

# BASEBALLS AND SOFTBALLS

## SUMMER

## REWIND!





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A photograph of catcher Aubree Munro in her white and red Team USA uniform. She is wearing a dark blue Wilson catcher's helmet with a silver face mask and a Wilson A2000 catcher's mitt. The background features a large, stylized image of a baseball with red laces and a yellow field, with the word 'A2000' written in red across it.

AUBREE **MUNRO** TEAM USA



# BALLS AND STRIKES

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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



In about a month my term as President of USA Softball will come to an end. When I assumed office in 2017, I communicated to all of you that one thing I had always heard from previous Presidents of USA Softball is that the two years would go by in a flash. And they have.

As I finish out my term, I look back at the last two years with mixed emotions. Did I accomplish everything I set out to do two years ago? No. But I am very pleased that several of the items that were high on my list did come to fruition, not the least of which was the creation of the USA Softball Endowment Fund to help support National Teams. As the fund grows it will generate more and more revenue that can be used to fund our national teams and all of the athletes, coaches and support staff that work hard to train, organize and represent the United States at events all over the

world. Donations are accepted “24/7” and can be made through the Oklahoma City Community Foundation by using this link <https://www.occf.org/usas/>. No amount is too small, or too large!

I also wanted to have our organization work to make it easier for our teams and umpires to play our brand of softball. One way we have done that is through our qualifying system. Another avenue we are working on is a new registration system. We have heard the feedback and the frustrations with the difficulty of the current system from our members and have begun the process to replace it with one that will be easier to navigate. We do not want the way we register to be a deterrent to teams, leagues and organizations from becoming members of USA Softball and are working on changing that.

As we move into a new decade, the challenges that face our sport are immense and will continue to provide obstacles to our success. We must continue to work to adapt to our changing customer base and provide them the tools they need to become part of USA Softball.

I wish to thank all of those who assisted me these last two years. That group includes members of the USA Softball Board of Directors and Council, the staff at the USA Softball National Office and the staff at USA Softball of Northern California. I will not name any names because I will inevitably leave someone out, except one. I could not do what I do without the love and support of my wife Hope, who has been with me every step of the way of this Presidential journey. Mark Twain once said that behind every successful man is a wise woman. That phrase is somewhat dated but without her standing beside me, not behind me, I would not have been able to make the commitment to this organization to serve as its President. I will continue to serve for two more years as Past President and will work with our incoming President, Texas Commissioner Rodney Cobb, in any manner he sees fit in order to benefit USA Softball. Thank you all for reading and for being part of USA Softball, the National Governing Body of Softball in the United States.



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# 2019 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON CONCLUDES



The 2019 Championship Season has come and gone as numerous National Championship trophies were proudly held high. Read more about the 2019 summer of softball on page 22.

# GOLDEN SUMMER FOR USA SOFTBALL



This summer, it was all about the Red, White, Blue and GOLD! Read more about the GOLDen summer for the Women's National Team and U-19 National Team programs starting on page 38.

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# FACES ON THE FIELD

Meet Kaitlyn and Kylee... athletes who are proud to play #USASoftball!



## KAITLYN, 17

Wisconsin  
Wisconsin Scorpions  
Girls' 18-Under Fast Pitch  
Catcher/First Base



**HER START** I started playing when I was about six years old. I started playing because both of my older brothers played baseball and I wanted to be just like them.

**FAVORITE PART OF PLAYING SOFTBALL** Being able to spend every weekend with a great group of girls who have the same drive to win as me.

**GOALS IN SOFTBALL** My goal is to be able to play at a collegiate level, possibly NCAA Division III.

**BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENT** My biggest accomplishment would have to be when I hit a homerun off the sign above the scoreboard to lead off a game.

**ROLE MODELS IN THE GAME** Haley Cruse. She is an extremely gifted athlete but is able to get it done in the classroom as well. She knows how to take the game seriously and be focused along with having fun and enjoying the game.

**TOUGHEST OBSTACLE** The toughest obstacle I've had to overcome would be coming back after a shoulder surgery that cost me a season of high school softball.

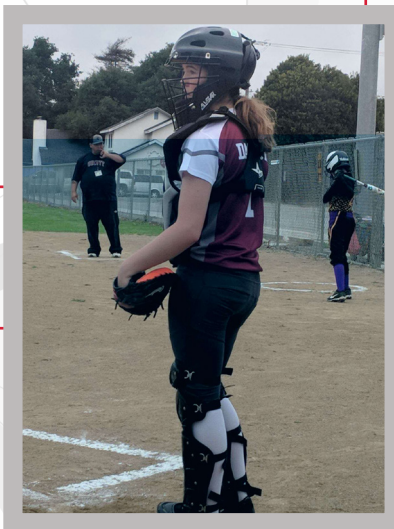
# FACES ON THE FIELD

Meet Kaitlyn and Kylee... athletes who are proud to play #USASoftball!



**KYLEE, 13**

California  
 Bearcats  
 Girls' 14-Under Fast Pitch  
 Catcher/Second Base



**HER START** I started playing in 2015 after playing baseball for three years.

**FAVORITE THING ABOUT PLAYING SOFTBALL** I love the people, all the coaches and the competition.

**MOST MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE** Going to Boise, Idaho for Nationals and finishing in 13th place out of 30 teams.

**GOALS IN SOFTBALL** My goals in softball is to earn a full scholarship to college through softball.

**BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENT** I am very proud that this past year in rec ball I had the highest batting average.

**ROLE MODELS IN THE GAME** Kelly Burt, who was a catcher for Cal Poly Mustangs and Aubree Munro who is a catcher for Team USA.

**TOUGHEST OBSTACLE TO OVERCOME** Transitioning from baseball to softball.

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# 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 some of the #USASoftball blues!



Championship crew for the Girls' 14-Under Class A Western Fast Pitch National Championship.

Pictured (L to R): Katrina Barber of Idaho, Jensen Johnson, and Nikki Butler.

- Tommy Hamkens  
*USA Softball umpire from Wyoming*

Couldn't be more proud of these guys! They have represented themselves and USA of KY perfectly! 12A Nationals, Kevin Conder plate on the championship game and Stanley Hall is U1 in the losers bracket final!

Great job by two great umpires!

- Ben Crenshaw  
*USA Softball Fast Pitch UIC from Kentucky*



Michigan 16U state championship crew: L-R: Jim Indgjer, Linda Hoover, Jonathon Riley.

- David Schimpf  
*USA Softball umpire from Michigan*



Championship crew for the Men's "C" National in Red Wing, MN.

Pictured (L to R): Ryan Roberts, John Maryanapolis and Tommy Hamkens .

- Tommy Hamkens  
*USA Softball umpire from North Dakota*





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**COACH'S RESPONSE...** "GIRLS 10 AND UNDER ARE JUST LEARNING THE GAME OF FASTPITCH. THEY WANT FAST BAT SPEED SO THEY CAN WAIT ON A PITCH AND SEE IT LONGER BUT STILL HAVE A QUICK BAT THROUGH THE ZONE."

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**MOM'S RESPONSE...** "MY DAUGHTER IS PLAYING FASTPITCH, SOCCER AND CHEERLEADING... SHE LIKES SOFTBALL, BUT I DON'T 100% KNOW IF SHE IS GOING TO PLAY NEXT SEASON OR NOT BUT I WANT TO GET HER A HIGH QUALITY FASTPITCH BAT SO SHE HAS FUN AND DOES WELL, BUT I DON'T WANT TO PAY TOO MUCH EITHER...."

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**LITE™ -13**

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**PLAYER'S RESPONSE...** "I AM PLAYING 8U FOR MY FIRST SEASON AND I REALLY NEED A BAT WITH A LARGE SWEETSPOT TO GIVE MYSELF THE BEST CHANCE OF GETTING SOLID HITS ON BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE PITCHES AS I LEARN HOW TO HIT A FASTPITCH BALL...."



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- New Lightning Lite™ Frame -13 Aluminum Technology - Max bat speed, see pitches longer, more plate coverage
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- Approved by USASB, USSSA, NSA, ISA
- Meets all softball association standards
- 30"/17oz, 29"/16oz, 28"/15oz, 27"/14oz, 26"/13oz



# NEWS & NOTES

## 2020 OLYMPIC SELECTION TRIALS HEAD TO OKLAHOMA CITY

The path to the podium for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games will begin in Oklahoma City, Okla. as the USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex will host the 2020 Women’s National Team (WNT) Selection Trials. Held October 1-6, this marks the first Olympic Games selection trials for a USA Softball WNT roster since the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the last Olympic Games the sport of softball participated in.

## USA SOFTBALL CROWNS 2019 NATIONAL CHAMPIONS



The 2019 National Championship season has concluded for USA Softball with teams taking home a coveted #USASoftball National Championship trophy in both the Junior Olympic (JO) and Adult Divisions of Play. Visit [USASoftball.com](http://USASoftball.com) to see the list of National Champions.

## NATIONAL OFFICE WELCOMES NEW STAFF MEMBERS

USA Softball has announced recent staffing updates to the National Office. In the I.T. Department, Devin Loehrs (Edmond, Okla.) returns to the National Office staff as the Registrations Administrator & Project Manager while the National Teams Department welcomes Allison Fanning (Midwest City, Okla.) as the National Teams Coordinator and Megan Schallom (St. Louis, Mo.) who transitioned from the events staff to National Teams Manager.

## USA SOFTBALL LAUNCHES “STAND BESIDE HER” TOUR FOR 2020 U.S. OLYMPIC SOFTBALL



USA Softball is proud to announce the “Stand Beside Her” tour, a series of competitions and training opportunities for the 2020 USA Softball Women’s National Team (WNT) as they prepare for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games. The “Stand Beside Her” message encourages fans everywhere to stand united in their support of the WNT and the United States in their journey to the Olympic Games. The complete schedule for the “Stand Beside Her” tour, including dates and locations, will be announced at a later date.

# USA SOFTBALL AND USSSA TO CO-HOST THE U.S. GAME



USA Softball, the National Governing Body of Softball in the United States, and USSSA, the world's largest multi-sport organization, will partner to host The U.S. Games, a prestigious girls' fast pitch tournament that will take place at USSSA Space Coast Complex in Viera, Fla. on January 18-20, 2020.

The U.S. Games brings USA Softball and USSSA together as co-hosts of the event, a 12-Under (12U) and 14-Under (14U) tournament. The U.S. Games will feature eight teams in each age division for a total of 16 total teams for the inaugural event. Teams will qualify for the U.S. Games through their finish at the 2019 USA Elite Select World Fastpitch Championship and USA Softball Girls' 12U and 14U Fast Pitch Class A National Championship. A future edition of The U.S. Games, 16-Under and 18-Under, will be held at historic USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex, which is currently in the final phase of a \$27.5 million renovation.

# WAYNE STRAITON APPOINTED AS USA SOFTBALL OF VERMONT COMMISSIONER



of Vermont

Wayne Straiton (Barre, Vt.) has been appointed as Commissioner for USA Softball of Vermont. Wayne will assume his responsibilities immediately. Straiton began his softball career as a 10-year old scorekeeper for his mother's Class A fast pitch team in Connecticut. At age 15, he began to umpire and has been a USA Softball umpire since 1982 and still officiates high school and college softball. Straiton has served as Vermont's Junior Olympic (JO) Commissioner for the past 12 years.

# ABI ATTACHMENTS, FRANKLIN SPORTS AND TURFACE ATHLETICS JOIN USA SOFTBALL AS OFFICIAL SPONSORS



USA Softball is proud to have Franklin Sports, ABI Attachments and Turface join the list of sponsors for USA Softball. Franklin Sports, now the Official Batting Glove of USA Softball, offers a variety of sports-related products, including batting and fielding gloves, training products, bats and more. ABI Attachments is a leader in innovative grooming equipment that properly prepares fields to be safe and playable while Turface Athletics is a leading manufacturer of soil amendments and sports field conditioners with products and services that maximize sports field safety and performance.

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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!



Epic Day! @USASoftball visited my school all the way in Iwakuni, Japan and gave powerful lessons to my students. Way to show love to our military kids. So inspiring! #USASoftball #U19SoftballWC



@RENEECOBB1908



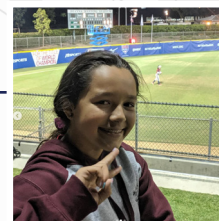
Mustangs 08 checking out USA'S Gold Medal from the Pan American games in Lima. They also got to see her Silver Medal from Toronto. #USASoftball #GOSTANGS



@RICHELLECLINGAN



Having fun watching the USA vs Japan game at the WBSC U19 Softball World Championships! Bought her a new glove to grow into too.



@BLMITCHELL85



One of Sheas's Birthday gifts! @catosterman she was super excited! #USASoftball #38thebeast



@OLEARY\_CARRIE

She said she is the happiest little girl in the world. Catalina met her favorite player tonight! #softballislife #USASoftball



@THECOOPERCATCH



Another great weekend with my Sistahs! We showed a lot of heart this weekend. I'm so excited to go to Worlds with these bunch of yahoos! Texas was a blast! I got to see a lot of my friends and make new connections as well. USA Softball knows how to put on a great tournament!



@BAMBAM\_63



# ***A DANGEROUS LINEUP***



**INTRODUCING  
THE MIZUNO F19  
FASTPITCH BAT LINEUP**



# ACE COACH EDUCATION PROGRAM REWARDS 20,000TH COACH OF 2019 SEASON

A lot goes into coaching a youth softball team. From the logistics of scheduling practices and traveling to tournaments to player development and more, the USA Softball ACE (Aspire, Challenge, Encourage) Coach Education Program provides coaches of all levels the skills and resources to help them understand their duties as a coach of a youth softball team.



## THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES BEHIND THE ACE COACHING EDUCATION PROGRAM ARE:

**A-SPIRE:** TO ACHIEVE A COMPREHENSIVE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE FOR THE GAME.

**C-HALLENGE:** YOUR UNDERSTANDING AND KNOWLEDGE THROUGH CONTINUED EDUCATION AND GROWTH.

**E-NCOURAGE:** YOURSELF AND OTHERS TO BE PREPARED AND KNOWLEDGEABLE AS A COACH IN ORDER TO PROVIDE YOUR ATHLETES AN ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THEY CAN ACHIEVE SUCCESS.

### 5,000th:

Jeremy Faries (Abilene, Texas) got involved in softball through his kids playing. Having taken the ACE Education courses, Faries said, "I try and utilize ACE Education to further my knowledge of the game. This game was brand new to me like it is to a lot of folks who get involved so it's a great tool to help you understand the game and what it entails. We use the training videos frequently especially when there is something we don't know or haven't seen before."

### 10,000th:

Staci Londerholm (San Angelo, Texas) coached at the secondary level before taking some time off for family. Now, coaching her daughter, Londerholm utilizes the ACE Education

courses. "I like the coaching tips it gives during the online course. It is always good to have a refresher with things always changing."

### 15,000th:

Steve Toth (Taylor, Mich.) began coaching softball 20 years ago when he signed up his oldest daughter for t-ball. Utilizing the ACE Education courses, Toth said, "I have used the ACE training courses and DVD training for quite some time. My team drills and workouts are themed after these training tools provided by ACE. Without a doubt, it has made our player development the last three years even more productive."

### 20,000th:

Dean VanDeWiele (Pierre, S.D.) began his

coaching career as a volunteer coach for his daughters' summer Junior Olympic team in 2011 before he was asked to help coach a travel ball team. During his daughter's junior year of high school, their travel team joined the high school league without knowing what it was or if they had the talent to compete in the league. Having taken the ACE Education courses, VanDeWiele says the videos worked as excellent training tools. "We all think we know the game, only to learn that we don't know it as well as we thought we did. Thinking about first aid, safety, and personal development are a few of the things we may not put priority on without this program."

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# 2019 SUMMER REWIND

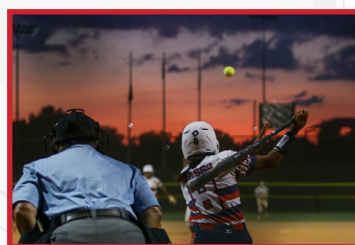
CHECK OUT SOME OF OUR FAVORITE PHOTOS FROM THE 2019 SUMMER SEASON OF USA SOFTBALL!



CHAMPS! Members of Excel Elite Williams hold the 18-Under GOLD National trophy in the air after winning the 18-Under division at the GOLD National Championships.



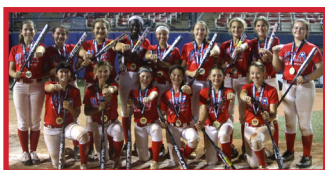
The U19 Women's National Team made history at the USA Softball International Cup after taking home the Bronze. It was the first time a junior program medaled at the event.



There's nothing better than a ballpark sunset! As games went late into the evening at the USA Softball JO Cup, teams were treated to a perfect sunset.



The Hotshots Platinum after winning the 2019 USA Softball JO Cup 6-2 over Florida Impact.



The winners of the 2019 USA Softball All-American Games, Region 3 Blue, shows off their rings and bats that were awarded to the team after winning the 12-Under All-American Games.



Athletes on Test Softball celebrate after a walk off win at the GOLD National Championships.



The Tulsa Elite OKC Walde celebrate after winning the 2019 16-Under GOLD National Championship in Plano, Texas.



The 2019 National Championship Season for the Junior Olympic (JO) Division came a close. At the Girls' 18-Under Class A in Montgomery, Ala., Alabama Sparks Elite-Stewart won the title in a 3-2 matchup over Georgia Power Demarini-Worley.



The USA Softball Women's Slow Pitch National Team claimed the Women's Border Battle title with a 15-5 (five innings) win over Canada.



USA Softball four-time Olympian Laura Berg poses in front of a commemorative plaque in Columbus, Ga., host of the 1996 Olympic Games for the sport of softball.



Three umpires between games at the 2019 USA Softball JO Cup. Over 70 umpires got the call at the 2019 JO Cup.



Comeback kids! The Women's National Team defeated Japan 2-1 in the Championship Game of the USA Softball International Cup, driving in both runs in the seventh inning.

# 2019 SUMMER REWIND

CHECK OUT SOME OF OUR FAVORITE PHOTOS FROM THE 2019 SUMMER SEASON OF USA SOFTBALL!



The USA Softball Men's National Team were front a center at the Opening Ceremony for the 2019 Pan American Games in Lima, Peru.



Eleven teams competed at the Men's Class A Slow Pitch National Championship, which was held in Hendersonville, Tenn.



The Men's National Team competed at the WBSC World Championship in Prague, Czech Republic. The team finished fifth but captured a big win over No. 4 Australia, 8-6 (eight innings).



The Men's National Team claimed the Silver Medal at the Pan American Games in Lima, Peru. It marked the first time since 2003 that the U.S. has medaled at the Pan American Games.



The Men's Slow Pitch National Team won Border Battle XI, besting Canada 30-14 (six innings).



The U19 WNT wave to the fans at the WBSC U19 Women's Softball World Cup.



USA Softball umpires before an exhibition matchup between the USA Softball Women's National Team and Scrap Yard Fast Pitch in Houston, Texas.



The USA Softball U-19 Women's National Team dogpiles after winning the WBSC U19 Women's Softball World Cup. In the Gold Medal Game against No. 2 Japan, the game was scoreless through regulation, forcing the ITB rule. After Japan plated three runs in the top of the eighth, the U.S. responded with a three-run home run by Frankie Ham moude and an error allowed the game-winning run to score.



The Women's National Team after earning the Gold Medal at the 2019 Pan American Games in Lima, Peru.



Women's National Team athletes Cat Osterman, Kelsey Stewart and Monica Abbott celebrate with a selfie after earning the Gold Medal at the Pan American Games.



Steph Hartness with Lady SNI was named MVP of the Women's Open Slow Pitch National Championship.

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# GOLDEN GIRLS OF SUMMER

## WOMEN'S NATIONAL TEAM CLAIMS THREE GOLD MEDALS IN 2019 SEASON



It was a Red, White, Blue and GOLD summer for members of the 2019 USA Softball Women's National Team (WNT). With the team participating in a lengthy and rigorous 2019 schedule of events, the U.S. won every major international competition they competed in: the USA Softball International Cup, the Pan American Games and the Japan Cup.

### USA Softball International Cup

The first medal of the summer for the WNT came in Columbus, Ga. at the USA Softball International Cup. Opening the tournament with an 8-1 win over Philippines, the team went on to earn three-consecutive shutout wins. A 7-0 win over Scrap Yard Fast Pitch, a 1-0 win over China and a 10-0 win over Peru put the WNT at 4-0.

The team would be tested by the U19 WNT program but it would be the senior squad who earned a 5-1 win over their junior counterparts in 10 innings. A walk off, 1-0 win over Chinese Taipei in the bottom of the seventh inning kept the U.S. undefeated until a 3-2 loss to Japan. The WNT earned their spot in the Gold Medal Game with a pair of 7-0 shutouts over Mexico and Puerto Rico.

In the Gold Medal finale, softball fans were treated to another battle of the titans Team USA took on No. 2 Japan. In the ESPN-televised showdown, Team USA overcame a one-run deficit in the bottom of the sixth as WNT veteran Michelle Moultrie (Jacksonville, Fla.) scored the game-winning run on a Haylie McCleney (Morris, Ala.) sac fly.

### Pan American Games

The WNT began their quest for the program's ninth Pan American Games Gold Medal on August 4 in Lima, Peru

with a roster full of nine Pan American Games veterans – but the road to the Gold would not be an easy one. Every opponent the U.S. faced was ranked in the latest World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Top 25 world-rankings, including three in the Top 5: No. 3 Canada, No. 4 Puerto Rico, No. 5 Mexico, No. 16 Venezuela and No. 20 Peru.

The WNT put up two shutouts in their first two contests: Monica Abbott (Salinas, Calif.) shutdown Mexico while the offense erupted in the 9-0 (six innings) run rule and Cat Osterman (Houston, Texas) kept Puerto Rico off the board in a 6-0 win. The Red, White and Blue faced a tough Canadian pitching staff, but another dominant performance by Abbott in the circle led the U.S. to a 6-1 win.

Two more shutouts, a 9-0 (six innings) run rule over Venezuela and a 7-0 (five innings) win over Peru landed Team USA as the No. 1 seed in the semifinal rounds at the Pan American Games. Canada handed the U.S. a 3-2 loss as the offense was limited to just three hits, putting the resiliency and heart of the squad to the test.

The heart and relentless mentality of the Red, White and Blue was on display as the U.S. needed to win two games to claim the Gold Medal – and the team did just that. Abbott went the distance in the circle for Team USA, earning both wins with two complete games under her belt while Aubree Munro (Brea, Calif.) and Moultrie lifted the offense in both wins. A 3-1 win over Puerto Rico landed the team in the Gold Medal finale against Canada, where the two powerhouses battled it through seven complete innings and Team USA walking away with a 3-1 win.

With the win, the U.S. improved its overall Pan American Games record to 100-5 since it debuted in 1979 and

avenged a Silver Medal finish at the hands of Canada at the 2015 Toronto Pan American Games. In total, the U.S. has Gold Medals in 1979, 1987, 1991, 1995, 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2019.

### Japan Cup

In their final tournament of the 2019 season, Team USA traveled to Takasaki City, Japan for the 2019 Japan Cup. Competing alongside No. 2 Japan, No. 6 Chinese Taipei and No. 15 Czech Republic, the U.S. cruised through the competition to retain the Japan Cup title.

The team opened the event with a pair of shut out, run-rule victories. Taking advantage of nine walks and two errors, the offense for the Red, White and Blue was relentless at the plate as nearly all batters reached base in a 13-0 (four innings) win over Czech Republic. The U.S. put up eight runs over six innings to pick up their second shutout win of the day, an 8-0 (six innings) win over Chinese Taipei. With all but one batter recording a hit in the win, Keilani Ricketts (San Jose, Calif.) and the U.S. defense kept a strong Chinese Taipei offense off the scoreboard.

The U.S. sealed a spot in the Championship Game of the 2019 Japan Cup with an 8-2 win over host-nation Japan. Team USA's offense continued their hot-hitting ways, combining for 13 hits while three U.S. pitchers limited Japan to just five hits.

The final meeting between Team USA and Japan prior to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games showcased what many expect to see next July – a stadium packed with fans and a hard-fought battle between the two softball powerhouses. With just one run deciding the game, a three-run home run off the bat of Valerie Arioto (Pleasanton, Calif.), who earned the title of 2019 Japan Cup Most Valuable Player (MVP), proved to be the difference maker in a game that saw three Olympic pitchers in the circle. For Team USA, it was the pitching duo of Abbott and Osterman that limited Japan to two runs while Yukiko Ueno faced Team USA for the first time since the Gold Medal Game of the 2018 WBSC Women's Softball World Championship.



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# THE SUMMER BEFORE THE SUMMER

BY AUBREE MUNRO



**2019. The summer before THE summer. It would be silly to pretend that that statement didn't mean anything, that it wasn't on our minds. Because it is. All the time. To be this close to a dream is nuts! But lucky for us we have an incredible group of women that despite the craziness that comes with being this close to your dream, can band together and put the summer's goals above anything else. This summer, as is any other summer, was about GOLD.**

The gold summer began with the first Gold Ball Gala. It was an incredible event put together to bring the past and present of USA Softball together to raise money and awareness for the future of USA Softball. I had the honor of

speaking at the gala, following directly after Sue Enquist at that. It was so humbling to look into the audience and see some of the greats of our sport all together. The focus of my message was gratitude. For those that take care of

us within USA Softball, our coaching staff, the ones that came before me, my incredible teammates that I share the field with, and the people that see the value of investing in us and our sport. We are so grateful for the people that see us and what we bring, because like I said that evening, we are women with stories to tell, women that are fierce competitors, and women that are worth investing in. We have come so far and we want to push to go even farther, leaving it better than when we started.

A few weeks after the Gold Ball Gala, we finally got together to train in Chicago. The Chicago Bandits were great hosts, allowing us to use their facilities while we trained for a few days before playing both the Bandits and the USSSA Pride. For years we have had the challenge of coming together in a limited period of time with the expectation of being a seasoned team immediately. We're competitors, even we begin to expect this of ourselves! But it's



always tough, we are always adding new faces (some returning faces) and that brings a whole new dynamic and skillset that we learn. So, in Chicago we learned a lot about each other in a short amount of time, which is great because we then left for Japan to play in the Japan All-Star series in Sendai and Tokyo.

Japan is always an adventure, and this year was no different. We played in front of awesome crowds that you could feel were just waiting for next year. The atmosphere in Japan is incredible and each trip is so important for preparing the players that will be there in 2020. We split the series in Japan and continued to learn more about each other. Coach E always



says "the lesson is during the test" and that's so true for our program. Fortunately for us, we have incredibly talented athletes that making learning on the fly not only easier, but enjoyable. We came home already better than we started, with our sights set on our first opportunity of the summer to win Gold in Columbus, Georgia.

I played at the University of Florida, so I know heat, but Georgia was HOT. We were winning games, but we were all aware that we felt like we were starting a little slow. When winning is the goal, it doesn't always matter what it looks like, but we are women with high standards who continue to push for better each game. We played Japan in the Championship Game



and it was our gritty style of play that helped us come out on top. Winning Gold is always special but winning it in America, with your fans right there, makes it extra special. This medal was extra special too because it was the first Gold Medal that this group would win



**"Winning is a standard with this program, as it should be, but it doesn't mean that it should be taken for granted."**

together and that will always be celebrated.

Winning is a standard with this program, as it should be, but it doesn't mean that it should be taken for granted. So, we celebrate wins and we celebrate growth and we celebrate each other.

Next on our summer journey was training for the Pan American Games in Lafayette, Louisiana and Houston, Texas before heading to Peru. We played two series against Scrap Yard Fast Pitch, and I can't say enough about the competition we were able to see before our international competitions. The effort made by those teams to help us prepare was awesome. Because of those programs we were able to see high quality competition that we don't always get to see. It would prove to be just the challenge we needed.



This was my first Pan American Games to participate in and it was SO cool! There are so many athletes from so many different sports all in one place. Not to mention the swag (thank you Nike and Team USA). The facility in Lima was great and everyone that was working the event made it really special. All the cool stuff aside, we were there to win Gold for the United States, so once games started it was all about winning. We really found our stride in Peru and we moved through pool play pretty smoothly, however, when we faced Canada in bracket play we lost. Now we were going to have to play Puerto Rico to get to the Gold Medal Game against Canada.

While some may have been thinking, "Oh no, this is bad," we knew that we would just take it one game at a time, with the goal of hearing our National Anthem three times that day.

Once before each game and then the final one on the medal stand with a Gold Medal around our necks. Some of my favorite memories with Team USA have been when our backs are against the wall. It shows a lot about a team, it draws out leaders, and takes away any expectations. Just find a way to win, then move on and do it again.

We knew that Monica was going to get the ball for both games, so I sent her a text the morning of expressing my belief in her and our preparation and that I was excited to compete with her. Her reply gave me the same sense of confidence. What a cool feeling to have within the battery. We were ready.

We took on Puerto Rico and with some late game RBIs, we put them away. We earned the opportunity to play in the Championship Game

and once again, we were ready. It was time to play Canada again, this time for Gold.

Michelle Moultrie got us on the board with a homerun and we were feeling good and ended up hitting the game winning single as well after they had a homerun of their own. I can't think of a better person to come up so clutch in a game like that. Michelle is the quiet type of leader that, although she might not speak up often, when she does - you listen. She has stuck it out through the thin years with USA Softball and to see her be the hero that day was perfect.



**"We play more blue collar. We play with a quiet confidence and just show up to play the game we know how to play."**

We're not a team of superstars. Don't get me wrong, we have superstar talent on our team, but we don't play like superstars. We play more blue collar. We play with a quiet confidence and just show up to play the game we know how to play. It makes this program special. We know our goals, we know what it takes to reach those goals, and we're going to do whatever it takes to get there. And we're going to have a lot of fun doing it, but it's not about one person ever. It's all of us, every day.

We finished the summer at Japan Cup winning our third Gold Medal of the summer. A team

that had just a few days to prepare before each stop won THREE GOLD MEDALS. That kind of record speaks to our resolve to continue the legacy that is USA Softball. We wear those letters with pride because of what they represent and who came before us. This summer stretched us and challenged us, but I can't think of a better time for that to happen. Whoever from this summer's team is on that Olympic roster will be better for going through this summer. They will be better for the challenges because this summer we decided who we wanted to be, and what we wanted to leave behind. We played great softball, we grinded through the

tough parts, and we made this program better through it.

Gold is always the goal, but we made strides this summer beyond gold as well. Strides that we are proud of as athletes, women, and competitors. The future of USA Softball is bright, and the Olympics will only further the games growth, something that we all champion. Dreams are coming alive again in the softball world and it's special to be a part of it. So as it was this summer, and as it will continue to be going into the biggest summer for softball since 2008: "Sometimes you, sometimes me, always US".

# 2019 USA SOFTBALL JO NATIONAL CHAMPIONS ARE CROWNED!



**USA Softball Girls' Class A 10-Under West National Championship**  
 Broken Arrow, Oklahoma | July 24-28  
 Championship: KC Storm 08 - 6, NW Legacy Trickel - 3  
[CLICK HERE FOR THE COMPLETE BRACKET](#)



**USA Softball Girls' Class A 10-Under East National Championship**  
 Johnson City, Tennessee | July 24-28  
 Championship: Atlanta Vipers Stewart - 9, Carolina Elite 08 Watson - 8  
[CLICK HERE FOR THE COMPLETE BRACKET](#)



**USA Softball Girls' Class A 12-Under National Championship**  
 Normal, Illinois | July 22-28  
 Championship: TN Heat 06 - 8, Florida Impact Ladd 06 - 6  
[CLICK HERE FOR THE COMPLETE BRACKET](#)



**USA Softball Girls Class A 14-Under National Championship**  
 Roseville, California | July 22-27  
 Championship: West Bay Warriors Gold - 12, PS33 Academy National - 2  
[CLICK HERE FOR THE COMPLETE BRACKET](#)



**USA Softball Girls' Class A 16-Under National Championship**  
 Salem, Virginia | July 22-28  
 Championship: Hotshots Platinum Knoop - 9, Intensity 16U Ralph/Francis - 2  
[CLICK HERE FOR THE COMPLETE BRACKET](#)



**USA Softball Girls' Class A 18-Under National Championship**  
 Montgomery, Alabama | July 22-28  
 Championship: AL Sparks Elite 18U Stewart - 3, GA Power DeMarini Worley - 2  
[CLICK HERE FOR THE COMPLETE BRACKET](#)



**USA Softball Girls' 16-Under GOLD National Championship**  
 Plano, Texas | July 29-August 3  
 Championship: Tulsa Elite OKC 16U Walde - 9, Wichita Mustangs 5  
[CLICK HERE FOR THE COMPLETE BRACKET](#)



**USA Softball Girls' 18-Under GOLD National Championship**  
 Plano, Texas | July 29-August 3  
 Championship: Excel Elite Williams - 11, Texas Blaze 18U Elite Lindsey - 1  
[CLICK HERE FOR THE COMPLETE BRACKET](#)

**marucci**

**CONFIDENCE IS  
FORGED IN  
METAL**

# GOLD NATIONALS TAKE PLACE IN PLANO, TEXAS



The 2019 USA Softball GOLD National Championships crowned a 16-Under and 18-Under Champion in Plano, Texas after a week-long competition from July 29 - Aug. 3. Seventy-one teams traveled to Plano to compete in the most prominent tournament in Junior Olympic (JO) Championship Play with 37 teams participating in the 16-Under division and 34 teams in the 18-Under division. Both divisions competed in two days of pool play games before embarking on their double-elimination quest for the Championship trophy. Recording the final victories of the tournament and raising their trophies in Plano were Tulsa Elite OKC Walde and Excel Elite Williams, as they were crowned the 2019 GOLD 16-Under and 18-Under National Champions, respectively.

The Tulsa Elite OKC Walde secured the 16-Under GOLD National Championship trophy with an undefeated 6-0 record in bracket play. The Elite had a series of competitive games on their journey to the trophy, edging past five of their opponents by just one run and clinching two extra-inning victories. Tulsa Elite landed their spot in the Championship with their semifinal win over the Louisiana Voodoo.

The Wichita Mustangs fought their way back to the Championship game after suffering a tough extra-inning loss to the Tulsa Elite OKC Walde in a previous winners' bracket match-up. Their first loss of the tournament, though, sparked the Mustang offense as they went on to record five losers' bracket wins, scoring an explosive total of 48 runs. The Mustangs defeated the Louisiana Voodoo 5-4 in their final elimination game of the tournament, advancing them to the Championship Game for a second shot at Tulsa Elite OKC Walde.

The consistent bats of the two final teams remained superior in the Championship Finale as they each recorded a home run in the first inning of the game. Tulsa Elite's Aaliyah Brown kicked off the home run hitting in the top of the first with a solo shot over the left field fence while Andie Edwards responded for the Mustangs with a two-run home run in the bottom of the first. The Mustangs plated another run in the bottom of the second with Tulsa Elite scoring two of their own to tie the game at three in the top of the third. After two quiet innings from both teams, the Mustangs broke the silence in the bottom of the fifth with a two-run home run from Tatum Long - her sixth home run of the day - giving the Mustangs a 5-3 lead through five innings. Always quick to respond however, Tulsa Elite strung together four singles in the top of the sixth to score four runs and grab a 7-5 lead. Two additional runs crossed home plate in the top of seventh for the Elite, improving their lead to 9-5 with only three outs remaining in the game. Hannah Harrison ended the game in strike-out fashion for the Tulsa Elite, sending her last three faced batters of the day to the dugout in order to clinch the 16-Under GOLD National Championship title.

The 18-Under division crowned Excel Elite Williams as the 2019 GOLD National Champions after their perfect 6-0 campaign through bracket play. The Excel Elite offense remained key to their success, with three of their wins resulting by way of the run rule. A combined total of 55 runs crossed home plate for the Excel Elite while only allowing 15 runs from their opponents. Excel Elite claimed their spot in the Championship contest with a dominating nine-run offensive sixth inning in their semifinal match-up against Test Softball, defeating them 15-2.

Competing against Excel Elite Williams in the Championship game was Texas Blaze Elite Lindsey, who fell victim to the Excel Elite in a previous winners' bracket contest. The Blaze were then sent to the losers' bracket where they collected five wins, three coming by way of the run rule. In their fight back to the Championship, the Blaze offense did not let up, scoring at least eight runs in each of their elimination match-ups, totaling for an impressive 58 runs crossing home plate. Texas Blaze Elite punched their ticket to the trophy game with a fifth inning rally against Test Softball, eliminating them 10-5, and sending the Blaze to the finals for a second shot at Excel Elite Williams.

Excel Elite Williams scored early and often in their final game of the tournament as they plated a quick six runs in the bottom of the first inning while adding at least one run to the board in every inning before reaching a fifth inning 11-1 run rule over Texas Blaze Elite Lindsey. Excel Elite Williams totaled 15 hits in their final game of the tournament, with eight of their nine batters recording one or more. Tristin Court went a perfect 3-for-3 at the plate with two home runs - giving her a total of four home runs and eight RBI on the day. Also recording a perfect game at the plate was Eva Myers, going 2-for-2 with an RBI. Another long ball hitter for Excel Elite, Jalynn Swiney, went 3-for-4 with a home run - her second of the day.

## WATCH VIDEO



## 2019 USA SOFTBALL JO CUP CROWNS THREE CHAMPIONS

Ninety teams gathered in Spartanburg, S.C. for the 2019 USA Softball Junior Olympic (JO) Cup from July 21-26. Since the inaugural year in 2015, the JO Cup has grown to include three age groups and has crowned a total of 11 champions in its five years. This year's fifth annual JO Cup totaled 28 teams competing in the 14-Under division, 33 teams in the 16-Under division and 29 teams in the 18-Under division. The tournament featured a five-game guarantee for each team – three pool play games and two double-elimination brackets per division. The winner of each bracket advanced to a single Championship Game for their respective age division.



In the 14-Under division, the Hotshots Platinum claimed the trophy with a 5-1 record in bracket play. Hotshots outscored their

first four opponents 24-10, securing their spot in the 14U B bracket Championship match-up against Glory Adkins Gold – who the Hotshots had previously sent to the loser's bracket after edging their way to a 2-1 semifinal victory. A 14-3 win over PA Strikers, though, set Glory Adkins up for a shot at redemption against the Hotshots in the 14U B bracket Championship Game where they would go on to defeat them 7-4, evening the playing field to 1-1 and forcing an "if-necessary" game. With the winner advancing to the 14-Under division Championship contest, the Hotshots offense was superior, eliminating Glory Adkins with an 8-6 victory.

Undefeated Florida Impact awaited Hotshots Platinum on the 14U A side of the bracket for the Championship Finale. The Florida Impact went a perfect 4-0 through the 14U A bracket to secure a spot against Lady Lightning Gold in the bracket A final. A four-run third inning led to a 4-3 win over the Lady Lightning, landing Florida Impact in the winner-take-all Championship game.

A strong first-inning from the Hotshots, which was highlighted by a three-run home run by Kelsie Jarret, gave the Hotshots an early three-run lead that was soon cut to one as the Florida Impact responded with a two-run home run by Megan Devilliers. After three scoreless innings, the Hotshots broke the silence as Selynna Metcalfe hit a solo shot to centerfield that was followed by a single from Karli Quillin who would eventually steal home to extend their lead to 5-2 in the fifth inning. The Hotshots would extend their lead one last time in the sixth inning before sealing the deal with a strong defensive outing in the seventh, earning the 6-2 victory and title of 14-Under USA Softball JO Cup Champions.



In the 16-Under division, the Tennessee Mojo secured the Championship trophy with a 5-1 record in bracket play. The Mojo

earned their first three wins of the tournament by a close margin of two or less runs before unleashing their offense in the semifinal match-up against the Indiana Shockwaves, forcing a 9-0 run rule and advancing to the 16U A bracket Championship. The Shockwaves would go on to shut out the Tampa Mustangs 4-0 in the final loser's bracket game of the tournament, forcing the Mojo to a rematch in the A bracket Championship game. Redemption was consistent at the USA Softball JO Cup as the Shockwaves outscored the Mojo, 4-2, in their second face off of the tournament, forcing the "if-necessary" game. In the final game of 16U A bracket, the Tennessee Mojo silenced the Shockwaves in a 4-0 shutout, claiming their spot in the 16-Under Championship game.

Meeting the Mojo in the Championship finale from the 16U B bracket as the Williamsburg Stars. The Stars had a perfect campaign through bracket play, tallying five wins and four shut outs while allowing an impressive low of one run to cross home plate in their five-game quest to the trophy. In their final matchup of the B bracket, the Stars faced Glory Adkins-Berkhiser who fell victim to another Stars shutout with a 3-0 victory, claiming their spot in the 16-Under Championship final.

The Stars jumped out to an early 1-0 lead in the first inning, but the Mojo answered by scoring two runs in the bottom of the second and one in the third for a 3-1 lead. The Stars pushed one across in the fifth, but the Mojo's lead would hold before pushing two more across in the bottom of the sixth to secure the 5-2 victory and title of the 16-Under 2019 USA Softball JO Cup Champion. Acelynn Sellers and McKenzie Vaughan were key contributors for the Mojo, both going 2-for-3 at the plate with a single and a double.



In the 18-Under division, the undefeated Tennessee Fury took home the trophy after edging their way past

five of their six opponents in competitive one-run victories. The Fury plated a combined total of 35 runs, scoring at least four runs in five of their six games. In their first two games of the 18U B bracket, the Fury won by a pair of walk-off doubles in the bottom of the seventh inning. Walk-offs were the name of the game for the Fury, this time taking eight innings to eliminate Rock Gold, 5-4, in the semifinals, advancing them to the B bracket Championship game against Scrap Yard Internationals. A quick offensive start for the Fury gave them an early 6-0 lead. Scrap Yard would respond late in the game with an offensive push, but the Fury's early rally was enough to capture the 6-5 victory, advancing them to the 18-Under Championship game.

Also advancing to the 18-Under Championship final with an undefeated 5-0 record from the A bracket was Glory Adkins Gold. Dominant offense proved consistent through their journey to the trophy as four of their five victories were won by three or more runs, combining for a grand total of 42 runs crossing home plate. In their A bracket Championship match-up against Georgia Power Gold, an explosive second inning set the tone for Glory Adkins as they defeated the Power, 10-5, punching their ticket to the 18-Under Championship contest for the trophy against the Fury.

After a scoreless first inning, the Tennessee Fury broke the 0-0 knot, scoring one run in the top of the second and pushing another across in the fourth, giving them a 2-0 lead. Glory Adkins broke their four-inning silence in the fifth inning, plating one run and cutting the Fury's lead down to one. A pair of 1-2-3 innings from the Fury forced Glory Adkins to go down quietly in the sixth and seventh inning, though, finalizing a 2-1 victory for the Fury as they were crowned the 18-Under 2019 USA Softball JO Cup Champions. Dominant pitching from the Fury was key to the victory. The duo of Catelyn Riley and Anna Hazelwood gave up just one walk and five hits with five strikeouts and limited Glory Adkins Gold to just one extra base hit.

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# TEAM USA STRIKES GOLD AT WBSC U19 WORLD CUP

The 2019 USA Softball U-19 Women's National Team (WNT) competed from Aug. 10 - 17 in Irvine, Calif. for the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) U-19 Women's Softball World Cup. After a summer of travel and preparation, including stops in Paris and Dublin and a historic third place finish at the USA Softball International Cup in Columbus, Ga., the World Cup was the final destination for the 2019 U19 WNT- one that ended with the team atop the podium as World Champions.



The U19 WNT won the program's third straight World Cup title, marking Team USA's spot in history as the first team to ever claim three-consecutive World Cup Gold Medals with seven titles overall.

Team USA clinched the Gold Medal with a perfect 10-0 campaign, recording six of their victories by way of the run rule. In addition to the powerful USA offense, the pitching remained dominant throughout. The pitching staff allowed only three runs from their opponents while combining for a total of nine shutouts and 92 strikeouts while only allowing three walks in 55 innings.

The U19 WNT captured their first pool play win of the 2019 WBSC U-19 Women's Softball World Cup over No. 5 Mexico with a four inning 15-0 run rule victory behind a 12-strikeout perfect game from Megan Faraimo (Vista, Calif.). Also tossing a perfect game was Montana Fouts (Grayson, Ky.), registering eight strikeouts and retiring all nine batters in Team USA's second pool play win over No. 43 Botswana. In their final pool play match-up of the tournament, Team USA plated eight runs in five innings, beating No. 15 Czech Republic 8-0 and earning the top seed in Group A heading into Super Round.

Team USA captured their fourth-straight World Cup win with a 12-0, four inning run rule victory over No. 3 Canada. In their fifth competition, Team USA played their first seven inning game, but kept their shutout streak alive, clinching a 5-0 shutout over No. 4 Puerto Rico - their fifth of the tournament. The U19 WNT added two more wins with a five inning 7-0 run rule victory over No. 6 Chinese Taipei and a 1-0 seven inning battle over No. 2 Japan. In their final two matchups for a spot in the Championship, Team USA collected two more shutouts with a

6-0 win over No. 8 China and a 9-0 victory over No. 7 Australia.

Earning the top spot in the Gold Medal contest, Team USA once again squared off against Japan, this time for the trophy. It was the same result, with some added excitement, as Team USA took the final victory in walk-off fashion to win the 2019 WBSC U-19 Women's Softball World Cup. It was a back-and-forth defensive battle through the first seven innings of the game, with neither team able to break the 0-0 knot. Faraimo recorded nine strikeouts through her first seven innings of work, giving up just three hits. Offensively, Team USA put the ball in play but wasn't able to break through the tough defense of Japan. In the eighth inning with the international tie breaker (ITB) rule in effect, Japan scored quickly on a double to left field to bring the ITB runner home to score. A single to left field drove in another run for Japan, followed by an infield error to give Japan a 3-0 lead.

Team USA entered the bottom of the eighth inning down 3-0 with Bailey Dowling (St. Joseph, Ill.) placed on second base. Jadelyn Allchin (Fountain Valley, Calif.) ignited the USA offense with a leadoff single, advancing Dowling to third. Frankie Hammoude (Oakland, Calif.) then executed a pinch-hit, three-run home run over the left field fence to tie the game 3-3. With two outs, Charla Echols (Newnan, Ga.) nearly ended the game with a solo blast but the ball stayed in the park for a triple to deep centerfield to continue the rally for Team USA. Jasmine Sievers (Laguna Niguel, Calif.) then singled on a ground ball bobbled by the shortstop, scoring Echols for

# TEAM USA STRIKES GOLD AT WBSC U19 WORLD CUP

the eighth inning, comeback victory, crowning the U19 WNT as the 2019 WBSC World Champions.

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Team USA captured their fourth-straight World Cup win with a 12-0, four inning run rule victory over No. 3 Canada. In their fifth competition, Team USA played their first seven inning game, but kept their shutout streak alive, clinching a 5-0 shutout over No. 4 Puerto Rico – their fifth of the tournament. The U19 WNT added two more wins with a five inning 7-0 run rule victory over No. 6 Chinese Taipei and a 1-0 seven inning battle over No. 2 Japan. In their final two matchups for a spot in the Championship, Team USA collected two more shutouts with a 6-0 win over No. 8 China and a 9-0 victory over No. 7 Australia.

Earning the top spot in the Gold Medal contest, Team USA once again squared off against Japan, this time for the trophy. It was the same result, with some added excitement, as Team USA took the final victory in walk-off fashion to win the 2019 WBSC U-19 Women's Softball World Cup. It was a back-and-forth defensive battle through the first seven innings of the game, with neither team able to break the 0-0 knot. Faraimo recorded nine strikeouts through

her first seven innings of work, giving up just three hits. Offensively, Team USA put the ball in play but wasn't able to break through the tough defense of Japan. In the eighth inning with the international tie breaker (ITB) rule in effect, Japan scored quickly on a double to left field to bring the ITB runner home to score. A single to left field drove in another run for Japan, followed by an infield error to give Japan a 3-0 lead.

Team USA entered the bottom of the eighth inning down 3-0 with Bailey Dowling (St. Joseph, Ill.) placed on second base. Jadelyn Allchin (Fountain Valley, Calif.) ignited the USA offense with a leadoff single, advancing Dowling to third. Frankie Hammoude (Oakland, Calif.) then executed a pinch-hit, three-run home run over the left field fence to tie the game 3-3. With two outs, Charla Echols (Newnan, Ga.) nearly ended the game with a solo blast but the ball stayed in the park for a triple to deep center-field to continue the rally for Team USA. Jasmine Sievers (Laguna Niguel, Calif.) then singled on a ground ball bobbled by the shortstop, scoring Echols for the eighth inning, comeback victory, crowning the U19 WNT as the 2019 WBSC World Champions.

**WATCH VIDEO**



# FROM DREAM TO REALITY

BY KELLEY LYNCH



**As a little girl, I always dreamed of playing for Team USA. I still remember receiving the email stating that I was invited to try out for the Junior Women's National Team. It still feels so surreal that I got the amazing opportunity to wear Red, White, and Blue and represent the United States of America.**

As I try to wrap up and summarize my experience this summer, I wish I would have known how important these people would be to me after just two and a half months of getting the opportunity to work and play with them. In December of 2018 I flew down to Clearwater,

Florida to try out. I remember being super nervous, but also so stoked that I was even getting the opportunity to do this. By the end of the week I had created friendships with some of the girls on the team, and everyone was pretty much in the same boat. We all wanted to know

if our efforts from the past week were enough to earn a spot on the team. Fast forward to a few weeks later. An email... THE email. An email that would eventually change my life. The email that verified my spot on the 2019 Junior Women's National Team.

On June 10 we arrived in Houston, Texas for our training. The team was warm and welcoming, but at this point we all still weren't very familiar with each other. We quickly began creating relationships with each other and started to play our first few games. It was weird at first. This was a brand-new team, and most of us had never played with any of the other athletes on the team. I think our coaching staff did a good job of making everyone feel connected. We played a few games in Texas, and then headed to Paris, France.

Paris was a once in a lifetime trip that I am so thankful to have gotten the opportunity to



**"During our time in Paris, we really started to become a unit."**

be a part of. It was so cool to see how softball is represented there, and how it is so different than the United States. During our time in Paris, we really started to become a unit. At this point, we had spent almost two weeks together, and we had a pretty good feel for each other. Of course, we played a ton of softball in Paris against teams like Japan and France, but we also got to see the Eiffel Tower and watch the Women's FIFA World Cup. From Paris, we traveled to Ireland. Although this trip was

short, a little more than 24 hours, we got to play Ireland and get a feel for the sports role in Ireland. It was really cool to see how blessed we are to play and live in the USA. Places like Ireland and France just are not given the same opportunities and facilities that we have the opportunity to have in the United States.

After 15 days of traveling the world, we finally made our separate ways back home. Even though I missed my bed, I was sad to leave

the team. Through our experiences in Texas, France, and Ireland I really feel like we became a family. We arrived in Atlanta on June 28 and stayed there until July 8. I will never forget this tournament because of the drive I made to get there. Charla Echols, my teammate, and I only live about an hour and a half from Columbus, Georgia. I picked Charla up to head to the hotel, and when we were about 20 minutes from the hotel my car broke down. I called Coach Tarr. She, along with Coach Walton and Coach Tony, did not hesitate to come pick us up. It was funny in the moment, but I think things like that are what make USA softball so special. It is so much bigger than yourself. Our coaches were the perfect examples of leaders and it really rubbed off on the team. This tournament was super cool because we were able to play the senior international teams and we got the amazing opportunity to practice with our Women's National Team. It was so cool to be able to learn the game from them, and just to be on the same field as them was an honor in itself. This is the week where this team truly found its identity. We realized that we were good enough to compete with the top teams in the world, and it really excited us. We finished with a Bronze Medal in the tournament, which





was an incredible achievement for us considering we were the only Junior team there.

July 18-23 was our training in South Carolina during the USA Softball Junior Olympic Cup. We spent almost the whole entire time we were in South Carolina practicing, but it paid off in the long run. After South Carolina, we had a break at home before heading out to Irvine, California on August 5 to compete in the WBSC U-19 Women's Softball World Cup. This is the tournament we trained for all summer long. Of course, you know how the story ended, but I want to talk more about what was happening behind the scenes.

I skimmed through our summer for you because if I listed everything that we did, then it would be more of a book. There is so much

more to this team than just the Gold Medal that we earned at the end.

So, what was happening behind the scenes? Every single day brought a new adventure. Over the course of the summer I created life-long friendships. I developed as a player, but I also developed as a person. Whether it was playing shiners with Coach Walton, teaching Coach Tarr some new dance moves, or laughing until we were crying with the girls on the team, the memories I made this summer are ones that I will never forget. Behind every good team is a good leader, and Coach Tarr really pushed all of us to be our best.

I remember the Gold Medal Game like it was yesterday. We were down 3-0 in extra innings

with the International Tie Breaker Rule in effect. We had two runners on base with one out. Coach Tarr calls timeout to put Frankie Hammoude in to pinch hit. Coach Tarr preached the whole summer that she believes everyone has a role on the team. She even said she thought it would be someone unexpected to step up and help us win the game. Frankie was not a starter for the team at this time, but she worked hard at practice and took advantage of her opportunities. Frankie steps up to the plate and hit the furthest ball I have ever seen in my life. The ball tied up the game 3-3 in extra innings.

That feeling is one I will never forget. Pure joy. Pure happiness. Jasmine Sievers goes on to hit in Charla Echols and walk off the game. Of course there was a dog pile. We received our Gold Medals, and now every time I look at it, I am reminded of all the incredible memories behind it. We were one team and one heartbeat. We were excited for each other's success.

As I reflect on the summer, it honestly makes me sad. What an incredible opportunity USA Softball blessed me with to be surrounded by such talented athletes and coaches, but even



better people. I know I will be a part of the USA Softball family forever, and I am beyond grateful for that. USA softball allowed to be a part of something that is much bigger than myself.

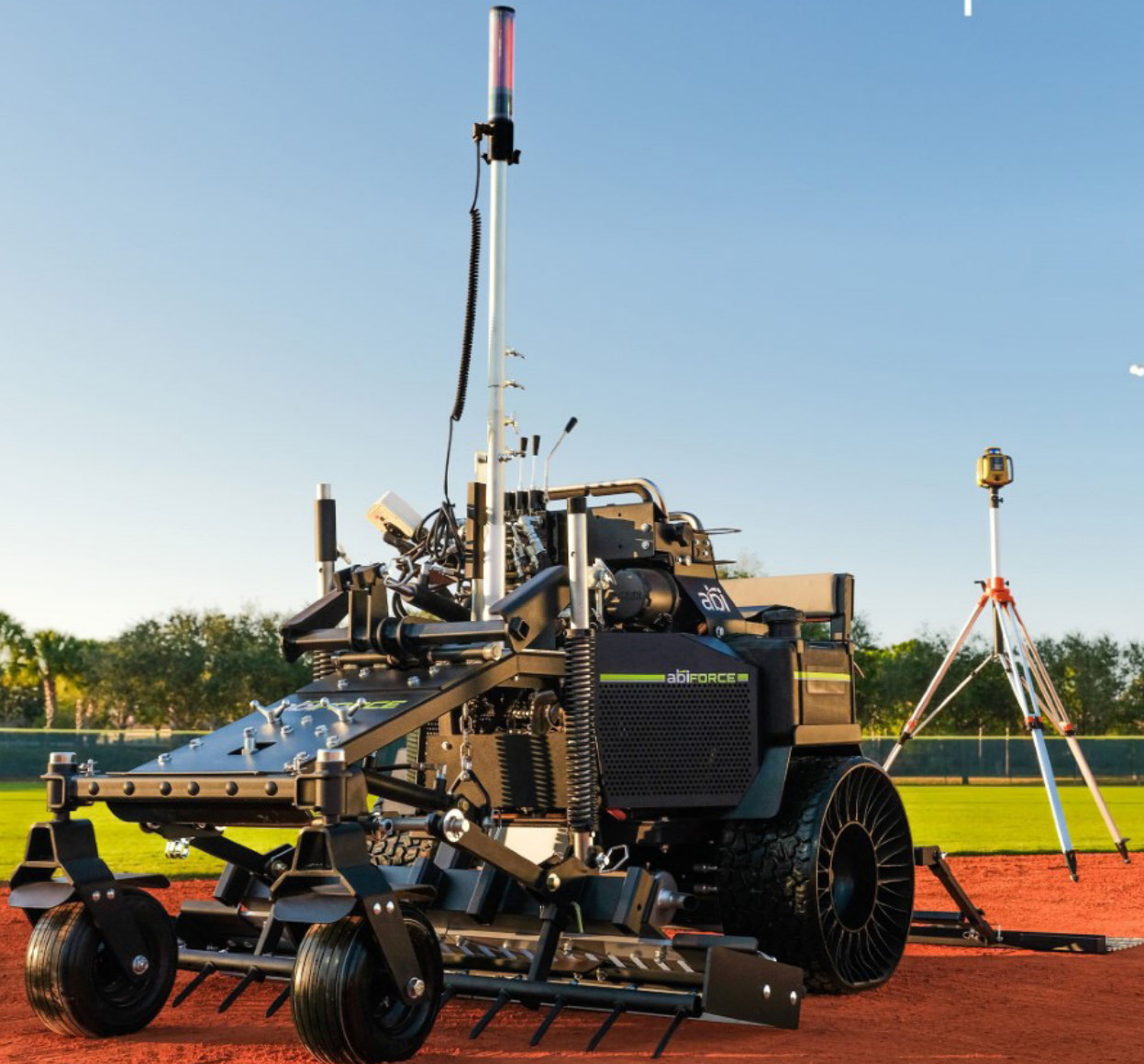
I cannot thank the whole USA staff enough for everything they did for us throughout the summer. Coach Tarr, Coach Bear, Coach Walton, and Coach Tony brought a contagious energy to the field that made all of us want to be better. I gained 16 best friends this summer and together...

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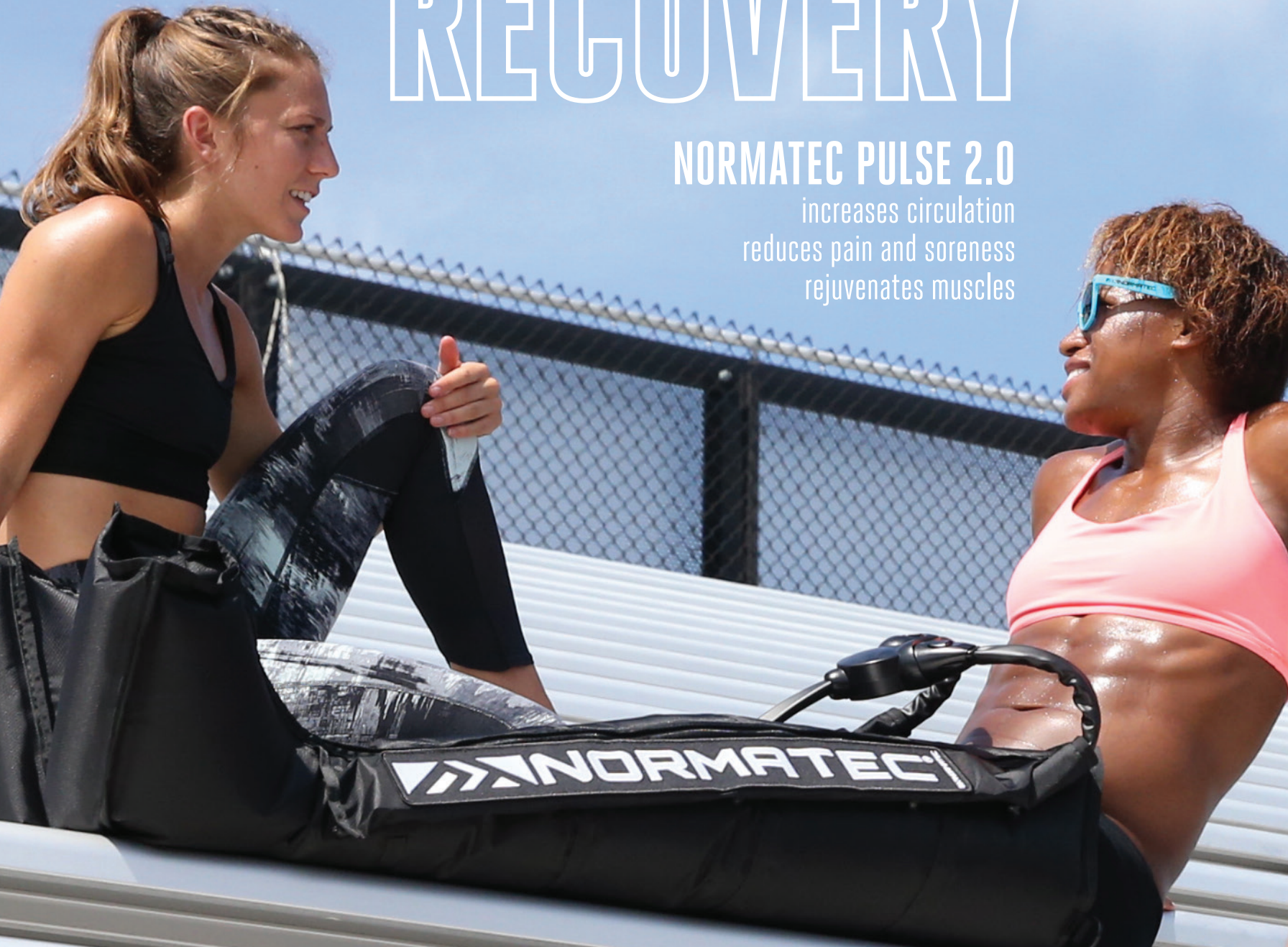
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# CHECK OUT THE LATEST RULE CLARIFICATIONS AND PLAYS



Each month, USA Softball Director of Umpires Kevin Ryan addresses hot topics surrounding the USA Softball umpire program. From updates on the Biennial Umpire-in-Chief (UIC) clinic to breaking down scenarios with Rule Clarifications, read every edition of 2019's Rule Clarifications and Plays!

## FEBRUARY, 2019

In this edition, Kevin Ryan talks about the success of the 2019 Biennial UIC Clinic, the dates and locations of the 2019 National Umpire Schools and provides updates on the 2019 Umpire Manual and Rule Book. [Click here to read the February, 2019 Rule Clarifications and Plays](#)

## MARCH, 2019

National Umpire School updates, SafeSport requirements and how umpires can apply for the Medals Program were among the topics discussed in March. A breakdown on the pitching rule for fast pitch pitchers also provides clarifications on the foot on the pitcher's plate. [Click here to read the March, 2019 Rule Clarifications and Plays](#)

## APRIL, 2019

How can pitcher's receive a signal from the dugout? This question, along with tips on game management, information on bat sensors and the new USA Softball Certification Marks are covered in April. [Click here to read the April, 2019 Rule Clarifications and Plays](#)

## MAY, 2019

How an umpire can join the National Indicator Fraternity and become WBSC certified are among the topics Kevin Ryan discusses in May. Another hot topic – obstruction. [Click here to read the May, 2019 Rule Clarifications and Plays](#)

## JUNE, 2019

With the 2019 Championship season arriving, Kevin Ryan gives umpires a list of helpful reference tools to assist umpires. Appealing a runner leaving too soon and a runner interference on an infield fly are also a few of the Rule Clarifications provided. [Click here to read the June, 2019 Rule Clarifications and Plays](#)

## JULY, 2019

Are courtesy runners tied to a pitcher or catcher in Junior Olympic Pool Play? What's the time limit rule for 14-Under? What is the correct mechanic for a foul tip? Kevin Ryan answers these questions and more in July's edition. [Click here to read the July, 2019 Rule Clarifications and Plays](#)

## AUGUST, 2019

This month, Kevin Ryan provides clarifications on what happens if a runner bumps into an umpire on the base paths and what happens if a player is ejected and there are no other players who can sub into the game. [Click here to read the August, 2019 Rule Clarifications and Plays](#)

## SEPTEMBER, 2019

In the latest edition of Rule Clarifications and Plays, Kevin Ryan gives a shout out to all the umpires who got the call at a 2019 USA Softball National Championship, gives a brief update on the 2020 National Umpire Schools and the Blues Across America program.



HAVE A QUESTION YOU'D LIKE ANSWERED?

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# SLOW PITCH NATIONALS CONCLUDE 2019 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON

THE MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SLOW PITCH DIVISION SAW ANOTHER COMPETITIVE YEAR AS THE 2019 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON CAME TO AN END.



The Men's Super Slow Pitch National Championship kicked off the 2019 USA Softball Slow Pitch Championship Season in Hendersonville, Tenn. from Aug. 15-16 with the Men's Class A Slow Pitch National Championship following on Aug. 17-18.

Claiming the Men's Super Slow Pitch title for the second consecutive year was H. Auto/RDD/Sprizzi/S&S/Easton after narrowly edging Dan Smith/Menosse/Steven Smith/FAI, 30-28, in the Championship Game. Travis Clark and Kyle Pearson were key contributors at the plate for H. Auto, each picking up six RBI with Clark hitting three home runs and Pearson sending two out. Jeremy Yates also sent three balls out of the park, driving in five runs. [CLICK HERE FOR FULL RECAP](#)

## 2019 Men's Super Slow Pitch All-Americans

Kyle Pearson – H. Auto/RDD/Sprizzi/S&S/Easton  
Bubba Mack – H. Auto/RDD/Sprizzi/S&S/Easton  
Daniel Clayton – Dan Smith/Menosse/Steven Smith/FAI  
Greg Connell – H. Auto/RDD/Sprizzi/S&S/Easton  
Steven Lloyd – Dan Smith/Menosse/Steven Smith/FAI  
Brian Wegman – H. Auto/RDD/Sprizzi/S&S/Easton  
Flip Washington – Anarchy/SIS/OA Apparel  
AJ Montano – TDB  
Benn Dunn – Dan Smith/Menosse/Steven Smith/FAI  
Travis Clark – H. Auto/RDD/Sprizzi/S&S/Easton  
Steele Lewis – H. Auto/RDD/Sprizzi/S&S/Easton  
Josh Riley – TDB  
Ryan Harvey – TDB  
John Nelson – Dan Smith/Menosse/Steven Smith/FAI  
DJ Hollingsworth – TDB

Tournament MVP – Travis Clark – H. Auto/RDD/Sprizzi/S&S/Easton  
Batting Champion – Travis Clark  
Home Run Champ – Travis Clark, Agen Dodds (Dan Smith/Menosse/Steven Smith/FAI)



Thunder/E.G.L. Foundation/Gillies Softball was crowned the Men's Class A Champion after an undefeated 5-0 record, outscoring their opponents 108-66 on their four-game path to winning the title. The Thunder defeated Precision/H. Auto/Sprizzi 21-12 in the Championship match up, with Brian McBryde and Josh Fyffee leading the Thunder offense, both driving in five runs with a pair of home runs. [CLICK HERE FOR FULL RECAP](#)

## 2019 Men's Class A Slow Pitch All-Americans

Jeremy Yates – Precision/H. Auto/Sprizzi  
Kyle Pearson – Thunder/E.G.L. Foundation/Gillies Softball  
Greg Connell – Precision/H. Auto/Sprizzi  
Dale Brungardt – TDB/FAI  
David Johnson – Monsta Athletics/ Black Sheep  
Bryan Dezern – Monsta Athletics/ Black Sheep  
Shannon Smith – Thunder/E.G.L. Foundation/Gillies Softball  
Cory Briggs – Thunder/E.G.L. Foundation/Gillies Softball  
Jeff Flood – Precision/H. Auto/Sprizzi  
Patrick Ellwanger – Precision/H. Auto/Sprizzi  
Steele Lewis – TDB/FAI  
Jason Matuski – TDB/FAI  
Ben Dunn – Thunder/E.G.L. Foundation/Gillies Softball  
Brain McBryde – Thunder/E.G.L. Foundation/Gillies Softball  
Travis Clark – Precision/H. Auto/Sprizzi

Batting Champion – Jeremy Yates  
Home Run Champion – Dale Brungardt, David Johnson, Matt Fox (Monsta Athletics/Black Sheep)  
Tournament MVP – Kyle Pearson



The Women's Open Slow Pitch National Championship concluded the 2019 Championship Season on Aug. 24-25 in Waxahachie, Texas with Lady SNI securing the trophy. Lady SNI defeated Low Bobs/Shirts & Logos 12-7 in the "if-necessary" game of the tournament after dropping the first Championship game, 7-8. Megan Miller fueled the Lady SNI offense in the title game, going a perfect 2-for-2 at the plate with three RBI. [CLICK HERE FOR FULL RECAP](#)

## 2019 Women's Open Slow Pitch All-Americans

Sarah Carlson – Low Bobs/Shirts & Logos  
Kelly Park – SIS/OA/Red  
Dani Wayt – Lady SNI  
Katie Mandigo – Lady SNI  
Terri Ross – Low Bobs/Shirts & Logos  
Steph Hartness – Lady SNI  
Kara Hatmaker – Lady SNI  
Tyquilla Abdo – Backman/Team 24/Miken/Worth  
Robin Stebbins – Lady SNI  
Alysia Hively – Low Bobs/Shirts & Logos  
Katie Burdeaux – SIS/OA/Red  
Paige Shields – SIS/OA/Red  
Ashley Mack – Backman/Team 24/Miken/Worth  
Laurel Pillifant – Backman/Team 24/Miken/Worth  
Annie Rardin – Low Bobs/Shirts & Logos

Batting Champion – Katie Burdeaux  
Homerun Champion – Terri Ross, Christian Dowling, Valisha Fincher  
Tournament MVP – Steph Hartness

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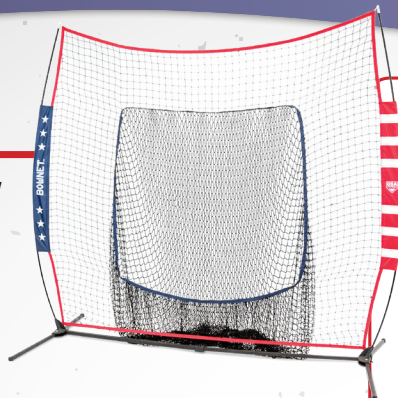


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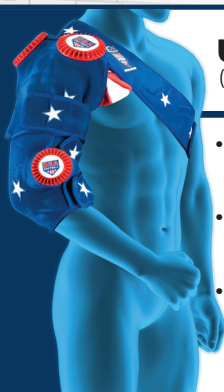
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# USA SOFTBALL NATIONAL OFFICE UPDATES

## Allison Fanning named National Teams Coordinator



Fanning joins the USA Softball National Office as the National Teams Coordinator where her primary responsibilities include overseeing apparel and equipment-related needs for USA Softball National Teams.

Fanning previously spent four years working as a student manager for the University of Oklahoma's softball program. In that role, Fanning assisted with equipment, handled all scouting responsibilities, and managed all in-game video. During her time at Oklahoma, Fanning was a part of the 2016 and 2017 National Championship staff, four Big 12 Conference Championships and two Big 12 Conference Tournament Championships. After earning a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History from the University of Oklahoma in 2018, Fanning went on to work as the Softball and Field Hockey Assistant Equipment Manager for Duke University where she assisted with day-to-day equipment operations for both teams. In the Summer of 2018, Fanning traveled with the USA Softball Women's National Team (WNT) for the Japan All-Star Series and the USA Softball International Cup, handling all scouting responsibilities and in-game video.

"I am extremely excited to be joining USA Softball in the National Teams Coordinator role," said Fanning. "Growing up in Oklahoma, I have attended games at the USA Softball Hall of Fame

Stadium since I was a little girl and to now be a part of the organization that houses that stadium is very special to me. Softball bring so much joy to me. From top to bottom, this sport gives so much to the athletes and the fans and I am so excited to continue my career around it."

## Devin Loehrs rejoins National Office I.T. Department



Returning to the USA Softball National Office is Loehrs, who first joined the event staff as a part-time employee in April 2006, working with the grounds crew and as a scorekeeper for tournaments at the USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex. Loehrs was then hired on part-time for online registrations support in 2010 and transitioned into full-time from 2014 to 2016. In the last three years, Loehrs worked for WeGoLook as the Director of Community and, in that role, oversaw the operations for the 40,000-plus contracted workforce across the United States, Canada, United Kingdom and Australia, while managing app developments, contractor recruitment, onboarding, and vendor contracts.

"It's been great to get back to softball because there's nothing quite like it," said Loehrs. "After completing my MBA and getting hands-on experience with cutting edge technology, I'm excited to bring my new skills, knowledge, and experience to the table and play my part in bettering USA Softball!"

## Megan Schallom named National Teams Manager



Schallom has been promoted to the National Teams Manager where her responsibilities will include overseeing the operations and logistics for USA Softball National Teams.

As a previous event manager, Schallom was responsible for managing stadium events, including stadium and tournament budgets, expense reports, event contracts, stadium concessions and product inventory. Serving as the Tournament Director for multiple tournaments, Schallom coordinated facility management and worked with teams for all schedule, merchandise and tournament needs. Prior to USA Softball, Schallom worked as a customer care specialist and social media coordinator for Rawlings Sporting Goods.

"Over the past two years with USA Softball, I have learned a lot about the game and am excited to apply my knowledge to the National Teams," said Schallom. "I look forward to continuing to grow USA Softball and helping our National Teams reach their goals each season."

# USA SOFTBALL WELCOMES NEW SPONSORS



**Turface Athletics and ABI Attachments Become Official Suppliers for USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex**



Turface Athletics is a leading manufacturer of soil amendments and sports field conditioners with products and services that maximize sports field safety and performance.

The Illinois-based company has provided groundskeepers, coaches and volunteers with the solutions that result in safer and playable fields for over 50 years.

"The USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex prides itself in hosting world-class softball competitions, which requires the best-of-the-best products to keep our facility in pristine condition" said USA Softball Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Craig Cress. "Our partnership with Turface Athletics provides the USA Softball field crew with products to help maintain and enrich the playing surfaces at the USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex."

ABI Attachments is a leader in innovative grooming equipment that properly prepares fields to be safe and playable. The Indiana-based company over 22 years of history in offering equipment to assist ground prep for sports, landscape and arenas around the country. Their premier equipment, the ABI Force, serves a variety of roles for grounds crew in maintaining fields with features such as laser-guided technology and seasonal renovation and compaction relief.

"The USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex field crew are thrilled to have ABI Attachments for our infield grooming equipment," said USA Softball Hall of

Fame Complex Sports Turf Manager, Chuck White. "I have never had one piece of equipment that impacts our ability to build and maintain the most professional infield surface. The ABI Force is such a versatile piece of equipment with a wide range of implements that allows us to do so many different tasks on both wet and dry surfaces. Our ability to use the ABI Force to laser grade all of our infield surfaces at any time with minimal effort provides us with such a great advantage in maintaining a safe, flat and playable surface and manage our surface material more efficiently. The ABI Force is a game changer that every sports turf team needs to maintain their field at the highest level."



## USA Softball and USSSA to Co-Host US Games

USA Softball announced a new event held in partnership with the United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA) as two of the nation's largest sports organizations join forces for grassroots development. USA Softball, the National Governing Body of Softball in the United States, and USSSA, the world's largest multi-sport organization, will partner to host The U.S. Games, a prestigious girls' fast pitch tournament that will take place at USSSA Space Coast Complex in Viera, Fla. on January 18-20, 2020.

The U.S. Games brings USA Softball and USSSA together as co-hosts of the event, a 12-Under (12U) and 14-Under (14U) tournament. The U.S. Games will feature eight teams in each age division for a total of 16 total teams for the inaugural event. Teams will qualify for the U.S. Games through their finish at the 2019 USA Elite Select World Fastpitch Championship and USA Softball Girls' 12U and 14U Fast Pitch Class A National Championship.

USSSA's new Space Coast Complex in Viera, Fla. will play host to the inaugural U.S. Games. The complex boasts 15 AstroTurf fields including five NCAA Softball regulation fields and a Fastpitch Stadium that features 1000 seat capacity, press box and HD Videoboard. The entire complex is wired with 4K broadcast capabilities and will feature the live stream of games on the USSSALive.com platform. The complex is located 45 minutes from Orlando and 15 minutes from Florida's Space Coast with its 72 miles of shoreline.

A future edition of The U.S. Games, 16-Under and 18-Under, will be held at historic USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex, which is currently in the final phase of a \$27.5 million renovation. Most recent renovations, which were unveiled during the 2019 NCAA Women's College World Series (WCWS), included the demolition to the outer entrance and press box area to make way for a new stadium entrance. A three-story press box also features new interview rooms with tunnels leading from the team locker rooms and a broadcast booth. The installation of upper-deck seating has begun, which will increase the capacity by an additional 4,000 seats.

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find a tournament near you!**

# 2019 USA Softball Annual Meeting heads to Sparks, Nevada



The 2019 USA Softball Annual Council Meeting is right around the corner! The meeting will take place at Nugget Casino Resort in Sparks, Nevada from Saturday November 9 (Hall of Fame Banquet) to Thursday, November 14 (Last General Council Session). The first General Council Session will be held on Sunday, November 10, where Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and outgoing President John Gouveia will address all in attendance.

Registration for the Council Meeting can be completed online.

**Click here to complete your registration!**

The 39th annual National Softball Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony will be held on Saturday, November 9 from 6:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. at the Nugget Casino Resort and will honor Rick Havercroft, Britt Hightower, Warren Jones, Tony Laws, Jessica Mendoza, Mike Nye, Ron Parnell and Joey Rich.

This year's USA Softball Trade Show is on Wednesday, November 13 from 6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m., and will be held at the Nugget Casino Resort, Sierra Rooms 1-5. Only 74 booth spaces are available. For outside vendors and exhibitors, the Trade Show is a chance to connect with key decision makers and present the

product or bidding city to USA Softball Council Members.

**Click here to secure your booth space.**

If you are interested in learning more about the tradeshow, please contact Nick Dorety at 405-425-3422 or [ndorety@usasoftball.com](mailto:ndorety@usasoftball.com)

USA Softball will be live streaming the Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and the Closing Session of the Annual Meeting. All live streams will be free.

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6 USA Softball Players advanced to the 2019 Finals in the Softball Division



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**Kyla Abad**

7/8 Division  
Mililani, HI



★ **Aurora Cobb**

7/8 Division  
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# 2019 SEASON HIGHLIGHTED BY A PAN AMERICAN GAMES SILVER MEDAL FOR U.S. MEN'S NATIONAL TEAM

The 2019 USA Softball Men's National Team (MNT) began preparation for the World Championship and Pan American Games by competing in Cancun, Mexico at the FPS Cancun Tournament, Kimberly, Wisc. at the Jack Grafmeier Memorial Fastpitch Tournament and select exhibition games in Stevens, Pa. The Red, White and Blue squad topped off the summer with a fifth-place finish at the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) World Championship in Prague, Czech Republic before ending a 16-year medal drought at a major international competition with a Silver Medal finish at the Pan American Games in Lima, Peru.

## MEN'S SOFTBALL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP - FIFTH PLACE (7-3)

Despite suffering three losses to higher-ranked Australia, Canada and the eventual World Champion, Argentina, the U.S. squad showed they weren't going down without a fight. Returning to the same city where the Intercontinental Cup was held and less than a year later, a 5-3 victory over Netherlands officially kicked off the tournament for the Red, White and Blue.

A 7-4 win over Venezuela capped off pool play, resulting in the U.S. earning the No. 3 seed with a 5-2 record. After falling to Argentina, 9-0, the U.S. went onto win 8-6 over Australia and 5-4 against Venezuela to place fifth.

### Scoreboard:

July 14: .....	USA 5, Netherlands 3
July 15: .....	USA 0, Australia 1
July 16: .....	USA 8, South Africa 1
July 17: .....	USA 1, Canada 4
July 18: .....	USA 7, Singapore 0
July 19: .....	USA 12, Denmark 4
July 20: .....	USA 7, Venezuela 4
July 21: .....	USA 0, Argentina 9
July 22: .....	USA 8, Australia 6
July 23: .....	USA 5, Venezuela 4

## PAN AMERICAN GAMES - SILVER MEDAL (5-3)

Finishing with a medal in their hands for the first time since 2003, the Red, White and Blue went to work in Lima, Peru, and collected five victories despite falling to the reigning World Champion, Argentina, three times.

### Scoreboard:

July 25: .....	USA 8, Venezuela 3
July 27: .....	USA 4, Cuba 2
July 28: .....	USA 0, Argentina 3
July 29: .....	USA 20, Peru 0
July 30: .....	USA 6, Mexico 2
July 31: .....	USA 0, Argentina 7
August 1:.....	USA 7, Mexico 4
.....	USA 0, Argentina 5

# A WALK THROUGH USA SOFTBALL 2019

BY: JENNER CHRISTIANSEN



The USA Softball Men's National Team kicked off its 2019 season on January 2, 2019. Thirty athletes from all over the United States were invited to Selection Trials and compete in a one-week tryout in Clearwater, Fla., where the Men's National Team Selection Committee would select a roster of 18 athletes.

I felt a little nervous but more excited and anxious for this great opportunity. Tryouts were very intense and included two games a day plus practice. All athletes were invited for a reason and it was a tough week. Everyone had a good shot at making the team. Once the Selection Trials were over, all athletes got on the plane and started to head home, anxiously awaiting the roster announcement.

Once the team was selected, the

tournament schedule was set. The team would need to get prepared for the WBSC World Championship in Prague, Czech Republic and cap off the summer in Lima, Peru for the Pan American Games.

The first stop for Team USA was Cancun, Mexico. This was a great kick off to the summer. The team was able to bond, build chemistry and get some quality games in. Team USA lost in the Championship Game, finishing second

in the tourney. This gave us a chance to find out what we needed to work on and showed us how we could improve.

Following Mexico, Team USA traveled to Philadelphia for the final tune-up before the World Championship. Team USA came ready to play, and won the tournament to prove we were ready to challenge the best teams in the world.



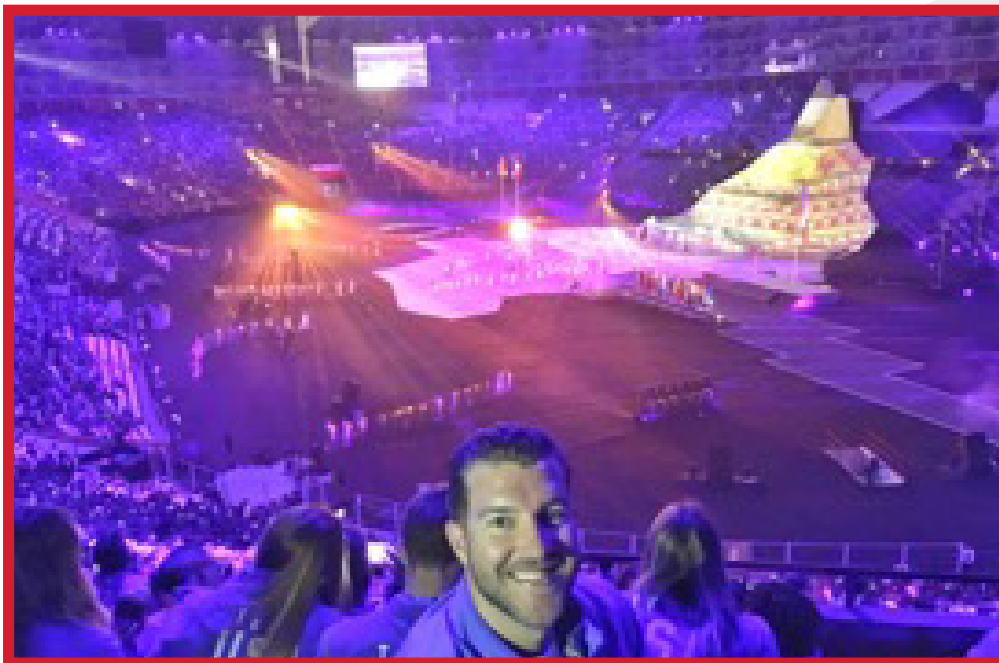
**"The first stop for Team USA was Cancun, Mexico. This was a great kick off to the summer. The team was able to bond, build chemistry and get some quality games in."**



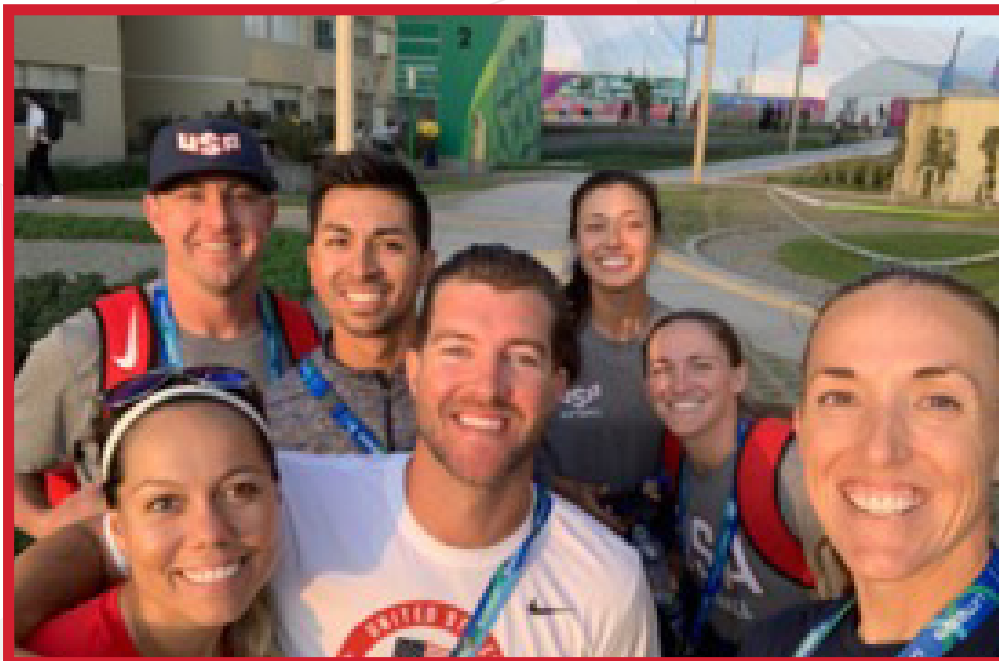
Team USA entered the World Championship ranked fifth in the world rankings. The tournament starts with pool play, then continued onto playoffs if we could qualify. We started very sharp, finishing second in our pool and advancing to the playoffs. After being defeated in the second round of playoffs, our shot at winning the tourney was over. We finished in fifth place. On our nine-hour flight back to the states, we were able to figure out what we needed to focus on and how to get prepared for the Pan American Games a couple weeks later.



Team USA landed in Lima, Peru and, out of the six total teams, was ranked second behind Argentina. Ranked third was Venezuela followed by Mexico at fourth. Ranked fifth was Cuba and in sixth, the home country of Peru. After five games of pool play, we qualified for playoffs with the second-best record. As play-offs continued, Team USA was set to face Mexico with the winner advancing to face Argentina for a chance at Gold. The U.S. defeated Mexico and prepared for gold. Although Team USA started strong, Argentina proved to be too much to handle. Although we lost the game, we won a silver medal which was the first for Team USA since 2003.



Walking through the tunnel and into the arena for the Opening Ceremony was one of the coolest things I have ever been a part of. Chanting U-S-A as our flag was raised still gives me goosebumps thinking about it weeks later. It was one of the best experiences in my life. I am extremely honored and blessed to be able to wear USA across my chest.



As our journey came to an end, the Women's National Team had just arrived. After playing some ping pong, corn hole and catching up, we were able to pass on some things we learned about the village, local restaurants and how the fields were playing. Watching them represent the USA Softball program and win Gold made a great end to the 2019 softball season.

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# BORDER BATTLE TITLE GOES TO U.S. SQUADS FOR SECOND-STRAIGHT YEAR

Border Battle bragging rights remain in the U.S. after the USA Softball Men's Slow Pitch National Team (MSPNT) and Women's Slow Pitch National Team (WSPNT) each bested Canada in the Men's and Women's Border Battle.

## WOMEN'S BORDER BATTLE



Christan Dowling went yard twice in Team USA's win over Canada at the third annual Women's Border Battle. Dowling sent the ball out of the park in her first at-bat of the game while her two-run home run in the bottom of the third helped put the game away as the U.S. defeated their northern neighbors 15-5 in six innings.

Canada brought the game within one run in the top of the third inning with a two-run double, but Dowling's two-run blast in the bottom of the inning quickly regained the three-run lead. Another run crossed the plate in the at-bat, making it 7-3, Team USA, after three complete innings.

Both sides added a run to their totals in the fourth inning while the U.S. opened the game with five runs in the bottom of the fifth. Canada's last run of the contest came in the top of the sixth, but a walk-off home run by Terri Ross ended the game via the run-rule.

Dowling and Ross each picked up three RBI in the win while Kasey Loomis and Jess Tolbert each drove in two runs. Six U.S. batters had a multi-hit performance in the win.

## MEN'S BORDER BATTLE



A 10-run third inning helped the MSPNT claim the program's ninth overall Men's Border Battle title as the Americans run-ruled Canada 30-14 in six innings. Kyle Pearson absolutely crushed the ball, driving in eight of Team USA's 30 runs while hitting four home runs in the win.

Taking a 7-4 lead after two complete innings, 10 runs crossed the plate for the Red, White and Blue in the bottom of the third inning to ultimately put the game away. A single from Travis Clark drove in two, Bubba Mack crushed a two-run home run, Ben Dunn wheeled around the bases for an in-the-park home run, Brian Wegman tripled and Pearson homered again to make it 15-6. The scoring did not stop there with Andrew Collins doubling to plate one and scoring on an error, extending Team USA's lead to 17-6 after three innings.

Canada added eight runs during their next two at-bats, but a three-run outing for the MSPNT in the bottom of the fourth, four runs in the bottom of the fifth and six runs in the bottom of the sixth earned Team USA the victory via run-rule.

In addition to Pearson's eight RBI, Clark drove in four runs with Dunn and Wegman plating three runs apiece. Nine U.S. batters had more than one hit in the win as the team combined for 31 hits.



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# CHAMPIONSHIP SUNDAY AT MEN'S MAJOR IN ST. JOSEPH GETS RAINED OUT; HILL UNITED CHIEFS CROWNED CHAMPIONS



Twelve teams arrived in St. Joseph, Mo. to compete at Hyde Park, home of the 2019 USA Softball Men's Major Fast Pitch National Championship, with the goal of earning a spot in Sunday's Championship Game. The Men's Major National Championship kicked off Friday, July 19 in St. Joseph, Mo., a city that has hosted the Men's Major National Championship previously in 1981, 1998 and 2002.

The 2019 USA Softball Men's Major Fast Pitch National Championship included teams from across the country, including the AWP Lumberjacks (Fairview Heights, Ill.), Bear Bottom Lodge (Ephrata, Pa.), Circle Tap Dukes (Denmark, Wisc.), Hallman Twins (Chesterfield, Va.), Hill United Chiefs (Machias, N.Y.), Kegel Black Knights (Amboy, Mich.), New York Gremlins (Clifton Park, N.Y.), Northwest Implement (Stanberry, Mo.), Ostrander Norsemen (Chanhassen, Minn.), Pueblo Bandits (Aurora, Colo.), Rio Grande Senators (Midland, Texas), and Wizards of OZ Kansas (Silver Lake, Kansas).

The Gremlins entered the 2019 Men's Major National Championship having won the last three National Championships (2016-18) but after weather forced



Tournament Directors to cancel Championship Sunday, the title was awarded to Hill United Chiefs. The Chiefs had a perfect 3-0 record after claiming a win over the then-undefeated Gremlins on Saturday afternoon, 8-1.

Fans saw a number of athletes from the Men's National Team (MNT) participating on various teams at the Men's Major, with Ostrander Norsemen having six U.S. MNT members: Tyler Bouley (Champlin, Minn.), Kevin Castillo (Long Beach, Calif.), Tony Mancha (Las Cruces, N.M.), Gil Saenz (El Paso, Texas), Marcus Tan (Union City, Calif.), and Duane Weiler (Richland, Pa.). Jenner Christiansen (Hayward, Calif.), Nick Mullins (Toms River, N.J.), Erick Ochoa (Imperial, Calif.), and Matt Palazzo (Pleasant Hill, Iowa) played for the New York Gremlins. Jonathan Lynch (Cape Girardeau, Mo.), Jeff Nowaczyk (Midland, Mich.), and Cam Schiller (Prescott, Ariz.) competed for the Hallman Twins, while Tyler Dudley (Battle Creek, Mich.) and Matt Ratliff (American Fork, Utah) were on the Circle Tap roster. Yusef Davis (Long Beach, Calif.) was on the roster for the Kegel Black Knights, while Jon Gwizdala (Bay City, Mich.) pitched for Wizards of OZ Kansas.



## USA SOFTBALL IS THE PIPELINE TO THE NATIONAL TEAMS

After competing with their various club teams, the U.S. squad traveled to Lima, Peru to cap off the 2019 season at the Pan American Games July 25 - Aug. 1. Coming off their fifth-place finish at the 2019 World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Men's Softball World Championship (MSWC), the Red, White and Blue ended a 16-year medal drought in a major international competition by claiming the Silver Medal.



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# 2019 HOF



**JOEY L. RICH**

*2019 // SPRINGFIELD, MO. // COMMISSIONER*

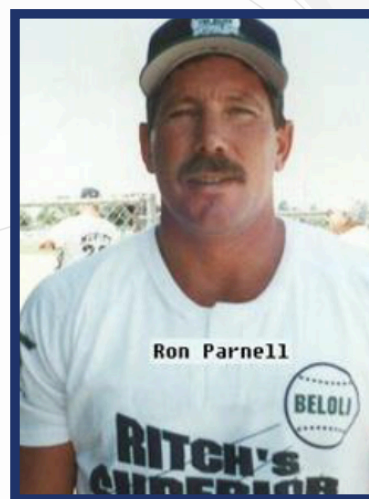
Joey Rich has spent the last 40-plus years to the game of softball at a variety of levels. Whether on the field as an umpire or off it as an administrator, his leadership has made a resounding difference. First registering as an umpire in 1973, Rich worked tirelessly within the Missouri association to grow and develop the game at the local level. Using his knowledge for the rules of the game, Rich took his efforts to the National level after being appointed an At-Large Player Rep for the National Council in 1987. He continued to rise through the ranks of the organization, which landed him the role of Commissioner in 2003. Since that time, he has gone on to hold leadership roles with several Committees, ultimately landing him a spot on the Board of Directors before culminating with his two-year term as President. With a personality to match his love and passion for the game, Rich has earned the respect of his peers and has left a positive impact on USA Softball that will last for years to come.



**RON PARNELL**

*2019 // HIGHLAND, CALIF. // SLOW PITCH PLAYER*

In slow pitch softball, you need a good fielder at shortstop, and according to many, there were none better at that position than Ron Parnell. Between 1983 and 1999, Parnell made a name for himself playing on team's of legend: Steele's Sports and Ritch's Superior. In total, Parnell played on seven Super National Championship squads and three runner-up teams. He batted .675 and smashed over 2,000 home runs while nine times being named a USA Softball All-American (1986-1988, 1992-1996, 1999). Once his career playing at the highest level in slow pitch softball came to an end, Parnell continued to play at the senior level where he continued his dominating play. Parnell earned All-American accolades at the Men's 40-Over Slow Pitch National Championship three times (2007-2008, 2012) and once at the Men's 45-Over Slow Pitch National Championship (2008) while leading his teams to National Championship titles in all but one of those All-American performances. Regarded as one of the most prolific power-hitting shortstops in the game, Parnell's name will go down in slow pitch softball history.



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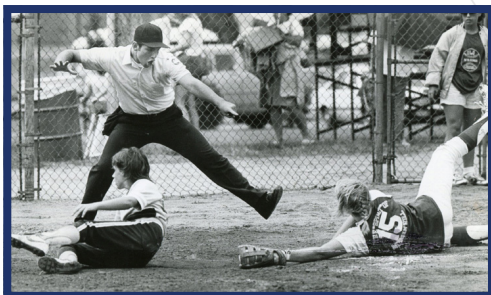
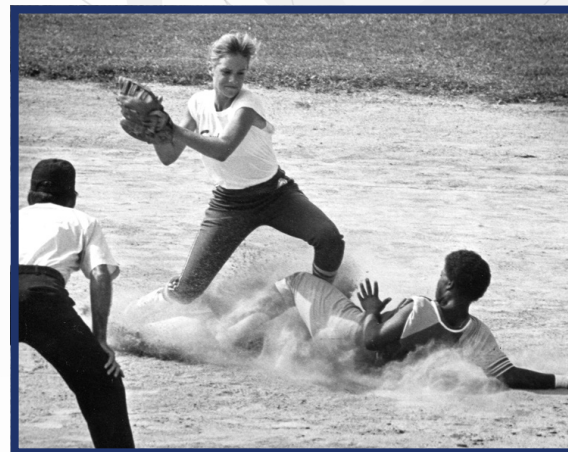
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# FROM THE VAULT



Safe or out? Close plays, whether at the plate or any bag, have been a part of the game of softball since its invention in 1887 in Chicago.

Here, we dig into the archives and highlight some of our favorite close calls.

# PLAY USA SOFTBALL

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