

Gilley's / Edebone Weber Shield 2012/13 Rd 1

Oct 25th 2012 – Oct 29th 2012

Perth International Softball Complex

Report – Andrew McManus

I would like to start out by thanking the NUS and Softball New Zealand for providing the opportunity to participate in this tournament. As well as North Harbour Softball Umpires Association for helping me prepare for the tournament. The friendships that were made during this tournament will not be forgotten along with the invaluable experience of working such a high level tournament.

In the early Afternoon of Oct 25th I arrived at Auckland International Airport to board a plane that which in 6hrs time, would land me in Perth. Much to my surprise I ran into not only the New Zealand selection team for the tournament, but also the Jr Black Sox who were getting set to fly off to Argentina for the Jr Worlds. During the wait for the plane, and the flight itself I was able to chat and meet some of the staff and members of the NZ selection team. It was pleasant getting to know the players and coaches a bit prior to the tournament, since once it started I would be not be able to socialize with them as much.

Upon arriving at Perth International Airport, I was met by Roy Cox who was kind enough to give me a brief history on Perth and drive me 25mins to my accommodation for the tournament. The heat was more than I expected, and I was quite glad I had brought a fair share of shorts along with my Jandles. Upon arriving at the hotel I was greeted by a few members of the crew who flew in before me. One of them happened to be my roommate from the IYC in July! We headed out together to get a bit to eat at a 24hr dinner since the rest of the crew were hours away from arriving still. After a nice dinner we arrived back at the hotel and welcomed in the rest of the crew. It was great meeting everyone, and getting to see both Steve Wallace and Andrew Rindfleish again as well.

We all called it an early night because the next day would be an early one. The crew woke up and had an early breakfast and coffee before heading off towards the grounds. At 10am we arrived at Perth International Softball Complex and did our field inspections along with bat and equipment checks prior to the start of the tournament. During this tournament we would be working in 4 umpire teams, aside from games in which Steve or George Norrish were on since they were being examined for their level 6's. For that reason we were informed that we would only be given 1-2 plate games for the

tournament. We also were informed of a tournament specific rule regarding intentional walks; Each team could only intentionally walk 1 batter per game. The reason for this was to insure that all batters got a fair number of at-bats. And that strong batters would not be getting consistently walked throughout the tournament.

My first game of the tournament was on 2nd base for the game between Queensland and New South Wales. The game itself was a quick one which only lasted 6 innings thanks to the run ahead rule. My second game of the day was a Plate between South Australia and New South Wales. The game was amazing with the national team pitching and catching combination playing for SA. The game was played well by both teams, with SA just able to hold on for the 1-0 win. This was also the first game I had ever done which required me to use a walkie-talkie to communicate with the scorers. No issues with that however, just took a few extra seconds to ensure the changes were correctly relayed.

After day 1 finished, we all headed to a nice local pasta place for dinner where we all exchanged story's and talked for a while before heading back to the hotel for some much needed shuteye. The next morning however we were not required to be at the park until 11pm, so the crew took this time to have a nice breakfast together and also get some shopping done. I got myself some new "Thongs" as those Aussies would call them, since my old pair broke on me on day one.

On the second day of games, I had 3rd base for the game between NZ and ACT as well as 1st base for SA v WA. Both games were well played, with NZ getting the win in extras, and SA edging out WA. And now since now the weekend had started, the venue started to fill up with fans as well, which only added to the atmosphere of the event. The hometown WA fans defiantly made sure you knew how they felt at any given time during the game.

The 3rd and final day of the tournament was an eventful one. I started things off with a plate game at 10am between SA and Queensland. The game looked like it was going to go to extras until a walkoff double from SA secured the win 2-1. Then the freak thunderstorm came rolling out of nowhere, causing a 2hour delay. This delay proved costly as the SA umpires had to leave early to catch their flight, unable to finish their games allocated to them. This was handled well by our UIC Dianne Walker, and we continued on with the tournament. I had one game left on first at 4pm and that was my tournament over. However on the last game of the day a little bit of an issue arose. The game went on for 3 hours and one of the teams, as well all the umpires, needed to leave right then in order to catch flights. The game was called after 9 complete innings and the race to the airport was on. After a quick goodbye and an exchange of gifts, the rest of the crew left for the airport while I stayed behind since my flight was booked for the following afternoon.

After a night on my own, Roy Cox came back and picked me up from the hotel. He was kind enough to show me around the city and also show me some Aussie wildlife. I was able to check out some great views and also pet some Roos! I was treated to a nice ocean side lunch before being dropped off at the airport. Chatted with the team and congratulated them on their amazing tournament (NZ finished with a record of 3-3) before flying out back home to Auckland.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following:

- Eugene and Softball New Zealand for organizing flights and accommodation for me.
- Softball WA and Softball Australia for putting on this wonderful tournament.
- North Harbor Softball Association for supplying me with souvenir badges.
- Wayne Saunders and the rest of the NUS for allowing me this amazing opportunity.
- Roy Cox for showing me around Perth and providing transportation to and from the airport.
- Dianne Walker and the rest of the crew for being so welcoming and providing such a great atmosphere. I look forward to seeing you all again sometime soon!
- Steve for putting up with me..... Again!
- North Harbor Softball Umpires Association for assisting me in preparation for this tournament

Games Officiated

Day 1

| Time | Diamond | Home | Away | Plate | 1 st | 2 nd | 3 rd |
|--------|---------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 3:00pm | 1 | QLD Heat Carter | NSW Firestars | Carter | Datson | McManus | Waller |
| 6:00pm | 2 | NSW Firestars | SA Starz | McManus | Suckling | Duff | Strauss |

Day 2

| Time | Diamond | Home | Away | Plate | 1 st | 2 nd | 3 rd |
|---------|---------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 12:00pm | 1 | NZ Whitesox | ACT Diamonds | Wallace- Yarrow | Kahler | | McManus |
| 4:00pm | 1 | SA Starz | WA Flames | Norrish | McManus | | Watt |

Day 3

| Time | Diamond | Home | Away | Plate | 1st | 2nd | 3rd |
|-------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 10:00am | 2 | SA Starz | VIC Titans | McManus | Norrish | | McCauley |
| 2:00pm | 2 | WA Flames | VIC Titans | Watt | McManus | | Strauss |

Total

Plate: 2 games

1st: 2 games

2nd: 1 game

3rd: 1 game