

Blind Sports Australia

December 2015



Promotion, Participation & Advocacy of Sports for the Australian Blind Community

IN THIS ISSUE

A Message from the CEO



As we lead into the festive season it is a good to take a little time to reflect on the year that's passed and what has been

achieved and what should be celebrated.

The big event and highlight this year was the Blind Sports World Games in Seoul, South Korea in May. A team of 26 athletes, coaches and support persons attended representing Blind Sports Australia in Goalball and Tenpin Bowling. These games are a large event (bigger than the Paralympic Games in numbers attending) with the best blind and vision impaired athletes attending the Games. All the athletes performed well with Marilyn Luck winning a gold medal in the Tenpin Bowling and the Goalball Women's team placing fourth.

In August Blind Sports Australia hosted an inaugural Blind Football forum in Melbourne with representatives from each State attending. This was a very collegiate and sharing meeting and as an outcome a draft strategic plan has been put together to develop the sport in Australia. Blind Sports Australia with the support of Blind Sport and Recreation Victoria has also submitted an Expression of Interest to IBSA (International Blind Sports Federation) to host an Oceania tournament in 2017.

The Board and I were pleased that so many people could attend a BSA Sports Forum held over a weekend in October. Again there was a lot of information sharing and idea generation. Also thank you to Tim Haggis (Australian Disability Sports), Simon Rodder (Australian Sports Commission) and Tim Matthews (Australian Paralympic Committee) who attended and presented. Thank you also to the APC and Essendon Football Club for the use of their facilities once again.

After the BSA Annual General Meeting, Mr Sam Theodore was elected by the Board as the Chair and Ms Voula Karantzias as Deputy Chair. Congratulations to both Sam and Voula, and thank you to David Blyth for his support and leadership of both BSA and to me personally over the last few years.

Thank you to Melissa Martin for putting together this newsletter, to all the Board and volunteers that have worked with BSA this year for your help and support – invaluable and I do appreciate it. Lastly I wish everyone a wonderful festive season and a safe and happy new year.

Stephen Barnes, CEO
ceo@blindsportsaustralia.com.au

A Message from the CEO

Page 1

Member Updates: Blind Sports & Recreation Vic

Page 2

*Blind Sporting Association of NSW
 Sporting Wheelies & Disabled Association*

Page 3

*Association of SA Blind Sporting Clubs
 WA Blind Sports Federation*

Page 5

*Blind Cricket Australia
 Blind Golf Australia*

Page 8

Goalball Australia

Page 9

*Blind & Vision Impaired Tenpin Bowling
 Other News*

Page 10

Upcoming Events

Page 11

BSA Board Members & Member Organisations

Page 12

Blind Sports Australia

**A Foundation Member of the
 Australian Paralympic Committee**

ABN 68 008 621 252

PO Box 2114, Oak Park Vic 3046

What have our Members been up to?

Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria

2015 National Disability Awards

Minister for Social Services, the Hon Christian Porter MP announced the selection of 27 finalists for the 2015 National Disability Awards.

Maurice Gleeson OAM, President of Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria was one of the finalists in these awards. The National Disability Awards have been set up to recognise the valuable contribution organisations and people make to improving the lives of people with disability in Australia," Mr Porter said.

Now in their ninth year, the National Disability Awards are part of the Commonwealth Government's celebration of International Day of People with Disability.

The 2015 National Disability Award winners were announced at a ceremony on Wednesday, 25 November at Parliament House in Canberra.

Congratulations Maurice on a well-deserved nomination.



Walking Tours in City of Yarra
Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria

was recently successful in receiving a grant from the City of Yarra to hold a series of walking tours and morning teas in the City of Yarra.

These events will be held bi-monthly, starting in March 2016, with more detailed information provided in February 2016.

Miriam Bilander, who has coordinated the Morning Tea in Moreland program, will continue as coordinator of this program in the City of Yarra. If you are interested in attending these morning teas, please contact Miriam on 98228876 or email Miriam@blindsports.org.au

Look Both Ways – Sharing Your Time project in Boroondara

Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria is continuing to create comfortable and accessible environments to enable people who have vision loss in Boroondara to get out and about with assistance from our great volunteers.

Whether it's sharing a walk in the park, attending a concert, creating music, exploring an exhibition hands-on, learning about mindfulness and meditation, going out for coffee with 'coffee mates' or listening to the birds which inhabit Boroondara, this project connects people together to walk, talk, laugh and have fun.

If you live, work or don't mind travelling to Boroondara and would like to participate in this project as a person who has vision loss or a volunteer, Janene would love to hear from you by phone on (03) 9822 8876 on Thursdays or email Janene@blindsports.org.au

Blind & Vision Impaired Tennis Program

BSV has developed an innovative Australia-first vision-impaired tennis program. With many blind and vision impaired people never having held a tennis racquet or been on a tennis court, this program enables you to develop skills associated with tennis movements such as serving, forehand and backhand with the assistance of trained volunteers. Numerous types of balls are used including audible, coloured and various sizes tennis balls.

The program is held at the National Tennis Centre (Indoor Courts). The National Tennis Centre is located within the Melbourne Park precinct, opposite AAMI Park Stadium, next to Hisense Arena. The program is held four times per year in six week blocks on a Friday evening commencing at 6.30pm.

Dates for 2016 are:

Term 1: 19 February, 26 February, 4 March, 18 March, 1 April, 8 April

Term 2: 6 May, 13 May, 20 May, 27 May, 3 June

Term 3: 5 August, 12 August, 19 August, 26 August, 2 September

Term 4: 14 October, 21 October, 28 October, 4 November, 11 November, 18 November.

If travelling by train, a meeting point has been organised at the barrier at Richmond Railway Station (Swan Street end near the kiosk) at 6pm.



For further information on the tennis program, please have a look at the link

<http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/Pub>

lications/Video-Gallery/PICSAR-Friends-for-Fitness.aspx

*Maurice Gleeson/Susan
Blind Sports Victoria*

Blind Sporting Association of NSW

2015 Vision Camp

The 2015 Vision Camp was held at Sydney Academy of Sport in Narrabeen from Friday Dec 4th to Sunday Dec 6th. Attendees were able to participate in a range of activities including Ten Pin Bowling, Indoor Soccer/Futsal, Goalball, Cricket, Tandem Cycling, Judo, Archery & Vision Impaired Tennis. The Vision Camp offered attendees the opportunity to meet new friends and enjoy new experiences in a supportive environment. Big thanks to Variety Club NSW and Vision Australia for supporting this program.

Surf Life Saving NSW

The sand in your eye Bondi Beach event has been moved back to provide more time to set up the infrastructure for this event in relation to the buddy swimming program and surfing lessons that will go hand in hand with break out education sessions and the launch of our online matrix website. Sign up registration packets will be available in early January for this event which will support a more inclusion beach community and partnership between Surf Life Saving NSW and Blind Sports NSW. The expected date will now be in late March 2016.

“Activate Inclusion”

“ACTIVATE INCLUSION” is a new program that promotes school students and their vision support teachers working together to learn

more about available social recreation grass roots sporting opportunities within their community. This event is being held on December 10 & 11 and participants will have the opportunity to experience Cricket, Goalball, Tennis, Futsal, Ten Pin Bowling, and Judo!

Big thanks to Sally from Department of Education and Kelly from Vision Australia Orange for their support leading up to this event. Also a big thanks to our major partner PCYC Orange for allowing us to utilize their wonderful venue for the sports over the weekend.

*Murray Elbourn, President
Blind Sports NSW*

Sporting Wheelies & Disabled Association of QLD

2015 Sporting Wheelies and Disabled Association Annual Awards

Barry Harpur was named “Col and Peter Marsh Volunteer of the Year” at Sporting Wheelies and Disabled Association’s Annual Awards on 20 November.

Barry made a significant contribution to goalball in Queensland in 2015 as a volunteer referee and committee member. He was a member of the organising committee for the 2015 Australian Goalball Championships in Ipswich in October, where he also acted as Senior Referee over the four-day event. He refereed at the July state goalball championships and officiated at Saturday morning social competition in Brisbane over the six-month season. Barry continued to mentor and train new referees to national level, and keep meticulous records of results and player

achievements as the volunteer historian for Goalball Queensland and Goalball Australia.



States share honours at Australian Goalball Championships, 5/10/15

The 2015 Australian Goalball Championships have drawn to a close in the historic Queensland city of Ipswich after four days of competition featuring Australia’s top players from Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and South Australia (1-4 October).

The host state won gold in the Women’s division, with the combination of Paralympians Meica Christensen and Nicole Esdaile with fellow national representative Raissa Martin proving too strong for New South Wales 10-4.

It was the perfect preparation for Meica and Raissa ahead of the 2015 IBSA Asia/Pacific Goalball Championships in China in November, where they will attempt to qualify the Australian women’s goalball team for the Rio 2016 Paralympics.



The Queensland men’s team (Michael Sheppard, Jon Horsburgh and Mathew Eaton) claimed bronze in their division with a convincing 13-3 win over NSW. The three Queenslanders have also been

selected to represent Australia in China as they try to qualify the national men's team for Rio.

Western Australia won the Men's gold medal with a thrilling 7-6 victory over Victoria. It was their second gold of the championships following their 4-2 win over NSW in the Junior division final.

NSW turned the tables on Western Australia in the Youth division final, winning another tight game 8-7.

Queensland's first mixed junior goalball representatives Sean Kendrick, Tobias West, Melodie West and Kendra Brewer went down 6-4 to Victoria in their bronze medal play-off. The Queensland mixed youth team (Brendan Young, Patrick Perring, Joe Hogg, Grace West, Nathan Luke) were under-manned due to injuries but fought strongly and improved throughout the tournament.

Queensland players featured in both the individual and All Star Team honours:

Women's division

- Meica Christensen – Most Valuable Player, Highest Goal Scorer, All Star Team
- Nicole Esdaile – All Star Team

Men's division

- John Horsburgh – Highest Goal Scorer
- Michael Sheppard – All Star Team

Youth division

- Brendan Young – Most Valuable Player, All Star Team



The four-day event was hosted by Sporting Wheelies and Disabled Association and featured around 200 players, coaches, officials and volunteers across the two competition venues, Ipswich Girls' Grammar School and Bremer State High School. For full results, visit www.sportingwheelies.org.au/agc15.

State bowls board lending weight to inclusive practices, 9/09/15

More than 60 bowlers with a disability have enjoyed three days of fierce competition during Bowls Queensland's State Multi Disability Lawn Bowls Championships at Aspley Memorial Bowls Club (31 August-2 September).



Bowls Queensland (BQ) host the annual event with support from its four partners – Sporting Wheelies and Disabled Association, Life Stream Australia, Deaf Sport and Recreation Queensland and the Queensland Blind Bowlers Association.

Daryl Francey, Development Officer – South Queensland, was happy with the number of bowlers who travelled from as far north as Mossman and as far west as Cloncurry to compete at the championships. "Over two-thirds

of the bowlers this year were from regional Queensland. This highlights the great work our local clubs are doing to welcome people with a disability across the state," he said.

The Association's Sport and Recreation Manager David Bartholomaeus said Bowls Queensland delivered a quality event for the bowlers, with senior Bowls Queensland officials playing key roles in the delivery of the competition.

"The quality of the competition this year was exceptional, and the BQ officials were clearly impressed with the level of skill on show," said Bartholomaeus.

Jake Fehlberg won his second consecutive Les Bushell Shield for best player of the championships within the blind bowlers division. Jake took out the singles title and pairs title, partnering with singles finalist Chris Backstrom.

"There was a lot to play for, with bowlers in the Sporting Wheelies division vying for selection in the national 2015 Multibowl Championships on the Gold Coast in October for bowlers with a physical disability," Bartholomaeus said.

Bowls Queensland Board Director Colleen Ryan, stated, "I was blown away by the attitude, stamina, sportsmanship and camaraderie of the participants. They played in the true spirit of the game and others could learn from that."



Ryan is now interested in finding out what clubs are doing to promote the inclusion of people with a disability at local level and will discuss the championships with the BQ Board. "It's important that all people in the community have the same opportunity to access and enjoy our sport," she said.

Click [here](#) for full results of the Queensland Multi Disability Lawn Bowls Championships.

For more information about lawn bowls in Queensland, contact Daryl Francey on (07) 3355 9988 or email daryl@bowlsqld.org.

*Kelli Chilton, General Manager
(Services), Sporting Wheelies*

Association of SA Blind Sporting Clubs

During November South Australia hosted the Pacific School games. The tournament went well thanks to Goalball SA & Pacific school games team who put in a lot of extra hours in preparing the court and making sure everyone enjoyed themselves. Congratulations to Western Australia on their win in the grand final narrowly beating South Australia 9-7, whilst NSW triumphed over Qld for the bronze.

We were very pleased to be able to showcase Goalball as an inclusive sport to the rest of the state. Throughout the tournament we were also able to demonstrate the sport to Westminster school students, overseas competitors and even some baseballers who were in the area. We are hoping that the success of the

tournament will encourage new participants in the future.

During Term 4 we were also able to run a soccer program at the SA School for the Vision Impaired (SASVI), with the assistance of FFSA & The Adelaide united Lady Reds soccer team, in particular our great coach Tiarn Powell. It was great to see the development of new skills by the students and feedback received from the school was that the students (& teachers) thoroughly enjoyed it, with many expressing an interest to continue in the future.

*Kent Dredge
Sports Development Officer
Blind Sports SA*

WA Blind Sports Federation

December 2015

Greg Madson (President) and Erika Webb (Secretary) of the Western Australian Blind Sports Federation attended the WA Department of Sport and Recreation Disability Forum, the final for the year. This forum is for mainstream and disability specific sporting clubs and groups, disability service providers, local and state government to showcase activities in the area of accessible sports. At this forum there was a panel with members from National Disability Services, Rocky Bay, and Gymnastics WA and Athletics WA, speaking about making sport inclusive and accessible. The WA Department of Sport and Recreation has a range of resources that are useful.

<http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au>

November 2015

On the weekend of 28 and 29 November our WA Blind Sailing team

participated in a race from Perth to Rockingham and return, which is around 25 nautical miles each way. There were a few minor hitches but overall the team did quite well.

On the 29 November Retina WA held their inaugural Tandem Cycling Have-A-Go Day for their members. A huge thank you to the WA Tandem Cycling Advisory Council (WATCAC) for providing tandems, coaching and experienced front riders and the Retina WA members had a wonderful and safe day. For more information visit <http://rawa.com.au> or <http://watcac.org>

Blind Cricket Australia and the West Australian Blind Cricket Club (The Venetians) held a Come and Try day at the WACA cricket ground on Saturday 28th November. These Come and Try days are held a couple times in the year and are proving to be quite popular.

For more information contact Lindsay Heaven, Director at Blind Cricket Australia <http://blindcricket.org.au>

Goalball Western Australia congratulated their WA players Steffan Nero, Murron Coyle and Darren Coyle coached by Natasha Cugley and team manager Lorraine who travelled to Adelaide. The team won gold at the 2015 Pacific School Games in Adelaide.

Students aged between 10 – 19 years from at least 12 countries, including every Australian state and territory, competed from November 21 – 29, 2015. Australian students qualify for the Games through their state or territory school sport unit pathways and international students follow their

national school sporting association pathways.

For more information about Goalball Western Australia or for their Newsletters which can be downloaded visit:
<http://www.goalballwa.com.au>

Blind Citizens WA Swish held on 11 November at St Luke's Church Hall. Swish is Blind Table Tennis played on the second Saturday of each month, 1pm to 5pm in Maylands (a short walk from Maylands Station). \$3 with tea and coffee provided and lots of fun. For more information visit www.bcwa.org.au All welcome!

The West Australian Blind Cricket Club (The Venetians) Played and are playing various teams over the summer season. They are looking for interested players and volunteers. You can visit the West Australian Blind Cricket Club Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/West-Australian-Blind-Cricket-Club-The-Venetians-1374441959461945/?fref=nf>

For the month of November Goalball Western Australia were selected to participate in Local Matters at Grill'd Brookfield Place for the whole month of November! People drop a bottle top token into a jar at Grill'd and at the end of the month the \$500 is split with \$300 going to the jar with the most bottle top tokens and \$100 split over the other 2 jars groups or organisations.

Thanks to Grill'd Brookfield Place - Tech Building at 125 St Georges Terrace Perth.

Are you interested in Beep Baseball? A group of WA parents have bought

the equipment for Beep Baseball from the USA. They are looking for keen players to set up a team or a come and try game. Contact Erika from WA Blind Sports Federation wablindsportsfed@gmail.com for more information.

October 2015

Blind Football (Soccer) Western Australia are looking for keen players to set up a team or to hold a come and try game. If you are interested contact Blind Football Western Australia via their Facebook page at:
<http://www.facebook.com/Www.blindfootballwesternaustralia.com.au/?ref=ts&fref=ts>

VisAbility congratulated everyone who competed in the Western Australian Blind Golf Association Open Championship on 15 and 16 October. VisAbility's Executive Manager of Operations Debra Barnes presented the VisAbility's Senior's Trophy to winner John White and caddy Ross Thompson.

If you want to play golf or be a caddy contact Western Australian Blind Golf Association at <http://wabga.org.au/>

Greg Madson (President) and Erika Webb (Secretary) of the Western Australian Blind Sports Federation attended the Blind Sports Australia, Sports Forum held at Essendon Football Club in Melbourne on 24 and 25 October. The weekend was a strategic planning session with the member clubs and organisations and also included the Annual General Meeting.

One of WA's Tandem Cycling Paralympian athlete was the feature of a recent article in the Edith Cowan University newsletter.

"From Paralympian to star student", Thursday, 22 October 2015

Despite having conquered the world as a Paralympian, Lyn Lepore thought her vision impairment meant university was out of reach for her. But now, 14 years after claiming gold in the women's tandem cycling event at the Sydney Paralympics, she is well on her way to finishing a Bachelor of Exercise and Sports Science.

Lyn will share her story of sporting and academic success at an ECU event to mark International Day for People with a Disability, which is celebrated on 3 December".

The full article can be found at: <https://www.ecu.edu.au/news/latest-news/2015/10/from-paralympian-to-star-student>

On the 14th October the year was the BWA - Bicycling Western Australia, Ride2Work 2015 Breakfast.

Deanne & Jennifer of "Out of Sight Out of Mind" riding team and 2 members of WA Tandem Cycling Advisory Council (WATCAC) team attended the Breakfast before going to work.

If you would like to ride tandems either as a front rider or a back rider please contact WATCAC at www.watcac.org

On the 12th October Peter Greco of 5RPH Radio 1197 AM Adelaide chatted with Ben Rowe, Vice President of Goalball Australia, Coach, and a Member of the Winning State at the Goalball Nationals wrapped up the Games.

The Western Australian Blind Sports Federation member clubs and groups met with David Blyth & Stephen Barnes from Blind Sports Australia on

Sunday 11th October at the Mercure Perth hotel. The clubs and groups represented were WA Lawn Bowls, Blind Cricket, Tandem Cycling and Goalball.

Also on the 11th October Stephen Barnes of Blind Sports Australia was a guest speaker at the Blind Citizens Australia 2015 National Convention at the Mecure Perth, speaking about the challenges of getting people who are blind and vision impaired into sports.

September 2015

Self defence is a useful tool for anyone at any age. VisAbility have a qualified instructor Atsuko teaching defensive manoeuvres, confidence-building techniques and basic Jujitsu moves to people with vision impairment on Monday mornings. Carers and family members are encouraged to join in. Participant Linda says "learning self-defence makes me more confident, keeps up my fitness, and helps me feel safer as I go about my daily life." Contact VisAbility to find out more: <http://bit.ly/1Gun9wD>

An inspirational athlete takes on Busselton's Ironman in WA (video) 23 September 2015

The next man your about to meet is nothing short of inspiring. He's about to put himself up to his biggest challenge yet.

Darren Stevens who is 23 years old and is going to compete in the 2016 SunSmart Ironman in Busselton in Regional WA. But he needs help. Darren needs guides to run, ride and swim with him.

To watch the video visit:

<https://au.gwn7.yahoo.com/w1/video/-/watch/29618288/an->

inspirational-athlete-takes-on-busseltons-ironman/2/

Darren, has a vision and hearing impairment, but he says he isn't going to let that stop him.

"I have conquered a lot of challenges in my life, but one challenge I have been wanting to do for a long time is an Ironman 3.8km swim, 180km bike ride and a 42km marathon run," says Darren.

West Australian Blind Cricket Club (The Venetians) were thrilled to have Fay Cotter - scorer, games coordinator and club treasurer - recognised with a City of Bayswater Blue Ribbon Award for Volunteer of the Year!

WA Blind Sailing team member Kylie Forth - Climb For A Smile - Fundraiser

Instead of participating in the World Sailing Championship this year, Kylie climbed the 1042 steps to reach the 50th floor of 108 St George's Terrace, the former Bank West Tower, to help eradicate world polio.

There are only three countries left in the world where polio is still endemic: Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria, with only 412 cases diagnosed worldwide in 2013. The goal is in sight to eradicate this debilitating disease from the world altogether. The only other disease ever successfully removed from the planet is smallpox.

Climb For A Smile was run by the Rotary Club of Crawley on Sunday 13 September, and aimed to raise \$70,000 for various community causes. Kylie hopes to raise \$2 for every step I climb.

Greg Madson (President) and Erika Webb (Secretary) of the Western

Australian Blind Sports Federation attended the quarterly WA Department of Sport and Recreation Disability Forum. This forum is for mainstream and disability specific sporting clubs and groups, disability service providers, local and state government to showcase activities in the area of accessible sports.

The WA Department of Sport and Recreation has a range of resources that are useful.

<http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au>

Westerners Blind Golf Club (Inc) (from the September WA Disabled Sports Association WADSA Newsletter)

The business end of the fixtures is coming up in September when we play our Club Championships and Match Play and it won't be long before we are attending the last fixtures on our books, the Awards and dinner evening on the 20th November at Maylands Golf Club. We are also very lucky to have a few of our older members attend this each year.

We have the WADSA Day at Melville Glades and though we don't have the golfers to attend this day as we only play 9 holes now we still enjoy it immensely; then we have our annual game against the Lake Claremont retired Men's Club shortly after once their 'nomad' members return. We have had a few new caddies and a new blind golfer and we will continue to put our club out to the forefront to try to boost our numbers. We have also taken delivery of 3 new buggies - courtesy of Lotterywest and thanks to WADSA for their help - which are in use each Friday and our members are delighted with them.

Erika Webb, Secretary, The Western Australian Blind Sports Federation

Blind Cricket Australia

The 33rd Blind Cricket Championships

The 33rd Blind Cricket Championships squads have just been announced and we are pleased to announce those who have been chosen, by each state, to participate in the upcoming championships being held in Melbourne from the 28th of December 2015 through to the 7th of January 2016.

We also invite you to check out [the Victorian Blind Cricket Association's](#) webpage, which will regularly update you on the goings on throughout the champs.

Come & Try Day

A great day had by at the Victorian Blind Cricket Australia Come and Try day in November at the MCG.

With the tragic terrorist attacks in Lebanon and France over the days prior, it was a blessing and a refreshing change to be out on the mighty MCG for the Victorian Blind Cricket Come and Try Day. Some great talent was present and all the kids had a ball! Congratulations to Rod and Daniel James Pritchard from the Victorian Blind Cricket Association as well as Aaron Wharton and Waddington Mwayenga from Cricket Victoria and the many wonderful volunteers for a very well organised and run event! And thanks to our camera women Kerry Nadine for taking lots of amazing photos!!



Source: Blind Cricket Australia
Facebook page

Blind Golf Australia

Blind Golf Australia (BGA) like most Australian golf clubs is struggling to maintain our membership numbers. If any readers happen to know any blind or vision impaired person who may be interested in trying golf as a new sport, or reviving a long lost interest in the game, please contact us. Our contact phone numbers and email addresses can be found on our website www.blindgolf.com.au

The last quarter of 2015 has been a busy time for blind golf with

- the Annual General Meetings of BGA, Blind Golf NSW (BGNSW) and Western Australian Blind Golf Association (WABGA);
- the NSW Open in September, the WA Masters and the WA Open in October;
- completion of the 2014/15 Order of Merit;
- a decision to stage the inaugural Queensland Open in July 2016; and
- allocation of places for BGA members in the 2016 ISPS HANDA World Blind Golf Championships to be staged in Japan in November 2016.

A hole in one!

Congratulations to Gary Sargent BGNSW member and a Director of BSA who recently achieved every golfer's dream of a hole in one! Gary's feat was achieved whilst playing with his wife Eileen at The Ridge Golf Club Sydney in a competition round on December 8. Using his hybrid, Gary "aced" the par 3 157m 11th hole. This is Gary's second hole in one with the first achieved in a social round at Kareela GC in 2012. Gary joins an impressive list of blind golfers and their caddies who had a hole on one with the most recent being Jeff Ellis BGV member at Southern GC.



Annual General Meetings

At BGA's AGM, the Board for 2015/16 was appointed as follows - President Doug Sloan, Vice President Rod Mills, Secretary /Treasurer Dona Kuruvitaarachy, Directors Robert Curtin and Ross Thompson and Director/Handicapper Geoff Walsh.

BGNSW's Board is unchanged.

WABGA have a new President in Gerry Brown who replaced Ross Thompson after Ross's 3 year term.

NSW Open

The NSW Open was played at Barnwell Park on September 17/18 as a 36 hole stroke event with 15 players. The net winner was Graham Coulton with a great score of net 87. Rod Mills was the gross winner with 159.

Full results - all events won by BGNSW members

Net Winner: Graham Coulton, 87
Gross Winner: Rod Mills, 159
Ladies Net Winner: Jenny Abela, 112
B3 Net Winner: John Hayward, 102
B2 Net Winner: Jenny Abela, 112
B1 Net Winner: Glenn Niciejewski, 105
Putting Champion: John Hayward, 56

WA Masters

For the first time, the WA Masters was staged over 2 days and played as a stableford event on Oct 13/14 at Collier Park with 10 players from WA, Victoria and NSW. This event is played for the Ron Anderson trophy-Ron was one of the founders of blind golf in Australia and is still a regular competitor.

Full results

Overall Winner: Deanna Minciullo WA, Caddy Clarrie Minciullo, 80 points
B1 Winner: David Blyth Vic, Caddy Gary McInnes, 46 points
B2 Winner: Graham Coulton NSW, Caddy Sue Carpenter, 68 points
B3 Winner: Doug Burrows WA, Caddy Thelma Burrows, 67 points

WA Open

The WA Open was played at Collier Park on October 15/16 with 14 competitors.

Full results

Overall Winner: Stephen Mitchell NSW, Caddy Chris Roberts WA, 78 points

Runner Up: Deanna Minciullo WA, Caddy Clarrie Minciullo, 75 points on a countback

B1 Winner: David Blyth Vic, Caddy Gary McInnes, 73 points

B1 Runner Up: Doug Sloan Vic, Caddy Jo Delaney, 37 points

B2 Winner: Alan Rusland WA, Caddy James O'Hanlon, 71 points

B2 Runner Up: Jenny McCallum WA, Caddy Ian McCallum, 69 points

B3 Winner: Doug Burrows WA, Caddy Thelma Burrows, 75 points

B3 Runner Up: John Hayward NSW, Caddies Gerry Brown/Len Pettit WA, 61 points

VisAbility Seniors Trophy: John White WA, Caddy Ross Thompson, 64 points



2014/15 Order of Merit (OOM)

BGA has an Order of Merit which is run over a two year period with the final placings being used to determine our entrants in the biennial ISPS HANDA World Blind Golf Championships Order of Merit points are awarded for the Australian Open, the Australian Stableford, NSW WA and Vic Opens and from 2016 the Qld Open. David Blyth Vic who is a B1 was the 2014/15 OOM winner following some great results in these major events .Congratulations David!

The Top 10 placegetters in the BGA 2014/15 were as follows:

1. David Blyth, Vic B1, 94
2. Graham Coulton, NSW B2, 83.5
3. Rod Mills, NSW B3, 82.5

4. Stephen Mitchell, NSW B3, 78
5. Gary Sargent, NSW B2, 72.5
6. Doug Burrows, WA B3, 68.5
7. Jeff Ellis, Vic B3, 83
8. Jenny McCallum, WA B2, 50
9. Doug Sloan, Vic B1, 48
10. Glenn Niciejewski, NSW B1, 48

Inaugural Queensland Open

In an effort to expand the game of blind golf, the BGA Board has decided to stage the inaugural Queensland Blind and Vision Impaired Golf Open at Virginia Golf Course, Brisbane on July 17/20 2016. Planning is still taking place and BGA are working closely with other blind sporting associations in Qld and with Golf Qld to ensure the success of this event. Initial interest is excellent with about 20 members advising that they intend participating. It is proposed to include a "come and try" afternoon at Virginia Golf Course on Sunday July 17 to introduce blind golf to blind and vision impaired persons in Qld.

2016 ISPS HANDA World Blind Golf Championships

This event will be staged in Japan in November 2016. Australia has been awarded 8 places by the International Blind Golf Association (IBGA). 2 of these places will go to defending world champions in Jenny McCallum WA and Malcolm Elliott WA and 1 to Graham Coulton NSW as a member of the IBGA Board. The remaining 5 places will be determined by the finishing places in the BGA 2014/16 Order of Merit. IBGA at this stage have restricted entrants to those with handicaps at or under their sight classification maximums and who have played a minimum 7 qualifying rounds in 2014/15. Members have been asked for expressions of interest in attending with the final nominations to be submitted in January 2016.

*Geoff Walsh
Blind Golf Australia*

Goalball Australia

The latter half of 2015 has seen our Aussie Goalball players diving around the country and Asia.

Hangzhou, south of Shanghai in China, played host to the Australian Youth Girls' and Boys' teams in June and the Men and Women's teams in November. The quaint, lakeside city proved to offer some fierce competition for all teams. The youth teams were invited for a training camp followed up by a competition between Australia, China and some local provincial teams. Despite the Chinese having a home advantage, our girls snatched the gold. For most of the youth players, this was their first international experience and definitely gave them a taste for international Goalball.

It was then the Men and Women's teams next as they were vying for Paralympic qualification at the Asia Pacific Goalball Championships. The newly formed Men's team gave the Asian teams some tough competition but unfortunately did not progress to the final rounds. The Women's team made the semi-final where they met the Japanese Women. After a tough loss, they returned the next day to claim the bronze medal. Australia's, Meica Horsburgh was the highest goal scorer in the Women's division. The Women's team are now waiting on other international results to confirm their qualification for the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games.



When it comes to the Australian Goalball Championships, any mateship amongst the Aussie teams is forgotten. New South Wales and Western Australia had the largest contingents and it showed as they racked up the medals. WA took home the gold in the Junior and Men's categories, while NSW took home the gold in the Youth category. Yet again, the Women division saw a State of Origin final between New South Wales and Queensland, and like the footy, the Maroons dominated.

Just when Goalball Australia thought they were done for the year, our school-aged Goalball players flew to Adelaide for the Pacific School Games. The games, run by School Sport Australia, saw Goalball contested for the first time. Goalball was one of nine sports and the games drew over 4000 participants. A little unexpected, but completely deserving, South Australia dominated the competition. In the finals, Western Australia showed that this competition was a marathon. They began to work seamlessly as a team and perfected their game strategy to win gold. The battered South Australian's took home the silver and bronze went to New South Wales. Not only were these games a first for the players, but also the coaches. Members of the Australian Women's Squad, Jenny Blow, Raissa Martin and Tash Cugley, swapped the eyeshades for the coaching clipboard as they led their respective states.



With such a massive year now behind us, keep your ears tuned for an even bigger year in 2016!

Jenny Blow, Goalball Australia

Blind & Vision Impaired Tenpin Bowling

BVIT activities in 2016

The 8th Australian Blind and Vision Impaired Tenpin Bowling Championships will be held at the Aspley tenpin bowl, Brisbane from Monday 14th March to Thursday 17th March 2016.

This will be a Tenpin Bowling Australia accredited event following IBSA and TBA playing conditions and is open to BVIT and TBA members who have a current eye acuity assessment of B1, B2 or B3.

The competition commences at 9 a.m. each day. Bowlers will compete in singles, doubles, trios and teams of four in scratch and handicap events, bowling 20 games across the 4 days.

Total pinfalls are also entered into an All Events category with trophies awarded to the winners in each category.

Medals and trophies will be awarded at the Presentation dinner to be held at the Kedron Wavell Services club, Chernside on Thursday 17th March.

Accommodation packages are available at the Chernside Apartments which is quite close to the bowl and adjacent to the Chernside shopping complex and Kedron Wavell Services club.

Details of competition and accommodation are available on the [BVIT web page](#). Entry forms will be available for download from the middle of January, with entries closing on Friday 19th February 2016.

The Coast to Coast Phantom League enters its fifth year, kicking off in February 2016. Bowlers submit scores from their first two games each week for the 20 weeks of the League with the scores and results posted weekly on the BVIT web page.

The Phantom league is a great way to keep in touch with Player's progress from around the country despite the tyranny of distance and has seen some very close results since its inception in 2011.

Glen Barwick, BVIT

Other News

Victorian B-League

A partnership between Football Federation Victoria and Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria.

The Victorian B-League took place in Melbourne's Docklands from September to December 2015. This league was the first adult blind football competition in Victoria, and Australia.

There were two divisions of the Victorian B league. The first was the Vision Impaired League which comprised of four teams, Doncaster Rovers Soccer Club (SC), FC Williamstown, Preston Lions Football Club (FC) and All Stars FC (a Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria team). These teams included B1, B2 and B3 players, with sighted volunteers also

taking part during the season. The other was the B1 Championship, which was played to IBSA (International Blind Sports Federation) rules, with all players wearing an eye mask. This competition was open to people who are blind or vision impaired, and sighted people.

This first season was a fantastic success, with those participating showing great sportsmanship and willingness to learn the game and have fun.

On Sunday 6 December 2015 the finals of the Victorian B-League took place. The first game of the day was the third place play off, which was taken out by Doncaster Rovers SC, defeating All Stars FC 6-2.

Next up was the final of the Vision Impaired League between FC Williamstown and Preston Lions FC. These two teams played some great football during the season with each game a classic, highly competitive and evenly matched contest. The grand final took it up a notch with both sides eager to lift the inaugural trophy. FC Williamstown came out winners 3-1 on the day.

‘Both teams displayed the essence of football, playing with heart, passion and for each other...magic.’ said FC Williamstown Coach and Social Goal Co-founder Tom Bevan.

‘It was a relief and joy when the final whistle blew.’ said Tom.

At the completion of the Vision Impaired Final, all players were presented with participation medals by Maurice Gleeson, President of Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria, a reward for their commitment to the

competition. Runners up and winners medals were presented by Adam Centafonti from Melbourne City Football Club and Nicholas Tsiaras, Football Federation Victoria Director.

In the lead up to the B1 Championship match a short skill session took place where Nicholas and Adam took part in an awareness session to learn some of the skills of the game. Some silky skills were on display and both were keen to get a bit of game time so they jumped on for a few minutes at the start of the B1 Championship Final.

The final event of the day, the B1 Championship Final, was a culmination of over 3 months of training and games in the B1 format, which was new and challenging for all players. The game showcased plenty of individual skill and great team work. Social Goal took out the final 1-0 against Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria.

In closing, a special mention must go to our fantastic team of volunteers who have helped out with a variety of roles during the competition: from initially building the court's barriers and setting them up each week to jumping on a team as a player or as an attacking guide. We would also like to thank Rich Fairbrother, a Football Federation Victoria accredited referee, who officiated both divisions.

We look forward to continuing to work with Football Federation Victoria, Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria and Blind Sports Australia to grow the game in Victoria, and Australia.

Set this time of the year in your calendar for blind football in Victoria.

The project team would like to thank

the following partners/supporters of the Victorian B- League:

City of Melbourne; YMCA @ The Hub; Preston Lions Football Club; FC Williamstown; Doncaster Rover Soccer Club; Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria; Football Federation Victoria; Melbourne City Football Club; Asian Cup Local Organising Committee; World Sports Group; South Melbourne Football Club; Vichealth; Joma.

Written by David Connolly, Co-founder, Social Goal (Blind Football Project Coordinator)

Upcoming Events

December 2015

28th December to 7th January

34th Blind Cricket Australia Nationals, Melbourne

January 2016

4th to 9th January

Brisbane International Tennis Championships, Sporting Wheelies & Disabled Association

22nd to 31st January

Blind Cricket Australia ‘Ashes Series’, Melbourne

March 2016

14th to 17th March

The 2016 Blind and Vision Impaired Tenpin Bowlers (BVIT) National Championships, Aspley Tenpin Bowl Brisbane

Blind Sports Australia Board Members



Mr David Blyth AO
Director, Chair



Mr Gary Sargent
Director



Mr Sam Theodore
Director



Ms Karen Ryan
Director



Ms Voula Karantzas
Director



Mr Garry Humphries
Director



Ms Melissa Martin
Director



Mrs Eileen Sargent
Company Secretary



Mr Stephen Barnes
CEO

Blind Sports Australia Member Organisations



Blind Sports Victoria

