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Issue Spotlight: Vancouver Island Area 1

Editors note: As a new regular feature of HeyBlue! Online, we will be featuring all of the areas of the Province. If you have an interesting tournament or event in your area or you just think that one of your local umpires need to be recognized for outstanding work this season, drop us a line and we will make sure that it is included in upcoming issues.

Well we have had an eventful winter here in Area 1. In November 2009 we hosted the BCBUA AGM as well as the 35th Anniversary party of the Association. We were able to honour 6 of the founding members of the BCBUA as well as recognize Ian Lamplugh as the BCBUA's

most successful umpire. It was a wonderful night especially to hear stories told by Mr Doug Hudlin, who attended with his wife Agnes. It was a privilege to be able to honour Mr. Hudlin along with the rest of the founding members. They are the reason we are able to be

on the field as part of the BCBUA as we are today.

We had planned to hold a Level 3 clinic in Victoria in February. Sadly this had to be cancelled due to lack of interested people (we had 9 people registered). Now any-

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BOD Changes....

BCBUA President John Berry has announced some changes to the Provincial Supervision structure effective immediately. Richard Christie remains the next Supervisor. as Supervisor, but his intention is to step down following this current baseball season. In the meantime, Assistant Supervisors Troy Carmont and Steve Boutang will take a more active role in the direction of

the BCBUA. It is the intention of the Board and Baseball BC to begin identifying the procedure that will be used to select

The goal will be to have a replacement for Christie in place in advance of the Baseball Canada National meetings and Conference in Richmond in early November.

In other Board developments, Okanagan South Area Director Dennis Windsor has resigned for personal reasons. Windsor was in his third year as Area Director following his relocation from Manitoba. No replacement was identified, but Berry is hopeful that somebody will be willing to take on the role in the short term.

Calendar of Events

April 1-4	Baseball Canada Level 4-5 Umpire clinic	Kamloops
May 27-30	John Main Peewee	Ladner/Tsawwassen
July 16-18	Jr. Provincials	Kamloops
July 29-Aug. 2	Midget AAA Provincials	Kamloops
July 29-Aug. 2	Midget AA Provincials	Prince George
July 30-Aug. 1	Premier Provincials	Nat Bailey, Vancouver
July 30-Aug. 2	Sr. Men's Provincials	Trail
Aug. 5-9	Peewee AAA Provincials	Kamloops
Aug. 5-9	Bantam AAA Provincials	Cloverdale
Aug. 12-15	Midget AA Westerns	Newton
Aug. 12-15	Bantam AA Westerns	Newton
Aug. 12-15	Peewee AA Westerns	Newton
Aug. 11-16	Baseball Canada Cup	Kindersley, SK
Aug. 18-22	Baseball Canada Peewee West	Brandon, MB
Aug. 19-23	Baseball Canada Midgets	London, ON
Aug. 19-23	Baseball Canada Jr.'s	Trois-Rivieres, PQ
Aug. 26-30	Baseball Canada Bantams	Vaughan, ON
Aug. 26-30	Baseball Canada Girls Bantams	Richmond, BC
Aug. 26-30	Baseball Canada Sr.'s	Halifax, NS

Clinic Season Winding Down

BCBUA's clinic season is rapidly winding down. Most clinics in the Lower Mainland are complete, with clinics in the Okanagan, Kootenays, and the North still ongoing. Check the BCBUA website mainpage for information about a clinic near you. It is updated regularly.

Abbotsford Hosts Advanced Clinic

Even the Winter Olympics could not keep people away from umpire education over the February 27-28 weekend in Abbotsford. With the Gold Medal Hockey game awaiting, 43 participants took part in the Level 3 Advanced clinic hosted by the BCBUA and Area 4 Director Rhonda Pauls. BC's top instructors were on hand to provide a higher level educational package that was well received by every-

one in attendance. Importantly, a good time was had by those in attendance, who were all chomping at the bit to get a good seat for Sunday's hockey finale. A significant profit was turned as a result of the outstanding attendance, also an important goal with the reduction of the Gaming Funds our association has become used to receiving over the years. Not to be overlooked is the fact that our

own instructors were able to provide a high quality educational experience without the assistance of any guest instructors or folks with what we have always called 'special and unique' skills. These instructors are to be commended. Rob Allan, Troy Carmont, Don Hass, Mark Bodwell, Jim Train, and Rhonda Pauls.

Kelowna clinic well attended

Almost 20 umpires from various Interior cities attended the 2 day Advanced clinic in Kelowna in March. Instructors Steve Boutang, Bill MacMillan, and Troy Carmont offered up loads of instruction and experience to the students who ranged in age from 16 to 'seasoned veterans'.

Provincials Applications

As outlined in the Calendar of Events, BCBUA is taking applications for the various Provincials and Western Canadian Championships that we are under

contract to allocate. Provincials

Chairman George Smith is in need of as many umpires as possible for all of these tournaments. Complicating the fact that several BC Minor tournaments are being hosted on the August Long Weekend, there is a Major Oldtimers tournament on the same weekend that is asking for our services. While the BCBUA appreciates and respects the nature and scope of the Oldtimers request, it goes without saying that the BCBUA is hopeful that our membership will first and foremost fulfill our contractual obligations to BC Minor Baseball by applying for BCMBA Provincials.

Provincials and Westerns are a rewarding experience. It gives you a chance to meet and work with other umpires from around the province. It offers you a chance to work in different parks. It gives you a chance to be evaluated by an experi-

enced supervisor, and an opportunity to receive valuable feedback as you try to improve your skills. Finally, our host associations are counting on us, especially the local umpires of the host community. These are expensive

tournaments to host, and by offering your services, you save the association hundreds of dollars in travel costs that would have to be absorbed with travelling umpires.

For those of you who reside in

communities far from a host site, fear not. The BCBUA is committed to

providing Provincials opportunities to those who must travel long distances to participate. Travel funding may be available to you to help offset your costs to attend an event.

Apply today. Here is a link to the website's application and information file.

BCBUA Provincials Application

Condolences:

The BCBUA would like to extend our sympathies and thoughts to members Ian Lamplugh and Chet Masse. Ian's mom passed away in early February and Chet's father passed away in March. We are all thinking of you at this difficult time.

The Thud Principle by Brian Cargnelli

I was in about my fifth year of umpiring and was starting to get calls from various allocators to work some games with older players. Having "paid my dues" working a lot of Little League ball I was eager to now officiate for some players who were beginning to play the game the way it was intended. Or at least that is what they thought. In retrospect they really weren't all that much better than the Little Leaguers.

I had enjoyed success as an official early on. In fact I umpired the championship game for our local Little League in my first year of umpiring and 2 years later I was working at the district tournament level. For a kid of about 14 years of age, that was quite an accomplishment. By the time I was asked to do the 18 year olds I was a "seasoned vet" of not only Little League District Championships, but I had also worked my very first Provincial Little League Championship. All by the age of 16. Needless to say I was feeling pretty confident in my own abilities as I strutted out onto the field to work that 18 year old game even though I was only 16. I knew I belonged out there and soon everyone else would too. "Hey," I

thought to myself, "this job is fun and I can do this!" It was a gorgeous spring day, the sun was shining, there was a nice gentle breeze, fluffy clouds, and I was feeling good. Then, about the second inning I hear it from the dugout:

"Give it a chance, Blue!"

This comment had come from the manager of the defensive team just after I called a ball. The pitch was obviously high I thought, and the comment didn't bother me greatly. I know managers are always "working the ump" to get all they can, and that's just part of the game. What did bother me a bit was that I heard it several more times after I called a pitch, and I began to wonder just what was going on.

"What is this guy's problem?" I'm thinking. I was having a good game and was all over every pitch and play. I just couldn't figure out what he was talking about with his "give it a chance" routine, and it began to gnaw at me a little. I also noticed I was getting some grimaces from the pitcher from time to time, and this entire thing continued for about four innings! It was nothing serious, and not

on every pitch, but it was there and it had me baffled.

Then between frames in about the fifth inning I'm standing along side the plate area, mask under my arm, still thinking I'm in complete control of this game and I'm doing a good job. Then this manager heads out to coach third base and says to me as he walks by...

"C'mon, Blue, you gotta give that curve ball a chance! Some of those have the zone and you're killin' a pretty good pitcher out there."

That's it. Nothing loud, nothing angry, but just a quiet comment as he walks by, and it really got me thinking about my performance. I'm thinking, "Could I have missed that many? Maybe I'm not seeing the ball as well as I thought."

This bothered me a lot, and I was determined to bear down and watch myself for the rest of the game. I was not going to let this guy upset my confidence and certainly not going to change my zone to suit him, but I was going to really concentrate and make sure.

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LIBRARY STOLEN by Steve Boutang

It appears that BCBUA is not immune to theft after all. While our library materials were undergoing shipment from Vancouver to the Island, a large box of DVD's were stolen. It is important to note that this action was through no fault of anyone associated with the BCBUA. However, the fact remains that many of our educational resources are gone. We did not carry any insurance on these products as it was cost prohibitive to do so. And so the loss was significant in more ways than inconvenience of not having these items. With limited resources on hand to replace these items, our board is faced with difficult decisions ahead. While we all understand the value of these items, we need to weigh out the cost of replacement vs.

the costs of suffering without them for a while.

The good news is that most of the Instructors at this year's Advanced Clinics donated some or all of their honoraria's back to the BCBUA to help with the cost of replacing the library. Further, cost cutting measures were put into place on all Advanced clinics so that we could turn enough of a profit as to justify spending some money on replacement of these items.

As a result, the board of directors also stepped up and approved some money towards this effort, and it is hoped over a period of time this year that most of the stolen items will be replaced and available again for use to our members.

I would personally like to thank the instructors who contributed towards this effort. I clearly asked a favour from them, and they responded in kind. I thank you all. The instructors who contributed in various ways were: Rob Allan, Troy Carmont, Jim Train, Mark Bodwell, Bill MacMillan, and Steve Boutang.

The new Librarian is Ed Berkenstock and he looks forward to serving you in the same way our outgoing librarian Jerry Tregaskis did for years. Contact Ed directly if you are interested in ordering some educational material for use this season.

Check the website out for more details.

(Continued from page 1)

one needing to maintain their Level 3 or wanting to go up to the Level 3 will need to travel to attend a Level 3 clinic. There are no plans to hold another clinic in Victoria in the near future with this poor level of interest. We do have a full slate of Level 1 and 2 clinics happening in most larger communities in the Area. Check the BCBUA website for a compete list.

Interestingly we have a second Premier and Junior Premiere franchise in Victoria,

the Victoria Eagles. It is too early to see how this will affect the umpire availability at the lower levels as more umpires will be called upon to work more Premier games. And the professional Victoria Seals have a new Manager for 2010. He is former MLB All Star and Seattle Mariner. Brett Boone. Seals baseball is fun and reasonably priced. A few local umpires get to work so come down and cheer Blue

I encourage all interested umpires to check the list of Provincial Tournaments

this year. There are many opportunities to work in a Provincial tournament if you want but you need to let us know! Please fill out an application found on the BCBUA website where you can also find a list of the upcoming tournaments. Lastly, if anyone wants a field evaluation this year, please get your requests in as soon as you can. Hope you have a great season!

Eric Rasmussen Area 1 Representative

Issue Spotlight: Vancouver Island Area 2

A new season is upon us and I am looking forward to a good one. I hope you are

First off, the clinics are up on the website and I hope the one that you are attending will be the best ever. You all know the areas that you should be working on so make sure the clinician covers what you came to hear. Ask lots of questions and make it a worthwhile learning event.

I would like to congratulate Morgan Wasiliew (see picture) from the Comox Valley for winning the Pro Image Jr Umpire of the year. This must have been a tough decision as there were many worthy candidates. She showed great improvement on the diamond as well as dedication to the local association by taking on the role of umpire scheduler for Comox Valley Minor Baseball and Komox Masters Division with her sister Thayna. A daunting task for anyone let a lone two teenagers. Thanks go out to both of you for your efforts!!

I would like to thank Lynette Walley for her past years as UIC for Campbell River and welcome John Caffery to the position. I would also like to thank Dawn Powelson for her past years as UIC for Oceanside and welcome Lisa Hewer, I hope that our communication will remain as strong as it has been in the past. Welcome back to Jerry Swaney in Port Alberni. I am sorry to say goodbye to Dave Miles in the Comox Valley. As of yet the

position of UIC has not been filled in this area.

I was disappointed that our advanced level 3 clinic was cancelled due to poor registration. I know how much effort Eric Rasmussen put in to the organization and it is a shame it didn't happen. I don't expect that we will hold one here on the island next year as there will be a Super



Clinic in Vancouver but we will probably try again in 2012.

Here in the Comox Valley we are trying a new system of mentoring. Each level 3 umpire and above will be mentoring 1 junior umpire for a minimum of 5 league games in the valley to improve their field skills. When the mentor feels that they are ready, the two of them will be scheduled

for a Bantam AA or Jr Premier game in Parksville. I would encourage all Jr umpires to find a mentor in their area, and get out of their comfort zone and try their hand at the next level. If you need help identifying a mentor in your town, I would be happy to recommend someone for you to contact. Thank you to the Sr. Umpires in the Valley for volunteering for this

worthwhile program.

It won't be long until the BC provincial tournaments are upon us so keep informed and apply early for a tournament near you. I especially encourage you Jr umpires to apply even if you are not sure that you qualify, as you might be surprised. If all UICs pass on names and contact info to their area rep of umpires they deem qualified we will endeavour to pass along the information to the tournament scheduler in the appropriate age and level.

Thanks to Lorne Raymond for his work last year as the BCBUA treasurer and Fabian Poulin, from Nanaimo, for taking over the position this year.

I am the new Librarian for BCBUA as Jerry Tregaskis stepped down this year. Let me know if you need anything from the Li-

See you on the diamonds!

Ed Berkenstock Area 2 Representative

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GET YOUR EVALUATION TODAY!

As part of the level 3 requirements, all level 3 umpires must have a current (within the last 3 seasons) and successful evaluation completed in order to maintain your standing. Level 3's always have preference when it comes to selection to Provincial and Western Championships. Some associations pay higher game fees for Level 3 umpires. You have to be a level 3 umpire before

you can attempt to qualify for National standing if that is your goal in umpiring.

Evaluations cost \$50. Like it or not, this is fact. Level 3 membership dues were reduced several years ago when this program was implemented. This program continues to be reviewed for better ways of doing business but will remain in place for at least the 2010 season.

Besides being a mandatory component of level 3 qualifications, evaluations are a great tool to help umpires improve. Don't wait for your qualifications to be on the brink of expiry to request your evaluation. For those serious about improvement, umpires should be evaluated for promotion or information/ education every year.

FUN FACTS!!!

- The average life span of a baseball used in Major League play is 5-7 pitches!
- The longest game in terms of time was played on May 9, 1984. The game lasted 25 innings and was 8 hours and 6 minutes long. The game had to be completed the following day because of curfew rules.
- The term "Spring Training" began in 1888 when the Chicago White Stockings went to Hot Springs Arkansas to prepare for the new season due to cold weather in Chicago that year. Today, all Major League teams head to warmer climes to begin preparations for the season anew. Many teams head to Florida for "Grapefruit League" play, while others head to Arizona for "Cactus League" action.

Did You Know????

It appears that baseball players are not the only ones defecting from Cuba these days. Legendary Cuban baseball umpire Nelson Diaz recently defected to the United States. Diaz has 26 years of umpiring experience in Cuba's National Series League, including multiple International assignments, and the Olympics as recently as 2008. However Diaz was not selected for the WBC in the United States in 2009 because officials feared he would defect.

Stump the Ump Spring 2010 by Brian Cargnelli

Here is an interesting situation that occurred to me at the Provincial Junior Championships in Kelowna several years ago. I was the 1st base umpire for this game and there were several ejections and a couple of injuries during the game to a one of the teams. In fact if we had just one more player leave the game for this one team they would not be able to field 9 players. And guess what, I had to eject that player!

So here is the situation:

In the bottom of the 7th inning, the home team is at bat trailing the game 5-1. This was team was down to its last nine players, one more player leaving the game and we were going to have a forfeit. So wouldn't you know it, a close play at first base and I called the runner out for the first out of the inning. The runner then yells at me to get my head out of my... well you can guess what

was said. Needless to say he was ejected. But that meant that the home team no longer had nine players left to play the game. The visiting team assumed that the game was over at this point. As the umpiring crew we had to explain to both teams that the game actually continues at this point because the rule states that the game continues until a team can not "field" nine players. Since the team was at bat they got to keep playing. Guess what, Protest #1 is now lodged.

So a protest committee is called into the skip that spot. We now have Protest # game. They met for about 20 minutes as 2. I explained the rule. Finally they agreed with our interpretation of the rule and the game continued. In fact the home team gets a bit of a rally going and they score 3 runs so that the score in the game is now 5-4 and still only one out, bases loaded. The person who is next to

bat though is the guy I ejected. Since there was no one able to take that spot the number 5 batter comes up. This batter reaches 1st base on a single to left and the tying run scores.

Immediately the defensive manager comes out and asks the plate umpire about batting out of order. The plate umpire gets all of us together and we rule that there was no batting out of order since the player in the number 4 batting position was ejected and there was no one to take his place we just

So here is the question, you're the protest committee. Do you uphold the protest or not and why. As always post your answer on the BCBUA Online forums for a chance to win a prize.

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Pictures from around the Umpire World



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Pictures from around the Umpire World







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The top of the fifth went pretty uneventfully. The pitcher for the other team was throwing mostly fastballs, and when he did try the #2 or most anything off speed it was usually well out of the zone. But I was really bearing down! I was concentrating so hard it almost hurt!

And when the bottom of the inning started I really got down to business. I was going to show this manager I knew my job! There was not a pitch that was going to get by me, and I was really into the game. The pitcher threw a couple of pitches and I made the appropriate calls with no beef from the dugout. I was all over them! Then the pitcher uncorks a curve ball. I don't mean a "curve ball" but "The Big Yellow Hammer"! This thing starts out way up there (as his others had), an obvious ball. But this time I watch it all the way into the catchers glove, concentrating on the pitch and blocking out everything else. About the last 10 feet this thing begins to break. I'll be damned if it didn't drop right into the zone about belt high, splitting the plate in half!

You remember the old E.F. Hutton commercials? Well, I imagine that's what it looked like in the stands and dugouts after that pitch. I was concentrating so hard on the pitch I forgot to make a call! Finally I said, "Strike!", and made the signal. From the dugout I hear, "There you go, Blue!"

Well, I learned my lesson that day about

timing. I discovered that no matter how well-intentioned my efforts if I didn't employ the proper timing techniques in making my calls everything went south in a hurry! I learned that I had to take my time and let every play conclude before I made a call, and let every pitch complete its path before calling it.

I gave this game a lot of thought afterward and I decided I must have been giving up on those curve balls, as some hitters do, and actually deciding it was a ball before it even got there! I have since noted this is a common problem for many young umpires, and it has become my personal "cause" to inform them how to time calls on the field.

I stress to all our umpires both in school and on the field the proper timing of umpiring. I have since become pretty good at timing my calls properly, and never, ever hurry them to impress anyone with my speed of making the calls. My first concern is getting it RIGHT, and as a result I have become a much better umpire. I have also since developed my own little routine for making all calls, both behind the plate and on the bases, which I refer to as "The Thud Principle".

The Thud Principle

The "thud" is the sound of the ball hitting the glove or mitt. That sound begins my sequence of calls and actions, and nothing happens before that sound! Oh, I am watching everything and I'm sure mental processes are going on, but outwardly there is no sign of anything from me.

Behind the plate I wait for the "thud" as I watch each pitch. Once I've heard that sound and a call must be made I decide on the proper call. I then hesitate for just a second as I say the call in my mind. Then and only then do I voice the call aloud and make a signal if called for.

On the bases the principle is much the same. As a play develops, force or tag, I get the proper position and watch the play carefully. When I hear the "thud" I decide the "out-safe" call, say it to myself, then voice it and make the proper hand signal. This allows me to be sure and allows me to let all playing action complete before making a call. There is nothing more horrible than to call a runner out quickly, then see the ball rolling along the infield!

And while this brief hesitation may be taken by some to be uncertainty it's not that at all. It is merely an umpire doing the best job he can and being absolutely certain of each and every call. Once the managers and players in my area began to realize my "style" they accepted it and I get no heat about it.

I urge all umpires, especially our veterans, to give it a try, or if not truly use my "Thud Principle" at least try to slow down those calls and be sure of what you saw. I am living proof that doing so can only make you a better umpire and probably save you a lot of heat from the dugouts. I am now an avid subscriber to the old Bill Klem saying, "Fellas, it ain't nothin' till I call it!"

President Message John Berry

Hi, everyone,

Welcome back to a great new baseball season! Baseball is well started in all sorts of ways, and umpiring is no exception.

Our clinics are still happening, with kudos to everyone involved. Our clinicians who instruct, the Area reps and others who organize, and the umpires who attend all do their part to get us ready for the season, and a special recognition to the many associations and leagues who continue to make officiating a priority by supporting clinics even in interesting financial times.

We've held advanced clinics in Abbotsford and

the Okanagan, and this year we have a new approach to a level 4/5 clinic -- part of our efforts to find better ways to improve umpiring in BC.

We also appreciate everyone's efforts to ensure that everyone who wants to umpire attends a clinic and joins BCBUA, becoming a recognized, carded umpire.

And being a carded umpire brings lots of benefits -- first and foremost the educational benefits, but also the chance to be recognized, to have opportunities that will stretch you -- tournaments, provincials, eventually even nationals. And of course, members are covered by insurance and become part of a unique group

of folks whose dedication is so necessary for good competition.

I hope you will look at the website for the dates and places where provincials are scheduled, and apply to do the one that best fits you. Provincials are a very important, prestigious opportunity for baseball players, and this also holds for officials. Doing provincials well is a hallmark of an umpire who's really on his game, and who wants to improve by doing some good, challenging ball. And this year we also have Westerns and the BC Summer Games!

All the best for a wonderful year of baseball!

Extra Innings – with BCBUA Area Rep Rhonda Pauls



What is your favour- heart. ite movie of all time?

Ben Hur or Gladia-

Bottom of the 4th.... You are notorious for being a busy person. What hobbies do you have when you have time?

Hmm..hobbies, not really. I love to play

rugby and coach basketball and run...anything sporty with youth will do!

Top of the 5th... What is your favourite ball park food?

Some ball fields are starting to sell Caesar salad...works for me!

Bottom of the 6th... What is your favourite car of all time?

1969 Ford Falcon Sports Coupe with a V8 302

It's the 7th inning stretch.... Will you be reaching for a beer, wine, coffee, soda, or something else?

I will be reaching for WATER!!!

Bottom of the 8th... What was the best game you ever umpired?

My favourite game to date would have to be the 2008 National Gold Medal Bantam Girls game between Team Quebec and Team BC. am fascinated by pitchers... the When BC won that game I was actually emotional for our BC girls and how hard they had worked for the championship...I have seen better baseball, but never better

Bottom of the 9th.... What is your favourite place to umpire in BC?

Delair Park in Abbotsford - behind home plate is the best view of the mountains you could ask for!

Lets go Extra Innings with Rhonda

Top of the 10th...If you could spend an hour in time with anyone in history, who would it be and why?

Top of the 11th ...Why baseball and not other sports?

I also love rugby and basketball, but baseball has been in my family for generations. I grew up on a ball field watching my dad...he was a Little League MVP who played ball into his late 40's and also coached for many years. I played as a kid and later as an adult in a mixed league; at family gatherings we would all play ball at the neighbourhood park, my brother played...my boys play(ed)...I just can't seem to pull myself away from it!

Bottom of the 12th...What is the most rewarding part of baseball for you?

Without a doubt, it's the kids! I love watching them play, and getting to be a part of it with them...I mechanics, the movement of the ball...it's like an art form to me. I just love it!

Personal:

Age- you are only as old as you feel...I am 19

Residence-Abbotsford, BC

Occupation- Adult/Parent Ed.

Family- Happily married 22 years with 6 children

Years Umpiring- 7

Top of the 1st Are you a Superstitious person? Anything strange the readers should know about you?

Superstitious - NO...Strange - YES! I believe in God and I believe in Karma a little bit – do good and it will come back to you...do ill and it will come back to you...

Top of the 2nd.... Who is your favourite actor/actress?

Russell Crowe for Actor and a tie for actress between Goldie Hawn and Sandra Bullock

Bottom of the 3rd.... Seen any good movies lately?

YES – The Blind Side and Invictus