

Conference 2010 - Loughborough University, Saturday 4th September and Sunday 5th September

Following the conference we looked in detail at your feedback. Thanks both for the thoughtful comments, and also for this special insight:

“MY favourite session was What Happens Next - excellent presenter. Should give him an award...”

- **Hamish Jamson**, esteemed presenter of What Happens Next and multiple award winner.

What worked..?

Dinner and Awards: From your reviews, the Conference Dinner was a resounding success (98% rated it good or excellent). The awards, expertly presented by Liz Pelling and Martyn Gallivan made the evening very special, and it was great to celebrate the success of our colleagues **Hamish Jamson** (inaugural winner of NPUA Umpire of the Year and the Special Merit award); and of course **Colin Barthorpe** who enjoyed a long standing ovation before collecting his Lifetime Achievement Award. In future we'll be looking at celebrating members' success as a wider theme, in order to recognise the many achievements of our members throughout the year.

Guest presenter: Tim Pullman (Australian Olympic & World Panel Umpire, fresh from umpiring England's win in the final of the EuroHockey Nations Championship) was a welcome guest, and provided some great insight into game management and the new rules. Jane Nockolds and Frances Block also shared their valuable experiences from the Women's Junior World Cup.

Tailored content: In a separate session, Tim talked in detail to our coaches and assessors. We'll be looking to ensure that next year we continue to offer relevant content to all our members, not just the active umpires.

Development Previews: The preview of Body Language 2 provided an exciting look at our next DVD release, and we are back on track for a New Year publication, after some hairy moments where it looked like all the data had been lost! Some sterling work (and quite a lot of panicking) from Box has recovered all the footage.

Question Time : provided an opportunity for people to submit their queries to an expert panel, allowing some interesting themes to be raised. We want to stay with this format for responding to concerns from the membership, rather than using the Any Other Business session of the AGM.

Conference 2010

The organisation of Conference2010 will be led by **Martin Twist**.

If there's anything in particular you'd like to see at next year's event (within reason!) please email him on martintwist@me.com.

Fitness Testing: The fitness test was a great success, with a very high number of umpires passing in a really supportive atmosphere. Congratulations to all those who passed the test at Conference or subsequently. With the continued focus on fitness, we will continue to search for the best time to run the test, and encourage as many people to complete it as possible.

Hockey Matches: The opportunity to watch some live hockey worked well, and we'll see if there's any scope to include this more formally next year (but perhaps still as an optional extra session).

Final Newsletter — January 2010

**Conference09
feedback & news..**

Now that the 2009/10 season is well underway and all the feedback has been gathered and analysed, we, the Conference Committee, wanted to share with you our thoughts about the NPUA Conference09 and provide you with some information about how we are already progressing the planning for conference2010.

We hope you enjoyed the new venue at Loughborough University and the fresh feel to Conference09, the feedback certainly indicated that was the case. We wanted to provide those that attended with a reminder of how things went, and a sneak preview of what's planned for next year, as well as provide an insight for those who couldn't attend..

**What didn't
go so well..?**

There are areas where we know that a few tweaks could really improve everyone's experience:

AGM: We recognise that the AGM is an important area where we can improve. This is a really significant session for everyone and the Association, but it can be a very painful one (particularly when reconvened at 9am on Sunday morning). We are looking to further streamline the meeting process and to put in place several procedures to clarify how the meeting should run and be managed. We all invest in the Conference (both in time and money) and we will get far more value out of the weekend developing ourselves as umpires, rather than debating technicalities. We'll be looking for the support of everyone next year to help us conduct our association business as efficiently as possible.

Panel Sessions: We recognise the need to ensure we include a panel session in the programme, in order to give members time to meet their panel peers and their panel selector.

Indoor Focus: With the expanding indoor game, we will be looking to include content for our indoor members. To kick this off, watch out for a special Indoor Newsletter in spring 2010 from our Chair of Indoor Selectors, Val Sassall.

Venue: We're already talking to Loughborough to improve the technical side of things further, with more screens and better audio. We are also re-examining the location of accommodation.

Sessions: Finally, we believe we missed some opportunities to generate consistency in our umpiring, especially with treatment of the new rules. This is something we hope to include in the Conference in 2010.

**And Finally...**

Regarding fitness, we wanted to share the thoughts of one of our members following Conference09:

"When I was being assessed prior to my nomination for the NPUA, my assessor said: "Your belly hangs over your belt! Is there anything that you can do about it?" That became a personal challenge for me and I worked very hard in losing weight (3 ½ stone in five months) and in increasing my fitness. I had to undertake a fitness test before being nominated for NPUA and David Howell witnessed my Cooper Test run of 2380m in 12 minutes.



"I did the Cooper Test at my first NPUA Conference and completed the required 1900m in nine minutes -- and then I stopped. Why did I stop? Because it was the distance that I had to do. But I felt unfulfilled because I knew that I could have done more and better. At my second Conference I did the Cooper Test again but completed 2300m in 10½ minutes. I was very pleased with myself and told Richard Wood who said: "Why didn't you do 2,500m?" So, at my third Conference, I was determined to complete 2,500m in less than 12 minutes. I trained very hard all summer and entered the pitch at Loughborough with the determination to achieve something that I had never done before and wanted to do.

"I ran and ran – probably far too fast to start with -and I heard people shouting encouragement to me. I completed the required 1,900m in less than nine minutes; then I passed the 2,300m mark in a little over 10½ minutes but I continued until I had finished the other 200m. Thus I completed the 2,500m in less than 12 minutes. I had done it.

"Maybe I was the "idiot" who kept running further and faster than was necessary but it was done - I had succeeded in achieving a life-long personal best. Did I feel good about myself? Yes I did.

"I sought out Richard Wood and told him of my delight and he said that I should aim for 3,000m next year. I said that that distance was not on the NPUA website and he replied that he could alter that just for me! I now train for 3,000m (even though I will never be able to do that in less than 12 minutes) and have just run that in a little under 14½ minutes – not bad for someone of 54 and a bit years of age.

"By the way – the South assessor (from the beginning of this tale) was Richard Wood and it is to him that I dedicate my weight loss and my increased fitness. How do I feel about all of this? Tired, footsore, fitter, lighter and very warm inside - and maybe I'm also prolonging my life expectancy."