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mtoft@ozemail.com.au

Tofty's Editorial

CONTRIBUTE TODAY



Since we started Blue's News On-line, there have been many stories told that could be published, but there seems to be a lack of willing umpires prepared to put pen to paper.

This magazine could become the best communication tool we have available to us in this world of technology, but it's up to you to get the messages across.

My job is to edit it and send it out each month. I have the easy job. If you are not confident in writing just give me a call and I will conduct an interview so those hidden stories are able to be shared with fellow umpires.

It is virtually impossible for me to be in every Association and region across Australia so I am relying on my family of umpires to get the inside edge on softball umpiring.

You saw it first in BNOL



Why do we check bats?

By the looks of it we should be checking the softballs.

The photograph was captured by Wies Fajzullin at the Queensland Under 19 Men State Championships last week.

This photograph, at the time of publication, is exclusive to Blue's News On-Line.

Orders are being taken for the photograph. Contact mtoft@ozemail.com.au



Softball umpires feared lost

The dreadful tragedy that took place in New York City and Washington DC on 11 September has without doubt cast an indelible shadow over our lives. The images shown around the world of the destruction and turmoil and subsequent rescue efforts are likely to stay with some of us for a very long time – especially those who might have been to NYC.

During the week I sent Email notes to the many American umpires that have become friends by way of the softball field, telling them that the thoughts of their colleagues in Australia were with them and hoping that their family members were safe.

By the very nature of their shift work, many police, firemen and parameds in America are officials in general and, in many cases, softball umpires. Henry Pollard, ISF Deputy UIC, reports that there is no doubt that many of those emergency service personnel that were lost in the collapse of the twin towers were softball umpires. Our hearts and thoughts go out to their families at this time.

Following is a copy of a note from ISF President Don Porter in reply to the many messages ISF has received.

Dear Friends and Sport Colleagues:

September 14, 2001

I take this opportunity to respond to the many letters and calls many of us have received here in the U.S. after the heinous acts of terrorism at its worst.

The terror and horror of the TV images burn fresh in our minds, yet it is time to begin the healing process. We are a strong and resilient country and will survive as we have in past tragedies but it is comforting to know our friends and colleagues in sport have been thinking of us at this difficult time.

We appreciate your thoughts and concerns and look forward to our renewing our faith in society as a whole by keeping sport as a way to overcome the cowardly acts of those who would wish our society to give in to terrorism and concede our freedom that many of us have fought for along with many of you.

Many thanks for your comforting thoughts and concerns.

Don E. Porter - ISF President

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Blues on the move

Australian Capital Territory

Five Umpires from the Australian Capital Territory will be attending the Junior Labour Day long weekend in Adelaide. This tournament is an excellent opportunity for umpires to work with other umpires from neighbouring States. ACT umpires are also gearing up for a big season with theory and practical clinics being held recently.

One of Australia's more senior umpires, Ken Culpitt received yet another award recently. Ken was recognised by the Australian Capital Territory Government for his volunteer work within Softball. Well Done Kenny!

NSW host Australian Uni Games

with Scott Rindfleish
In what will be a big year in Softball for the premier State, New South Wales have just completed the Australian University Games. The Softball competition was played at Webbs Avenue Playing Field the home of the Auburn Softball Association.

State Umpiring Association Secretary, Sue Itzstein was not seen on the diamond as she took on the role of Competition Manager for the Softball. Umpires who officiated at the Games were, Bruce McCahon (UIC), Brian Higginbotham, Dinga Bell, Cristin Quinnell, Amanda Greggs, Graham Boyle, Scott Rindfleish.

There were a distinct difference between the top four teams (who had a number of representative and/or State players involved) and the rest. To give some indication of that was the following quote. The quote of the Games (which could be the quote of the century) was a discussion between a player and umpire Scott Rindfleish.

Player: "Ump would it be interference if I barfed on a runner."

Umpire: "No I think you might find that it would be an obstruction."

The final was played between Queensland University and the Canberra University with Amanda Greggs, Graham Boyle, Scott Rindfleish officiating in the final. NSW are now gearing up for the Australian Masters Games to be held in Newcastle next week.

Larter
the best
Medicine



There is al-
ways time
to laugh!

ADVICE
TO
LIVE
(As told by children) BY



READ

BNOL

&

SPREAD

THE

WORD

- Never trust a dog to watch your food.
- When your Dad is mad and asks you "Do I look stupid? Don't answer.
- Never tell your Mum her diet is not working.
- When your Mum is anger at your Dad, don't let her brush your hair.
- Never let a 3-Y-O in the same room as your school assignment.
- Puppies still have bad breath even after eating a Tic-Tac.
- You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk.
- Don't pick on your sister when she is holding a softball bat.

Crew Signals

Pre and Post Game

Why do we have a pre and post game discussion? Some umpires believe it to be a waste of time, some actually benefit from it.

It is so important that umpires (especially those who have not worked together before) have a pre-game discussion so they can work out the fundamental movements on the diamond which lie ahead in the game as each person has their own idiosyncrasies. Many times umpires that have not worked together before hardly even know their names, let alone what their movements will be.

The old saying "Familiarity breeds contempt" is very true. Don't assume your partners are on their game. Run through the various responsibilities each and every game to ensure that every member of the crew is switched on for the game.

Most pre-game discussions should include:

- Outfield responsibilities of the base umpires (3 or 4 umpire system) or the inside/outside theory in a 2-umpire system.
- Rotation and reverse rotation and responsibilities
- Using each others names.
- Who will call leaving early (2 umpire system)
- Who will call play back at 1st base with runner at 1st and 2nd or 3rd. (2 umpire system)
- Hit by pitched or batted ball situations.
- Tag up responsibilities
- Fly ball to right field, play at 1st base who's call? (3 or 4 umpire system)
- Timing of crew signals
- Difficult situations. Possible blocked ball situations, holes in fence etc.

Post-game discussions should take in

- Rotation problems
- Rule interpretations
- Any difficulties that you may have experienced during the game.
- Game control situations.

It is important that during these discussions, you have an open mind and contribute with truthful discussion, it is not an attack on your crew or on yourself. It is about "Keizan" (continual improvement). Umpires who practice these methods, will improve not only their own game, but also the game of other members of the crew, which ultimately improves our game.

This article is not to be confused with "the pre game meeting" held at the plate at the commencement of the game with coach's. More on that next issue.

Northern Territory

Well our season has just finished and now we all intend to take a well earned rest –Ha!

The men's comp. intends to begin shortly. Another 3 umpires were accredited at Level 1 before the end of the season – congratulations to Leah Schwartz, Adam Griffiths and Kylie James.

Kylie unfortunately is being posted to Queensland with the army so we will lose her services.

However, an "old" blue by the name of Jackie Kruger helped out in the Grand Final games and hopefully will be back with us next season.

Also many thanks to Robyn who came over from Nhulunbuy to help umpire for the semi final games (before Ansett crashed).

Darwin had its presentation night recently and David Binder (BTM) was awarded "Umpire of the Year".

Both Marg Lee (Mum) and Kevin Anderson (Ando) received awards for "Services to Softball" – so umpires can win awards!

Overall it has been a very successful season with the Arafura Games being held in the midst of it.

There have been five umpire accreditations and hopefully more next year. All the umpires intend to "let their hair down" next Saturday when they gather together to try out Ando's pool.

Marg Lee—State Director of Umpiring



OUCH: Darwin's Umpire of the Year. David Binder shows off one of his painful awards from being an umpire.

Queensland

Queensland are in the midst of its representative season with the Open Men's/Queensland Cup Championships and the Under 19 Youths and Women's Championships being completed last month. Also the Men's Club Classic has come and gone.

At the Open Men's/Queensland Cup, which was held at South Brisbane, Darren Sibbraa (Wynnum), Mike Williamson (Redlands) and Chris Anderson (Caboolture) all attained their Level 4 accreditations, while at the Under 19 Women's in Brisbane, Dianne Bunston (Toowoomba), Robyn Hoeta (South Brisbane) and Jamie Harries (Brisbane) attained their Level 3 accreditation.

Many Queensland umpires are making the trek to Newcastle next week for the 8th Australian Masters Games, where it is expected to be a whole lot of fun. **"Look out Crowie—the Maroons are coming."**

Queensland's Open Women's and Queensland Cup Championships will be held on 19, 20 and 21 October in Caboolture.

The allocations for State Championship finals so far this year -

Men's Club Classic—Ian Frame, Mark Toft, Yvonne Kahler, Frank Thomas.

Queensland Cup - Frank Thomas, Ian Frame, Mark Toft.

Open Men's—Yvonne Kahler, Jamie Harries, Ralph Brown.

President's Cup Final—Robyn Pittman, Ted Gross, Ian Bunston.

Under 19 Youths—Championship Game— Yvonne Kahler, Darren Sibbraa, Ian Bunston. President's Cup Final—Mark Toft, Lester Brewer, Danny Griffiths.

Under 19 Women - Championship Game—Ron Trow, Bruce Challenor, Ian Goodman.

KUHN receives award

Queensland umpire Karen Kuhn was recently honored by the Queensland Softball governing body when she was presented a Queensland Service Award following its Annual General meeting.

It seems that Karen has been around forever and a day and the recognition from the State body is long over due. **Well done Karen!**

Life Membership awarded to Umpires

The Toowoomba Softball Umpire's Association have recognised past and present umpires by bestowing Life Membership of the Toowoomba Umpiring body.

The recipients are—Patricia Bichel, Mark Toft, Norelle Thomas, Ian Luchterhand, Ken Harwood, Mary Youngman, Lyn Lange, Ian Bunston, Dianne Bunston.

It should be noted that all the umpires named with the exception of Ian and Dianne Bunston have previously been awarded Life Membership of the Toowoomba Softball Association Inc.



The strategic planning that has been set up for all umpires in WA is now in the system. The documents have been distributed to all umpires in the State and is now waiting for feedback.

The timeline to finalise the management system is set for the end of September. The next meeting of the group set for early October will put in place people to run umpiring in the State and send out voting slips to all umpires to lodge their vote on the candidates.

We hope to have the committee set up by early December and from there to implement all the planning procedures. I will give you a full rundown on the committee members next issue.

Several Associations have completed their Winter Season last weekend. I have not received any reports as yet but I do know there were big crowds at Mirrabooka to watch the Grand Finals in all grades.

This event is the pinnacle of the Men's Winter Season and is growing each year. There was a good representation from all umpiring groups in attendance and as far as I know all games ran smoothly.

The Dale Districts competition also had finals on the weekend and also was supported by a large number of fans. This competition is growing stronger each year and has the largest contingent of umpires in the State.

Preparations are in place for the new season in all areas of the State and there has been several requests for umpiring Clinics before the start of the season. I hope to gain a lot of new umpires this year and along with our Senior umpires run several Clinics to get them going.

I will be attending the North West Championships in Paraburdoo this weekend and will conduct a Clinic for all umpires.

There will also be practical examinations for candidates wishing to upgrade their level. I will give a full report next issue.

Peter Baker—State Director of Umpiring

Scenario:

Batter hits a slow rolling ball along first base line, just inside fair territory. Catcher moves out, picks up the ball and lobs it over the batter-runner's head in an attempt to throw him out. In doing so the throw is high, thereby allowing the batter-runner to reach first base safely.

The Question:

Even though the thrown ball did not hit the batter-runner, should this be deemed as interference, as the catcher was impeded in his attempt to retire the batter-runner by having to throw over his head?

The Ruling:

In determining whether this play is an interference, the position of the batter-runner at the time of the throw is critical. The batter-runner is required to use the 0.91m (3 foot) running lane while running to first in order to be protected from an interference call. He can only be called out for interference if he has reached, but not ??? in, the lane at the time of the throw.

In the above scenario, if he had reached the start of the running lane (9.14m [30 feet] from home plate) and was inside the base line at the time of the throw, then a call of interference would be correct. However, if he had not yet reached the lane then it is simply play on with no infringement, regardless of whether he was inside or outside the base line at the time of the throw.

Level 4	Darren Sibraa, Mike Williamson, Chris Anderson (QLD).
Level 3	Dianne Bunston, Robyn Hoeta, Jamie Harries (QLD).
Level 1	James Hailston, Megan Longley, Peter Commane, Paul Bourke, Kate Lingard, Rhonda Williams, Terry Posselt, Brent Jordan, Greg Zuchetti, Mellissa Humphries, Kate Seale, Meghann McKenzie, Amelia Hanagan, Ken James, Samantha Bancroft, Sarah Humphries, Tracey Ellis, Jackie King, Maria Mulvaney, Francine Steedman (NSW)
CONGRATULATIONS TO EACH AND EVERY ONE!	

South Australia

SAUA busy with clinics

with Neville Lawrance—State Director of Umpiring

With the advent of the summer season SASUA Committee members are hard at work with the planning and running of 3 one-day clinics. These are to be run between now and just after the start of the season for umpires at levels 0 to 2 and levels 2-3.

The first of these clinics is for our level 2-3 umpires focusing on basic rotation, inside outside, position and angle, working the slot and a host of other topics. We also have two basic clinics for level 0-2 planned for the Hills and Mt Gambier Association.

In addition we are running two basic clinics for level 0-1 and run over 4 weeks incorporating the basic exam as a central part of the clinics.

These are held on the last four Monday and Tuesday nights in October for the umpires in the Adelaide and CDSA Associations.

A problem that we face in Adelaide is a lack of “A” grade games to share among the umpires that we have working in the Adelaide competition. SASUA have committed to a development program for our level 3-4 umpires that will see all our level 3 and 4 umpires given more opportunities to work “A” grade games with senior umpires.

It is hoped that this will give them the exposure to the quality of games they need to develop into our future national umpires. To allow the level 3 and 4 umpires to receive the exposure they need, our senior umpires will get to see a lot more “B” and “U19” games this season.

By the time you get to read this we will have also run the Junior Labour Day long weekend tournament. This has proven to be an excellent opportunity for a lot of our umpires to get some real live “Balls and Strikes” umpiring in before the start of the season.

We also look forward to this weekend as an opportunity to meet and work with some of the junior and not so junior umpires who travel with the teams from interstate. So, to the umpires who worked the Adelaide Labour Day Long Weekend Junior Championships I hope you enjoyed yourselves and look forward to working with you again.

WORLD MASTERS GAMES—BIGGER THAN BEN HUR

October 2002 will see a multitude of participants descend on Melbourne for the 2002 World Masters Games, covering 29 sports, of which, softball is expected to have the largest number of participants.

At this time, we have over 1400 expressions of interest in Softball, and are planning to play Fastpitch at 2 venues, Jells Park Waverley and Gilbert Park Knox, with the slowpitch component being played at Melbourne Softball Association (Fawkner Park).

Despite any gossip to the contrary, there are no qualifications (other than age) to enter these Games, and we have not limited the number of teams that can enter.

Should you wish to obtain further information, then this can be found at www.2002worldmasters.org, and information specific to Softball can be found at worldmasters@softball.org.

At the 2002 World Masters site, you can enter your team, or as an individual, on line.

We are hoping to have up to 200 teams competing at the Games, so if there is anyone who wants to volunteer their services, as an umpire, statistician, grounds person, or anything else, then the Organising Committee contacts are;

Chair	John Larter	jonvon@ozemail.com.au
Waverley Representative	Leane Wilkinson	leawilkinson@hotmail.com
Knox Representative	Graeme Young	gmyoung@ozemail.com.au
Melbourne Representative	Elaine Duyvestyn	melbsoft@sx.com.au

Please do not hesitate to contact one of the above if you have any question relating to the 2002 World Masters Games.

WE WANT TO KNOW YOUR BIRTHDAY

If you want to join our birthday call just send us the date of your birthday. Margo has most senior umpires' profiles but there are many more junior/senior umpires out there not on her list. Just send us yours or your friend's date.

Our Girl Tricia.....

Queensland's most respected leader

By Mark Toft

Patricia Joy Bichel began playing softball for the Gatton Convent School (100 Kilometres West of Brisbane) at the age of 12, under the coaching of the late Mary Holley.

She joined the Gatton Softball Club, competing in the Toowoomba Softball Association Under 16 division and she represented Queensland schoolgirls for three years.

In 1975, Patricia was a Queensland Under 16 representative, appearing again at the age of 18 in the Queensland Under 19 team. As a player for Toowoomba, she travelled the State, competing at numerous State Championships as a junior and later in A Grade.

Patricia was lured into Brisbane Softball in 1979, through her membership with Jindalee Marauders. This team participated in the night ball competition at Perry Park. In 1981-82, Patricia continued night ball at Redcliffe on Wednesday and Friday nights. However, she decided to remain in Toowoomba Softball and encourage the sport there. Her talents as a player in the local fixtures were recognised with her receiving the Player of the Year Award on six occasions.

Aside from playing softball, Patricia has imparted much of her talent to the junior players who have played for Toowoomba, coaching six consecutive Under 16 team at Junior State Titles from 1979 to 1985.

Patricia was selected as Assistant Coach of the Queensland Under 16 team in 1981 and 1982. In 1985-86 she took on the role of A Grade coach for Toowoomba and in the early 80s moved to the All Stars Club where she has led her team to several A Grade premierships.

Since 1985 Patricia has set aside her participation as a representative player and coach to take on the role of an umpire. In umpiring she has attained her Australian Level 7 accreditation and apart from being president and a committee member of the Toowoomba Softball Association's umpiring committee, has also held positions on the Queensland Softball Umpiring Committee.



MIXING WITH THE BEST: Tricia with Olympic Silver Medallist Jai Tarima at the Darling Downs Sports Awards in January this year, where she was named Administrator of the Year.

In the 1989-90 season she was selected into the international training squad to umpire at the World Series in Adelaide in 1991. Her career as a world-class umpire was cut short due to a freak accident. Since then she has worked tirelessly as the Queensland Director of Umpiring, a position she has held uncontested for more than a decade, and is currently Deputy Director of the Australian Umpiring Committee.

Career Highlights – 1981 – Life Member Toowoomba Softball Association; 1988 – Life Member Queensland Softball Association; 1989 – Toured USA and Canada with Australian Panel; 1991 – Umpired at Under 19 Worlds in Adelaide; 1996 – Service Award Australian Softball Federation; 2000 – Australian Sports Award; 2001 – Darling Downs Sports Award for Administrator of the Year.

Long-term Positions Held – 1992 – current National Championship UIC; 1991 – current Queensland Director of Umpiring; 1995 – current Deputy Director Umpiring (Australia).

Patricia has been an inspiration and an intricate part of our sport not only in Queensland, but throughout Australia over many years.

Tricia, Blue's News On-line salutes you.

A word from the CROWE.....Heeeellllppppp!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

8th Australian Masters Games - Newcastle

Newcastle is set to host what is likely to be the largest softball event ever to be conducted in New South Wales. Even with the problems associated with the collapse of Ansett airlines, more than 1000 softballers will be competing in the 8th Australian Masters Games commencing on Saturday 6th October.

With more than 465 games to be played over eight days, the workload on the umpiring crew will be immense and has already commenced for the Tournament Chief Umpire, David Crowe.

"Even though we are two weeks out from the event I am spending around 15 hours a week checking draws, playing rules and chasing team umpires. This would have to be one of the largest softball tasks that I have taken on in my sixteen year career."

The current draw for the Masters starts each day at 8am with six 75 minute rounds scheduled for each day (except Sunday only 5). During the rounds, 10 diamonds will be in use at least 90% of the time which means that there are approximate 60 games a day requiring umpires.

"There are a wide range of umpires coming to the event on behalf of teams. Umpires range from Level 0 'clubbies' to five members of the 2002 International Development Squad."

Any umpire (or other interested volunteer) will be more than welcome to visit the softball being played at the Stevenson Park complex, Industrial Drive Mayfield. Any help from one game to a day would be great.



BIRTHDAY CALL FOR OCTOBER

Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday to you,
Happy Birthday dear everybody, Happy Birthday
to YOU. Hip hip! HOORAY, Hip, hip! HOORAY,
Hip hip! HOORAY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



October 8th—Sue Itzstein (Level 6) New South Wales—Member of the 2001 International Development Squad.

October 18th—Margo Koskelainen (Level 8) Victoria—National Umpiring Director.

October 23rd—Julie Lamond (Level 4) New South Wales—Candidate for Level 5 in Hobart in January.

October 28th—John Glistak (Level 6) South Australia—Umpiring at the Under 16 Girls Nationals in Hobart in January.

October 31st—Damien McCauley (Level 6) South Australia—The boy from Kangaroo Island. Examining at the Under 19 Men in Melbourne in January.

WHY DO WE SAY THINGS.....

Contributed by P. J. B.

Ever wonder where some of those expressions we use in our daily language originated?

Next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be. Here are some facts about the 1500s:

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May and still smelled pretty good by June. However, they were starting to smell, so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odour.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the sons and men, then the women and finally the children -last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it - hence the saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water".

Houses had thatched roofs - thick straw - piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the dogs, cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall of the roof - hence the saying :It's raining cats and dogs."

8th Australian Masters

Following the success of the 7th Masters Games in Adelaide, Newcastle will be "the best games ever".

For further information regarding the umpiring crew contact David Crowe.

Email— dncrowe@iprimus.com.au

Don't Forget

Register for BNOL

Simply Email the Editor and join the ever-growing list of umpires.

Toowoomba celebrates 50th Anniversary

The Toowoomba Softball Association is this year celebrating its 50th anniversary of the sport in Toowoomba. An official function will be held on Saturday, February 9, 2002 and will be held at Paddy's Cathedral Centre, Toowoomba. Along with the Saturday night celebration a "Recovery Day" is planned for the Sunday to be held at Kearney's Spring Sports Complex which will include a BBQ and a "Golden Oldies Game". For further information contact Debbie Prouten 4613 1671 or email debbie.prouten@doe.com.au (Badges will be struck and are on sale)

Wanted

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

mtoft@ozemail.com.au
au