



October 2013



National UIC's Call

With Tricia Sibraa

Welcome to October's BNOL, and thanks to the ACT, Queensland and Victoria who have submitted articles for us.

The ACT has had a busy start to the season, as seen on page 2. Another reminder about the annual Skins Tournament (29th Nov. to 1st Dec.) and Australian Day Tournament (25th to 27th Jan. 2014) – if you're interested in calling some games, please get in touch with ACT SDU, Alex Turnbull (contact details on page 2).

Queensland have continued in their State Championships season and congratulations are extended to those umpires appointed to finals and were successful in gaining their next level of accreditation. Read all about it, starting on page 3.

Victoria recently played host to the 14th Australian Masters Games. A huge crew of blues headed south, experiencing Victoria's wild weather for a week. Thanks to Angela Broadbent who has submitted an open letter about her experiences at the Masters Games. These open letters are very encouraging to the umpiring community, both for potential participants and for the organisers. Angela, we appreciate the time you've taken to submit this letter. Details about the Masters and the Werribee Memorial Shield start on page 6.

Thanks to Jesse Smith (NSW) who has compiled this year's Theory Exam analysis on the "Top 10 worst Answered Questions." Did these questions catch you out? If so, see the article on page 10, and see why the answer was what it was!

Lastly, two new guides have been uploaded to the SAL Umpiring webpage: [National Appointment Guide](#) and [International Appointment Guide](#). These guides are designed to assist umpires attending their first National or International Appointment. Click the hyperlinks above to access these resources.

Until next month, happy calling!

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Australian Capital Territory

Summer of softball gets underway

While the 2013-14 softball season officially got underway in the ACT last weekend, it has already been a hectic start to the season with a number of training courses completed and a full calendar of events planned.

The Saturday women's competition (A-E) commenced on 12th October and men's Monday and Tuesday night competitions (A-C) started on 14th October. SUAACT is endeavouring to cover as many games as possible with [Sarah Houston](#) coordinating allocations for the Saturday comp and [Alex Turnbull](#) sorting the men's games.

SUAACT has welcomed five new Level 1 umpires to the ACT crew with Benjamin Vance, Jack Downes, Jason Mackinlay, Philip Leahey and Damian Gates all successfully completing the Level 1 training course with flying colours. The course was held in August with the guys getting valuable match practice at the ACT PSSA carnival. Congratulations guys and good luck for the coming season.

SUAACT has scheduled a half-day refresher course for all umpires on 19th October and a Basic/Introductory Clinic focusing on L1s and L2s on Sunday 20th October. Special guest Martin Turnbull (a National levelled umpire and SUAACT Life Member) will be down from sunny Queensland for the weekend and has kindly agreed to put the locals through their paces.

Looking forward - There is also a full calendar of events coming up in the ACT. Keep your eye out for the following:

- Skins and "Aussies Got Talent U13 & U15's" 29 Nov to 1 Dec 2013
- U17 Boys Nationals 5 - 11 Jan 2014
- Combined U19 Nationals 16 - 22 Jan 2014
- Australia Day Tournament 25 - 27 Jan 2014.

To nominate for the Skins carnival or for information on the Australia Day Tournament please feel free to contact [Alex Turnbull](#), ACT State Director of Umpiring on 0406697631.

Queensland

State Championship Under 19 boys – Hervey Bay

The Hervey Bay Softball Association held an excellent tournament with eight teams competing to take out the title of Under 19 Men's State Championship.

As with all tournaments, it commences for most umpires with "the gathering". That time where we all catch up with our fellow umpires, renew friendships and do some reminiscing about previous tournaments. For some it has only been a few days, others it has been a number of months or longer. This tournament was no different with 12 umpires making up the "Blue" crew. The captain of the ship was Tricia Sibraa, ably assisted by Darren Sibraa and Bridget Cameron as examiners.



Photo of the "Blue" Crew (L – R): Yvonne Kahler, David Casey, Brian MacPherson, Michael Trost, Bridget Cameron, Jana McCaskill, Neville Baggow, Darren Sibraa, Alan Walsh, Jamie Harries. Missing: Tricia Sibraa (Doing TCU stuff), Graeme Love (Awesome guy taking picture)

The best thing about this type of tournament and the caliber of umpires involved means that there is plenty of opportunity to practise and learn as the games progress. With David, Bridget and Jana participating in the 2014 ISF Umpire Certification Clinic, the tournament was a valuable time to continue to develop their skills in the lead up to this important time of their umpiring careers. Along with umpire skills, there was some opportunity for a couple of umpires to show their "Gangnam Style" after a request was made by a young fella to DJ-Dave. Unfortunately, those that shall not be named did not accept the challenge.

On a more serious side, one of the key learnings from the weekend where the importance of pre-game meetings. The pre-game meetings ensured the crew understood their role and to discuss local ground rules that would affect "normal" rotations or the necessity to cover a ball that is normally another umpire's responsibility. Also a focus on good communication between the crew and the coaches during the game is as equally important.

Finally, post-game debriefs are a must for learning, particularly from umpires that don't work together on a regular basis, a fresh set of eyes on your game and positive feedback is an excellent learning tool.

As the tournament progressed into the final day, there were some good preliminary finals held which lead to a President's Cup Final between, Bundaberg and Mount Isa and a State Championship Final between Redlands and Toowoomba. Congratulations to the following umpires for their appointments to the Grand Finals.



Picture (L-R): Presidents Cup Grand Final Crew:
Yvonne Kahler (1st Base), Graeme Love (Plate), Jamie Harries (3rd Base)

President's Cup Grand Final

In a close fought game which was tied at 6 all going into the top of the 6th innings, Bundaberg were the eventual winners 9 – 6 over Mt Isa.

State Championship Grand Final

An outstanding performance by both Toowoomba and Redlands in the Grand Final with Redlands running out State Champions 9 – 6. Congratulations Redlands!

In closing, another excellent tournament; lessons learnt, fun had, friendships renewed and softball was the winner! A final congratulations to Neville Baggow (Mackay) for successfully obtaining his Level 4 at this tournament.

Writer: Graeme Love



Picture (L-R): State Championship Grand Final:
Bridget Cameron (1st Base), David Casey (Plate), Jana McCaskill (3rd Base)

State championship under 17 boys – South Brisbane

What a fantastic weekend for a tournament. The sun was shining, it wasn't too hot and there wasn't a hint of rain – unusual for a tournament held at this time of year. The crew consisted of a mix of young and experienced umpires who all worked well together both on and off the diamond. The bond between these umpires resulted in a group hug at the end of the tournament making for a memorable moment between us all.

Our TCU was Darren Sibraa along with examiners Mark Toft and Janelle Hicks (Alan Walsh – trainee) providing our feedback.

Congratulations to Caine from Toowoomba on attaining his Level 2, a fantastic effort.



Photo (L-R): State Championship Final Crew:
Jamie Harris (1st Base), Norelle Thomas (Plate) & Janelle Hicks (3rd Base)

Grand final crews –

State Championship Final

This game was played between Toowoomba and Redcliffe with Toowoomba running out convincing winners.

President's Cup Final

This game was played between Redlands and Hervey Bay with Redlands victorious by 2 runs.

Writer: Norelle "Pinky" Thomas



Photo (L-R): Presidents Cup Final Crew:
Michael Pedler (1st Base), Alan Walsh (Plate) & Sam Bent (3rd Base)

Victoria

Werribee Memorial Shield – 21st – 22nd September 2013

For 14 years, over two days in mid-September, Werribee Softball Association (WSA) has conducted the Werribee Memorial Shield (WMS) Competition. The event was established to commemorate the loss of two young players in the prime of their life.

Over the years since its establishment, the WMS has become well known as a fun event that offers a valuable opportunity for WSA clubs to motivate teams for the forthcoming season. More recently the competition has attracted interest from other associations and clubs for the same purpose.



Photo (L-R): B Grade Women Final Crew:
Kian Privitera & Peter Samuels

From all reports the event and atmosphere is fantastic.

On the 21st – 22nd September, 22 teams entered the competition resulting in two grades for both the male and female competition. The event has become so popular that the Victorian State U17 and U19 squads also participated and from all accounts were pleased with the competition, experience and organisation that went into the event.



Photo (L-R): B Grade Men Final Crew:
Chris Hutchings & Hayden Croft

In conjunction with the event, the Victoria Umpiring Committee was able to conduct

two training courses for up and coming umpires. The venue & event offers a great atmosphere for the trainees and with the more experienced umpires support and tutelage everybody got an opportunity for knowledge sharing.

All teams are required to nominate umpires for the competition and I was the lucky guy that got to complete the allocations for the weekend. The combination of experienced and developing umpires was a good blend for the event. If the smiles on their faces are any indication I must have kept most happy with the

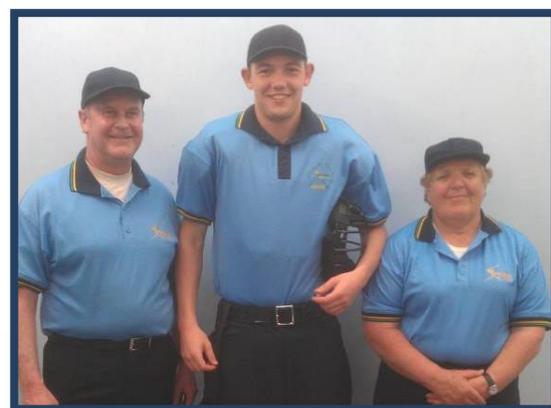


Photo (L-R): A Grade Women Final Crew:
Mark Williams, Brett Tyler & Rhonda Rowe

allocations.

The families of those being commemorated support the event and along other awards they provide an award for the umpire of the series. This year Kian Privitera of the Waverley Association was selected to receive that award. My congratulations and those of VUC go to Kian and best wishes for a great umpiring future.

See you all on a diamond somewhere soon.

Writer: Trevor Murphy



Photo (L-R): A Grade Men Final Crew:
Stan Tolmie, Dave Addlem & Richard Barrow

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

14th Australian Masters Games – Geelong - October 2013

On 5 October 2013 saw the start of the 14th Australian Masters Games Softball competition at Geelong Softball Association, Victoria. Seven days of competition was about to commence but not before the Umpires Meeting.

Under the shade of the marquee, young, old, new, experienced, happy and familiar faces were there waiting for the tournament rules to be discussed. The 'roll' was called and the first positive for the tournament - everyone was accounted for. That was one load off my mind as I had spent a week putting together seven days' worth of allocations so everyone knew what they were umpiring for the rest of the week. I dreaded the thought of going back to the drawing board 16 hours before the start of day 1 of competition. The next hurdle was to explain to the Queenslanders and Western Australians all about daylight savings and the need to put their watches forward before they went to bed so they didn't turn up an hour late for the first game.

Day 1 – all umpires arrived on time so the daylight savings explanation was a success. Now for the tournament rules and whether everyone understood what we discussed. I waited each day for a protest to be thrown my way. No protests lodged – umpires sorted out their own disputes on the game. I began to wonder why I was even there.

Over the coming days, 245 games of softball were to be played, 499 umpire appointments to be fulfilled. The weather forecast was promising apart from the gusty 55kmh wind. It was better that we had the wind rather than the heat and weather Sydney was facing at the same time. We did have a forecast of 31 degrees one day with a cool change coming in the following day down to 16 degrees. But that's what Melbourne weather is all about – challenging and unexpected.

Generally the umpires were injury free - apart from one umpire rotating into the path of an outfield thrown ball, and being struck to the side of the head. A fair spread of around 2-3 games a day across 46 umpires made for a light commitment and a chance for umpires to get out and watch others or socialise with their teams. Senior umpires were utilised to get out behind the nets and record feedback for all umpires on the diamond. The feedback was excellent and taken on board. Rotation errors were ironed out early in the week. Both new and experienced umpires were given feedback opportunities for development in order to apply a more consistent approach to the teams in blue. So the regular comments of 'We don't do that on Mars!' were put to one side and good work practises were put into place.



Photo: Spence Williams and the 'gusty' beard

A funny moment of the tournament was when I was advised that the plate umpires beard blew up in his face during a strong gust of wind just as the pitcher was about to pitch, resulting in him yelling out 'no pitch'. The team thought his beard blowing up was very funny and that was the basis of their laughter in passing the information onto me. When I approached the umpire, Spence Williams, after the game and challenged him about it, I found out that the beard wasn't the funny bit, it was the fact that he didn't have his mask on and that was why he called 'no pitch'. The players hadn't even noticed that part of his equipment missing.

On behalf of all the umpires, thanks must go to Ange Broadbent and Naisie Taiwi who went home each night and cooked some yummy cakes to keep our waists trim and taut and sugar levels peaking.

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



Photo: The bronze medal crews: Deb Keogh (TCU), Thomas Sutomo, Dave Addlem, Dinga Bell, Naisie Taiwi, Mark Williams, Andrew Cooper, Rhonda Rowe, Ken Evans, Rob Davis, Linda Sheridan, Scott Rutherford, John Humphries, Jen Womsley, Stan Tolmie, Bernard Vella, Robbie Fulton, Talia McDonald, Spence Williams, Vicki Dornam, Angela Broadbent, Ian Kennedy, Rhonda Scammell (DTCU)

Congratulations to the Bronze Medal Game umpires

- Mens 35+ Div 1: Kevin Offer (Plate), Talia McDonald (1st Base) & Stan Tolmie (3rd Base)
- Mens 45+ Div 1: Vicki Domon (Plate), Rhonda Rowe (1st Base) & David Addlem (3rd Base)
- Womens 35+ Div 1: Linda Sheridan (Plate), Benard Vella (1st Base) & Jen Womsley (3rd Base)
- Womens 35+ Div 2: John Humphries (Plate) & Robbie Fulton (Base)
- Womens 35+ Div 3: Ian Kennedy (Plate) & Mark Williams (Base)
- Womens 35+ Div 4: Dinga Bell (Plate) & Naise Tauimi (Base)
- Womens 45+ Div 1: Ken Evans (Plate) & Rob Davis (Base)

Congratulations to the Gold Medal Game umpires:

- Mens 35+ Div 1: Kevin Offer (Plate), Talia McDonald (1st Base) & Stan Tolmie (3rd Base)
- Mens 45+ Div 1: David Addlem (Plate), Linda Sheridan (1st Base) & Ian Goodman (3rd Base)
- Womens 35+ Div 1: Ron Trow (Plate) & Vicki Domon (Base)
- Womens 35+ Div 2: Andrew Cooper (Plate) & Jen Womsley (Base)
- Womens 35+ Div 3: Angie Broadbent (Plate) & Jye Davis (Base)
- Womens 35+ Div 4: Heather Watts (Plate)
- Womens 45+ Div 1: Spence Williams (Plate) & Thomas Sutomo (Base)



Photo 3: Deb Keogh, Rhonda Scammell, Joanne Phillips and Steven Lloyd enjoying windy and wild weather at Geelong

14th Australian Masters Games – participant's letter

The following email is reproduced as an open letter – feedback received from an umpire following her participation at the Australian Masters.

Dear Softball Victoria,

I recently participated in the Australian Masters Games in Geelong as an umpire.

This was only my second masters tournament as an umpire, and the only experience I brought with me was some club level games and some basics I had learnt in June, at the Victorian Masters in Bendigo. Not knowing too many people and what to expect, I went in with an open mind to learn as much as possible. And learn I did! The environment amongst the umpiring fraternity was unbelievably friendly and everyone was willing to not only include the rookies, but encourage and support us throughout the entire week. I had the opportunity to meet so many new people (umpires) who were so willing to give their time to answers questions and offer constructive feedback. For most of my games I had experienced umpires either working with me, or watching from the sidelines to give me on the spot feedback and advice as each game progressed. Most of these umpires also had their own allocations to attend to, so it was extremely impressive that they were so open to helping out the rookies. Both the TCU (Deb Keogh) and DTCU (Rhonda Scammell) were also amazing, as they too were out and about watching many games, and again so willing to provide feedback both positive and constructive. I realise how complicated the task of preparing umpire allocations can be (on a much smaller scale), but everything in this department ran so smoothly. The allocations were concise, with copies on display and distributed to all umpires so we knew exactly what our requirements were well in advance. If umpires had requested specific requirements, these were met. For example I had to leave early on Thursday, not only was my request accommodated, I was delighted to see that my last allocation for that day was on the closest diamond to the clubrooms to allow me to be away in plenty of time to meet my other engagement. It is these small details that highlight the professionalism and experience of both Deb Keogh and Rhonda Scammell as coordinators. Both of these umpires are a credit to Softball Victoria, and should be congratulated on overseeing such a successful tournament. This is the second time I have had the pleasure of working with both of these ladies, and I would look forward to be given the opportunity again - hopefully next June.

I went into this tournament with a basic interest in umpiring, I came out of it with a genuine enthusiasm to keep umpiring, and more knowledge than I can possibly remember.

This will be the tournament by which all future tournaments will be measured. I have been involved with softball for the past 30 years in all forms of the game, purely because I love the game.

But I can honestly say that I have not enjoyed a tournament in this way for such a long time. It's now two days later, and I am still telling anyone who will listen what an amazing week it was.

So to all of the umpires involved and in particular Deb Keogh, Rhonda Scammell and also David Addlem (my personal umpiring coach), I say thank you and well done!

Regards,

Angela Broadbent

Werribee Softball Association

2013 SAL Rules Exam

Top 10 Worst Answered Questions Analysis with Jesse Smith

The following 10 questions, listed in descending order, caused the most difficulty across all levels of accreditation in the 2013 SAL Rules Exam

Question 82:

R4 on 3rd base, B5 has a count of Ball 2 Strike 2. F1 pitches the next ball low for a called ball. F2 returns the ball directly back to F1, however F1 takes well over 20 seconds to pitch to B5. RULING: The plate umpire should call an illegal pitch, B5 is awarded 1st base and R4 home.

Answer: FALSE. Rule 6 Sec 3n Note & Effect Sections 1-7

Explanation: *Whilst it is true that the pitcher has 20 seconds to release the next pitch after receiving the ball, an illegal pitch is not called in this instance (Effect Section 1-7). The purpose of the 20-second time limit here is obviously to keep the game moving. As the pitcher took longer than this a penalty needs to be applied. In this instance, the penalty is an additional ball on the batter. This would result in a base on balls, so B5 would go to 1st base (Note to Sec 3n). R4 stays at 3rd base.*

Question 30:

An umpire is hit by a fair-batted ball before it passes a fielder, excluding the pitcher. Is this a form of interference?

Answer: YES. Rule 1 Sec 60c

Explanation: *This question assesses your knowledge of definitions. If a fair-batted ball hits an umpire or runner before it passes a fielder, excluding the pitcher, it is deemed to be a form of interference. The reason for this is because the umpire has prevented a fielder from making a play on a runner. As this is an umpire no one is called out.*

Question 31:

One out, with bases loaded. B4 mishits the ball along the 1st base line and all runners advance. F3 fields the ball and runs toward B4, who stops. The runner from 3rd crosses the plate. B4 then takes a step back toward home plate before being tagged by F3. RULING: B4 is out and the run scores.

Answer: FALSE. Rule 8 Sec2i & Effect

Explanation: This rule is designed to prevent the batter runner from delaying a possible play on another runner by stepping backwards to avoid a tag. As such, the batter runner is out when he steps back toward home plate to avoid, or delay, a tag by a fielder. The act of stepping back toward home plate results in the ball being declared dead, B4 being declared out, and all runners being returned to the last base held at the time of the pitch. The offensive team cannot benefit from a batter runner avoiding or delaying a tag by a fielder, so the runner needs to return to third base. The timing of the runner from third crossing the plate is irrelevant – the tactics employed by the offence to ‘delay’ the play on the runner advancing home needs to be counteracted by returning him to third base. Any outs made will stand.

Question 44:

The pitcher reaches into his back pocket and puts his pitching fingers on a resin impregnated cloth prior to putting his fingers on the ball and releases the next pitch. RULING: This is an illegal pitch.

Answer: FALSE. Rule 6 Sec 5b Note

Explanation: A resin cloth can be used on the hands of the pitcher only, under the supervision of the umpire. The purpose of a resin cloth is to enhance control of the pitch. Therefore, the use of a resin cloth does not constitute an illegal pitch.

Question 17:

The base path is the direct line between two bases.

Answer: FALSE. Rule 1 Sec 7

Explanation: A base path is a direct line between a base and the runner's position at the time a defensive player is attempting (or about to attempt) to tag a runner. The base path should NOT be confused with the base line, which is the direct line between two bases.

Question 90:

None out with R1 on 2nd and R2 on 1st. S1, an unreported substitute, hits the ball to F4 who forces R2 out at 2nd. S1 and R1 are safe at 1st and 3rd respectively. The defence now lodge an appeal for S1 being an unreported substitute. RULING: S1 is called out, declared Ineligible and removed from the game. R2 remains out and R1 remains at 3rd.

Answer: FALSE. Rule 4 Sec 8g Effect 2-4: 1(b)

Explanation: An illegal player is a player who takes a position in the line-up, either on offence or defence, who does NOT have a legal right to that position. A player violates this rule as soon as one pitch (legal or illegal) has been thrown OR a play made. In this question, the defence lodge their appeal for S1 being an unreported substitute at the correct time – i.e. before the next legal or illegal pitch. The effect of this appeal is the Illegal Player (S1) being called out and declared ineligible, so the first part of the ruling above is correct. However, the second half of the ruling is incorrect, as any advance of runners (R1 to 3rd), as a result of the Illegal Player becoming a batter-runner, is nullified (cancelled/reversed). The out made on R2 at 2nd does stand, but R1's advance to 3rd must be nullified. The correct ruling is: S1 is called out, declared ineligible and removed from the game. R2 remains out and R1 is returned to 2nd.

Question 70:

The penalty for an illegal re-entry is the removal from the game of both the coach and the player in violation.

Answer: FALSE. Rule 4 Sec 7 Effect 7a-c 3

Explanation: Violation of the re-entry rule is handled as an appeal, which may be made at any time while the illegal substitute is in the game. The penalty for an Illegal Re-entry is the ejection of both the manager/coach (whose name appears on the line-up card) and the illegal substitute. An illegal re-entry is treated as the most serious violation of the substitution rule so the penalty (ejection) reflects this.

Question 63:

When a runner is called out for interference, all other runners must return to the last base legally touched by them at the time of the pitch, unless forced to advance.

Answer: FALSE. Rule 8 Sec 8h & Effect

Explanation: A runner must return to his base, but need not touch the intervening bases, when a batter, or runner, is called out for interference. When the runner interfered, the ball is declared dead, and all other runners must return, without liability to be put out, to the last base legally held at the time of the interference, unless forced to advance because the batter became a batter-runner. Runners do not have to return to the base last occupied at the time of the pitch in this instance.

Question 74:

When the FLEX player bats for the Designated Player (DP). They are known as the Offensive Player Only (OPO).

Answer: FALSE. Rule 1 Sec 67

Explanation: An Offensive Player Only (OPO) is a player in the batting order, other than the FLEX, for whom the DP is playing defence. The OPO continues to play offence, but not defence. If the DP fielded for the player listed 8th in the batting line up, then that player would be called an OPO and not field. The FLEX cannot be called an OPO when batting for the DP.

Question 2:

Re-Entry is the act of any of the starting players, except the Designated Player (DP), returning to the game after being legally, or illegally, substituted.

Answer: FALSE. Rule 1 Sec 85

Explanation: If a team decides to use a Designated Player (DP) then they must always identify this in their starting line-up. In effect, this means that the DP must be subject to the re-entry rule like any other starting player. This question is false because it suggests that the DP is exempt. Re-entry is the act of any of the starting players returning to the game after being legally, or illegally, substituted.