UNITED STATES SELECTED TO HOST 2015 ISF JUNIOR WOMEN’S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

The International Softball Federation (ISF) announced earlier this month that the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America/USA Softball will host the 2015 ISF Junior Women’s World Championship. Following approval by the world governing body’s Board of Directors, the event is tentatively slated for Aug. 7-16, 2015, at the ASA Hall of Fame Complex in Oklahoma City.

“We are excited to host the 2015 International Softball Federation Junior Women’s World Championship here in the Mecca of softball,” ASA/USA Softball Executive Director Ron Radigonda said. “When people think of softball, they think of Oklahoma City. Every athlete wants to play here. Every fan wants to be here. Not only is this event a great chance to show fans the future stars of the NCAA Women’s College World Series and the World Cup of Softball, hosting the Junior Women’s World Championship is a unique chance to give those athletes the opportunity to wear Red, White and Blue in front of a home crowd. The 2015 ISF Junior Women’s World Championship will be a special event for all those involved.”

While Oklahoma City will host the World Cup of Softball for a seventh consecutive time June 28-July 2, 2012, the ASA Hall of Fame Complex will host the event in 2015.

The Inside Pitch
Official Newsletter of the Amateur Softball Association of America

February 2012

A note from Amateur Softball Association President E.T. Colvin

I hope that all who attended the JO Workshop in Oklahoma City had a great time. Not only is it nice to catch up with our fellow colleagues, but it is also a great opportunity for us to receive insight and helpful information about our program. I just want to say thank you to the presenters, attendees and National Office staff for putting on a great workshop.

As ASA President, I encourage all of you to take what you learned at the workshop and put it to use in your association. Abby Lane from MLB Pitch, Hit & Run gave a great presentation over the program and I hope that many of you will take advantage of the opportunities and host an event. At ASA, we pride ourselves on the quality of athletes we produce, and I have no doubt that we can get more ASA players into the Championship rounds.

Bollinger Insurance gave a helpful presentation to help clarify how your teams will be covered. We also got a visit from the ASA Marketing and Communications department, who came out to talk about promoting ASA. There are various ways to market ASA, whether you partake in eFundraising or establish an association logo. Please note that this information is available on the portal for your reference.

To those of you who will begin play shortly, good luck and thank you for all that you do for ASA!
A note from The Inside Pitch editor  
Codi Warren

Welcome to the February 2012 edition of The Inside Pitch, the official newsletter of the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America. It was so nice to meet many of you at the JO Workshop! For those who attended, hopefully you walked away with the proper information to further the success within your local association’s JO program.

We are only a few days away from the kick-off of the 2012 season here at the ASA Hall of Fame Complex. The complex opens this weekend with The Preview college tournament and a 12 and 14-Under girls fast pitch tournament. Not only will we be hosting some of college softball’s best teams, but five USA Softball athletes will be making an appearance.

A lot has been going on this last month at the National Office. Renovations continue on and we are halfway near completion. We can’t wait to show off our new look when we open our doors in May. We’ve also revamped the portal and designed a Tournament Director portal, so I encourage everyone to take a look at the new and updated items on each.

Just a reminder, if you would like to have a news item or photo included in The Inside Pitch, please send me an electronic copy by the 15th of every month at cwarren@softball.org. Any items not submitted by the deadline may not be included, so please plan accordingly. Also, if you have anything you would like to submit for the March issue of Balls & Strikes online magazine, please send them to Jamie Blanchard.

Thank you all for everything you do!

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ASA awards ACE Coaches with a Pocket Radar™ and custom Powerchalk™ account

In an effort to thank and award those coaches who achieve an ACE Certification, the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America has teamed up with sponsors Pocket Radar™ and Powerchalk™ to provide ACE coaches with a prize pack. Every time the ACE Program reaches a 1,000th milestone, ASA will award that coach with a Pocket Radar ($200 value) and the next coach with a custom Powerchalk account ($100 value).

“We are thrilled to launch this new program as a way to honor our ACE coaches and provide them with the proper tools needed to excel and develop on the field,” said ASA/USA Softball Executive Director Ron Radigonda. “Pocket Radar and Powerchalk have become outstanding partners with ASA and we can’t thank them enough for providing this opportunity to our membership.”

The ACE Coaching Certification Program is a four-level certification program that is developed and designed to provide softball coaches of all levels – from beginning coaches to experienced veterans – an opportunity to certify as a coach with a national softball organization. Coaches who achieve certification receive various benefits, including Bollinger liability insurance coverage, a coaches manual and an identification card that corresponds to the completed certification level. ACE coaches also have exclusive access to “Candrea on Coaching”, a monthly eNewsletter by ASA Director of Coaching Education and two-time Olympic Coach Mike Candrea that provides coaching blogs and tips. The ACE Program was put in place to ensure the safety of the players and fans, so in addition to these benefits, all ACE certified coaches must undergo and pass a Background Check.

Eight coaches have been awarded prize packs. John McCauley (Malone, N.Y.) and Karen Hughes (Henderson, Nev.) are the most recent winners. Previous recipients of the complimentary Pocket Radar and custom Powerchalk account are Rodney Holder (Magnolia, Tex.), Kimberly Moore (Oxford, Ga.), Amye Scrivener (Prince Frederick, Md.), Dan Proffer (Grand Blanc, Mich.), Brian Gorniak (Glen Carbon, Ill.) and Katherine Egbert (Hillsborough, Calif.).

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The Inside Pitch

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the United States has not played host to a world championship since Michigan was the site of the 1996 ISF Men's World Championship. The United States hosted three previous Junior Women's World Championships with Fargo, N.D. hosting in 1985, Oklahoma City in 1987 and Normal, Ill., in 1995.

Brampton, Ontario, Canada, was also awarded today with the next Junior Women's World Championship scheduled for July 1-7, 2013. Cape Town, South Africa, hosted the most recent tournament in December 2011, with the 2011 USA Softball Junior Women's National Team beating Japan 4-1 for the title. The United States also won in 1987, 1995 and 2007.

“As we recently saw in South Africa, the junior women's world championship is the premier event for our young female athletes,” ISF President Don Porter said. “The organizers in Cape Town did a first-class job and we are confident that Canada and the U.S. will do the same next year and in 2015. We need them to because this is an important competition opportunity for that age category to be able to continue to test their skills against their counterparts from around the world.”

Softball Factory announces 2012 schedule for National Identification Program

The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America/USA Softball and Softball Factory announced today the initial 2012 schedule for the launch of the ASA/USA Softball National Identification Program. Unveiled in December 2011, the National Identification Program will help identify female fast pitch players for the USA Softball Junior Women's National Team (JWNT) Selection Committee, while also providing athletes with additional college exposure and skill development through Softball Factory.

The ASA strives to give players opportunities to participate in the USA Softball program. With the Softball Factory as an Official Scouting Partner for ASA/USA Softball, this partnership will help facilitate that mission through various identification events and college recruiting guidance for ASA participants.

The following are the first 13 Softball Factory events of the 2012 year with additional events possible. The participating divisions will be 16-Under and 14U with the primary focus of the partnership on the National Identification Program, powered by Softball Factory.

February 26 – San Diego, Calif. – Palomar College
March 4 – Orange, Calif. – Santiago Canyon College
March 18 – Little Rock, Ark. – Hendrix College
March 25 – Rochester, N.Y. – Monroe Community College
April 15 – Boston, Mass. – Forekicks Indoor Fieldhouse
April 29 – Nashville, Tenn. – Cumberland University
May 13 – Portland, Ore. – Location TBD
May 20 – Las Vegas, Nev. – Centennial High School

May 25-26 – Phoenix, Ariz. – Rose Mofford Sports Complex
June 1-3 – Oklahoma City, Okla. – Oklahoma City University (Player Development ONLY)
June 18 – Ashland, Ohio – Brookside West Park
June 21-22 – Bloomington, Ind. – Twin Lakes Park
June 26-29 – Oklahoma City, Okla. – Oklahoma City University (Player Development ONLY)

*Additional events to be announced at a later date.*

Players who attend the National Identification Program must be ASA registered and will be entered into an identification pool for the USA Softball JWNT Selection Committee to review for possible selection. The USA Softball Junior Women's National Team captured the 2011 International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women's World Championship Gold Medal in December in Cape Town, South Africa, with a 4-1 victory over Japan. The bi-yearly Junior Women's World Championship will be contested again in 2013 (location TBD).

“I absolutely loved being a part of the USA Softball Junior Women's National Team,” said 2011 NCAA Women's College World Series (WCWS) Most Outstanding Player Dallas Escobedo of Arizona State. “In the two years I was on the team, I traveled to Colombia and South Africa. I was able to experience amazing cities and play international softball against young women who love the game just as much as I do. I was also able to develop awesome relationships with my teammates which made the experience that much better.”

For more information, please visit [www.softball-factory.com](http://www.softball-factory.com) for registration and more information.
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Every day, millions of lives are shaped with a softball and a little open space.

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Far from the stadium lights and the roar of the crowd come the moments when youth sports matters. These opportunities help form bonds that enrich the game and enhance the lives and life skills of young players. That’s why Liberty Mutual and our partners are proud to bring you the Responsible Sports™ program – offering educational resources, training tips and teaching tools for youth sports parents and coaches, plus coaching awards and valuable community grants.

Memorable youth sports moments are waiting for you. Visit ResponsibleSports.com/Softball today.

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Responsibility. What’s your policy?
Tips, tricks from past grant winners

We get a lot of questions asking for tips on how to rally the community to help win a $2,500 grant. Questions about what past winners have done and what they’re doing with the money. So we created Extra Point, our exclusive Community Grant eNewsletter.

Extra Point will be sent two times per month throughout the three-month grant period. Each issue will feature:

• A Key Grant Promotional Theme with exclusive new downloads
• “Where Are They Now?” Past Winner Feature
• “What I Learned” Parent Perspective

Once the grant period ends and the winners are announced, you will be automatically unsubscribed from this list.

Sign up today! >>

Artifact of the Month!

Since softball has such a rich and vast history, we want to share with you some of the amazing artifacts we have deep within our collections. Stay tuned every month for a glimpse into our archives!

In 2002, the USA Softball team won their fifth-straight Gold Medal at the ISF Women’s World Championship in Saskatoon, Canada. This jersey is currently in our archives, and holds the signatures of the Gold Medal team.
Changes for Spokane ASA

Ron Burke, the Spokane ASA Junior Olympic Commissioner for 29 years, has retired because of health issues, Commissioner Fuzzy Buckenberger announced.

“He’s been there since 1983,” Buckenberger noted. “He’s made our JO a real successful program. He worked hard and went above-and-beyond, and personally, he’s a very special and real good friend.”

“There was a lot of stress sometimes,” Burke said, “but I enjoyed it.”

Burke got into ASA softball as a coach when daughter Emily was six. Buckenberger’s father, Clarence Buckenberger Sr., who was the Spokane commissioner, appointed Burke to the JO position. He served under three commissioners – Buckenberger Sr., John Tuft and Buckenberger Jr.

Randy Hastings, who has been coaching JO softball for five years and is vice president on the board of the Spokane Girls Fastpitch Softball Association, was appointed by Buckenberger Jr. to succeed Burke. Hastings has been involved in ASA softball locally since 1981 as a men’s fast pitch, modified fast pitch and coed slow pitch player and JO coach.

The Spokane commissioner also appointed Ken Mathia, a 20-year ASA umpire, as a Deputy Umpire-in-Chief on the staff of third-year Spokane ASA UIC Randy Harnasch. Mathia, who has worked in six ASA slowpitch nationals, is president of the Spokane Softball Umpires Association and was the organization’s former assignor. He is a youth sports director with the YMCA in Spokane.

Mike Bordner of Nassau County receives the National Indicator Award from Vincent Donnelly, Bob Mauger, and Newton Buchner.

On February 4th, an umpires clinic was held at Wagner College in Staten Island. Over 120 ASA umpires from New Jersey, New York City, Upstate New York and Long Island participated in the event. ASA staff who attended the event were: John Gino (Southern NY Deputy Commissioner), Al Thompson (ASA Elite umpire), Vincent Donnelly (Nassau County Umpire-in-Chief), Glen Payner (Southern NY Commissioner), Newton Buchner (Southern NY Umpire-in-Chief) and Bob Mauger (New Jersey Umpire-in-Chief).
Nationally acclaimed pitching instructor Tim Timmons passes away at 68

Ralph LeRoy (Tim) Timmons, a nationally acclaimed fast pitch instructor, passed away January 8, 2012 from leukemia. He was 68 years-old.

Born September 23, 1943 in St. Louis, MO, Timmons compiled a record of 334-37 pitching in the Class A division of the Los Angeles Parks and Recreation Leagues from 1967-1978 and had seven first place finishes in the Los Angeles City Championship Tournament and one first place in the California State Championship.

Although not having a strong arm, Timmons learned how to make the softball move, learning to throw the rise ball from the late legendary Eddie Feigner, the change-up from the former Orange Lionette and ASA Hall of Famer Nancy Welborn, the drop ball from Joe Barraza and taught himself how to throw the curve ball and the screwball.

At age 65, Tim could still spin the curve and rise balls and eventually began to teach others after he had mastered the various pitches.

He began instructing part-time in 1968 and full-time in Houston since 1988. His enthusiasm for the sport and his desire to develop scholarship athletes culminated with the launching with his partner, Michael Loy, Collegiate Access, Inc, in October of 2011.

It has been said that if a person can effect just one person for good then a legacy has been started and the ripple effect for future good can be immense. “I don’t think knows how many thousands of athletes came through Tim’s influence but the ripple effect is really more like a tidal wave,” said Dan Rodriguez, Texas District 43 JO commissioner. “Tim was one of softball’s biggest supporters and best teachers of the game. Anyone who came into Tim’s life at some point says, ‘Tim’s the best.’ I don’t think I can improve on that simple thought.”

Tim is survived by daughters, Kim and Tammy; grandchildren, Kylee, Katyn, Kayla, Natalie, and Sam; and a great granddaughter, Julian.

Nick Cinquanto passes away

Nicholas P. Cinquanto Jr., age 62, passed away on January 22, 2012 of Bensalem, PA. Loving husband and best friend of Victoria L. (nee Witkowski). Dear father of Christopher Cinquanto (Rae Ann) of Severn, MD and Nicole DiZio (Dan) of Churchville, PA. Loving grandfather of Nicholas and Christina Cinquanto and Danny and Michael DiZio. Dear son of Mary Jane (Paolella) Cinquanto and the late Nicholas P. Sr. Also survived by numerous relatives and friends.

Nick was a graduate of Germantown Academy Class of 1968, Ryder College Class of 1972. He retired from the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole after 35 years. He was the NCAA Regional Coordinator of soccer officials, Conference Supervisor/Coordinator of Officials (soccer) Atlantic 10 Conference (DI), Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference (DII) and Colonial States Athletic Conference (DIII), Board member of EP&D Soccer Association College Assignor.

Nick was regarded as one of the premier Fast Pitch Umpires in the United States. He was inducted into the International Softball Federation (ISF) and the Philadelphia Softball Hall of Fame. He also worked for the National Football League Drug Testing. Nick’s NCAA officiating experience dates back to 1978 and includes rising to the Division II level in basketball and Division I level in soccer, softball and baseball.
So. Cal ASA donates $5,000 to Komen

At the annual Southern California ASA Travel Ball Meeting held in Irvine, So. Cal ASA representatives presented a $5,000.00 check to the Susan G. Komen for the Cure. The money was raised by holding a Showcase October Tournament. The So. Cal ASA is happy to announce that this will be an annual event to raise money for this great cause.

Accepting the award is Cindy Brenneman, Director of Volunteer Services for Susan G. Komen.

Max Wilkes inducted into the Chattahoochee Valley Sports Hall of Fame

Max Wilkes, inducted into the National Softball Hall of Fame in 2011, has had a long career with sports and will be inducted into the Chattahoochee Valley Sports Hall of Fame in Georgia this year for his accomplishments. For about the past 50 years, Wilkes has officiated a variety of high school and amateur sports, including football, softball, baseball and basketball.

Max has been a long time supporter of ASA dating back to 1959 where he played and managed several softball teams in the southeast. He helped organize the Phenix City Umpire Association, and has served as President since 1968. In 1996, he received one of the highest honors when he served on the Atlanta Olympic Games staff for the first-ever Olympic Games.

Wilkes served as Alabama ASA District 5 Umpire-In-Chief for over 30 years and currently still holds that position. He is a four-time President of Alabama ASA and three-time Alabama Umpire-In-Chief. From 1993-2006, he served as UIC for over 75 ASA National Championships. During his 25-years on the National Umpire Staff, he was responsible for the coordination of 350 National Championship Tournaments from the Southern Region. He also served ASA on several committees including the Slow-Pitch Playing Rules and Umpires, Master/Seniors and Junior Olympics and Playing Rules-Special Programs.
The Missouri ASA 28th Annual State Convention was held at Lakewood Resort in Osage Beach on Friday and Saturday, February 17-18, 2012. This was the fourth consecutive year the event was held at this central location. A total of 28 people attended the meetings over the course of two days. Following a light meal of grilled burgers and sides for all the delegates, Friday night opened with a presentation to all Council members of their membership card and certificate, and travel insurance certificate. State Commissioner Joey Rich gave a brief general overview going into the 2012 operations season. Following a presentation of the Lakewood staff, the GREAT AMERICAN FROG RACES were held. Everyone agreed the races were a lot of fun and a great idea. After the races calmed down, the die hards stayed around for Texas Hold ‘Em, and seven participants played cards. A total of $149 was made and that money will be sent to MO Special Olympics to support their softball program.

Saturday’s meetings included a full session from the State commissioner regarding a wide range of topics. State Umpire-In-Chief Jack Walker made presentations on the umpire program and the tournament schedule for 2012 and challenges the tournaments will create. The 2012 Flipping Coin was also unveiled. Following lunch of cold cut sandwiches, State Junior Olympic (JO) Commissioner Kristy Rich presented the JO session, featuring TournamentASA.com operator Greg Light from Kansas City. The meetings ended with the annual “Council Roundtable” and discussions were held on the 2013 convention site, association wide softball purchase program, and a few other issues. The meetings adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

26th annual sports banquet

For the fourth straight year, the Awards Banquet was held at Seven Springs Winery in Linn Creek, about a 15 minute drive south and west of the Lakewood Resort. One hundred ten people were in attendance at the banquet. Following introductions and the invocation by Chuck Snow, the Silent Auction and 50-50 ticket sales were held during the meal. The 50-50 drawing made $142 and Mark Himebrook was the winner. The Silent Auction netted a total of $829.50. All the money goes to the Student Scholarship program. Special thanks to Cindy and Jack McCracken on the auction set-up, Rick Petty for the 50-50, and Kristy Rich for overseeing the payments on the auction.

Awards Presentation

Missouri ASA President Bob Garner, Cape Girardeau presided over the awards festivities. JO Awards were presented by JO Commissioner Kristy Rich. They include:

**Honor Roll of Champions:**
- Northwest Royals (Winston, Boys 10U Fast Pitch)
- Trentonettes (Trenton, Girls 18UB Fast Pitch)
- Northwest Implement (Stanberry, Men’s 23 Fast Pitch)

*These teams won national championships in their respective divisions of play*

**Student Scholarships ($400):**
- Maegen Shults (Rolla)
- Katelyn Hardy (Sedalia)

**Sponsor of the Year:**
- Northwest Implement (Greg McQuinn, Stanberry)

**Hall of Blue (Umpires):**
- George Sutphin (Waynesville)
- Tom Wieberg (Jefferson City)
- Rusty Root (St. Joseph)

**Hall of Fame:**
- Gene Barr - deceased (Springfield)
- Scott Loveland (Springfield)

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DETERMINATION RINGS WITH EVERY HIT
Oklahoma City hosts the 2012 Junior Olympic Workshop

Over 120 Junior Olympic (JO) commissioners and other representatives from local Amateur Softball Associations (ASA) across the country headed to Oklahoma City Feb. 3-4 for the 2012 JO Workshop sponsored by Bollinger and Markel Insurance. Members from the 76 local ASA associations took part in a series of instructional and information sessions on youth softball hosted by the ASA National Office.

“We were excited to welcome our Junior Olympic commissioners and other local ASA leaders to Oklahoma City,” said ASA Executive Director Ron Radigonda. “We’ve really focused on how we can improve our Junior Olympic play and have initiated some exciting changes that will greatly benefit our program. This workshop allowed our National Office staff the chance to present these new ideas and changes to members of our organization so that they may start the 2012 season on the right foot. Our local leaders will be able to take what they learned that weekend and implement these changes within their local association.”

Radigonda kicked off the workshop with a welcome address and was followed by a presentation from Bollinger Insurance, the official insurance program of ASA. The next session featured Abby Lane of Major League Baseball’s Pitch, Hit & Run (PHR), a competition which provides boys and girls 7-14 the opportunity to showcase their baseball and softball skills. ASA staff members also held a session Friday afternoon to discuss the Achieve, Certify, Educate (ACE) Coaching Certification program and RegisterASA. Friday’s activities concluded with a session over TournamentASA.com, the official tournament management system for ASA Softball, and a reception for the JO service awards. During the banquet Friday evening, recipients of the Years of Service award were honored for their commitment and contributions to the ASA JO program throughout the years.

The excitement continued on Saturday as ASA President ET Colvin started the day off with an address to the workshop attendees. Assistant Director of Membership Services Chris Sebren and Supervisor of Umpires Kevin Ryan began Saturday’s sessions with a presentation on the 2012 ASA code and rule changes that will affect the JO program, followed by Sebren discussing the importance of consistent forms and paperwork. Workshop attendees also received information on hosting recruitment tournaments, how to write legislation and rule proposals, and tournament play options. Saturday’s agenda closed with an open discussion for all participants. Later that evening, attendees were treated to a social dinner, which was held at the ASA Hall of Fame Complex Fieldhouse.

The JO Workshop is held on a biennial basis and first began in the 1990s.
Catching up with Olympian Michelle Venturella

Riding a 100-game win streak, the United States entered the 2000 Olympic Games as a clear-cut favorite. However, the Americans learned that the road to a second Gold Medal would not be that easy. Despite losing three games, the U.S. Softball Team bounced back to capture their second-consecutive Gold Medal. Olympian Michelle Venturella was among the 15 women who journeyed to Sydney, Australia to earn their spot in the Olympic records. During her six-year stint as a USA Softball athlete, Venturella captured four medals with the US team, including the Gold Medal in Australia and the 1998 Women’s World Championship in Japan. We recently caught up with Michelle to see what life has been like since her days of representing the Red, White, and Blue.

Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to us Michelle! You have such a long career with softball, what made you decide to play?

I first became involved in softball as a kid playing in my hometown of South Holland, Ill. We didn’t have 12-inch softball, so I grew up playing 16-inch slow pitch until I was in my summer just before entering high school at Thornwood. My older sister knew the head softball coach at our high school and told him I played. I was invited to come out to play in a game with them, so I brought a glove to the field and they gave me a uniform. From that point on I started playing fast pitch and loved it! I was fortunate to have a great coach, Gary Lagesse, who guided me throughout my high school career. We won two state tournaments in 1990 (the first in our school’s history) and 1991 which was the catalyst to help me get recruited to Indiana University where I played my collegiate career. I was a first baseman heading into college but my collegiate coach, Diane Stephenson, turned me into a catcher. Two years later I was trying out for the first- ever Olympic Softball Team!

What would you say is one of the best parts about being an athlete for USA Softball?

The best part about being a member of USA Softball was the fact that I had this amazing opportunity to represent my country in the Olympic Games. I had the opportunity to be around a tremendous group of successful women. I got to be a role model for kids all over the country. I realized that even though winning the gold was a tremendous accomplishment, it was more about the experiences that I went through during those six years of being a part of Team USA that I will always cherish.

What ways have you stayed involved with softball since your time with USA Softball?

After I finished playing with Team USA, I played one year in the professional league and then decided to get into coaching at the collegiate level. I was offered the assistant softball position at the University of Iowa where I spent six years working primarily as the recruiting coordinator and hitting coach. I am currently in my fourth year as the Head Softball Coach at The University of Illinois at Chicago.

You’ve earned four medals while representing the United States in international play, what would you say is your favorite memory or moment during those six years?

The first thing that stood out in my mind was the following moment: After we won the Gold Medal at the 2000 Olympic Games, we were going crazy on the field. After that, we all were preparing to take our victory lap around the field with the flag. I was several feet behind my team, towards the back of our group, and I was trying to find my family in the stands. I looked up and saw my mom waving her hands and shouting to me. When I saw her I was completely overwhelmed with emotion. I literally had to put my hands on my knees to catch my breath. She has always been there for me so when I had that moment with her I felt like everything made sense.

You have quite a busy schedule as the Head Coach at UIC, do you still find time to stay in touch with your former teammates?

I have the chance to see some of my teammates, but one of the hardest things after the Olympics ended is that most of us live in different states so it is not easy to get together. It’s always great to see them when we do catch up. Going through such a unique experience with those women was one of the greatest experiences of my life. They are such tremendous people that were highly motivated and successful at what they did. When you are around a group of people like that you want to be better. They all helped me achieve my dream of doing something that seemed impossible.
Seattle umpires give back

Since December of 2008, wrestling and softball officials from the Pacific Northwest Officials Association (PNWOA) have helped raise over $50,000 for the Jack Reynolds Scholarship Fund. Reynolds, a former member of the PNWOA and Washington official for over 38 years, passed away in June of 2008 after a long battle with lung cancer. After his passing, many officials wanted to continue his legacy in the form of a scholarship fund which aids a student athlete who plans on attending a post-secondary university, college, or vocational school. This scholarship is awarded by committee selection to a student who exemplifies qualities modeled by Jack Reynolds: scholarship, sportsmanship, integrity, dedication and mentorship.

Each year, wrestling and softball officials raise scholarship money through tournaments and other various benefits. The Seattle Metro Softball Umpires Association, an ASA affiliate, began an annual umpire evaluation tournament in 2009 to help raise monies for the scholarship fund. For more information, please visit the Jack Reynolds Scholarship Fund or the Seattle Metro Softball Umpires Association.

Bonnie Anderson passes away

Bonnie Anderson, a pioneer for women umpires, passed away January 15, 2012 at the age of 69. Anderson was a well-known ASA umpire from 1974-1998 and was a mentor, clinician and teacher for hundreds of men and women in the Northwest.

A resident of Springfield, Anderson was inducted as an umpire in the Oregon ASA Hall of Fame in 1990 and the Regional ASA Hall of Fame in 2007. She also is a current nominee for the National Softball Hall of Fame.

Anderson umpired all levels of youth and adult fast pitch and slow pitch softball, and was a Pac-10 umpire for 20 years. She was an ISF certified umpire who worked the 1995 Junior Women’s World Championship in Normal, Ill. She also worked six ASA women’s national tournaments, 29 ASA regional tournaments, 58 ASA state tournaments and the 1982 National Sports Festival and U.S. Olympic Festival in 1994. She also umpired in five NCAA Women’s College World Series championships.

Anderson was UIC for Oregon from 1981-1990, the first woman in the nation to serve such a role, and was tournament UIC for numerous state, regional and national tournaments.
ASA awards Junior Olympic leaders

The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America celebrated 23 members from all four territories for their service to the organization at the Junior Olympic (JO) awards banquet Friday in Oklahoma City. The banquet is a part of a two day instructional workshop sponsored by Bollinger and Markel Insurance that aims at strengthening the organization’s the JO program.

Highlighting the service award recipients were Manuel Gomez, JO commissioner for the Nor Cal ASA, and M. Bruce Kaufmann, JO commissioner for Newark ASA, who were honored for their 30 years of service. Five leaders were recognized for 20 years of service, five for 15 years, one for 10 years and 10 for five years.

Service Award Recipients

Rob Combs, Oregon ASA – 5 years
*Chris Chance, Mississippi ASA – 5 years
*Michael Cox, New Mexico ASA – 5 years
Tommy Hunt, Alabama ASA – 5 years
Jack Hutcherson, Maryland-DC ASA – 5 years
Cassi Rogers, Sacramento ASA – 5 years
Carolyn Shafer, Oklahoma ASA – 5 years
Wayne Straiton, Vermont ASA – 5 years
*Tom Williams, Ohio ASA – 5 years
Chris Wirth, Florida ASA – 5 years
John Austin, Fort Worth ASA – 10 years
Dave Forte, Central California ASA – 15 years
Brenda “Bunny” Petty, Kentucky ASA – 15 years
Mike Schuck, So Cal ASA – 15 years
Patricia Spirito, New Jersey ASA – 15 years
Renee Williams, Nebraska ASA – 15 years
Dan Bennett, Portland ASA – 20 years
Bart Magellan, Great San Joaquin ASA – 20 years
John Spears, Ohio ASA – 20 years
David Either, Rhode Island ASA – 20 years
Merton Ishida, Hawaii ASA – 20 years
Manuel Gomez, Nor Cal ASA – 30 years
M. Bruce Kaufmann, Newark ASA – 30 years
* Regional JO Commissioner
Renneisen receives award

The City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department brought back top honors from the annual Indiana Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) annual conference in Michigan City, Ind. last week.

Parks and Recreation Department Director Mick Renneisen was named the IPRA Outstanding Professional of the Year.

According to IPRA, the Outstanding Professional of the Year is the highest individual honor the Association can confer on an individual. This award is presented each year to a park and recreation professional who has shown excellence in the administration of parks and recreation services in Indiana.

Mick Renneisen has served as the Director of the Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department since 1996. He is a past president of IPRA, and served on the IPRA Board of Directors for many years. Renneisen was instrumental in the development and adoption of IPRA’s strategic action plan, which guides the association’s multi-year operations. He also initiated the offering of youth sports coach training through IPRA member agencies.

“I’m very humbled to be honored with this award,” Renneisen said. “I’m thankful for the outstanding staff that I have worked with who create the programs and experiences that have a positive effect on the quality of life of our residents, while also contributing to the overall livability of our community.”

ASA/USA Softball announces partnership with PR*Bar

The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America/USA Softball, the National Governing Body of Softball in the United States, announced today that PR*Bar of Carlsbad, Calif., has partnered with the organization to be the Official Performance Nutrition Bar of ASA/USA Softball.

“We are thrilled to welcome PR*Bar to the ASA and USA Softball family,” said ASA/USA Softball Executive Director Ron Radigonda. “PR*Bar provides the nutritional energy to fuel our athletes at every level and we want to thank PR*Bar for their commitment to our association and members.”

PR*Bar’s line of great tasting, gluten-free bars deliver almost double the protein and a long list of industry-leading features not found in competing products. PR*Bar was a success over the summer with USA Softball athletes who enjoyed the bars while competing internationally and helped fuel the 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team to their World Cup of Softball and Pan American Games victory.

“I had my first PR Bar with Team USA this summer and they are an outstanding pre/post game or workout snack,” said Molly Johnson (Tucson, Ariz.), current shortstop for USA Softball Women’s National Team. “They taste great and provide good energy assistance throughout my workouts! They are easy to throw in my bag for when I need quick, quality nutrition throughout the day.”

PR*Bar is the official Performance Nutrition Bar of the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Teams. PR*Bar’s agreement with the USOC runs through 2017 and establishes the first time USOC sports dietitians will consult with a nutrition bar company to help create a product based on collective input for use with U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Athletes.

“PR*Bar’s family of the Team USA Bars as well as U.S. Olympic-branded performance nutrition bars will be available at retail in 2012,” said Sheri Sears, co-founder and Vice President of PR*Nutrition.
Fernandez, 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team nominated for U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame

Three-time Olympic Gold Medalist Lisa Fernandez and the 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team are among the final nominees for the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame's Class of 2012, the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) announced today. Fernandez is vying for one of six spots in the individual category while the 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team is vying for the sole team spot.

The public can help select the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame inductees at http://www.teamUSA.org/halloffame/. Voters will be allowed to vote once per day, per category, through April 9, 2012. Recognizing the ongoing support that fans give U.S. Olympians, Paralympians and hopefuls in their training and competition, the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame presented by Allstate was one of the first major sports halls of fame to incorporate fan voting into the selection process.

"Being considered for the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame is really the pinnacle of my career as a softball player," Fernandez said. "When you think about being an Olympic athlete, you think about winning the Olympic Gold Medal, but to be recognized with a nomination for the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame is special and a reflection of everything that I have been blessed to accomplish in the sport. Never in a million years did I think I would be considered for this honor. I am so fortunate to share a nomination with my teammates, not just at the 2004 Olympic Games but at every event that I have been a part of.

Members of the 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team are Laura Berg (Santa Fe Springs, Calif./Fresno State), Crystl Bustos (Canyon Country, Calif./Palm Beach Community College), Fernandez (Long Beach, Calif./UCLA), Jennie Finch (La Mirada, Calif./Arizona), Amanda Freed (Cypress, Calif./UCLA), Lori Harrigan (Las Vegas, Nev./UNLV), Lovieanne Jung (Fountain Valley, Calif./Arizona), Kelly Kretschman (Indian Harbour Beach, Fla./Alabama), Jessica Mendoza (Camarillo, Calif./Stanford), Taaria Mims Flowers (Tucson, Ariz./UCLA), Stacey Nuveman (La Verne, Calif./UCLA), Leah O’Brien-Amico (Chino Hills, Calif./Arizona), Cat Osterman (Houston, Texas/Texas), Jenny Topping (Whittier, Calif./Cal State Fullerton) and Natasha Watley (Irvine, Calif./UCLA). The team was coached by Mike Candrea (Tucson, Ariz./Arizona Head Coach) with assistant coaches Ken Eriksen (Tampa, Fla./South Florida Head Coach) and John Rittman (Palo Alto, Calif./Stanford Head Coach).

Dubbed the "Real Dream Team" on the cover of Sports Illustrated magazine, the 2004 U.S. Olympic Team went 9-0 in Athens, a record that included eight consecutive shutouts and four run-rule wins. In total, the Americans outscored opponents 51-1, not allowing an opponent to score until 55 2/3 innings into the tournament when Australia scored in the sixth inning of the Gold Medal Game.

"What an honor for Lisa Fernandez and this great group of athletes and their unforgettable performance during the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens," said Candrea, two-time U.S. Olympic Softball Team Head Coach. "The 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team is a group of young ladies who raised the bar in their preparation, dedication, teamwork and ultimately produced a performance on the field that will go down as one of the best in Olympic history. I am grateful and humbled to have been a part of this great team, staff and USA Softball and appreciate the 2004 U.S. Olympic Team's nomination for the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame."

Members of the 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team set 18 Olympic records in Athens. No U.S. Olympic Team has ever given a more dominant performance with as many team and individual Olympic records broken en route to the Gold Medal. Among the teams records set were the most hits (73), highest team batting average (.343) and highest slugging percentage (.559).

Fernandez set the individual record for batting average with .545 while Crystal Bustos’ 10 RBI and five home runs were also records.

The U.S. pitching staff, led by Fernandez, had the lowest combined earned run average (.12) in Olympic history. One run is also the fewest runs allowed by a team in Olympic history. And dominant pitching was no fluke in Athens as the team also had a .22 ERA during the "Aiming for Athens" Olympic preparation tour, in which they went 53-0 in 30 cities.

While the team relished in on-the-field triumphs, the 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team battled off-the-field tragedy. The team wore "SC" on their helmets to honor Sue Candrea, coach Candrea’s wife, who passed away from a brain aneurysm 10 days before the team left for Greece. Sue was traveling with the team in central Wisconsin on the “Aiming for Athens” tour.

Candrea was named the 2004 USOC Coach of the Year. Other honors garnered by the 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team were the 2004 USOC Team of the Year award and the 2004 ESPY for Best Female Olympic Performance. For her individual performance in Athens, Fernandez was a finalist for the 2004 USOC SportsWoman of the Year award.

"Softball is not an individual sport. Throughout my career, I have had amazing teammates, not just at the 2004 Olympic Games but at every event that I have been a part of. They've helped me achieve everything that I have done," Fernandez said. "As a pitcher, I was blessed to have a great defense behind me. I was blessed to have a great offense that could score so many runs. I know that without great teammates, what I did in the circle would not have mattered. I could have thrown no hitters and still lost if I didn't have such a strong team." Fernandez is part of a rare class of U.S. Olympians who hold three Olympic Gold Medals from three Olympic Games. In 1996, 2000 and 2004, Fernandez led the Americans to the Gold Medal, the only pitcher to appear in three Olympic finales. Most notably, she entered the final game of the 1996 Olympic Games in the sixth inning and earned the save as Team USA defeated China 3-1 for the inaugural softball Olympic Gold Medal. Overall, she achieved 7-2 record in the circle throughout her Olympic career, allowing only 20 hits, seven walks and six runs (four earned) while striking out 93 over 74.2 innings of Olympic play.

While Fernandez is most renowned for her work in the circle, she also recorded 76 at-bats over three Games. Fernandez hit .333 (23-for-76) overall in Atlanta, Sydney and Athens with three doubles, three home runs and 15 runs batted in (RBI) and 13 runs scored.

A rare pitcher/hitter, Fernandez has the distinction of holding four individual Olympic records in addition to those she helped set as a team. In 2000, she struck out 25 Australian batters, a record. She holds the Olympic record for fewest runs allowed. In 2004, she achieved the highest batting average (.545) in Olympic play and hit three doubles, another record.

"It is bittersweet that softball has two nominees for the 2012 U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame when our sport is excluded from the 2012 Olympic Games in London," Fernandez said. "It's unfortunate that today's players will not have the same chance to compete that I did. The U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame is our opportunity to leave a legacy in the Olympic arena until we get softball back in the Games. It was so special to play in the Olympics. My teammates and I appreciated the opportunity to represent our country on that stage. To have a place in the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame, that would be incredible. That's where you leave your mark. There is nothing more special than being an Olympian and being in the Hall of Fame would truly be an honor."

No softball athletes are currently inducted into the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame.
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LE-AL-CO teammates headline 2011 Hall of Fame class

The Tennessee Amateur Softball Association hosted its 6th Annual Hall of Fame Induction on December 3rd at the new Hendersonville Public Library. An estimated 120 attendees were on hand as a total of nine individuals were inducted into an elite class.

“This banquet was undeniably the best yet,” stated Commissioner Ellis. To be able to host this prestigious event in such a beautiful new 13 million dollar facility and to have 120 attendees was perfect as the Tennessee ASA Annual Meeting came to a close. I would like to thank our sponsor, Top Prospect Network, the Hall of Fame Committee, Hendersonvile Parks Director Dave LeMarbre, and the City of Hendersonville for allowing us to pay tribute to these well-deserving individuals in such a remarkable setting”.

Teammates Mac Stalcup and Tommy Everette from the Lebanon, Tenn. based men’s slow-pitch powerhouse entered the Hall together. The categories and inductees were:

**Slowpitch**
- James “Skip” Evans (Manager)
- Tommy Everette (Player)
- Mac Stalcup (Player)
- Buck Brown (Player)

**Fastpitch**
- Paul Potter (Player)

**Meritorious Service**
- Lawrence “LA” Tucker
- Jack Armstrong.

Click here for the bios of the Hall of Fame inductees.

Mike Rabin (center), Seattle ASA Commissioner, presented the James Farrell Award of Excellence to the City of Kent, Wash. The city received the award after hosting one of the highest rated ASA National Championships. Accepting the award is Kent mayor Suzette Cooke.
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—Ron Radigonda,
Executive Director of ASA

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*Note: Online registrations may be charged credit card processing and transaction fees. Please call for quote 888.427.9170 Option 3, Option 1
2012 ASA 2K Series locations announced

The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America is pleased to announce that the Combat Capital City Classic, held April 20-22 at the ASA Hall of Fame Complex in Oklahoma City, kicks off 2012 ASA 2K Men’s Slow Pitch Series presented by Combat. Now in its fifth year of existence, the ASA 2K Series consists of designated ASA tournaments that each award a $2,000 travel certificate to the first place team to travel to the ASA Men’s Class A National Championship in Oklahoma City. The first place team at each tournament will also receive a Combat prize pack that includes three bats, 15 batting shirts, shorts and hats.

“We are thrilled to continue our partnership with Combat on the 2012 ASA 2K Series tournaments,” said ASA/USA Softball Executive Director Ron Radigonda. “This year, we have provided an additional qualifying tournament and we encourage all our slow pitch teams to participate in this extra opportunity. The ASA Hall of Fame Complex is home to the nation’s top softball tournaments like the NCAA Women’s College World Series (WCWS) and the World Cup of Softball. The ASA 2K Men’s Slow Pitch Series is the premier event for our adult slow pitch participants, and it provides our fans a chance to see the best of the best vie for an the 2012 ASA Men’s Class A National Championship.”

In order to participate in the ASA Men’s Class A National Championship in Oklahoma City, teams must compete in either an ASA 2K event or ASA Territorial National Championship. Teams will be awarded points based on their finish in each ASA 2K event with the team who earns the most points at end of Series also winning a Combat prize should they attend the ASA Men’s A National Championship.

If a team repeats as winners in more than one of the ASA 2K events, the certificate will be distributed to the top finishing team that has yet to receive an award. These cash certificates are only redeemable upon arrival in Oklahoma City and subsequent participation in the ASA Men’s Class A National Championship Finals. The ASA Class A Men’s National Championship team will also receive a Combat prize pack that includes 15 bats, bat bags and batting fleeces.

“Combat Sports is extremely excited to enter a third season supporting the ASA 2K Series,” said Johnny McCraw, Combat National Promotions Manager. “The series has been a huge success the last two years and we look forward to 2012. We are planning on attending events and having demo products available to promote our new product line. We can’t wait to get to the fields.”

Each tournament site is free to incorporate local rules they see fit provided that they restrict each participating team to five players that appear on the ASA Slow Pitch Restricted Players List. The list can be found by clicking here. It is also required that teams submit a complete roster to the tournament director prior to their ASA 2K events.

Listed below are the initial sites for the 2012 ASA 2K events:

- **April 20-22** – Oklahoma City, Okla. – Combat Capital City Classic
- **May 4-6** – Owatonna, Minn. – 33rd Annual Corky’s Earlybird Men’s Softball Classic
- **May 5-6** – Portland, Ore. – Best of the Northwest
- **May 5-6** – Cincinnati, Ohio – Mid America Grand Slam
- **May 19-20** – San Diego, Calif. – ASA 2K Series
- **June 8-10** – Tupelo, Miss. – Gum Tree Classic
- **June 15-17** – Bloomington, Ind. – ASA 2K Series Midwest Challenge
- **June 22-24** – Bismarck, N.D. – McQuade
- **August 3-5** – Chattanooga, Tenn. – Chattanooga Cho Cho ASA 2K Classic

For more information on the 2012 ASA 2K Men’s Slow Pitch Series presented by Combat, visit [www.asasoftball.com](http://www.asasoftball.com).
ASA Northwest Region 15 Hall of Fame

Two active commissioners, a retired player and a retired coach were inducted into the ASA Northwest Region 15 Hall of Fame as the Class of 2012 during the region’s annual council meeting on January 26.

Idaho Commissioner Steve Anthony and Alaska Commissioner Rod Hill were enshrined along with former modified fast pitch player Mike Peterson and Junior Olympic fast pitch coach George Lynn, both from Spokane.

Anthony, who is also the Region 15 director, has been involved in ASA softball for more than 42 years as a player, coach and administrator. His first position with ASA was as a Player Representative for Idaho. In 1983 he became a district commissioner and in 1986 was elected president of Idaho ASA. He became state commissioner in 2002 and is chairman of the ASA Seniors Committee.

Anthony, who has served as tournament director for five ASA national tournaments in the state and conducted more than four dozen national qualifiers and regionals, was inducted into the Idaho ASA Hall of Fame in 2005. He has been director of the Coeur d’Alene, Idaho Parks and Recreation Department for 29 years.

Hill’s multifaceted career of more than 50 years includes player, coach, umpire and administrator. A national-tournament umpire who has ASA Elite status in slow pitch, he was inducted as an umpire and credits the late Jerry Kenney for his success. Kenney, who was inducted into the Northwest Region 15 Hall of Fame from Alaska in 1992, taught “the love of the game, respect the game and never cheat the game,” Hill said.

Hill’s career started as a player in a church fastpitch league in The Dalles, Ore. He umpired his first game in the summer of 1964 in Hood River, Ore. in a program where you would play a game then someone from your team would umpire the next game. His “blue” career took off from there. He umpired his first ASA Regional in Spokane in 1982, a Men’s Class A Tournament, and his first national in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho in 1986, a JO Girls 18-Under slow pitch tournament.

Peterson, an all-around athlete who was a football wide receiver at Washington State University, started his softball playing career innocently enough in the summer of 1982 when a friend invited him to join his team. During that first season, Peterson got a glimpse of the men’s major modified fastpitch game and joined that program the following summer.

Peterson helped that first team qualify for the ASA Men’s Major Modified National Tournament, the first of his 15 national championship appearances, where the team finished fifth. His teams had 12 top-10 finishes, winning two national championships, one of which capped an undefeated season in 1987. He was an All-American center fielder eight times, four of which were first team accolades. Peterson continues to stay active in sports as an NCAA Division I basketball referee and radio and television color man in Spokane.

Lynn started coaching while stationed with the Air Force in Iceland in 1988 when his oldest of three daughters, Kirsten, was 7 years old. Twenty-two years later, following the 2009 season, he stepped aside. He accumulated more than 700 victories with his Spokane Sliders program in ASA play, from 8-Under through 18-Under GOLD, for which he was honored by the National Fastpitch Coaches Association. His Sliders teams made 10 national tournament appearances.

Lynn, who could not attend the induction because he was deployed with the Air Force in Guam, was also the head softball coach at Shadle Park High School in Spokane for 10 years. His teams were perennial state-championship contenders, winning one title, and he won more than 200 games. Daughters Kirsten, Ashley and Danielle, who all played for their father, gave a touching tribute to Lynn, and his wife, Karen, accepted the award. Lynn was able to watch and participate via Skype, which was hooked up in the banquet hall to an 8x8 screen.

The Region 15 council also elected four new members to its Hall of Fame for induction as the Class of 2013 next January – Portland Commissioner Ron Boley, retired Portland JO Commissioner Boots Duffy, retired player Steve Newell from Portland and retired Spokane Umpire-in-Chief Chuck Stewart.

Spokane ASA Commissioner Fuzzy Buckenberger made a special presentation to Spokane Youth Sports Association, which runs an ASA program, and its director, Phil Helean, for its support through the years.
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