



BLIND SPORTS AUSTRALIA

A.B.N. 68 008 621 252

A Foundation Member of the Australian Paralympic Committee

Newsletter

April 2015



Australian Government
Australian Sports Commission

From the CEO

Over the last three months Blind Sports Australia has been working hard on all three of our main objectives – participation, promotion and advocacy.

We have signed a tri-party Memorandum of Understanding with Blind and Vision Impaired Tenpin Bowling and Tenpin Bowling Australia. The press release (which is below) resulted in a segment on ABC News Perth (TV).

I was very pleased to be asked to talk to Sports and Recreation students at Holmesglen Institute and discuss both the opportunities and the challenges that blind sports in Australia face. The students at Holmesglen are travelling to Fiji in October to run sports programmes for blind and vision impaired persons. Sports will include rugby, netball rugby league and soccer.

I also talked to a group of students from Melbourne Grammar School about NGOs and the issues they face.



Stephen Barnes with students from Melbourne Grammar School

Last week I was in Adelaide attending the launch of the Pacific School Games (PSG). The PSG brings together over 4000 students from 12 countries and will be held in Adelaide at the end of November. This time Goalball has

been included as a sport. I was also good to catch up with Cathy Lambert from the Australian Paralympic Committee, Kent Dredge from BSA SA, Rajini Vasan from the Blind Sporting Council and David Tiller from Goalball South Australia.



The All Abilities Cricket Championship was held in Melbourne to coincide with the Cricket World Cup (which I won't talk about further!). South Australia was the worthy champions in the final against Queensland. It was good to get out to see some of the matches and if you listened carefully you would of heard my dulcet tones assisting Marco, Hamish and Peter commentate the South Australia v ACT match. I also enjoyed catching up with members of the different teams.

Early March I attended a quarterly forum for CEOs of National Sporting Organisations hosted by the Australian Sports Commission. Unfortunately I left a little desponded as there seems to be a massive disconnect between the sports and the ASC, and a lack of understanding of the capacity and capability constraints faced by NSOs and particularly the smaller NSOs and NSODs.

BSA has also been on several radio shows lately. Sam Theodore and Stephen Barnes have both been on Blind Sports Radio, Stephen has also been on Blind Citizens Australia's New Horizon program, and recorded a short article for their quarterly audio journal Sound About. Rob Apps was on 2RPH talking to Peter Greco on the Pacific School Games, and Rob Crestani and Pam

Hyden are on the radio this week discussing the Goalball Aussie Invitational Cup.

Blind Sports Australia is pleased to announce a team of 26 from Goalball and Tenpin Bowling will be travelling to Korea in May to the IBSA World Games. This is the biggest blind sporting event in the world and happens every four years. For the Goalball teams the Games also are the final qualifying tournament for the Paralympic Games in Korea. I am also very pleased to announce that the flag bearer for the Australian is Marilyn Luck, and the Chef de Mission is Rob Apps. Congratulations to everyone in the team and best of luck for a successful Games.

Stephen Barnes
CEO

Meet Karen Ryan

Karen Ryan is one of the four new Directors who joined the BSA Board in December 2014. Karen has a strong background in government and the not-for-profit sector and has worked across multiple portfolios including health, education, child safety and disability services. Karen's professional background is psychology and social work and she is also a certified change management practitioner and a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She brings significant experience in strategic policy, stakeholder engagement, legislative review, intergovernmental relations and governance.



New MoU signed with BVIT and TBA

Tenpin Bowling Australia (TBA) is pleased to announce the formation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Blind Sports Australia (BSA) and the Blind and Vision Impaired Bowling Association (BVIT).

Blind Sports Australia is the peak governing body of all blind and vision impaired sport in Australia as recognised by the Australian Sports Commission while the Blind and Vision Impaired Bowling Association is the national association for blind and vision impaired tenpin bowlers.

The MOU demonstrates the commitment of all parties to work in collaboration to improve the participation opportunities and options for Australians who are blind or vision impaired. Vision Australia has estimated that more than 350,000 people in Australia are blind or have vision impairment.

Tenpin Bowling Australia CEO, Cara Honeychurch said "This is a very exciting time not only for our organisation and partners, but also for the bowling community. This agreement further demonstrates our organisations commitment to include all Australians into tenpin bowling ensuring it's a lifetime sport option".

"The level of participation in sport by the blind and vision impaired community is very low. BSA and BVIT are very pleased to be working with TBA to increase participation and inclusiveness in Tenpin Bowling" said Blind Sports Australia CEO, Stephen Barnes.

2014 Pin & Win Promotion

The \$30,000 major prize winner of the 2014 Pin & Win promotion was Adrian Marron of Canberra. Adrian and his wife have been going through a little rough time with some

serious illness, so this came along at a very handy time to help out with treatments.

When asked if Adrian was going to support us in our next campaign, he gave an emphatic “of course we will! “



BSA Board member Gary Sargent and his wife Eileen were in Canberra for work and stopped in to present the prize to Adrian. Congratulations to all the winners.

Membership database

Kent Dredge has sent a request for all members to assist him compile a member database for Blind Sports Australia. In addition Stephen Barnes has sent emails to the executive members of BSA members asking that ALL their members and ALL volunteers have their information in the database.

There are three main reasons BSA requires this database to be completed

1. It is a requirement of all National Sporting Organisations accredited by the Australian Sports Commission – which Blind Sports Australia is one.
2. It assists with insurance cover and will reduce the premiums BSA pays for the insurance of our members
3. We require information so we can go to the corporate market and arrange sponsorship partnerships.

It should be emphasised that no personal identifiable information will be passed on or used by BSA. Once the database is completed Stephen Barnes will be the only person with access to the database. Also if there is privacy concerns please refer to the BSA Privacy Policy which is available on the BSA website.

Providing this information is a little task that helps BSA directly help each member organisation and their individual members. This current financial year every dollar received from the federal government via the Australian Sports Commission was directed back to our members. The non compliance of the database has put the next financial year’s grant and the recognition of BSA as a National Sporting Organisation at great risk. This will in turn have direct impact on how BSA can assist its members. We would really appreciate your assistance by returning the information to Kent as soon as possible.

Promoting your sport

BSA has secured a package to provide unlimited press releases this financial year. It is available for members to use to promote their sports and activities – and we provide this to members for FREE. It is really easy and quick – write a short press release and send it to me. I’ll upload it and schedule the release time. Recently we have sent out two press releases – firstly on the Memorandum of Understanding signed with BVIT and Tenpin Bowling Australia. This resulted in ABC TV News in Perth picking up the story and making two news items around Tenpin Bowling and Goalball and the IBSA World Games. The second was a press release on the Goalball Aussie Invitational Cup that resulted in two radio interviews.

Budget and plans

BSA will be developing its 2015-2016 financial budget and operational plan to go to the BSA Board in May for endorsement.

Members have been asked to supply BSA with information of their plans for the next year so BSA can factor them into its plan. All information needs to be with Stephen Barnes by Wednesday 6th May. No late submissions will be considered. Teleconference discussions are available and dates and times have been sent to members – first in, best dressed!

Scratch and Win Promotion

The 2015 'Scratch and Win' national promotion began on April 7th with sellers in the ACT and Newcastle areas to begin with.

The funds this promotion generates directly assists BSA with its three strategic objectives of increasing participation, promotion of blind sports, and advocating on behalf of blind sports at the national and international levels.

We encourage you to buy a \$10 pin or a \$25 key ring if you see the sellers in a shopping mall, and also go up and talk to the sellers as this helps make it real for them, and gives them a better appreciation of blind sports.

What have the members been up to?

BSA - South Australia

Vision Challenge 2015

Grab a partner and meet the challenge of walking, jogging or running 2, 4 or 8km whilst wearing a blindfold!

You can choose to run blindfolded, guide your partner through the course or just have a run on your own.

Then refuel yourself with coffee and a BBQ while bragging about your exploits or if you are up for another challenge why not try doing it again on a tandem bike!

There are plenty of post-race activities and fun for the whole family, with demonstrations of blind cricket and Goalball!

Come along and help support a great cause by raising money and awareness whilst experiencing what it's like to be vision impaired.

Also check out our new initiative involving schools and corporate teams in the competition information section.

When: Sunday 30th April 2015

Where: Victoria Park, Adelaide

Goalball Australia

Bendigo will play host to the 3rd annual Aussie Invitational Cup this April.

Australia's top Goalball players have been invited by their respective head coaches to compete at this prestigious tournament running from April 10th-12th. Players have been selected across four categories – youth boys and girls, women and men.

The Aussie Invitational Cup guarantees a fierce competition with the top players across all states divided into mixed teams to compete. Attracting the country's elite, this competition has become a significant event on the Australian Goalball calendar.

This year marks the first time the Invitational's have been held outside of NSW. The Victorian Goalball Association and Goalball Australia have worked tirelessly to ensure a smooth competition. The competition will be held at Girton Grammar School and games are played between 11am and 6pm across the three days.

To further support the development of Goalball in Australia, the competition will be run in conjunction with a Referee's Course. This course has been implemented under the guidance of Goalball Australia's Referee Representative, Warrick Jackes.

For the Australian Men and Women's Goalball teams the competition serves as vital preparation in their lead up to the IBSA World Games in Seoul, Korea only a month later. At this tournament both teams are seeking to qualify for the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.

For further information please contact the tournament director, Rob Crestani

BVIT

The BVIT Coast to Coast Phantom league started early February with 22 bowlers competing.

Participating players send in their results from the first two games bowled each week, with the results published on the [BVIT web page](#). The final round will be bowled during the week of 29th June.

At the time of writing, only 4 points separate first and fifth places, so another close finish is expected.

In May this year, BVIT will be sending a team to represent Australia at the 2015 IBSA World Games in Seoul, South Korea. The players are:

- Marilyn LUCK (B1 Victoria)
- Justin BETTES (B1 WA)
- Donna HOLLAD (B2 NSW)
- Rhian PATCHING (B3 Queensland)
- Kingsley WILLIAMS (B3 Victoria)

WABSF

Blind tenpin bowler aims for world Gold in South Korea.

A blind West Australian tenpin bowler is aiming for gold in the sport's world championship for the visually impaired in South Korea.

Justin Bettes is currently second in the world for blind tenpin bowling and hopes to encourage more blind sportsmen and women to take up the game.



To read more about Justin's story visit the ABC website: www.abc.net.au/news/2015-03-31/blind-tenpin-bowler-aims-for-gold/6363088

The 31-year-old from Rockingham, south of Perth, has represented Australia three times at the International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA) World Games. Visit the IBSA website at:

<http://www.ibsasport.org/calendar/484/5th-ibsa-world-games>

The West Australian Blind Cricket club

The Venetians are looking for new players. The Venetians recommencing their season on 22nd February 2015.

When: 12:30-5:30

Where: Shearn Park, 90 Central Avenue, Maylands

For more info, please contact Deanne Ferris on 0438 687 768

WA Blind Lawn Bowling Association

Club day is Wednesday at Perth & Tattersalls Bowling Club, East Perth. New members always welcome. Many bowlers who are blind or vision impaired play with their local regular clubs. If you would like any further information feel free to call, Marie Bellenger on (08) 9498 7468 or 0424 745 648

Blind Judo

The University of Western Australia Judo Club, with Romana Schipp of LuBecker Judo Club of

Germany (able-bodied) visited Perth and Ian Blackburn, a yellow belt (totally blind judo player) participated in some mainstream judo training sessions at the end of January, UWA Judo Club makes mainstream judo accessible to people who are blind and vision impaired.

University of Western Australia Judo Club
Claremont Campus Gym
Cnr of Agett Rd and Goldsworthy Rd
Claremont WA 6010
Email: info@judouwa.com.au
<http://www.judouwa.com.au/>



Goalball Western Australia

Goalball WA's own Thanh Tu and Benjamin Rowe have been selected to represent Australia in the IBSA World Games from the 8th May to the 18th May in South Korea.

Visit the IBSA website at:
www.ibsasport.org/calendar/484/5th-ibsa-world-games

To read an interview by Ben and Thanh about Goalball visit the website at:

Ben and Thanh: Goalball Reflections
<http://www.goalballwa.com.au/news/ben-and-thanh-goalball-reflections>

For Goalball information contact: Benjamin Rowe

Phone: 0407 446 576
General Enquiries: [<info@goalballwa.com.au>](mailto:info@goalballwa.com.au)

Goalball is played at the Sporting Hall in the VisAbility Perron Centre (GWA leases Handa Hall) at 61 Kitchener Ave, Victoria Park WA (near the Vic Park train station)

WA Tandem Cycling Advisory Council (WATCAC)

WATCAC members participated in this year's Giro D'Perth (The back lane bike odyssey) and the Freeway Bike Hike, which were events held during 2015 WA Bike Week. This shows the community that people who are blind or vision impaired are also cyclists.

WATCAC members and volunteers participate in regular recreation rides of around 25kms at a leisurely pace and the club rides are around 50kms at a good pace for experienced cyclists.

WATCAC were able to purchase a couple of Mountain Bike Tandems last year through a Grant and are planning an off ride later this year.

For more information about WATCAC contact Jennifer Musgrave
Tel: 08 9310 8431
Mob: 0410 499 464
Email: info@watcac.org

WABGA (WA Blind Golf Association)

Blind Golf players from WA regularly attend International tournaments and have had success with various men and women taking out a number of events both in the highest order in World and other international country championships. Players are rated by an Order of Merit which is updated after each tournament (both state and internationally) and is used to pick players to compete in World Championships which are conducted bi-annually.

For more information about Blind Golf contact Wendy Davidson
E-mail: wendy@wabga.org.au
Website: www.wabga.org.au

Westerners Blind Golf Club

The other Blind Golf club, the Westerners Blind Golf Club play at Lake Claremont between March and November each year. Anyone who is blind or vision impaired are welcome. If you are interested in joining or would like to volunteer, or just like further information please contact the club.

Rae Lane
Phone: 08) 9272 8684
E-mail: brlane10@bigpond.com

Blind Citizens WA Swish

Swish is played the second Saturday of each month at St Luke's Church Hall Maylands. It costs \$3 and new players are welcome. For more information contact Blind Citizens WA on 9355 5113 or email bcwa@westnet.com.au

Blind Cricket Australia

SA Wins Inaugural National All Abilities Cricket Championships (blind division)

The inaugural National All Abilities Championships was held in Melbourne between Monday 16 and Friday 20 March 2015

Representative teams from South Australia, Queensland, Victoria, ACT and NSW took part in the four day event.

The competition was very even, with most matches being very close and the race to the final went right down to the last match played in the minor round.

On completion of the minor round the points table was:

Qld 4 wins 0 losses 16 pts
SA 3 wins 1 loss 13 pts
VIC 2 wins 2 losses 8 pts
ACT 1 win 3 losses. 4 pts
NSW 0 wins 4 losses. 0 pts

South Australia and Queensland contested the final. Queensland lost the toss and batted first, compiling 8/195 after 20 overs. This included some penalty runs as SA went over time.

Queensland felt confident at this point and for the first 10 overs kept South Australia to 7 runs an over.

However, a partnership between Mark Haskett and Stefan Nero turned things around, and SA scored the winning runs with 2 balls to spare, undoubtedly a thrilling finish.

South Australia claimed their first national title and the Steven Short / Mark Turner trophy.



Street Parade – Steven Palmer and Mark Haskett take the trophy on tour to Neighbours 'Ramsay Street'

Award winners and best players for the tournament were

B3. Steven Palmer (SA)
B3. David Gaucci (VIC)

B2. Lindsay Heaven (QLD)
B2. Scott Jones (NSW)

B1. Cameron Roles (ACT)

The first National All Abilities Cricket Championships which also included Deaf Cricket and ID cricket is an initiative of Cricket Australia.

Cricket Australia is planning to host these events annually, with an aim to increasing their involvement in all forms of cricket throughout the states and territory that currently play blind cricket.

The tournament was a huge success, on and off the field for Blind Cricket Australia, with many young and talented cricketers showcasing their skills and putting their collective hands up for selection in upcoming international campaigns.

Off the field, a huge congratulation and heartfelt thanks to tournament director for the blind division, Troy King, who volunteered his time to ensure a successful and professional event was run.

The next event on the blind cricket calendar is the 33rd BCA National Blind Cricket Championships to be held in Melbourne in late December 2015.

To catch up with all of the action from the National All Abilities Championships, click on www.blindcricketaustralia.com.au and be sure to bookmark our website for further goings on throughout the year involving blind cricket.

ABBA

The ABBA Nationals and the AGM are being held in Adelaide 28th April – 7th May.

Golf

Recently 2 B1 golfers competed in pro-am events; this is a big thrill for any golfer, and lots of fun. The pro golfers are always super impressed with blind golfers, as they say it is hard enough to play with full sight. And of course the sighted guides are in high demand for lining up putts and shots with many offers to pay them!

Glenn Niciejewski from Brisbane, with Mark Toukey (ex NRL player) as guide, competed in the Australian Ladies Masters Pro-Am at Royal Pines with Steph Na. Glenn also played in the multi disability QLD championships at Emerald Lakes coming in runner up on 34 points- this was a great effort from Glenn. He has recently been nominated for Elite Athlete with a Disability in the Logan City Sports Awards. Good luck Glenn.

David Blyth, President of BSA, recently competed in the Australian Ladies Golf Open Pro-Am with a Japanese Professional at Royal Melbourne, with Gary McInnes as guide. At the same Event, Geoff Ellis gave demonstrations and Kay Hancock was interviewed on ABC TV during the Blind Golf Clinic at the Event.



L-R Sam Bush (Soldier On), Haru Nomura (LPGA Professional Golfer from Japan), David Blyth, Gary McInnes, Michael Rolls (Amputee golfer) at ISPS Handa Australian Women's Open Pro-Am at Royal Melbourne GC

We extend an invitation to anyone interested in joining in Blind Golf as a player or volunteer and/or guide or simply come along to upcoming events as a spectator and see how it all works.

1. April 13/14. Rosebud Country Club - Victorian Blind Golf Open
2. April 16/17. Rosebud Country Club – ISPS Handa Australian Blind Golf Open
3. May 28/29. Adelaide – BGA Australian Blind Golf Stableford Championship

More information is available at www.blindgolf.com.au or www.blindsportsaustralia.com.au .

NSW Blind golfers go bush

Every year blind golfers from NSW hold an event called 'West of the Mountains'. It was the brainchild of Mary and Tom Watson, long-time members of Blind Golf NSW. They lived in Blayney, a small town in Central West NSW over the Blue Mountains and Mary used to drive Tom down to Sydney a couple of times a month so he could participate in sport with other vision impaired people. This is an 8 hour round trip at least, and overnights can be

necessary if black ice comes into play through winter. The event has been held in varying locations from Blayney to Mudgee.

The current event and trophy is a memorial to the Watsons. This year it was held in Blayney, in early March. As usual, it was hot and dry. This is Brian Turner's home course now in his retirement. Brian is a well know character and has had many years of volunteering in blind sports from his working days at the Royal Blind Society Enfield. He has acted as driver, cricket umpire/scorer and guide for vision impaired golfers and bowlers.

Luckily the local annual Show was on the same weekend, so a few of us enjoyed the animals, mostly 4 legged, crafts and atmosphere of a very Aussie country town. You can't beat the dog trials, horse events and good old country cooking and crafts.

Blayney Golf Club is a typical country course, hot and dry, with plenty of run and the odd snake and kangaroos later in the afternoon, and plenty of birdlife. 9 holes were played on the Saturday and 9 on the Sunday. Saturday night was dinner at a local pub, with a lovely BBQ at the Motel on Sunday after the game. Golf tales were tall and mostly untrue, pretty typical post-game chat.

The winners this year were Graham Coulton and Gary Sargent, closely followed by Rod Mills and a local guide/caddy Jimmy McDermott. A big thank you goes to Brian for organising the times and having us in his world for a few days.

To find out more about blind golf, go to www.blindgolf.com.au or www.blindsportsaustralia.com.au

Don't worry if you can't play, most of us can't either!!!



At the local Show



On the course



19th hole

The Yass blind golf challenge 2015

This is the 'State of Origin' in blind golf events. Every February blind golfers and their guides travel from Victoria and NSW to Yass for a weekend of good times and competitive golf. The format is stableford with the best 5 scores from each state being averaged to reveal the winning State. In a very rare outcome, Victoria was this year's winners. Congratulations to all who took part: Victorians, enjoy it while you can! (from Gary and Eileen)

Blind Sports Victoria

New confidence for the blind

Article from the StarCommunity newspaper on Monday 30th March.

Building confidence and self-esteem is the main goal of a new partnership between Insight Education, Blind Sports Victoria and Funtastic Gymnastics in Berwick.

On Monday, seven Insight students – who suffer from some kind of blindness or vision impairment – worked on their gymnast skills, following a successful pilot program at Essendon Keilor Gymnastics Academy.

Insight students have been attending gymnast classes since last year, and this week principal Tim Hemphill said they once again displayed typical courage to tackle various activities.

With research showing that learning is approximately 80 per cent visual, Insight students require explicit instruction, especially when it comes to ropes, rings and beams of gymnastics.

“This is all part of our expanded core curriculum,” he said.

“It’s become a regular activity for the school and it will continue next term also.

“It helps the students be aware of their own bodies and what’s around them.

“It builds social skills. Students can share goals about what they want to achieve. It’s a pathway to inclusion.”

Seven-year-old students Christian and Jemma love the experience of being taught specific skills, to simply jumping into a foam pit.

“I love the rope because I get to swing like Tarzan,” Christian said, while Jemma has been working on her “candlestick” manoeuvre. “I’m tipped upside down on the rings,” she said.

Students not only sail on Fridays, but go shopping for ingredients and cook for staff mid-week.

Upcoming events

For all upcoming events please go to the BSA website events page

<http://www.blindsportsaustralia.com.au/events.html>

The events calendar is also downloadable in pdf format.

Member Opportunities

Travel insurance

We strongly encourage members, their family friends and generally everyone that is travelling to check out travel insurance via our website.

Either click on one of the Covermore banners or use the link below

<https://track.commissionfactory.com.au/t/15299/11003/>

Using the banner or the link above you will get the same travel insurance as if you went through major travel agencies. Only thing to remember is you must use the link or the banner. And remember – anyone that needs travel insurance can access it through these links

Why is BSA promoting this – because not only do you get great travel insurance at a great price, but BSA receives a commission for every policy purchased.

Use the BSA logo

On most correspondence from BSA and on our website you will notice that we include the Australian Sports Commission and the Australian Paralympic Committee logos.

We invite, and encourage, our member organisations to use the Blind Sports Australia logo on their correspondence and advertising material in much the same way.



We have found that adding the Australian Sports Commission and the Australian Paralympic Committee logos has assisted develop the BSA brand and lent some more creditability to the BSA brand. It also assists promoting the Australian Sports Commission and the Australian Paralympic Committee brands. Putting the BSA logo on your letterhead, uniforms and marketing material adds creditability to your organisations and helps BSA promote itself and blind sports.

Additionally we have BSA banners, and access to ASC banners, that we would appreciate being displayed at all national events and competitions, and for state members at state events.

If you would like to use the BSA logo, or the BSA and ASC banners please contact Stephen Barnes.

Volunteering?

Do you, or one of your members, need some volunteers? Need help with a 'Come and try' Day, or a sausage sizzle? Then let Stephen Barnes know the details and BSA will try and get some volunteers to assist. Send what types of volunteers you need, time commitment, and any other requirements and information – and don't forget to send contact details too.

Currently BSA is looking for:

Video maker

Seeking the support of someone to plan, film and edit a short promotional video to summarise what our organisation does! As a starting point: we were thinking snippets of film to be captured at member events and interview with the CEO and Board Chair.

Open to your creative ideas!

Lawyer to review policies

We need a person to review various policies for Blind Sports Australia e.g. privacy Policy, Code of Conduct, Member Protection, Selection Criteria, Athletes agreements, MOUs, Grants and acquittal statements and indicate gaps and changes required.

Physiotherapists and Sports Masseurs

Volunteer Physios and Masseurs for the Blind Cricket Australia Nationals to be held in Melbourne in December and January.

Contact details and links

Blind Sports Australia
P.O.Box 2114
Oak Park, VIC 3046
Australia

Email: admin@blindsportsaustralia.com.au

Website: www.blindsportsaustralia.com.au

Board Chair – David Blyth AO
Board member – Gary Sargent
Board member – Sam Theodore
Board member – Garry Humphries
Board member – Karen Ryan
Board member – Voula Karantzas
Board member – Melissa Martin

Board Secretary – Eileen Sargent

CEO – Stephen Barnes (part-time Thursdays and Fridays)

Gary McInnes – Member Protection Information Officer

Kent Dredge – Member Protection Information Officer

