 to the new format. The Activity Log is to be submitted to the National U-I-C in electronic format.

Being a softball umpire is a multi faceted existence and there are a number of areas of involvement that are to be recorded on the Activity Log. With respect to games umpired, these are identified as Plate or Base and Male or Female.

The description should be brief description of the competition; whether finals etc and whether 2 or 3 man or (1)).

The other involvement areas have been divided as described below. Include a brief description of the activity, your involvement and the hours spent on each activity.

Development includes any aspect of skill development, such as lecturing/running any practical or rule sessions; preparation for such training; attendance at any training sessions; informal assessment involvement with development of umpiring as either a mentor, trainer or trainee.

Administration covers any involvement in management of an umpire program or administration at Club, Association, State or National level. This would also include if applicable, time spent representing umpires/umpiring on a softball committee at any level.

Tournament management is to be used to capture all involvement in any facet of umpire management at tournaments or competition. This would include umpire allocations or appointments; U.I.C. or Deputy responsibilities; examination and assessments.

Remember.

1. all umpires should complete an Activity Log.
2. Include all your involvement in the sport – if in doubt – include it – do not understate your involvement in our sport.

Activity Logs must be submitted to the National U.I.C. when applying for Nationals, in electronic format.

Victorian Softball Association Inc.

Marjorie Nora Dwyer Memorial Scholarship - Umpiring

This year's recipient of the Victorian Softball Association Inc. Marjorie Nora Dwyer Memorial Scholarship - Umpiring was awarded to Sunshine Umpire Stacey Evans.

Stacey is a Level Three umpire who has a great future in the sport as an officiator. Stacey is a pleasant person on and off the diamond (hang on should she be an umpire with that credential) and is very keen to advance through the umpiring ranks.

Her family breathes softball with her brother, Andrew, an Australian Representative, Mother, Sandra, a State representative coach and player, Father, Leigh an ISF Accredited umpire and Grand-mother, Betty McGuire a retired International Umpire.



2004 Recipient - Stacey Evans

The Award

Awarded to assist developing umpires gain further experience and improve their umpiring and accreditation level.

This scholarship is available to members of the Victorian Softball Association, who hold at least a current level two accreditation in the Australian Softball Accreditation System, and must have actively demonstrated a desire and ability to obtain the next level.

Written applications to the Victorian Umpiring Committee and Curriculum Vitae, must be endorsed by an officer of the member's affiliated association / State softball association.

Applications on the correct form must be lodged with the Victorian Softball Association before 31st May annually.

Congratulations

Stacey on behalf of the Australian Umpiring family of Blues I take this opportunity to congratulate you on being awarded this most prestigious award.

I am sure I speak for everyone who knows you and have worked with you on the diamond that you are a worthy recipient of this award. Well Done!

NORTHERN TERRITORY UPDATE

The normal season of softball in the NT ended in September to be followed by the Masters games in Alice Springs in October.

Sadly before that happened we lost two of our "Blues". Ian Lee passed away on October 13 after losing his battle with cancer and Ian Aiken passed away on October 20 with respiratory problems.

Our small band of dedicated Blues are determined to continue on. Our thanks go out to all those who sent messages of condolence and flowers.

The small contingent that went to Alice Springs had a great time on the diamond and caught up with umpires from other centres. Even Marg flew down later in the week and umpired four games including a plate. To finish off the year the Darwin umpires are going to have a "celebration of life" party at "Hotel Lee".

We have three umpires off to the Nationals – Cathie Allen from Alice Springs who gained her Level 5 in January, Derek Quong from Darwin who is a Level 5 candidate and Yvonne Newman from Darwin who is a Skillshare candidate. We wish them all great tournaments

An early reminder that Arafura is coming up in May 2005. There will be both men's & women's teams competing – some from overseas. We always appreciate any help we can get so if you want to visit the NT – come.

We take this opportunity to wish you all a happy and safe festive season and best wishes for 2005.

2005 VICTORIAN Open Championships

Grand Final Umpire Appointments

A Grade Women

Kev Broomhall Robert Mitchell Stacey Evans

B Grade Women

Lindsay Whitehead Richard Barrow Vanessa Fleming-Baillie

A Grade Men

Debbie Grove George James Diane Waller

B Grade Men

Leigh Evans Rick Loveridge Stan Tolmie

National Officiating Accreditation Scheme

Softball Australia is a member of the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) and is sponsored by that body. As officials in softball we have certain responsibilities, one of which is that all registered umpires must be accredited with the National Officiating Accreditation Scheme (NOAS). As of January 1, 2005 we will begin registering all softball umpires, who wish to remain registered, with NOAS. Whilst registration is with the ASC and NOAS, it is achieved through Softball Australia, as administered by the National Umpire Committee.

Details of registration with NOAS are:

1. \$2 registration fee paid upon registration and upon reaccreditation. Re-accreditation with NOAS is required once every four years or when an umpire gains his or her next level of accreditation.
2. Each registered official receives
 - membership card
 - a reminder when re-accreditation is due
 - a discount voucher for use at a number of retail outlets
3. Softball Australia will forward details of each registered umpire to the NOAS for inclusion in their database.

Implementation Outline

1. Registration with NOAS of all umpires attending Nationals between January and April will occur at the National Championships, where they will complete the registration form and pay the registration fee.
2. Each State U-I-C/Director will be responsible for managing the registration process within their State for Level 1 to 4 umpires and those not attending Nationals.
3. Individual umpires can download the registration form, complete it and return it with the \$2 fee to their State U-I-C at any time.

In completing the registration form, it is imperative that the format of the Excel Spreadsheet not be altered in any way. This information will be placed, as is, in our data base for submission to the ASC. A printable format is also available for those with absolutely no access to computer or email facilities.

It is my goal, a goal the Board of Softball Australia have agreed with, to have all umpires registered with NOAS by the end of 2005. I seek the support of all umpires in Australia to become registered as soon as you possibly can.

2004 Rules Exam Analysis – 10 Worst Answered Questions

707 Candidates of all levels sat the Australian exam. Following is a list of the 10 most incorrect answers to questions at all levels, with an explanation of the correct rulings.

Q	% incorrect	Rule
Q6	69.31%	7-9f exception
Q7	64.92%	4-10
Q43	63.22%	1-66
Q45	72.7%	8-2g 6 & effect
Q51	62.52%	3-6f note 3 exception
Q53	66.20%	9-1z
Q59	72.70%	6-10e note
Q64a	75.81%	8-1e effect 3, 8-10 m
Q64b	77.23%	8-1e effect 3, 8-10 m
Q64c	78.64%	8-1e effect 3, 8-10 m

Q6. 2 strikes on B2 - Runner on third base interferes with F5 fielding a bunted foul fly ball. Ruling: B2 is out bunting foul on the 3rd strike. Answer. False: Rules 7-9f exception 1 & 2.

Explanation:

When a batter bunts foul with two strikes; he shall be declared out. Exception, when a runner interferes with a bunted foul fly ball that could be caught, or a fielder that could catch the ball. The runner is out and the batter resumes batting with an additional strike if less than 2 strikes.

Q7. This question related to disputing of an umpires judgment decision. Ruling: The umpire should remove the player. Answer. False: Rule 4 –10.

Explanation:

The answer lies in the wording of the question, viz: "... the umpire should re-move the player...", because the rule calls for, viz: "... shall result in the ejec-tion of..."

Q43. This question stated a Designated Player could not re-enter after being substituted. Answer. False: R1 – 66.

Explanation:

A Designated Player returning to the game after being substituted is a re-entry. Under the new rules of 2002 the Designated Player is the same as any other starting player, they may be substituted for, and return to the game once.

Q45. This question had R1 on 2nd, B2 swinging at the 3rd strike, F2 dropping the pitch, which went forward into fair territory. B2 then stepping on the ball as F2 was about to field it after R1 rounded 3rd. The Ruling said B2 is out and the runner returns to 3rd base. Answer. This is false. R8 – 2g6 & Effect.

Explanation:

Whenever a batter-runner interferes with a play, all runners must return to the base they held at the time of the pitch, not at the time of the interference. This meant that R1 must return to 2nd.

Q51. Runners at 3rd and 2nd, on a squeeze play the runner sliding for home loses his helmet, F2 then comes in contact with the helmet and fails to make a play on the runner at third. The Ruling said the ball remains alive, the run counts and no one is called out. Answer. False: R3 – 6f Note 3 Exception.

Explanation:

Because the dislodged helmet prevented F2 from making a play, the runner (R1) wearing the helmet should be called out. However, as R1 had already scored before F2 contacted the helmet, he cannot be called out, so the run scores. The exception to R1 being called out allows for the runner closest to home to be called out, so R2 would be declared out in this instance.

Q53. The ball is dead when a batter fails to enter the box within 10 seconds after the umpire calls play ball.

Q59 After a warning the coach at third continues to wave his arms about in an attempt to distract the pitcher. Ruling: The umpire should remove the coach. Answer. False: R6 – 10e Note.

Explanation:

After a warning, a coach who continues to act in this manner should be **ejected**, rather than removed.

Q64.a, b and c. This question was the most incorrectly answered across all levels. It relates to a runner being hit by a batted ball - it involves rules relating to whether a ball has hit a runner after it passes a fielder, before it passes a fielder, after being touched, not being touched, the pitcher's position and whether the runner is in contact with a base or not. The scenario goes like this: -

None out, F3 playing behind the base line, B3 hits a line drive ground ball that contacts R2 who is still standing on 1st base, before it passes a fielder other than the pitcher. F3 picks up the ball and tags R2, who is still standing on the base, then touches the base to force out B3, runner 1 advances home on the play. The Rulings read (a) R2 advances to second. (b) B3 is safe at first. (c) The run of R1 is legal.

The answers were (a) true, (b) true & (c) false. R8 – 1e Effect 3 & R8 – 10m.

Explanation:

It is important to understand the rules pertaining to a runner being hit by a batted ball. A look at the rule references above will help. The most common situation is one of four. Firstly, if a fair-batted ball that is first touched by a fielder, including the pitcher, hits a runner it is play on and the ball remains alive. Secondly, if a runner is hit by a fair-batted ball that has passed a fielder, other than the pitcher, and no other fielder had a chance to make an out it is play on and the ball remains alive. Thirdly, if a runner is hit by a fair-batted ball before it passes a fielder, excluding the pitcher, and no fielder had a chance to make an out, the ball is dead but no one is called out. Fourthly, if a runner is hit by a fair batted ball before it passes a fielder, other than the pitcher, and this contact interferes with a fielders opportunity to make an out, the ball is dead and the runner is out.

There is also an exception that covers a runner being hit by a fair-batted ball while in contact with a base; this exception states that if the runner is in contact with a base and is hit with a fair untouched batted ball he is not out, unless he deliberately interferes. However, the ball will be dead or alive depending on the position of the fielders - if the fielder is fielding behind the base line the ball would be dead.

So the answers for this question are: (a) TRUE. When the ball hit R2 he was in contact with 1st base so he is not out; the ball is dead as F3 was fielding behind the base line, so R2 advances to 2nd (forced to advance by B3 becoming a batter-runner). (b) TRUE. B3 is safe at 1st because of the dead ball (he cannot be returned to bat again). (c) FALSE. The run of R1 is nullified because of the dead ball; R1 must therefore return to 3rd.

Note: As distinct from when a fair-batted ball hits a runner, a runner that interferes with a fielder fielding a fair-batted ball will always be called out, making the ball dead.

If you have any questions in relation to these rules or any other queries regarding rules in general please do not hesitate to email me on levans@hotkey.net.au or 0419 304100 or Alan McAuliffe National Rules Interpreter almac8@chariot.net.au

Leigh Evans
Softball Australia
National Umpiring Committee
Staff Member.

New South Wales in Pictures



U14 State Finals
Girls (right)

P: Wendy Boyd,
1: Ryan Benson,
3: Peter Medbury

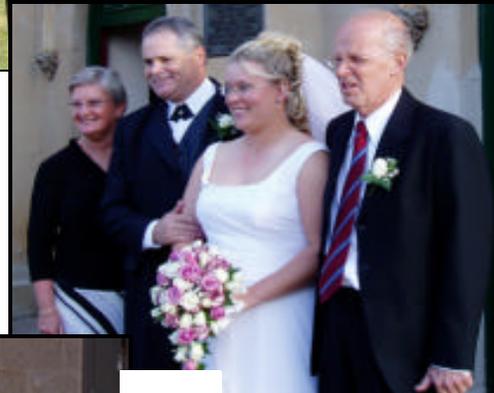
Well Done!



U14 State Final Crew
Boys (above)

P: Greg Zucchetti,
1: Doug Stracey,
3: Keith Compton

Well Done!



Thumbprint
Day

Ron and
Amanda
Hitched!

Best
Wishes.



N
S
W



Level 3

Ryan Benson
(Georges River)

Wendy Boyd
(Sutherland)

Kyira Cox
(Sutherland)

Ryan absent
from picture.



State Caps Awards

NSW State Caps were awarded to Bruce McCahon, Darrell Shepherd, Scott Rindfleish, Sue Itzstein and Greg Baker.

Level 2 - Paul Bourke
(Southern Districts), Mark
Marvell (North Shore),
Robert McIntosh
(Hawkesbury), George
Norrish (Lake Macquarie)

Softball Australia Service Awards

The following softball players and officials and officiators were recognised for their contribution to the sport with Softball Australia Service Awards recently.

Some of those who were named are Blue's and BNOL takes this opportunity to congratulate these umpires. The editor has highlighted the names of some umpires known, but there are probably more. If not highlighted please send an Email to mtoft@ozemail.com.au so BNOL can recognise all umpires.

Tasmania: David Lipscombe, Dean Anyon, Deborah Rodman, Helen Scales, Joscelyn Read, Karen Pearson, Leanne Forbes, Tania Horton, Wendy Goodwin.

Queensland: Anna Allez, **Maxine Baxter**, Barbara Bleakley, Greg Boddice, Les Bullock, Jenny Clifford, Nancy Considine, Jenny Covill, Yvonne Covill, Alana Cutmore, Margaret Enstrom, **Allan Georg**, Karen Griffiths, Cheryl Hobday, Sharon Hobday, Anne Llewellyn, Graham McLeary, Wayne Nicol, Michelle Nielson, Janine Rodgers, Margaret Sheehan, Shirley Stahlhut, **Mark Toft**, **Michael Trost**, Beverley Wallwork, Steve Wagner.

Victoria: Alan Vogt, Merv Larter, **Debbie Keogh**, Dot Bourke, Eric Nicholls, Val Nicholls, Carolyn Clearson, Jacquie Allen, Dean Anglin, Max Apps, Lauranne Apps, Jenny Baker, Stacey Baker, Steve Broomfield, Bev Byatt, Judy Crichton, Bill Giese, Chris Hammond, Mary Hartnett, Jim Haynes, Karen Jones, Rosemary Kirk, Jenny MacAuley, Warwick Mitchell, Robyn Nicholson, Helen Nixon, Peter Nixon, Diane Pearson, Keith Quinn, Leonie Ritchie, Maree Ryan, Tess Sard, Donna Scammell, Linda Scammell, Mark Scammell, **Rhonda Scammell**, Kerry Scott, Cheryl Star, John Sullivan, Trevor Weekly, Margaret Whittaker.

Canberra: Wayne Quinnell, Maxine Stewart, Gaye Disbrey, Avis Kerr, Margo Bain, Jenny Tebbutt, Julie Aitchinson, Kris Brooks, Alistair Kirkpatrick, Dean Benedetti, Jenny Knights, Kerry Macklin, Dot Worrall, Graeme Matthew, Antonia Matthew, Bruce Brownlie, Deborah Meuronen, Belinda Staler, Hans Bachinger, Kathy Bersinic, Ann Brownlie, Peter Bryant, John Chick, Brenda Chick, Susan Ford, Tanya Ford, Ann Levy, Sue Kominek, Kate Greeney, Richard McCreedy, Jenny MacDonald.

New South Wales: Colin Pegler, Cathy Kerr, Mavis Aldred, Norm Perry, Robert Summerville, **Jim Long**, Priscilla Higinbotham, Robyn Kimpton, Rhonda Maliphant, Leone Ruddy, Bill Holland, Phillip Aldred, Brian Long, Neidra Hill, Gary Johnston, Geoffrey White, Andra Duckworth, Doug Stracey, Troy Baverstock.

Western Australia: Ingrid Smith, Jo-anne Malkovic, Debbie Stevenson.

To all Blues,

Have a very Merry Christmas and a joyous and safe New Year.

To those umpires going to Nationals, especially those who are candidates good luck and good calling.

To those going to Adelaide for the Open Women. Don't party too hard as we have to fly on January 1, 2005.

Regards, Mark Toft and Family

Please Note:

CHRISTMAS IS CANCELLED

Apparently, **YOU** told Santa that you have been **GOOD** this year ...



He died laughing

Next edition may be December/January

1st World University Championships

21st October – 3rd November 2004

Thursday 21st October 2004

Today was a very long day. It started when we arrived at Sydney when our original flight was delayed, so we were booked onto another plane which was headed for LA. When we arrived at LA we missed our connecting flight and spent the next ten hours hanging around the Airport. We planned that we could get a shuttle bus into Hollywood for a couple of hours, but due to unforeseen circumstances at the Airport we didn't have any time. We ended up boarding a flight on another airline at 10pm that night.

Friday 22nd October 2004

We finally touched down at Tampa at 5am. We were taken to a café for a traditional Cuban coffee by Nelson. At 3pm we headed down to the ISF headquarters for a look around and then the girls had a training session. I was just checking things out from an umpire's point of view and took some photos.

Saturday 23rd October 2004

We did our own thing until lunch when we all went for a walk to the shops. We left at 1.15pm headed for the University of Southern Florida for a training session and then a game against Tampa. I introduced myself to Ken Ericson who is the head coach of USF and also assistant coach of the US National team. He was in charge of the umpire's allocations.

Australia vs Tampa

Barry – Steve – Diane – Rick.

Steve was an ISF umpire and was to umpire at the WUC. When we arrived home at 8.15pm we had dinner and then Paula held a team meeting.

Sunday 24th October 2004

We were to head off to USF at 9.15am, but a slight delay because two people, who were from the Anti-Doping program wanted to drug test either Lauren Dayken or Jocelyn McCallum. We had a game at noon.

Australia vs USF

Richie – Diane – Don – Dianne

The University rules are very strict with the pitching to the extent that the pitcher's foot cannot even lift up off the plate, even if the toe has not moved forward. We had the bus booked for 6.30pm to take us to Busch Park, a theme park. Because they were celebrating Halloween they had a "Halloscream" night. You walked through all this mist and fog and people would jump out and try to scare you and they did. The coaching staff and I stayed together, but Paula and I went on some rides. We arrived home at midnight.

Monday 25th October 2004

This morning the girls had a training session at ISF headquarters. When we arrived home we had lunch and then I had to pack as I was headed for my new home for the next week or so. There were three of us, myself, Rob from Netherlands and George from Chinese Taipei that required transporting to Plant City.

When we booked in I was told that I was rooming with a female named Tracey. Appar-

ently Tracey couldn't make it, so I had a room all to myself. Rob rang me at 6.30pm and informed me that we are all going to ISF now. I met up with Henry and was introduced to Merle Butler; at this stage Henry informed me that I was the only female in the crew. We arrived at ISF and met the other umpires. We had a three hour session in which Don Porter, President of the ISF spoke for a short time and then it was left to Merle and Henry. We exchanged some gifts and received a show bag from ISF, which included our ISF shirts.

Allocations were given out for the first day of competition. When we got home we walked to Dennys for something to eat.

Tuesday 26th October 2004

We had to attend the Tech meeting which was held at the Holiday Inn in Lakeland. All of the competing teams were now staying there. It was a normal Tech meeting that went for an hour or so. We had lunch and headed off to ISF at 12.30pm. We inspected the fields and Henry went through some problems that we needed to know about the Stadium diamond, such as open dugouts, etc.

USA vs Japan

Waller – George – Veldkamp – Jian

This was a good standard game with the USA winning 2 – 0.

We had the opening ceremony and guest what! I was the shortest, so I had to lead the crew out. The Aussies cheered for me as I walked out which was great.

USA vs Chinese Taipei

Thibeault – Veldkamp – Duran – Waller

I thought the umpiring crew worked as a team out there.

We went to "Cherrys" a sports bar for dinner and arrived home at midnight.

Wednesday 27th October 2004

Chinese Taipei vs Guatemala

Hanney – Waller – Shigeo – Hill

Unfortunately Guatemala was a fairly inexperienced bunch of females and was never really in the race. At times they had trouble just fielding a ground ball. Their pitcher had trouble pitching strikes and anything that was close the Chinese Taipei batters were batting. We finished this game early so I had time to get changed and then watch the Aussies play USA in which they lost 2-1, very close game.

USA vs Netherlands

Duran – Shigeo – Jian – Waller

The sprinklers were trying their hardest to come on during the game so the ground's crew was called out.

Most of the umpires were fed by the Chinese Taipei team as they had heaps of food left over after their team had already eaten. When we arrived home I watched the last couple of innings in which Redsox won the World Series.

Thursday 28th October 2004

USA vs Canada

Veldkamp – Jian – Waller – Shigeo

USA won 2-0 in 1 hour 40 minutes.

USA vs China

Thibeault – Waller – Veldkamp – Duran

USA won 3-0 by scoring runs in the bottom of the 6th inning and then holding China out in the 7th.

This game took 1 hour 12 minutes. Merle informed me that we want to use foul territory for a bunted ball as well as an outfield ball.

We all went out for lunch at Beef'o'Gradys. Tonight was a Culture experience for all involved in the Games. It was held at the Florida Aquarium, where we had a meal and then proceeded to walk around the Aquarium at our own pace. The umpires then went to another sports bar where we had a drink or two.

Friday 29th October 2004

Chinese Taipei vs China

Waller – Hanney – Klemm – Leon

Yet again! This was another close game with Chinese Taipei winning 3 – 0. In the 1st inning I was given the outs as per normal and wasn't getting any response. I said to myself "Yes, this is the American crew on the bases". Leon on third did actually notice that I was given signals and said that he would respond, which was good. The only time that Steve and Tim were interested was when it was an infield fly situation.

I gave a batting out of the box decision in this game and it was interesting the events that took place afterwards, just trying to explain to their interpreter what had happened.

Netherlands vs Guatemala

Leon – Waller – Shigeo – Jian

This game was over in 57 minutes with Netherlands winning 7 – 0 in 5 innings.

The Aussies was playing China in the night game in the Stadium. The 1st stoppage was our pitcher was having trouble with the loose dirt so the ground crew were called out. Merle and Henry were down there as well. The next stoppage was when the catcher for China copped a ball in the throat area and the medical staff attended to her, which took about 10 minutes. The third stoppage was when Ricardo, the plate umpire, in the top of the 8th inning with bases loaded indicated that the batter had been hit and awarded her 1st base walking in the first run for the game. Paula came out of the dugout and queried the call. Ricardo had a conference with his team and they reversed the decision. Now the China coach was not in a very good frame of mind. He ended up going to Merle and Henry with his argument but to no avail. The Aussies ended up winning with an outfield hit to Smithy which bought a run in. The game went for 2 hours 40minutes. There were discussions held after this game in body language. Like when a question is asked of you – answer the question verbally but do not shake your head because that is what the crowd see.

Saturday 30th October 2004

John and his wife Andrea took 6 of us down to the Mall for some shopping. Today was the start of the Playoffs. I didn't have a game until 8pm so it was a long day for me. My game was 1 vs 2 and I was pumped. Henry spoke to me before the game and told me that there were a lot of big name people watching this game and to do what I do best, the Aussie way.

USA vs Chinese Taipei

Waller – Thibeault – Veldkamp – Shigeo

For the first couple of times I went for a drink Henry was in my ear telling me that I'm doing great and just keep going. I was very pleased that we had a good game. There was a discussion regarding illegal pitching after the game.

We went back home and we had a Halloween party in the lobby. John's wife had set it all up which looked great. We had chicken, rice, mashed potato & gravy. Tim told me that I had a perfect game, I said "It was good, but not perfect", and then he said that Alicia Hollowell from the USA pitched a perfect game. Well there you go. We were all given a Halloween gift which was great, this also consisted of a Championship shirt and a fridge magnet for me. After dinner the allocations were given out for the last day – I had 1st base in the Gold Medal game, which I was very pleased with. A few of us went to John & Art's room and were watching a slide show from Jean-Claude's camera until we were told twice to keep the noise down by the management.

Sunday 31st October 2004

When I was having my breakfast the two guys from the ASA were there. They said that I had a good game last night. I thanked them and then we started talking about softball in Australia in general. We all went to the park together. Kerry had the first plate in the game between Chinese Taipei and Japan. The umpiring crew was an all American crew and as I watched the game the pitcher was putting resin straight onto the ball, but that doesn't seem to worry them, they are more concerned about the footwork. There were no signals given throughout the game except maybe the odd "infield fly". Anyway Chinese Taipei won 3 – 0.

Gold Medal Game

USA vs Chinese Taipei Thibeault – Waller – Duran – Veldkamp – Shigeo – Jian

This was my first ever 6 man game of softball. The game was nil all until the bottom of the 6th inning when USA scored 3 runs and then held Chinese Taipei in the top of the 7th. There was a Closing Ceremony but we weren't required to attend. After the game we packed up our gear and said our good-byes to the ones that were flying out tonight. Henry dropped some of us back home and then he left for the Airport. I went to Jean-Claude & Kerry's room and we were signing the match balls. We were just watching television until it was time to go out for dinner. The umpires that were left went to this Steakhouse which was supposed to be the bee's knees. It was an eventful night to say the least, but we did get a discount.

Monday 1st November 2004

Lori, who was Laurie's assistant, came to pick Rob and myself up because we were both going back to the Holiday Inn at Lakeland. I left my gear in the lobby and went to Paula's room. We packed up the Aussie's team uniforms. We went for a final walk to the shops to buy some clothes.

The bus departed from the Holiday Inn at 12.30pm for Tampa Airport. We had 1 ½ hours before we had to board so Paula and I went shopping. We purchased some neck pillows which came in very handy. Now we were headed for Chicago, on our way home.

There was a concern that we weren't going to make our connecting flight, but one thing in our favour was that they booked our luggage through to Sydney. It was tight but we did make it. I did request a window seat, which I got on all four flights on the way home. I actually had three seats all to myself from San Fran to Sydney.

We touched down in Sydney at 7.20am. We got through Customs without any problems and then waited for the shuttle to take us to the domestic terminal. We had a 2 ½hour wait before heading off to Melbourne. I was glad to be back home.

It was a great experience to umpire in the First World University Championships. I met some very interesting people and I'm sure that one day in the future I will meet up with some of these umpires somewhere else in the world. The competition was at a very high standard and I'm grateful that I was part of it. Alan McAuliffe was there all week and it was good to talk to him regarding the whole experience. Thanks to Paula and the Australian University team for making it easy for me.

Regards,

Diane Waller
WUC Umpire