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A YEAR IN REVIEW

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MEN'S NATIONAL TEAM CLAIMS BRONZE AT PAN AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP.

USA SOFTBALL WOMEN'S SLOW PITCH NATIONAL TEAM ESTABLISHED

NINE LEGENDS ENSHRINED IN NATIONAL SOFTBALL HALL OF FAME.

INAUGURAL USA SOFTBALL ALL-AMERICAN GAMES CHAMPION CROWNED!

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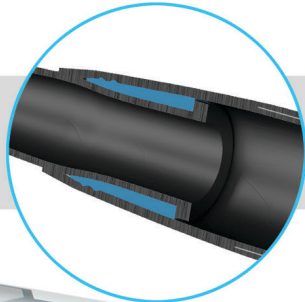
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NEW

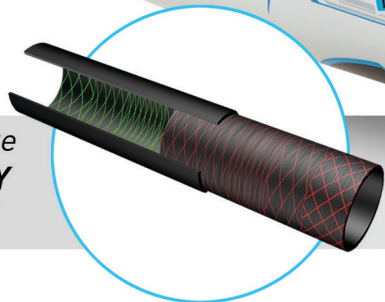
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BALLS AND STRIKES

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December 2017

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Greetings Softball Enthusiasts!

I am very proud to be addressing you as the new President of USA Softball. I have been involved with the ASA since the 1970's and even though it was a difficult decision to move forward solely as USA Softball, I believe it ties more closely with our identity as the National Governing Body of Softball in the United States. That does not mean, however, that we will not continue to remember and honor those who made the Amateur Softball Association of America great and continue that legacy moving forward. 2018 will be our 85th year of providing opportunities to all who wish to participate in our wonderful sport, but none of it would exist if it were not for all of you; the players, coaches, sponsors, umpires and administrators that make up our membership.

I would like to thank our two Immediate Past Presidents, Mr. Warren Jones and Mr. Phil Gutierrez, for working closely with me and helping me to prepare for my term as President. I would also like to congratulate Mr. Rodney Cobb, USA Softball of Texas Commissioner, on his election to the position of President-Elect.

What is unique to USA Softball is our commitment to all facets of the game. We are not a one trick pony. Our participants range in age from four and five year-old T-ballers to in some cases centenarians still playing the game they love. Beginning at our grassroots, our local associations continue to offer various classifications of play in recreation leagues as well as competitive tournaments, across all disciplines of the sport to

include Fast Pitch, Slow Pitch and Modified. If you want to play softball, there's a place for you with USA Softball.

Our Umpire Program continues to set the standard by which all other programs are measured. Working with our Allied Members at the high school and college levels, we continue to look for innovative ways to train our umpires to be the best in the country, regardless of whether they are working a high level National Championship or the Wednesday night league at the local Park and Rec. To the players, the game they are playing in is the most important game there is, and we want you to have the best officiating no matter what level of ball you play.

USA Softball is also the leader when it comes to training coaches in our Junior Olympic (Youth) program. The continuing education of coaches and other volunteers involved in the program through the ACE Program, the USA Softball National Coaching Schools, plus concussion training and the new SafeSport program being mandated by the Federal Government is paramount to building healthy, productive and confident youth in a safe environment.

Our Adult Program, once the backbone of our association, has seen a continuing decline in numbers over the last decade and a half. As the baby boomer generation gradually becomes older, we are not seeing the influx of Gen-Xers and Millennials taking their place. We need to understand why that is happening and what we need to do to make our sport more attractive to those younger generations.

One of our responsibilities as the National Governing Body is to select and support our National Teams. While we are thrilled that Women's Fastpitch is back in Olympics for 2020, we cannot overlook our other National Teams whose players and coaches work just as hard to achieve their ultimate goal and dedicate time away from their jobs and families to represent

the United States of America. Our Men's Team placed sixth at the World Championship in Whitehorse, Canada and two months later they reached the medal stand at the Pan Am Qualifier in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Our Junior Women's team took the Gold at the Junior Women's World Championships in Clearwater, Florida, which bodes well for our future Women's teams. Our Junior Men will be competing in their World Championship next July, and I know the coaching staff has been hard at work scouring the country for talent. Our Women's team will also be back at it, defending their title at the Women's World Championships next August, with an opportunity to qualify for the Olympic Games in the offing. Finally, our Men's Slow Pitch National Team participated in the Annual Border Battle versus Canada, and for the first time, a Women's Slow Pitch National Team competed against Canada as well. How awesome is that? But all of this does not come without cost. Supporting all of those teams at a level they deserve is an expensive proposition. To that end you can help by making a donation to the USA Softball Legacy Club, which helps provide much needed funding. Go to USASoftballLegacyClub.com for information on how you can help support our National Teams.

USA Softball would also like to extend our thanks to the voters of Oklahoma City, who approved a Bond Measure last September that will provide \$27.5 million for additional improvements to our Hall of Fame Stadium and complex, "The Mecca of Softball®". OKC has been an outstanding partner and the decision that was made to bring our Headquarters there 52 years ago has proven to be a wise one.

Lastly, a big shout out to our Council, Board and National Office for what you do to make USA Softball great. See you at the ball park.

Joe M. Lucia

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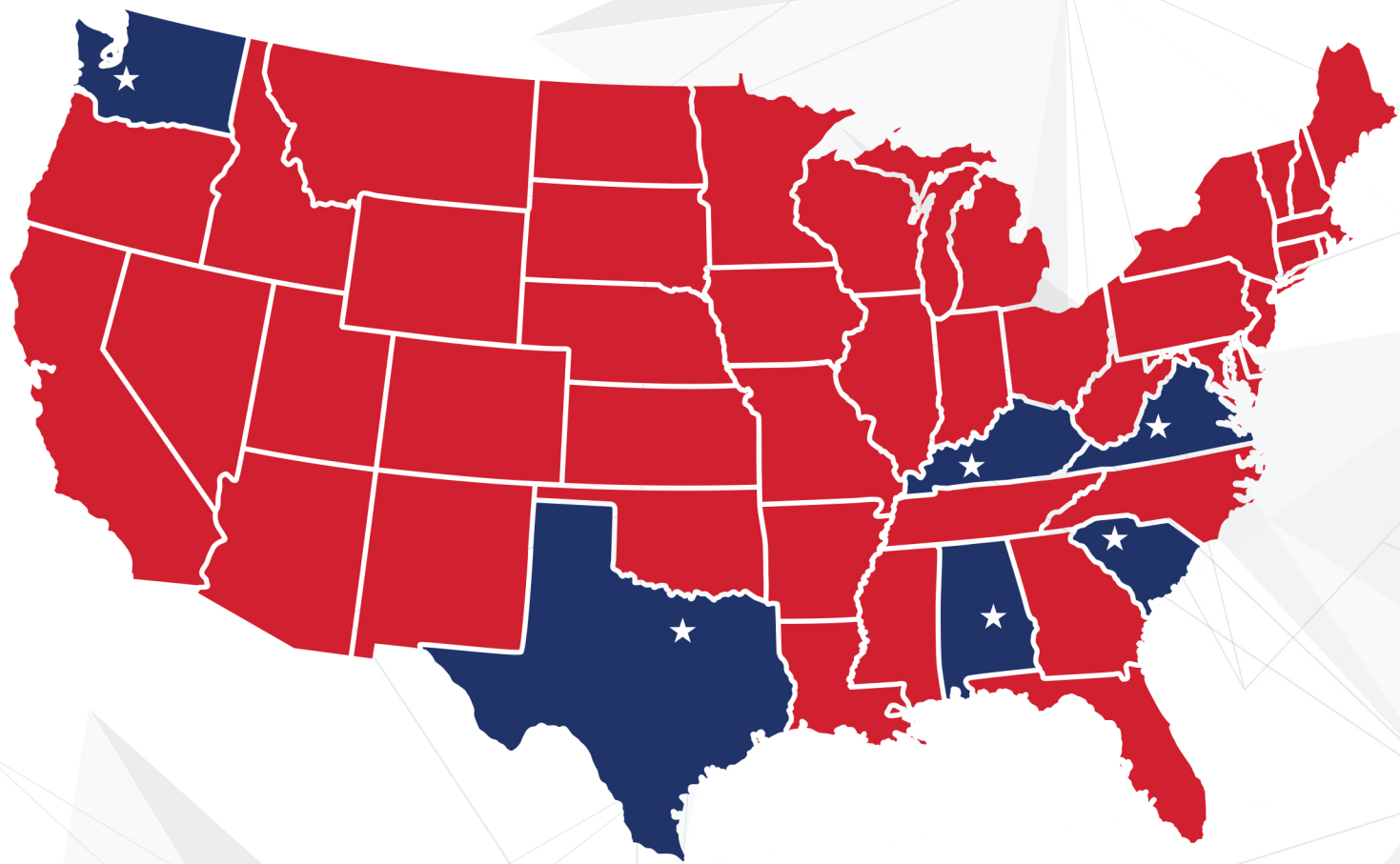
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NINE MEMBERS ENSHRINED INTO THE NATIONAL SOFTBALL HALL OF FAME



Nine softball legends were inducted into the National Softball Hall of Fame and Museum!
Read more about the 2017 inductees on page 59.

// MAP OUT YOUR ROAD TO A 2018 USA SOFTBALL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP //



Have you mapped out your road to a 2018 #USASoftball National Championship?
See where your team could be heading next year on page 36.



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FACES ON THE FIELD

Every year, USA Softball has 924,000 Junior Olympic (JO) athletes playing on more than 77,000 teams while over 1 million adults play on 88,000 teams across the United States. Meet Hailey, Hannah, Mariah and Sydney... athletes who are proud to play #USASoftball!



HANNAH, 17

*Painesville, Ohio
Mid American Fastpitch
Girls' 16-Under Fast Pitch Class A
Centerfield*

HER START

I started playing coach pitch softball at the age of five. I pretty much started because my dad played baseball in college at Miami University (OH) and still loves the game today. He's been my coach ever since I started playing. My dad and I share a bond through softball and is one of the reasons I still play today.

FAVORITE THING ABOUT PLAYING SOFTBALL

I love the friendships I've made with all my teammates, but the thing I may miss most when my playing days are over are the car rides home after a game. My dad and I talk about all the things that happened. We analyze the plays and talk about what went right and what we could have done better. I'm going to miss that some day.

BEST EXPERIENCE IN SOFTBALL

Without a doubt it was my walk-off, three run home run this past summer. My dad was coaching third base and we were

tied in extra innings. My dad looked down at me from third base and said, "Hannah, just be YOU!" I drove the first pitch over the left field wall to win the game. As I rounded second base and approached third base I saw the BIG smile on my dad's face. I jumped into his arms to celebrate. Great moment!

TOUGHEST OBSTACLE

I'm not the tallest player on my team and I'm not the fastest. In fact, I might be the shortest player on every team I've ever played for and definitely in the bottom three as far as speed. That can make it difficult for a centerfielder. However, what I lack in size and speed, I try to make up for with preparation and drive. My dad and I are always talking about the game of softball or baseball. He'll give me little quizzes about what he thinks the manager should do in certain situations. I think I've learned a lot about the game through these moments.

ROLE MODEL

My favorite players are Francisco Lindor (because of his love for the game) and Cory Kluber (because of his approach to the game). However, I think my role model is my dad. His genuine love for the game itself has taught me many lessons. He is always preaching to our team about having "respect" for the game. He also talks about controlling what we can control (how hard we compete) and that good things will happen if we do. I know this applies to softball, but I also know it applies to life.

FACES ON THE FIELD



HAILEY, 12
Rochester, N.H.
Lady Mavericks
Girls' 12-Under Class A Fast Pitch
Pitcher

HER START

I started playing at six years old after watching my older sister play.

GOALS IN SOFTBALL

To be a top pitcher and play in college.

BEST EXPERIENCE IN SOFTBALL

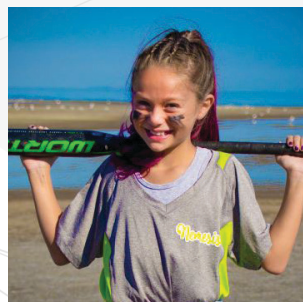
I am a lefty pitcher and in my first year of 12-Under playing USA Softball I struck out 129 batters.

TOUGHEST OBSTACLE

Being mentally focused on the pitcher's mound.

ROLE MODEL

My sister, my pitching coach and Geana Torres who is an older Lady Maverick's player who helps with our team practices.



MARIAH, 9
Salt Lake City, Utah
Utah Nemesis
Girls' 12-Under Class A Fast Pitch
Third Base

HER START

I started playing rec ball when I was five years old.

FAVORITE THING ABOUT PLAYING SOFTBALL

I love playing! I love getting the ball and throwing it hard to my sister on first base.

BEST EXPERIENCE IN SOFTBALL

I really liked the Halloween tournament. We dressed as unicorns! It was so fun!

WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF

My team won three, first place Championships in one week.

TOUGHEST OBSTACLE

I am small, the smallest and youngest on the team...but I always try my hardest. I also have hearing loss, but I am working on more signals from my team and coach.

FACES ON THE FIELD



SYDNEY, 14

*Watertown, S.D.
LAPD, Wild Things and
Watertown Arrows
Girls' 14-Under Fast Pitch and
Slow Pitch
Slow Pitch - Pitcher and Third
Base, Fast Pitch - Third Base*

HER START

I fell in love with the sport when I was just six years old playing for the park and rec.

FAVORITE THING OF PLAYING SOFTBALL

Spending time with my teammates and overall love of the game.

BEST EXPERIENCE IN SOFTBALL

This last summer was my first time ever playing fast pitch. Though I was nervous to start, I picked up on it fast and fell in love with it the way I did slow pitch.

WHAT ACCOMPLISHMENT ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF

I am most proud of our 2016 season of slow pitch when our team won the 14-Under State tournament for South Dakota. We had a great season!

TOUGHEST OBSTACLE

I have struggled with my batting in fast pitch. It's been a huge change from slow pitch, but I'm improving. I also am a very shy person so for me to become more aggressive at the plate and in the field is something I am trying to improve.



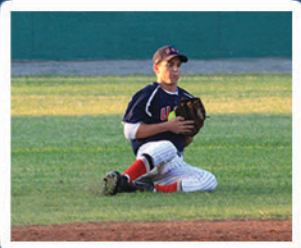
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TM

USA SOFTBALL PRIDE STARTS WITH YOU BLUE!

Every year, USA Softball registers over 25,000 umpires across the U.S. From the local level to the international stage, USA Softball Umpires are the best trained and proficient in the world! From our Umpire Awards Programs to the various local and national clinics through the country, it pays to be a USA Softball Umpire! Here, we feature Heidi Dum and the Santa Monica Girls Fastpitch Junior Umpire Program.



HEIDI

Silverton, Ore.

USA Softball of Oregon Umpire
Umpires: Girls' Fast Pitch, Men's
Fast Pitch, Special Olympics
Started Umpiring: 2009

FAVORITE THING ABOUT UMPIRING USA SOFTBALL

The excitement in the 10-Under and 12-Under players at the beginning of the season when they start hitting the ball and making plays consistently. Then, getting to watch as they mature as individuals and teams.

GOALS IN UMPIRING

To improve my personal skills in order to obtain National assignments that will move me towards becoming an Elite Umpire.

BEST EXPERIENCE IN UMPIRING SO FAR

Umpiring the Special Olympics North American Softball Championships in Salem, Va. in 2016.

PROUDEST ACCOMPLISHMENT

Being able to adjust my plate stance so that at a 10-Under/12-Under National Championship with a team with three lead off batters 36" tall, I was able to get down to their strike zone with my 36" legs. USA Softball Umpire Awards: I'm a Gold Medal Umpire and WBSC Certified.

USA SOFTBALL UMPIRE AWARDS:

I'm a Gold Medal Umpire and WBSC Certified.

TOUGHEST OBSTACLE TO OVERCOME

Having experienced an electrical shock injury that resulted in multiple permanent injuries that affects all aspects of my life including nerve, muscle and tendon damage in both wrists and hands which results in not being able to hold onto things. Early on I found holding onto an indicator difficult, and that it spent as much time on the ground as in my hand. Thus, out of necessity, I learned to function on the field without an indicator.

USA SOFTBALL PRIDE STARTS WITH YOU BLUE!



TIM KOHUT

*Umpire-in-Chief (UIC) of Santa Monica Girls' Fastpitch Junior Umpire Program
"Samo Umpires"*

Santa Monica, Calif.

USA Softball of Southern California

Umpires: Girls' Fast Pitch

Started Umpiring: 2007

FAVORITE THING ABOUT UMPIRING USA SOFTBALL

As UIC, my favorite thing about our program is watching our umpires grow in maturity and confidence on the field, and watching them umpire Championship Play (District, State, and National Tournaments). A close second is to receive compliments from parents and coaches about how much they enjoy seeing our junior umpires on the field officiating their games.

GOALS IN UMPIRING

My goal as UIC is to continue to grow and sustain the Junior Umpire program in Santa Monica, and to encourage other leagues to start similar programs.

BEST EXPERIENCE IN UMPIRING SO FAR

As Assistant UIC for the Southern California - LA Southbay District, I get to UIC Championship Play. My best experience has been watching representatives of the same umpire program working at the highest level in Championship Play. It is also gratifying to see graduates of our umpiring program continuing on, even after they graduate from high school and head off to college. Some day, I hope to watch one (or more) of our umpires working the USA Softball 18-Under Gold, the World Cup of Softball, the Olympics, or the NCAA Women's College World Series.

TOUGHEST OBSTACLE TO OVERCOME

Encouraging our umpires not to quit, even when they have tough games, or when they take heat from coaches or parents.

MORE ON THE SAMO UMPIRES

In our sport, it's important for players, parents, and coaches to see confident, athletic, and enthusiastic umpiring. No where is this better exemplified than in junior umpiring programs. The Santa Monica Girls Fastpitch Junior Umpire Program hopes to spread the good news to other leagues throughout the country. To this end, in 2014 So Cal staff encouraged me, as UIC for the program, to define "why does the Santa Monica Girls Fastpitch junior umpire program succeed where others do not". In reply to this, I wrote the "Junior Umpire Roadmap", which I update yearly, to highlight what is working, and what is challenging for our program. This document is available under the umpire tab on the league's website.



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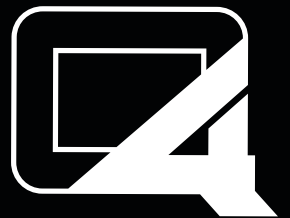
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NEWS & NOTES

**ATTEND THE FINAL NATIONAL
COACHING SCHOOL BEFORE THE
START OF THE 2018 SEASON**



Learn from some of the best in the game as USA Softball will host it's final National Coaching School before the start of the 2018 season! Held in Plano, Texas, the schools feature instruction from current USA Softball Women's National Team (WNT) coaches and athletes and will take place January 19-21!



**CODE, PLAYING RULE
AND PROCEDURAL
MANUAL CHANGES
WITH COMMENTS
NOW AVAILABLE**

Get ready for the 2018 season of USA Softball! The 2018 Code and Playing Rule Changes with comments are now available online! Submitted by USA Softball Council Members each year, USA Softball Code and Playing Rule changes are determined annually at the USA Softball Annual Meeting.

NOTE: All changes are EFFECTIVE January 1, 2018, unless otherwise noted.

MEN'S NATIONAL TEAM CONTINUES TO STRENGTHEN AFTER PAN AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP



The USA Softball Men's National Team claimed the program's first international medal since 2003 after earning the Bronze at the 2017 Pan American Championship. The team would go 6-4 en route to a third-place finish while picking up a key win against current world-ranked No. 4 Canada.

#THEBESTPLAYINOKC



They say that best play in Oklahoma City, and with an action-packed 2018 calendar teams have the opportunity to add their name to the legacy. Over 10 events will be held at the Softball Capital of the World® from March-July 1...what are you waiting for?! Sign up for a 2018 event today at TournamentUSASoftball.com!

USA SOFTBALL BECOMES NFCA OFFICIAL CONVENTION SPONSOR



In an effort to further grassroots initiatives, USA Softball has partnered with the NFCA as an Official Convention Sponsor. In addition to education material for the ACE (Aspire, Challenge, Educate) Coach Education Program, this partnership also provides ACE coaches with an opportunity to purchase a discounted membership to join the NFCA.

2018 NATIONAL TEAM COACHES NAMED



USA Softball recently announced the selection of Brett Helmer, Don Cooper and Ken Eriksen as the Head Coaches for the Men's Slow Pitch, Women's Slow Pitch and Women's National Teams, respectively. These three coaches join Tyron McKinney, who was previously named the Head Coach for the 2018 Junior Men's National Team.

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SOCIAL MEDIA:

LET'S HEAR FROM YOU!


If there's one thing we love at USA Softball, it's interacting with softball fans from around the world! Are you following along on social media? Share your photos and be sure to tag @USASoftball with the hashtag #USASoftball for a chance to be featured in an upcoming issue of Balls & Strikes Magazine!

 "She changed my life after coaching me at a one week pitching camp in 1984. I didn't know what I was capable of until she told me!! What an incredible influence she had on me. I am forever grateful for that experience with her!" - in response to USA Softball Hall of Fame legend, Donna Lopiano


@MACYHAMILTON04

 "I highly recommend going. I learned so much and can't wait to bring it back to our league and share it with our coaches and girls." - in response to the National Coaching School she attended


SABRINA HUGHES

 "Shoutout to Aubree Munro for hanging with the team. #usasoftball #gatorsSB #stanggang05" - in response to receiving a surprise visit from National Team member Aubree Munro at their USA Softball tournament

@PHILONTHEFLY26


 "That would be awesome to watch. Much respect." - in response to the Wounded Warrior Amputee Softball Team Tour of Virginia announcement"

TIM HANSEN


 "I remember him at some of my daughter's tournaments. You do a great job Kaipo!" - in response to the USA Softball umpire Kaipo Adamos featured video

STEPHANIE POWELL




 "Congrats guys!!! First Men's medal in many years. Well done!!!" - in response to the Men's National Team claiming Bronze at the Pan American Championship


@MICKEYMETS

 "Awwwww so happy!!!" - in response to the Junior Men's National Team Selection Camp announcement


LYNN AVERY

 "Great day to be an Outlaw. First day of winter workouts. Thanks to @mzkerleee for the workout and words of advice. The girls really loved it. #outlawlife #USASoftball" - in response to National Team member Morgan Zerkle spending time with the team

@OUTLAWS04WV

 "Huge honor. They definitely got the right guy. Tons of class. Good luck Brett!" - in response to newly announced Men's Slow Pitch National Team Head Coach Brett Helmer

DONALD J. MILLER

 "Congrats @GotBustos on being named to the 2018 #usasoftball Hall of Fame class. You deserve it." - in response to the 2018 HOF Class being announced

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2017: YEAR IN REVIEW

From new events to National Championships and Hall of Fame inductions, 2017 was a busy year for USA Softball. Here's a look at some of the headlines and highlights from throughout the year.

JAN 3

USA Softball announced a list of 24 athletes named to the Junior Women's National Training Team. The final 17-player roster would be determined at a later date.



JAN 4

USA Softball announced the creation of the USA Softball All-American Games, a prestigious tournament for elite athletes in the Junior Olympic (JO) 12-Under fast pitch division.

JAN 6

Twenty athletes were named to the 2017 USA Softball Women's National Team that would compete at the World Cup and Pan American Championship later in the year.

JAN 14

The inaugural Winter Classic Men's Slow Pitch National Invitational Tournament was held in Myrtle Beach with two divisional champions crowned.



JAN 25

Two-time Olympian Jennie Finch was named the Youth Softball Ambassador for Major League Baseball as part of MLB, USA Baseball and USA Softball's joint initiative to grow softball at the amateur level.

FEB 2

Over 400 umpires descended upon Oklahoma City for the 25th Biennial Umpire-In-Chief (UIC) Clinic. This biennial clinic features breakout sessions and panel discussions relating to the USA Softball umpire program.

FEB 7

Tyron McKinney was announced as the Head Coach for the 2018 Junior Men's National Team, which will compete at the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Junior Men's World Championship.



FEB 28

USA Softball made an important announcement regarding USA Softball certified equipment Certification Marks. There would be no changes to the Certification Marks for all bats and balls used for Championship Play.

MAR 3

The USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex hosted the Historically Black College and Universities (HBCU) Classic, which welcomed athletes from Division I through NAIA historically black colleges.



MAR 11

The United States Olympic Committee (USOC) honored the Pac-12 Conference institutions for their commitment to Olympic sports and three-time Olympic Gold Medalist Leah O'Brien-Amico was among those honored.

MAR 16

Seven umpires from the United States were selected to represent the USA Softball umpire program at a WBSC World Championship.



MAR 22

USA Softball announced the creation of the Women's Slow Pitch National Team which would compete in the inaugural Women's Border Battle against Canada.

APR 20

Thirty athletes were selected to the 2017 rosters for the Men's Slow Pitch and Futures Slow Pitch National Teams. The two rosters would compete at the Border Battle IX in Oklahoma City.

APR 25

Five Women's National Team athletes were drafted in the National Pro Fastpitch draft. Ali Aguilar, Hannah Flippen, Delanie Gourley and Morgan Zerkle were drafted to the Scrap Yard Dawgs while Danielle O'Toole was drafted by the Chicago Bandits. Gourley would later be traded to the Texas Charge.

MAY 1

The complete coaching staff for the Junior Men's National Team was announced with Tony Aresco, Mike Armitage and Bob Piddock named as Assistant Coaches.

MAY 25

The ACE Coach Education Program hit the 5,000 mark for the 2017 season with Megan Lindquist awarded a prize pack for being the 5,000th coach.

MAY 30

USA Softball unveiled the redesigned USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year trophy, which was molded in the likeness of three-time Olympic Gold Medalist Lisa Fernandez. Kelly Barnhill, a Florida sophomore, would go on to win the 2017 Collegiate Player of the Year award.



2017: YEAR IN REVIEW

JUNE 12

The USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex hosted the second annual Softball Breakthrough Series, which hosted 60 high school softball players from across the nation in a special development camp. Olympic Gold Medalists Jennie Finch and Sheila Douty would serve as instructors along with Hall of Famer Sue Enquist.

JUNE 28

USA Softball and ESPN inked a multi-year agreement to televise the World Cup of Softball through 2020. Four USA Softball contests and the Championship Game will be televised and also available for live streaming through the ESPN app.

JUNE 29

In an effort to grow female participation in softball across the globe, USA Softball sent Scrap Yard Dawgs General Manager Connie May to conduct softball clinics in Malta as part of the WBSC Development Commission's "Softball in Schools" initiative.

JULY 1

Both the Men's and Women's Slow Pitch National Teams would fall to Canada in their respective Border Battle contests. The USA Futures Slow Pitch National Team would post a 32-15 win over Canada earlier in the day.

JULY 4

The final roster for the Men's National Team for the WBSC World Championship was released. Nine veterans and eight rookies would be named to the team, which would finish the World Championship in sixth-place.

JULY 22

The Florida Impact -Feldman and Virginia Unity would claim the 16-Under and 18-Under GOLD National Championship titles, respectively.



JULY 30

The Junior Women's National Team claimed back-to-back World Championship titles after a record-breaking performance.

AUG 1

The Louisville Lady Sluggers took home the 18-Under USA Softball JO Cup title while the Michigan Finesse claimed the 16-Under title in walk-off fashion.

AUG 6

The New York Gremlins won their second-consecutive Men's Major Fast Pitch National Championship, which was held in South Bend, Ind.

AUG 8

Citing health concerns, Denny Bruckert stepped down as Head Coach of the Men's National Team while Gregg Leather was named as his replacement for the Pan American Championship.



AUG 13

The Women's National Team battled through adversity to claim the Pan American Championship. The team was nearly eliminated from the event after dropping their opening game of the Playoff rounds. The win qualified the team for the 2018 World Championship and 2019 Pan American Games.

AUG 21

Region 5 Red would take home the inaugural USA Softball All-American Games title after defeating Region 5 Blue 5-0 in the Championship Game.

AUG 31

LGS Glass out of California took the title in the Men's B National Championship with a 35-19 win over All American/BB5/Monsta in the "if-necessary" game.

SEPT 1

Haylie McCleney was announced as a Best of August finalist for Team USA Awards, presented by Dow.

SEPT 3

T's 13/Omaha/Monsta captured the Men's Class C Slow Pitch National Championship, picking up three-consecutive wins on Championship Sunday en route to the title.

SEPT 7

ShirtsAndLogos.com was designated as an Official USA Softball licensee, which also provided fans the opportunity to purchase replica and custom USA Softball jerseys.



2017: YEAR IN REVIEW

SEPT 29

WC Monsta won the Super Slow Pitch National Championship in a 43-38 win over H. Auto/Resmondo/OA Apparel/Specialty Tank.

OCT 1

Precision was crowned the Men's Class A Slow Pitch National Champion while SFI/Spurgeon Trucking won the Men's Class D Championship Series and Derby Girls won the Women's Open Slow Pitch National Championship.

OCT 11

The list of athletes who accepted invitations to the 2018 Women's National Team Selection Camp was announced.

OCT 19

USA Softball announced seven locations that would host a 2017-18 National Umpire School. The list includes Advanced National Umpire Schools for both fast pitch and slow pitch.

OCT 21

Nine softball legends were enshrined into the National Softball Hall of Fame at the 37th Annual Hall of Fame Induction ceremony. The 2017 class consisted of Mike Candrea (Tucson, Ariz.) - Meritorious Service, Jimmy Derrick (Douglasville, Ga.) - Umpire, Gary Evans (Mason, Mich.) - Umpire, Dick Gulmon (Valley City, N.D.) - Meritorious Service, Mark Martin (Fayetteville, Ark.) - Slow Pitch Player, Rick Minton (Cerro Gordo, Ill.) - Fast Pitch Player, Bob Quinn (Branchville, N.J.) - Fast Pitch Player, Willie Simpson (Oak Lawn, Ill.) - Slow Pitch Player and Evans Telegadas (Scottsdale, Ariz.) - Fast Pitch Player.

OCT 26

John Gouveia officially began his term as President of USA Softball while Rodney Cobb was appointed the President-Elect.

NOV 7

Plano, Texas was announced as the next host for the GOLD National Championships for 2018.

John Gouveia



NOV 8

USA Softball added a 14-Under division to the 2018 USA Softball JO Cup, which would be held in St. Louis, Mo.

NOV 16

Thirty-six athletes accepted an invitation to participate at the 2018 Junior Men's National Team Selection Camp.

NOV 17

Eight-time Men's Slow Pitch National Team alum Brett Helmer was announced as the next Head Coach for the Men's Slow Pitch National Team. Helmer will take over for Steve Shortland, who retired after nine years leading the program.

NOV 19

The Salinas, Calif. National Coaching School concluded with over 100 coaches attending the three-day workshop. Featured instructors were Women's National Team Head Coach Ken Eriksen, two-time Olympic Head Coach Mike Candrea and Women's National Team Assistant Coach Heather Tarr.

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PRESIDENT JOHN GOUVEIA

TEN THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ME



GET TO KNOW THE NEW PRESIDENT OF USA SOFTBALL JOHN GOUVEIA!

Currently serving as the Commissioner for Northern California,

President Gouveia has been involved with USA Softball for a number of years at a variety of roles. His first role came when he was appointed the Commissioner for Oakland (which would merge with Northern California in 2016), and he has been on the USA Softball Board of Directors, has held various Committee Chairs with the National Council and has served as a National Representative at National Championships 14 times.

President Gouveia is also actively involved with the National Team Program and his associations have hosted Women's National Team Tour Stops three time and a Junior Men's National Team Tour stop.

With a resume that boasts years of experience in growing the game both locally and nationally, read on to learn 10 things you might now know about the President of USA Softball.

1

My first paid job was working the 1975 Men's Major Fast Pitch National Championship in Hayward, CA. when I was 14.

2

I have a collection of over 1,000 rock albums on vinyl, and yes my parents kept telling me to turn it down.



3

I love Disney and have been to Disney World over 20 times and Disneyland more times than I can remember.

4

I have been a San Jose Sharks season ticket holder since their inaugural season of 1991-92.



5

I own every baseball card set made between 1968 and 1990.

6

I met my wife Hope on the internet before online dating became a "thing".

7

I live in the same town I was born in.



8

I went to school with current Oakland Raiders head coach Jack Del Rio



9

I have attended the World Series, the Super Bowl and the Stanley Cup Finals.

10

I have been to three Olympic Games and am now looking forward to a fourth!





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EVOSHIELD

A GUIDE TO HOLIDAY TRAINING FOR SOFTBALL PLAYERS

BY HAYLIE MCCLENEY



The holidays are a time when lots of softball players decide to take time off of the game and focus on being with family. This is a GREAT thing, however, a lot of the times the time off from softball is associated with time off of workouts...and that should not be the case! December and January are where we need to fine-tune those motor skills to help us perform at the highest level once our season rolls around in February or March. Here, I provide some tips and even some sample programs to help you through your winter training and get you ready for the spring!

Something is better than nothing

When in doubt, always try to move your body in some way! Whether that is running, lifting weights, or even some recovery yoga, try to move every single day. Maybe you lift weights three days a week, run twice a week and then take it light the other two days with a walk or a pick up game of family football. Regardless, every day your body should be moving. Don't be a couch potato!

Utilize proper nutrition on non-Holidays

I know, everyone's favorite. I recently provided some nutrition tips for Thanksgiving, and these tips carry over really to any large family gathering where there is sure to be lots of food, so check that out [HERE](#).

Based on your activity level, you will want to modify your carbs/fat/protein intake over the Holidays. If you are more focused on resistance training, make sure you are getting adequate amounts of protein. If you are more cardio focused, add a few more carbs in. Try to stay away from sweets and sodas and ALWAYS make sure to drink plenty of water. Proper hydration affects energy levels, cognitive function, and many other things in your body.

Expand your definition of health

There are many aspects of overall health, including our mental well being. This may seem unrelated, but it needs to be said. The Holidays are the time of year in which depression rates are the highest. Remember to take time to self-reflect and be grateful for the incredible things in your life this Holiday season. One of my favorite things I have ever done is start a gratitude journal. You could do this similarly to how people do Christmas countdowns. Every day leading up to Christmas, or even to the New Year if you are feeling up to it, write down three things you are thankful for. You will be amazed at the positive effects this has on your outlook!

Sample Programs:

I strongly suggest going to a gym over the break and talk prices with the managers to find the best fit for you. You can get A LOT accomplished at home, but there is nothing like being in a gym around other people. Grab some friends and try out some classes, or check out some membership options in your area. As for running, this can be done at any field with no equipment, as long as you have your yardage marked off. If you were to repeat these workouts, try to progress week to week either by increasing weight, increasing reps, or decreasing rest time.

It should be noted that your rotator cuffs should not be ignored over the Holidays. The winter is a prime opportunity to build strength in those arms to prepare it for the high volume throwing in the spring. Grab some bands if you can and get some prehab in as well. For baseball and softball throwers, I highly recommend checking out the pages of Austin Wasserman with High Level Throwing and Eric Cressey of Cressey Sports Performance.

Haylie McCleney has been a member of the Women's National Team and is a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist. If you'd like to contact Haylie for consultations, email mccleneystrength@gmail.com

STRENGTH/POWER:

FULL BODY DYNAMIC WARM UP

Jump rope x 1 min

- A1. Deadbug 3x6e
- A2. Weighted Squat Jumps 3x5

- B1. Goblet Squat 3x5
- B2. DB RDL 3x5
- B3. Front Plank 3x :45s

- C1. Push ups 3x5
- C2. DB Single Arm DB Row 3x6
- C3. Y Raise off Bench 3x10

- D1. Side plank 3x :20s each
- D2. Weighted Russian Twist 3x20e
- D3. Alternating V-Ups 3x8e

SPEED:

FULL BODY DYNAMIC WARM UP

Jump Rope x 1 min

- High Knee March 2 x 15yds
- High Skips 2 x 15yds
- A skips: 2 x 15yds
- Lateral Skips 2 x 15yds

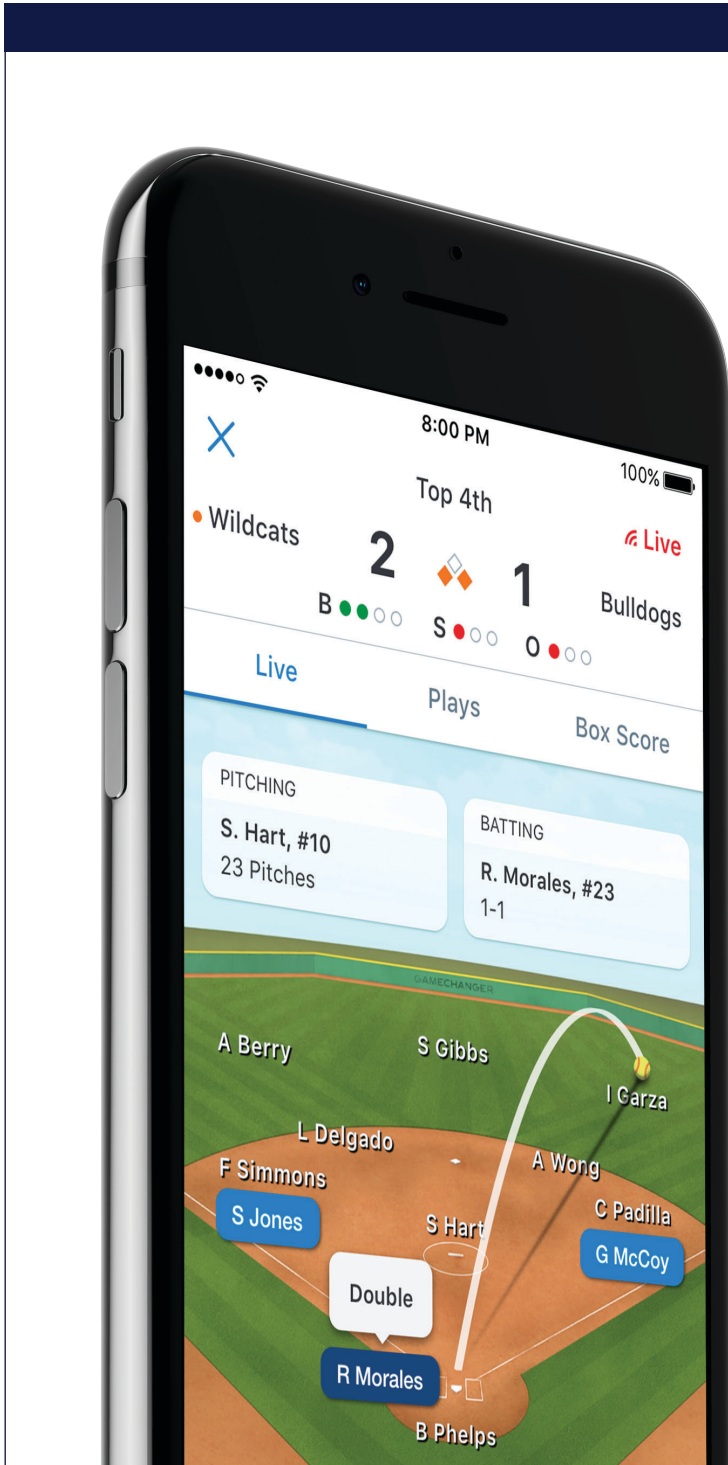
- 5-10-5s x 5 (:60s rest in between)
- 15 yd sprint x10 (:60s rest in between)

ENDURANCE DAY:

FULL BODY DYNAMIC WARM UP

- High Knee March 2 x 15yds
- High Skips 2 x 15yds
- A skips: 2 x 15yds
- Lateral Skips 2 x 15yds

- Broad Jumps 3x5 (Max Effort)
- ½ Gassers x 10 (:60s rest in between)



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TEAM MESSAGING

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2017-18 USA SOFTBALL NATIONAL UMPIRE SCHOOLS

DATES	LOCATION	REGION	COORDINATOR	PHONE
January 19-21, 2018	Jacksonville, Fla.	Region 3	Alan Mitchell	904-733-3831
January 26-28, 2018	Las Vegas, Nev.	Region 10	Tom Mahoney	406-459-4774
February 16-18, 2018	Meridian, Idaho	Region 9	Meco Rodriguez	208-599-3146
February 23-25, 2018	Elmira, N.Y.	Region 1	Lynn Nemeth	607-259-2062
Slow Pitch Camp June 6-10, 2018	Lawrenceville, Ga.	Region 3	Rick Hearn	770-560-3754
Fast Pitch Camp July 5-8, 2018	Irvine, Calif.	Region 10	Don Parker	619-672-4269

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LOCAL ASSOCIATION CHAMPS

TEAM NAME	DIVISION	HOMETOWN	TEAM NAME	DIVISION	HOMETOWN
ALABAMA			ALABAMA		
Birmingham Thunderbolts	Girls' 12-Under Class A Fast Pitch		DC Outlaws	Men's Class C Fast Pitch	Elkhart, IN
Birmingham Vipers - Stander	Girls' 14-Under Class A Fast Pitch		Wabash Pride	Men's Class D Fast Pitch	Wabash, IN
Firecrackers AL - Ingram	Girls' 16-Under Class A Fast Pitch		D&R Miller Concrete/Scott Routing	Men's Class C Slow Pitch	Topeka, IN
All-Out	Girls' 18-Under Class A Fast Pitch		Concrete Impressions	Men's Class D Slow Pitch North	Topeka, IN
CONNECTICUT			Turf Stars	Men's Class D Slow Pitch South	Indianapolis, IN
Davidson Dirt Dogs	Men's D Slow Pitch	Meriden, CT	Cedar Creek	Men's Class E Slow Pitch North	Nappanee, IN
Reraise	Men's E/Rec Slow Pitch	N. Branford, CT	Area Code/Countertops Plus	Men's Class E Slow Pitch South	Wolcottville, IN
Spencer Hill Communications	Men's Wood Bat Slow Pitch	Branford, CT	Smith's Downtown	Coed Class Rec Slow Pitch North	Buchanon, MI
CENTRAL CALIFORNIA			187	Coed Class Rec Slow Pitch South	Jasper, IN
Fresno Force	Girls' 14-Under Class A Fast Pitch		MARYLAND-DC-DELAWARE		
Dirtdogs Lee	Girls' 16-Under Class A Fast Pitch		Wagner's Galbreath	Girls' 14-Under Class A Fast Pitch	
Paso Robles Bearcats	Girls' 10-Under Class B Fast Pitch		Frostburg Mountain Thunder	Girls' 16-Under Class A Fast Pitch	
Goleta Thunder	Girls' 12-Under Class B Fast Pitch		Wagner's - Magersupp	Girls' 18-Under Class A Fast Pitch	
Clovis Bullets	Girls' 14-Under Class B Fast Pitch		MICHIGAN		
Santa Monica Quakes	Girls' 8-Under Class C Fast Pitch		Turnin' 2	Girls' 14-Under Class A Fast Pitch	Detroit, MI
Five Cities Eagles	Girls' 10-Under Class C Fast Pitch		Turnin' 2	Girls' 16-Under Class A Fast Pitch	Detroit, MI
Clovis Bullets	Girls' 12-Under Class C Fast Pitch		Mt. Pleasant Drillers	Girls' 10-Under Class B Fast Pitch	Mt. Pleasant, MI
ILLINOIS			Attack 12U	Girls' 12-Under Class B Fast Pitch	Imlay City, MI
Moline Heartland Havoc	Girls' 10-Under Class A Fast Pitch		Diamonds - Kiszka	Girls' 14-Under Class B Fast Pitch	Grandville, MI
Johnston City Illinois Force	Girls' 12-Under Class A Fast Pitch		Michigan Bulldogs (01)	Girls' 16-Under Class B Fast Pitch	Detroit, MI
Glen Carbon Midland Magic	Girls' 14-Under Class A Fast Pitch		Michigan Snappers	Men's Class B Fast Pitch	Eaton Rapids, MI
Glen Carbon Midland Magic	Girls' 16-Under Class A Fast Pitch		Mickey's Sleds	Men's Class C Fast Pitch	Midland, MI
Normal BNGSA Angels	Girls' 18-Under Class A Fast Pitch		Mayan Agency	Men's Class D Fast Pitch	Midland, MI
Galeburg Knox Co. Crush	Girls' 10-Under Class B Fast Pitch		5 Star/Kanine PC	Men's Class E Fast Pitch	Petoskey, MI
Springfield Stars	Girls' 12-Under Class B Fast Pitch		SacFly	Men's Class D Slow Pitch	Midland, MI
Southern Illinois Falcone	Girls' 14-Under Class B Fast Pitch		Dawgpound	Men's Class E Slow Pitch	Saginaw, MI
Pontiac Sirens	Girls' 18-Under Class B Fast Pitch		Kokaly Sports	Men's Class F Slow Pitch	Bay City, MI
Arthur D&M Construction	Men's Class C Slow Pitch		Powell's Pub	Men's Major 35-Over Class 2	Ann Arbor, MI
Litchfield The Squad	Men's Class D Slow Pitch		The Mattress Store	Men's Seniors 50-Over AAA	Grand Rapids, MI
Jacksonville Resolution	Men's Class E Slow Pitch		Power 88.3	9-Man Class B Modified Pitch	Port Huron, MI
Rock Island Construction Nation	Coed Class C Slow Pitch		Hammer Hurricanes	10-Man Class A Modified Pitch	Port Huron, MI
Jacksonville K&B	Coed Class D Slow Pitch		Four Seasons	10-Man Class B Modified Pitch	Midland, MI
Ramsey Financial	Men's Wooden Bat Fast Pitch		7-Eleven	Coed Class 3 Slow Pitch	Shepherd, MI
Central Illinois Knights	Men's Invitational Fast Pitch		Culligan of Midland	Coed Class 4 Slow Pitch	Midland, MI
INDIANA			MINNESOTA		
Indy Edge '01	Girls' 16-Under Class A Fast Pitch	Indianapolis, IN	All American Restoration/BBS/Monsta	Men's Open State Slow Pitch	
Silverbacks/Bar D	Boys' 16-Under Slow Pitch	Topeka, IN	State Farm	Men's C Slow Pitch	
Cedar Creek	Boys' 18-Under Slow Pitch	Millersburg, IN	Outdoorsmen	Men's D South Slow Pitch	
			Clark Builders & Remodelers/Reckless	Men's D North Slow Pitch	
			The Concrete Doctor/Velocity Sportswear	Men's E Northeast Slow Pitch	



LOCAL ASSOCIATION CHAMPS

TEAM NAME	DIVISION	HOMETOWN	TEAM NAME	DIVISION	HOMETOWN
1st Assembly White	Men's E Northwest Slow Pitch		Waconia	16U Tier 4 Fast Pitch	
Smogehous/Mike Nasby Jr. Lawn	Men's E Southeast Slow Pitch		MN Twisters	18U Tier 1 Fast Pitch	
Arnie's Sewer & Septic	Men's E Southwest Slow Pitch		New Ulm Red	18U Tier 2 Fast Pitch	
Harpo's	Co-Ed Slow Pitch		OMGAA Weineke	Fall 8U Tier 1 Fast Pitch	
Cash Concrete	Women's C Slow Pitch		Farmington Green	Fall 8U Tier 2 Fast Pitch	
Rush City Beavers	Women's D Slow Pitch		Wayzata Britz	Fall 8U Tier 3 Fast Pitch	
Miller Properties	Men's Fall North Slow Pitch		Rosemount Irish Thomas	Fall 10U Tier 1 Fast Pitch	
MN Magic	18U Gold Fast Pitch		Forest Lake Maroon	Fall 10U Tier 2 Fast Pitch	
MN Force Standering	16U Gold Fast Pitch		Waite Park	Fall 10U Tier 3 Fast Pitch	
Midwest Speed Gold	14U Gold Fast Pitch		Wayzata Sorenson	Fall 10U Tier 4 Fast Pitch	
Mankato Peppers	8U Tier 1 Fast Pitch		Champlin Park Reimler	Fall 10U Tier 5 Fast Pitch	
Lakeville Blue	8U Tier 2 Fast Pitch		Irish Bennerotte	Fall 10U Tier 6 Fast Pitch	
Shakopee Black	10U Tier 1 Fast Pitch		St. Anthony Blue	Fall 10U Tier 7 Fast Pitch	
North Polars Jeanson	10U Tier 2 Fast Pitch		ROSA Wallace	Fall 10U Tier 8 Fast Pitch	
Rosemount Irish Thomas	10U Tier 3 Fast Pitch		Monticello	Fall 10U Tier 9 Fast Pitch	
New Prague Black	10U Tier 4 Fast Pitch		Stillwater Red	Fall 10U Tier 10 Fast Pitch	
Baldwin-Woodville Blackhawks	10U Tier 5 Fast Pitch		Silver Bullets Orcutt	Fall 10U Tier 11 Fast Pitch	
Andover Polzin	10U Tier 6 Fast Pitch		Rosemount Henderson	Fall 12U Tier 1 Fast Pitch	
St. Louis Park Jansen	10U Tier 7 Fast Pitch		Rosemount Stapf	Fall 12U Tier 2 Fast Pitch	
ROSA Messer	10U Tier 8 Fast Pitch		Becker Patnode	Fall 12U Tier 3 Fast Pitch	
Farmington Blue	10U Tier 9 Fast Pitch		OMGAA Storm Pautzke	Fall 12U Tier 4 Fast Pitch	
Randolph Rockets	10U Tier 10 Fast Pitch		Andover Polzin	Fall 12U Tier 5 Fast Pitch	
Mankato Peppers Elite	12U Tier 1 Fast Pitch		Northfield Raiders Gold	Fall 12U Tier 6 Fast Pitch	
Woodbury Blue	12U Tier 2 Fast Pitch		Andover Nguyen	Fall 12U Tier 7 Fast Pitch	
Prior Lake Joesting	12U Tier 3 Fast Pitch		Stillwater Red	Fall 12U Tier 8 Fast Pitch	
Waite Park Blue	12U Tier 4 Fast Pitch		Farmington Green	Fall 12U Tier 9 Fast Pitch	
Anoka-Ramsey Abrahamson	12U Tier 5 Fast Pitch		Brooklyn Park Justin	Fall 12U Tier 10 Fast Pitch	
Chaska Hawks Gold	12U Tier 6 Fast Pitch		Crow River Laidlaw	Fall 12U Tier 11 Fast Pitch	
New Richmond Black	12U Tier 7 Fast Pitch		Inver Grove Heights Spartans	Fall 12U Tier 12 Fast Pitch	
Bloomington White	12U Tier 8 Fast Pitch		MN Stars 03	Fall 14U Tier 1 Fast Pitch	
Maple Lake	12U Tier 9 Fast Pitch		MHAA Warriors	Fall 14U Tier 2 Fast Pitch	
MVSA Mustangs	12U Tier 10 Fast Pitch		Rochester Royals	Fall 14U Tier 3 Fast Pitch	
STMA White	12U Tier 11 Fast Pitch		Sartell Swarm Scholz	Fall 14U Tier 4 Fast Pitch	
Crow River Revolution Blue	14U Tier 1 Fast Pitch		Buffalo	Fall 14U Tier 5 Fast Pitch	
White Bear Lake Black	14U Tier 2 Fast Pitch		Lakeville Lightning	Fall 14U Tier 6 Fast Pitch	
Randolph Rockets	14U Tier 3 Fast Pitch		Woodbury Blue	Fall 14U Tier 7 Fast Pitch	
St. Paul Highland Gold	14U Tier 4 Fast Pitch		MN Starters Macken	Fall 16U Tier 1 Fast Pitch	
Bloomington Blue	14U Tier 5 Fast Pitch		Red Tide	Fall 16U Tier 2 Fast Pitch	
Northfield Raiders	14U Tier 6 Fast Pitch		Team Synergy	Fall 16U Tier 3 Fast Pitch	
MHAA Warriors	14U Tier 7 Fast Pitch		Sibley North Stars	Fall 16U Tier 4 Fast Pitch	
Faribault Fury	16U Tier 1 Fast Pitch		Maple Grove	Fall 18U Tier 1 Fast Pitch	
Riptide	16U Tier 2 Fast Pitch		MN Whirl	Fall 18U Tier 2 Fast Pitch	
Waite Park Blue	16U Tier 3 Fast Pitch				



LOCAL ASSOCIATION CHAMPS

TEAM NAME

Tennessee Comets 2000
 White Lightning
 East Tennessee Twisters 04
 Wildcats 04
 Middle TN Hotshotz
 TN
 Comets
 Hot Shots
 Eagles
 Lady Devils

DIVISION

Girls' 16-Under Class A Fast Pitch
 Girls' 18-Under Class A Fast Pitch
 Girls' 12-Under Class B Fast Pitch
 Girls' 14-Under Class B Fast Pitch
 Girls' 16-Under Class B Fast Pitch

 Girls' 6-Under Class C Fast Pitch
 Girls' 8-Under Class C Fast Pitch
 Girls' 10-Under Class C Fast Pitch
 Girls' 12-Under Class C Fast Pitch

HOMETOWN

Fayetteville, TN
 Knoxville, TN
 Knoxville, TN
 Maryville, TN
 Hendersonville,

 Oliver Springs, TN
 Cleveland, TN
 Chattanooga, TN
 Vonore, TN

PORTLAND

Portland Sparks
 Voodoo Dollz
 Sandy Thunder
 Portland Aspire
 Aloha Breeze
 Eastside Roughriders
 Eastside Roughriders
 Vengeance
 Voodoo Dollz
 Black Widows
 All American Athletics
 Oregon Elite
 Elite Chiropractic & Bull Mountain
 Authority Construction NW
 Richey's Tire Factory
 Portland Misfits
 Coppermath/Afterchicks

Girls' 10-Under Class A Fast Pitch
 Girls' 12-Under Class A Fast Pitch
 Girls' 14-Under Class A Fast Pitch
 Girls' 16-Under Class A Fast Pitch
 Girls' 18-Under Class A Fast Pitch
 Girls' 10-Under Class B Fast Pitch
 Girls' 12-Under Class B Fast Pitch
 Girls' 14-Under Class B Fast Pitch
 Girls' 16-Under Class B Fast Pitch
 Girls' 18-Under Class B Fast Pitch
 Men's Class C Slow Pitch
 Men's Class D Slow Pitch
 Men's Class E Slow Pitch
 Men's 50-Over
 Men's 55-Over
 Coed Class B Slow Pitch
 Women's Class B Slow Pitch

Portland, OR
 Portland, OR
 Sandy, OR
 Portland, OR
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 Portland, OR

SACRAMENTO

California Breeze 06
 California Yard Sharks 04
 California Breeze 03
 All-American Sports Academy - Capps
 Foothill Gold - Stinson
 Foothill All Stars
 Roseville Thunder Red
 Five Cities Screaming Eagles
 Five Cities Screaming Eagles
 Elk Grove Stealth
 Folsom All-Stars
 Cordova Fury
 Woodland All-Stars

Girls' 10-Under Class A Fast Pitch
 Girls' 12-Under Class A Fast Pitch
 Girls' 14-Under Class A Fast Pitch
 Girls' 16-Under Class A Fast Pitch
 Girls' 18-Under Class A Fast Pitch
 Girls' 8-Under Class B Fast Pitch
 Girls' 10-Under Class B Fast Pitch
 Girls' 12-Under Class B Fast Pitch
 Girls' 14-Under Class B Fast Pitch
 Girls' 16-Under Class B Fast Pitch
 Girls' 8-Under Class C Fast Pitch
 Girls' 10-Under Class C Fast Pitch
 Girls' 12-Under Class C Fast Pitch

TEAM NAME

WASHINGTON
 10U Heat Fastpitch
 Absolute Blast 2004
 Elite Diamonds 02 Easton
 Team Baden (Axe)
 Diamond Dusters
 Wildcats 04
 Tri-City Thunder
 WA Angels 16U

DIVISION

Girls' 10-Under Class A/B Fast Pitch
 Girls' 12-Under Class A Fast Pitch
 Girls' 14-Under Class A Fast Pitch
 Girls' 16-Under Class A Fast Pitch
 Girls' 18-Under Class A/B Fast Pitch
 Girls' 12-Under Class B Fast Pitch
 Girls' 14-Under Class B Fast Pitch
 Girls' 16-Under Class B Fast Pitch

HOMETOWN

Warden, WA
 Kirkland, WA
 Sammamish, WA
 Tenino, WA
 Kingston, WA
 Kennewick, WA
 Kennewick, WA
 Kennewick, WA

WYOMING

Applied
 Country Home Mortgage
 Summit Construction
 Fiberglass Structures
 The Warehouse
 12U Laramie Girls Softball
 Gillette Blue Jays
 Laramie Lightning
 Extreme 14U
 Gillette Blue Jays

Division II
 Division III
 Women's Class D
 Coed Competitive
 Coed Recreational
 Girls' 12-Under Recreational
 Girls' 12-Under Class B
 Girls' 14-Under Recreational
 Girls' 14-Under Class B
 Girls' 16-Under Class B

Gillette, WY
 Rock Springs, WY
 Worland, WY
 Casper, WY
 Worland, WY



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THE BEST PLAY USA SOFTBALL

Annually USA Softball conducts over 100 National Championships in each of its major disciplines of the sport – slow pitch, fast pitch and modified pitch. Since each competitor must earn their berth into a USA Softball National Championship through a network of qualifying tournaments conducted throughout the season, the champion goes home as the unchallenged best team in the nation for their respected division each year.

Qualifying for USA Softball National Championships begins at the local level with league championships, state championships and eventually national qualifiers. Each year over 30,000 players qualify to compete in a USA Softball National Championship. Cities from across America annually bid for these celebrated events, largely because of the economic impact they will make on their communities.

Map out your road to a 2018 USA Softball National Championship today! To find a 2018 USA Softball National Championship, please visit USASoftball.com and visit the “USA Softball National Championships” section under “Tournaments”.



Is your softball equipment approved for USA Softball Championship play? For a complete updated listing of USA Softball Certified Equipment, please visit USASoftball.com!

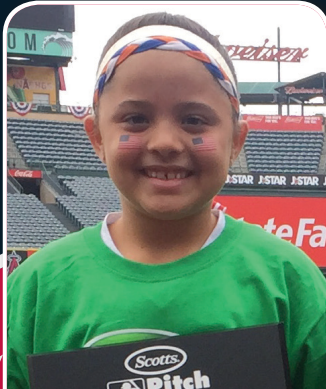




USA SOFTBALL National Finalists

Annually over 625,000 youth participate in the free Scott's® MLB® PITCH HIT & RUN™ program. Participants have the opportunity to advance through four levels of competition, include Team Championships at MLB® ballparks and the National Finals hosted during MLB® All-Star Week.™

8 USA Softball Players advanced to the 2017 National Finals in the Softball Division



Candice Puig

7/8 Division
Whittier, CA



Mya Bartlett

9/10 Division
Las Vegas, NV



★ **Mylia Perez**

9/10 Division
San Ramon, CA



★ **Macy Richardson**

11/12 Division
Tecumseh, NE



Maysen Fisher

11/12 Division
Dauphin, PA



Olivia Shaw

11/12 Division
Flowery Branch, GA



★ **Abbey Smith**

13/14 Division
Austin, TX



Brianna Mendez

13/14 Division
Marina, CA

★ National Champion

Will one of your girls be next?

For more information and to get involved today, visit PitchHitRun.com



OVER 80 ATHLETES TO ATTEND A NATIONAL TEAM SELECTION CAMP IN JANUARY, 2018

Two USA Softball National Teams will hold selection camps next January in Clearwater, Fla. as athletes look to make the Women's National Team (WNT) and Junior Men's National Team (JMNT). In addition to the Selection Camps, there will also be an open tryout opportunity for athletes hoping to make the 2018 Women's National Team.

The 2018 season is a crucial international calendar for Team USA. For the Junior Men's program, the team will be competing at the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Junior Men's World Championship in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Canada. For the Women, the team will be competing at the WBSC Women's World Championship in Chiba, Japan, which will serve as a step in the qualifying process for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.



[Click here to see the list of athletes participating at the Junior Men's National Team Selection Camp >>](#)



[Click here to see the list of athletes participating at the Women's National Team Selection Camp >>](#)

TEAM USA CLAIMS BRONZE AT MEN'S PAN AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP

In the September issue of Balls & Strikes Online Magazine, we discussed how the USA Softball Men's National Team (MNT) is re-emerging as a contender in the world of men's international fast pitch...a discussion which would prove true at the Men's Pan American Championship in the Dominican Republic. It had been over a decade since an international medal has been claimed by the U.S., but with a roster full of first-time Team USA athletes, the MNT overcame adversity to finish the Pan American Championship with a Bronze Medal.

For many on the team, it was their first time to wear the Red, White and Blue...but the young squad performed well and had several notable performances. Right off the bat, the U.S. would face the always-tough No. 7 world-ranked Venezuela in a contest that would go into extra innings with Team USA falling 8-4. The team quickly rebounded, stringing together three-wins before dropping a 3-2 heartbreaker to Colombia. Wins over Cuba and Puerto Rico would seal the No. 2 seed in their pool to setup a highly anticipated contest against the No. 4 world-ranked Canada.

Despite falling behind in the second inning, the U.S. would pull ahead in the third and maintain the lead to upset Canada 6-5... guaranteeing a medal for the Red, White and Blue. Back-to-back losses to world-ranked No. 3 Argentina and Venezuela resulted in a Bronze Medal for the U.S.

"We came into this tournament with some goals; to get double life in our pool, win a medal, and be on top of the podium receiving a medal," said Head Coach Gregg Leather. "We came up short on the last goal but are very happy with the Bronze Medal we did earn."

The team was fundamentally sound, hitting .237 with 11 home runs and 56 RBI while the pitching staff combined for a 2.90 ERA with 62 strikeouts.



Team USA went 6-4 at the Pan American Championship en route to a Bronze Medal finish.



Jeff Nowaczyk knocked in nine RBI during the event.

"I am tremendously proud of this team and what we accomplished here at the Pan American Championship. The team went through a lot given the two hurricanes that unfortunately affected the area and the subsequent delays and rainouts that followed. The team never looked for an excuse and tried their best to keep all distractions off the field."

Head Coach Gregg Leather

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 **Pitch
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Macy Richardson, of Tecumseh, NE was 1 of 12 girls to advance to the 2017 Scott's Major League Baseball Pitch Hit & Run (PHR) National Finals. PHR is the official skills competition of MLB and is designed for youth ages 7-14 to showcase their baseball and softball skills. Richardson competed locally with her USA Softball league, attended the Team Championship at Kauffman Stadium, and represented the Kansas City Royals at the National Finals during MLB All-Star Week in Miami. Richardson took some time to answer a few questions about her experience with Pitch Hit & Run!

BIO INFO:

USA Softball Team/League:

Tecumseh 12U

Position(s):

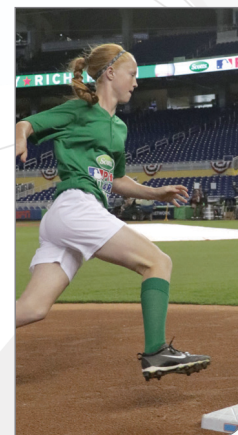
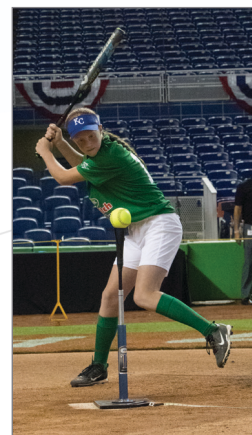
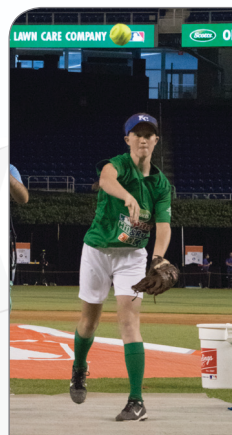
Pitcher/Shortstop

Height: 5'6"

Age: 12



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NATIONAL FINALIST QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. How did you find out about the Pitch, Hit & Run competition/who encouraged you to try?

My first experiences with PHR, began at age seven in Auburn, Nebraska. My mom saw a flyer posted at her school advertising a local PHR competition that was going to be held in a nearby neighboring town through the Jaycees organization. The poster had information about possible advancement to the MLB All-Star Week, which intrigued my mom into researching more about the competition. She encouraged both my brother and myself to give it a try.

2. What was your favorite element about PHR: Pitching, Hitting, or Running? Did you practice a lot?

My favorite element of the PHR competition has changed over my years of experience. My first couple of years, I enjoyed the hitting portion. As I matured, I discovered that one of my biggest assets is my speed, so the running skill ranked highest in my mind due to the ease of scoring and my confidence in my ability to compete with anyone my age. This past year, at the 2017 National Finals competition in Miami, FL, I changed my mind yet again to the pitching element. I stepped up as the first competitor in my age group and connected on 5 of 6 targets, putting pressure on my competitors.

3. What do you remember about the first time you stepped on to a Major League Field at the Team Championship?

I was 7 years old, dressed in white softball pants and a blue PHR shirt, standing outside of the Colorado Rockies stadium not knowing what to expect. My major focus was pitching to my dad from 35 feet away trying to put the ball in his mitt. I found a routine, and was consistently throwing strikes feeling pretty good, but anxious. The wait to go inside seemed like forever. Finally we got the okay, I nervously departed from my family and friends and entered Coors Field from the outfield gates. The field and stadium was gigantic, I really didn't realize how much area a pro baseball outfielder has to cover until I actually got to walk the length of the field. I was overtaken for a moment with a bunch of mixed feelings. I was excited, yet nervous for what was about to take place. What a rush!

4. Looking back at your PHR National Finals experience during All-Star Week, what was your favorite memory?

Many memories come to mind, although the Home Run Derby probably tops the list. The thrill of being in the outfield while some of the greatest hitters were blasting shots over your head or even errant line drives at you, was absolutely crazy. The balls are coming so fast and the crowd is going wild. It is a rush! Even while waiting our turn to go onto the field was a treat, as some All-Stars stopped by, took pictures with us and we even received autographed baseballs from them.

Other notable favorites was going to PLAY BALL Park, where we spent time with former USA softball members, watching the Celebrity Softball game, and seeing Flo Rida and Pitbull perform. We had so many exciting activities going on, it is hard to pick just one favorite.

5. What was it like when you got home after the All-Star Game with classmates, teammates, reporters, etc?

The 2013 National PHR Championship (7-8 Year Old Softball Division) was very special to me, as it was my first individual National Championship. I received numerous texts and calls from family and friends that asked me about my experiences, then stated how proud they were of me and my accomplishments. Many couldn't truly believe that someone from a small town in Nebraska could compete on a national level against kids from all the other states.

This was only the beginning of the exciting things that happened to me as a result of the win. On my way home from New York, NY we stopped in St. Louis, MO to watch a Cardinals game, and to my surprise they asked me to throw out the FIRST PITCH. When we finally returned home, to my disbelief my entire driveway was filled with balloons, signs and people waiting



Softball National Finalists with members of the USA Softball Women's National Team

to celebrate with me. The news traveled quickly of my recent accomplishment, my classmates made me posters, area newspapers and tv stations covered the story, and my small town Mayor and City Council created the Tecumseh Pride Award and presented it to me. I couldn't believe the excitement in southeast Nebraska over ME!

The 2017 National PHR Championship (11-12 Year Old Girls Division) was a personal goal checked off my list, as I wanted to prove to myself that it wasn't just luck the first time. I knew of the great opportunities that the PHR program provided and I was determined to get back to the National Finals and win another championship. I was fortunate enough to fulfill this goal and each of my individual National Championships have great meaning to me, and I will continue to strive for yet another.

6. What advice would you give to other girls planning to compete in their local PHR competition?

The advice that I would give to other girls is simple. Set your sights high, never give up on your goals, and push yourself to practice hard (mentally & physically) even when you want to make excuses. You will never reach your full potential, if you just talk about it and not WORK for it!

7. Who are your softball idols?

My softball idols are not only great players, but great leaders too. Jenny Finch, was an obvious stand out on the softball field as a pitcher, but even now she is still able to enjoy a sport she loves by leading clinics, camps and giving advice to young aspiring athletes, such as myself. She displays her enthusiasm for the game through her efforts to give back to the sport, by developing the next potential generation of softball players.

8. What are your goals for the next couple years?

I have many goals for the upcoming 5 years in regards to sports. Adding another National Championship in any sport/event, is the first thing that comes to mind. I want to become a familiar face at the PHR National Finals as I only have 2 years left to compete. Two more National Championships would be great! Going out with a bang in this competition, would possibly assist in my ultimate goal of playing NCAA Division 1 ball for a top college

9. Are you planning to participate in PHR next spring and if so, how will you practice to return as a repeat National Finalist?

YES! I plan on participating in PHR until I am aged out of the competition. I wouldn't want to miss out on the wonderful opportunities awaiting each potential participant. The PHR representatives and the sponsors treated all National Finalists and their guests like kings/queens. Each one of us regardless of our final placings or hometowns were fully supported and encouraged throughout, as if we were their family.

I am going to continue to NOT make excuses, and get out in my driveway everyday to make myself better. I believe that if you want something, you are going to have to work for it! Practicing may not always be fun, but it is necessary to put forth 100% effort both mentally and physically to make good things happen!

Scotts

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FEB 23-25	BREVARD COUNTY, FLA.
MAR 16-18	ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (TOURNAMENT)
APR 3 - 15	GLASSBORO, N.J.
APR 22-29	TOUR OF VIRGINIA
MAY 18-20	LONG ISLAND, N.Y.
MAY 25-27	TOLEDO, OHIO
JUNE 10-17	KIDS CAMP, MANCHESTER, N.H.
JUNE 22-24	BISMARCK, N.D. (TOURNAMENT)
JULY 6-8	GRAND FORKS, N.D. (TOURNAMENT)
JULY 13-15	BRAINERD, MINN. (TOURNAMENT)
JULY 20-22	ELMIRA, N.Y.
JULY 27-AUG 1	ALUMNI KIDS CAMP, BRANSON, MO.
AUG 10-12	FOND DU LAC, WISC.
AUG 17-19	CINCINNATI, OHIO
SEPT 14-16	WELCH, MINN. (TENTATIVE)
SEPT 21-23	ADRIAN, MICH.
OCT 12-14	DAYTON, OHIO
OCT 26-28	HUNTSVILLE, ALA. (TENTATIVE)
NOV 9-11	MISSION VIEJO, CALIF.
NOV 30-DEC 2	SCOTTSDALE, ARIZ.

Scheduling for the 2019 Season opens up on January 1, 2018. If your community is interested in hosting the WWAST for 2019 please contact our Executive Director:

Dennis Wince
dennis@thewwast.org

MEET OUR PLAYERS



Mike Gallardo

Sergeant (Retired) Mike Gallardo was born in 1984 and is from Los Angeles, Calif. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 2004 and has a combat tour to Iraq in 2006-07 serving as a Cavalry Scout. While deployed, his vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device which rendered him a below the knee amputee. Sergeant (Retired) Gallardo has been awarded a Purple Heart, multiple Army Achievement Medals, and multiple Army Accommodation Medals. He currently resides in Nutley, N.J. where he works for the MLB Network.



Brian Gentilotti

Brian Gentilotti was born 1981 in Framingham, Mass. and enlisted in the US Air Force in June of 2001. Shortly after returning home from a deployment, Brian was hit by an oncoming car while riding his motorcycle. The accident resulted in the loss of his right leg just below his knee. Currently, Brian lives in Jefferson, Mass. and likes to spend his time helping and encouraging youth who are living with the loss of limb.



Matias Ferreira

Lance Corporal (Retired) Matias Ferreira was born in 1989 and is from Atlanta, Ga. He enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 2009 and deployed to Afghanistan in 2010 as a Machine Gunner. Five months into his deployment, his team was on a rooftop of a compound and upon jumping off the roof, Matias landed on a 30 pound IED. The injuries he sustained were bi-lateral below the knee amputations, a broken pelvis and a shattered femur. Lance Corporal (Retired) Matias Ferreira has been awarded a Purple Heart, Combat Action Ribbon, and a Naval Unit Citation Ribbon amongst several other achievements. He currently resides in Long Island, N.Y. where he is currently an officer with the Suffolk County Police Department.





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BRETT HELMER

to take over the reins of Men's Slow Pitch National Team

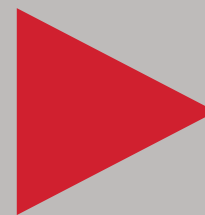
Men's Slow Pitch National Team alum Brett Helmer (Cicero, N.Y.) has been selected as the Head Coach for the USA Softball Men's Slow Pitch National Team Program. A member of eight Men's Slow Pitch National Teams, Helmer will take over the reins from Steve Shortland (Converse, Texas) who retired following Border Battle IX.

Helmer recently completed his first season on the coaching staff for the USA Softball Men's Futures National Team. As a member of the staff, Helmer helped lead the program to a perfect 4-0 record at Border Battle IX, including a 32-15 win over Team Canada.

As a player, Helmer appeared on the Men's Slow Pitch National Team since its inaugural season in 2009 through the 2016 season. With the Red, White and Blue, Helmer amassed a .785 (22-for-28) career batting average against Team Canada with 11 home runs, 25 RBI and 19 runs scored.

"It's a huge honor to be named the Head Coach of the Men's Slow Pitch National Team. After playing for Coach Shortland for so many years, to be able to take the reins from him and lead this program into the future means the world to me. I couldn't be happier to be headed to Canada in 2018 and bring back the Border Battle title to the USA!"

– Brett Helmer





DON COOPER

continues role as Head Coach for Women's Slow Pitch National

Don Cooper (Browns Point, Wash.) will once again serve as the Head Coach for the 2018 USA Softball Women's Slow Pitch National Team.

Cooper was the first-ever Head Coach of the team at the inaugural Women's Border Battle this past summer. The Red, White and Blue went 3-1 in their debut, with their sole loss to Canada in the title Border Battle contest. Cooper also has previous experience with the Slow Pitch National Team Program, having served as an Assistant Coach for the Futures Slow Pitch National Team in 2013.

At the national level, Cooper started his softball career as a player before transitioning into a coach. Currently, he spearheads the Derby Girls, who claimed back-to-back USA Softball Women's Open Slow Pitch National Championship titles at the 2017 USA Softball Slow Pitch Championship Series.

Cooper will look to lead the U.S. next summer in the Women's Border Battle II on Canadian soil as the Red, White and Blue look to claim their first Women's Border Battle title. The complete roster and competition schedule for the 2018 Women's Slow Pitch National Team will be announced at a later date.

“Coaching Team USA is such a great honor and privilege, but most of all it’s extremely humbling.”
– Don Cooper



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PROUD
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KEN ERIKSEN

to lead Women's National Team at 2018 World Championship

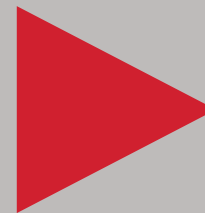
Long-time Women's National Team (WNT) Head Coach Ken Eriksen has once again been selected to spearhead the program for the 2018 season. For the right-consecutive season, Eriksen will lead the Red, White and Blue at the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Women's World Championship in Chiba, Japan where the U.S. will look to defend their Gold Medal from 2016.

In 2011, Eriksen took over the WNT Program and ushered in a new era of USA Softball with a roster comprised of international rookies. Eriksen continued the legacy established before him, leading a strong U.S. roster which produced a Gold Medal at the 2011 Pan Am Games in Guadalajara, Mexico. In his tenure with the USA Softball WNT Program, Eriksen has amassed two WBSC World Championships Silver Medals before reclaiming the Gold at the 2016 WBSC World Championship in Surrey, B.C., Canada. He also boasts four World Cup of Softball titles and a Silver Medal from the 2015 Pan American Games in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

As a player, Eriksen began playing USA Softball when he joined the Clearwater Bombers, playing from 1987-1992 while batting .347 in 1992 and .456 in the Men's Major Fast Pitch Nationals. Eriksen was a part of the Miller-Toyota team and Tampa Smokers up until 1997 when he won the Men's Major Fast Pitch National Championship with his fellow teammates. Eriksen racked up additional honors on the international scene, earning a silver medal at the Pan American Games (1991) and was a three-time Olympic Festival participant (1993, 1994 and 1995), where he took home an additional silver medal at the 1995 Olympic Festival. Eriksen retired shortly after playing for the USA Select Team, which was the first American athletic team to compete in communist Cuba in over 30 years (1958).

"Once again, it's an honor to be thought of as someone who has been entrusted with progressing this program to be successful at the 2018 World Championship. That is what our focus will be on as we pick the team in January and train for in the early part of the summer."

– Ken Eriksen





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2018 USA SOFTBALL JO CUP

adds 14-Under division as the annual event heads to St. Louis!



One of the most prestigious events in youth softball is about to get even more prominent as USA Softball will be adding a 14-Under division to the 2018 USA Softball Junior Olympic (JO) Cup. The event, which heads to St. Louis, Mo. in 2018 and Spartanburg, S.C. in 2019, welcomes the top 32 teams in the 14-Under, 16-Under and 18-Under divisions for the opportunity to compete for a cash prize and evaluation by the USA Softball Women's National Team Selection Committee (WNTSC).

The inaugural JO Cup began in 2015 and featured 32 teams in the 18-under division and has grown to include a 16-under division the past two years (2016, 2017). New this year will be the 14-under division which brings the total number of teams to 96 split across three separate age divisions. The JO Cup features a five-game guarantee, three pool play games and a double-elimination bracket into a single Championship Game. A blind-draw will be conducted for bracket play with protection given to the first- and second-place finishers from the 2017 JO Cup.



LEARN MORE ABOUT CHESTERFIELD VALLEY ATHLETIC COMPLEX (CVAC), THE SITE OF THE 2018 USA SOFTBALL JO CUP!

The CVAC is a 176-acre complex in the Valley consisting of Catch 22 Miracle Field, 19 ball diamonds, 14 multi-purpose fields (soccer, football, lacrosse and Ultimate Frisbee), 12 practice baseball/softball practice fields, four concession buildings, two playgrounds and four parking lots. The entertainment plaza in the F Quad concession stand pavilion at the Chesterfield Valley Athletic Complex is the perfect place to enjoy a break from the heat and stay cool, while watching your kids play ball or enjoying a glimpse of a Cardinals game. The plaza is 28.5 feet x 23.5 feet and includes six stand up tables, two ceiling fans, a 55-inch television and wraparound stone countertops with tongue and groove siding. There is an unobstructed view of the F3 and F4 baseball fields, too.

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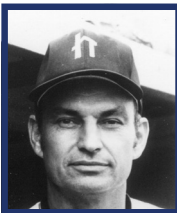
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2018 HALL OF FAMERS



Dick Brubaker

(Elburn, Ill.) – Fast Pitch Player

Quick Facts/By the Numbers

Four-time USA Softball All-American
Member of 1972 World Championship Silver Medalist U.S. squad
Had a career ERA of 0.67



Todd Joerling

(New Melle, Mo.) – Slow Pitch Player

Quick Facts/By the Numbers

Member of inaugural Men's Slow Pitch National Team in 2009
10-time USA Softball All-American and MVP of the 1999 Super Slow Pitch Championship
Finished with a career batting average of .720



Crystl Bustos

(Canyon Country, Calif.) – Fast Pitch Player

Quick Facts/By the Numbers

Two-time Olympic Gold Medalist and an Olympic Silver Medalist
Holds Olympic record for RBI (10) and home runs (5)
Three-time Pan American Games Gold Medalist and WBSC World Champion

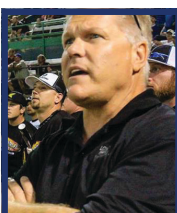


Bill Silves

Silves (Mount Vernon, Wash.) – Umpire

Quick Facts/By the Numbers

Has been a USA Softball umpire since 1969
Has served as a Umpire-in-Chief at over 30 USA Softball National Championships
Umpired at four USA Softball National Championships



John Daniels

(Albertville, Minn.) – Sponsor

Quick Facts/By the Numbers

Has sponsored nine USA Softball National Championship Teams
Has sponsored teams since 1985
Assembled a super star roster in 2001 as his team went 70-6 on the year and captured the "Grand Slam" of softball



Christa Williams

(Houston, Texas) – Fast Pitch Player

Quick Facts/By the Numbers

Two-time Olympic Gold Medalist
Two-time World Champion with both Women's and Junior Women's National Team
Two-time Women's Major Fast Pitch National Champion



Ricky Huggins

(Pembroke, Ga.) – Slow Pitch Player

Quick Facts/By the Numbers

11-time USA Softball All-American
Four-time MVP recipient
Has over 3,000 career home runs



Charles Wright

(Columbus, Ga.) – Slow Pitch Player

Quick Facts/By the Numbers

12-time USA Softball All-American
Was named MVP of the Super Slow Pitch National Championship twice in his career
Played for several of the top teams in slow pitch history and led the legendary Steele's in homeruns in 1986 with 503



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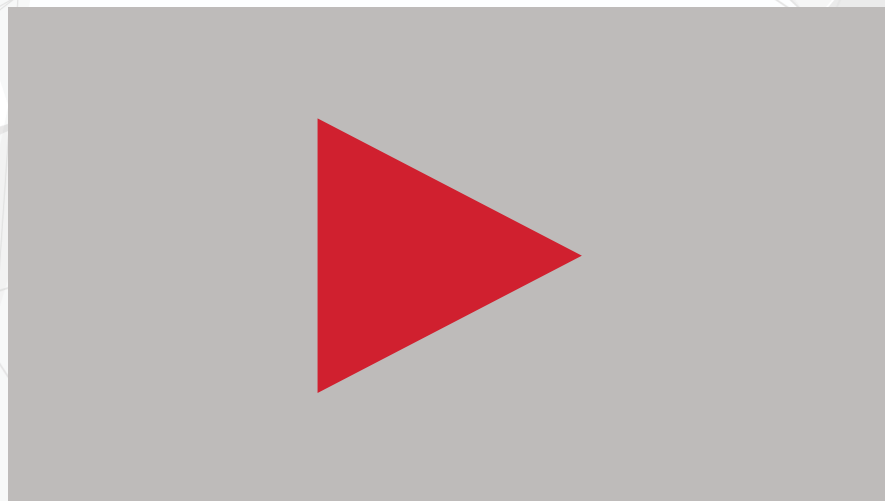
NINE LEGENDS

enshrined into National Softball Hall of Fame

Nine individuals received softball's highest honor on October 21 as USA Softball inducted nine members to the National Softball Hall of Fame at the 37th Annual celebration at the Sheraton Greensboro in North Carolina.

A night to remember, the 2017 class consisted of Mike Candrea (Tucson, Ariz.) - Meritorious Service, Jimmy Derrick (Douglasville, Ga.) - Umpire, Gary Evans (Mason, Mich.) - Umpire, Dick Gulmon (Valley City, N.D.) - Meritorious Service, Mark Martin (Fayetteville, Ark.) - Slow Pitch Player, Rick Minton (Cerro Gordo, Ill.) - Fast Pitch Player, Bob Quinn (Branchville, N.J.) - Fast Pitch Player, Willie Simpson (Oak Lawn, Ill.) - Slow Pitch Player and Evans Telegadas (Scottsdale, Ariz.) - Fast Pitch Player.

Relive the highlights from the 37th Annual Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony!



FROM THE VAULT



A photo taken from the 1970 Women's Slow Pitch National Championship, which was held in Parma, Ohio.



A photo from the conclusion of the 1987 Centennial Torch Run, which celebrated softball's 100th Anniversary. This would be the final destination for the torch, which was placed on July 10, 1987.



A countdown to softball's Olympic Games debut in 1996 outside of the USA Softball National Headquarters in Oklahoma City.



Dave Timok of the Aurora Sealmasters catches a pitch during warmups.



The 1950 PBSW Ramblers out of Arizona.



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- 1.** Name one important milestone USA Softball achieved in the 2017 season.
- 2.** What association is President John Gouveia currently Commissioner of?
- 3.** Name one location of the National Umpire School.
- 4.** Where was the Men’s Pan American Championship held?
- 5.** Where will the 2018 USA Softball JO Cup be held?

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How the Top 25 Fared - Week 7

Twenty-two teams to compete in USA Softball Spring Challenge; College Preview Tournament to feature OU, UAB, Mississippi State and LA Tech

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