Become a part of USA Softball’s legacy!

Help preserve the past, present and future of USA Softball by joining the ASA/USA Softball Legacy Club. The program, designed to generate financial support for all USA Softball National Teams, has been organized to support and promote all athletes who don the Red, White and Blue. An effort to connect alumni, staff, fans and donors, the Legacy Club’s emphasis is simple; to make sure the legacy continues for future generations.

“The USA Softball Legacy Club is an exciting new program,” said ASA/USA Softball Executive Director Craig Cress. “As the National Governing Body of softball, the Amateur Softball Association is responsible for training, equipping and promoting all of the USA Softball National Teams for international and domestic competitions. The money generated through this program, as well as others like the USA Softball Ambassador Program, help us to do just that. We have built a reputation as being highly successful in international play and support we get from the advocates of our program help keep that reputation intact.”

Click here if you would like more information on USA Softball Legacy Club membership

Launched January 1, the USA Softball Legacy Club has already generated over $40,000 with 100 percent of the proceeds going directly towards the USA Softball National Team programs. Money generated will be used to support the costs of training teams for international play and travel to those competitions. Depending on levels of support, members receive different benefits that are only available to via the USA Softball Legacy Club.

Along with the financial support that the USA Softball Legacy Club generates, it is also provides an opportunity to unite alumni of the program. Every athlete who has ever worn the USA Softball uniform in a World Championship, World Cup, Pan American Games, Olympics or Border Battle event is automatically a member of the group. Future plans include alumni gatherings, events, camps and clinics across the country.

Depending on the level of contribution, members receive benefits including autographed team posters, exclusive t-shirts and polo’s, autographed replica jerseys and even a trip to an international event.

“I had the pleasure of visiting with the National Umpire School that was hosted by Arizona ASA this past weekend in Peoria. I was enthralled by the enthusiasm of the students. They wanted to be there, they wanted to learn and they appreciated the effort the instructors were making to train them.”

ASA/USA Softball President Phil Gutierrez

Read more from the President on Page 2!
Greetings! What a wonderful, enthusiastic and energetic start ASA/USA Softball has had to the 2014 softball season! Despite miserable weather conditions that delayed (and in some cases cancelled) flights throughout the Eastern portion of our country, we had excellent attendance at our scheduled biennial Junior Olympic (JO) Workshop to start the month. The National Office Staff and the JO Committee prepared an excellent meeting agenda that was completed flawlessly. I departed the JO Workshop confident that every attendee associated with our JO Program left the event more informed, better equipped, and more inspired about this season’s beginning. The workshop also served as a forum to inform and train new association commissioners regarding their duties pertaining to the JO Program.

Also attending the JO Workshop were about 30 association commissioners who, in addition to participating in some of the JO Workshop events, took the opportunity to hold a roundtable meeting with me and our Executive Director, Craig Cress. The group received briefings on a variety of topics including the Umpire Program, IT Department, Communications Department and the Membership Department. Additionally, the group discussed topics suggested by those present, which included commissioner meetings, commissioner agreements, tournament formats, additional NITs, association fees, association audits, bonding of association commissioners and additional championships such as Winter Championship in both the Adult and the JO Programs. Before ending the roundtable committees were assigned to look into the possibility of holding Winter Championships in the near future. Truly a very successful weekend for both the JO Commissioners as well as the association commissioners.

Some associations have already started playing softball this year. If you are in a warm weather area, league play has most likely started in both slow pitch and fast pitch. I urge you to check with those leagues and travel clubs to make sure proper registration of players/teams has occurred so that insurance coverage is in place as softball injuries have already occurred this year on some areas. I also ask that you ensure all your umpires are also registered, preferably all the way through the National Office, because if teams and leagues are playing umpires are umpiring games.

Speaking of umpires, I had the pleasure of visiting with the National Umpire School that was hosted by Arizona ASA this past weekend in Peoria. I was enthralled by the enthusiasm of the students. They wanted to be there, they wanted to learn and they appreciated the effort the instructors were making to train them. Moreover, the job that the Arizona ASA Umpire Program accomplished hosting the school was admirable. Although this will be the only National Umpire School I’ll be able to visit this year, I am confident that others held have been and those still scheduled will be a mirror of this one.

I wish each of you success as you begin your new seasons. Please remember that the National Office Staff is available to answer any questions you may have and/or to assist you with any problems with which you may need help.

Lastly, the Board of Directors will meet at the end of March for our Spring Meeting. If you have anything you believe should be brought to the attention of or discussed by the Board, please discuss the issue/topic with one of your Territory Vice-Presidents so they may have it placed on the agenda.

Your membership and participation with ASA/USA Softball is much appreciated.
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Hello everyone and welcome to the February 2014 issue of The Inside Pitch, the official newsletter of ASA/USA Softball!

This issue, I wanted to focus on a new program that we’ve started here at the National Office with our Executive Director, Craig Cress. As you are all aware (hopefully), Craig has a Twitter account (@ASA_CraigCress) and has become quite the Twitter machine! Julie, Steven and I (or Team Comm as we like to say) managed to convince Craig to do a weekly 30 minute Q&A session. Here’s how it works: anyone can tweet a question to Craig (so long as they have a Twitter and “tag” him) and he responds. Pretty simple right?! We currently just wrapped up Week 3 of his weekly Q&A’s, and each week are excited to see more and more questions get asked!

There are several benefits to holding a weekly (or even bi-weekly) Q&A session for your association’s Twitter/Facebook account. Here are a few that I’d like to highlight:

1. **More people will follow your association!** Since launching Craig’s Q&A’s, he’s had an increase of at least 50% in Twitter followers! I like to joke with him that he now has more followers than I do! By hosting a Q&A, your association has the potential to reach more people, which in turn gets out more information about ASA/USA Softball!

2. **Users feel valued and appreciated.** Rather than just pushing out information, a Q&A is a way of letting people get the information they want to know. It’s also a great way to engage in a conversation with the people who either do or could Play ASA!

3. **You can get a feel for what your audience wants!** By creating a Q&A, your association can get a feel for what people are thinking. We always like to know the hot topics in softball, and by engaging your audience you can find out trends and get good feedback from our members.

4. **It helps break a common misconception!** In a recent interview by StudentSports.com/Softball, Craig was asked what a common misconception is that people have about ASA/USA Softball. His response was “…that we’re closed minded…” What better way to combat this common misconception than to actively engage with your audience?!

Has your association implemented something like this on your social media platforms? If so, what are some of the benefits you’ve seen? Share your success stories by sending me an email at cwarren@softball.org.

If you’re interested in finding out how your association can begin a Q&A session, please feel free to reach out to any member of Team Comm. We’re always here to help!

That’s all for now! Until next time, thanks for all you do for ASA/USA Softball!
Two men whose careers each span more than four decades are the newest members of the ASA Northwest Region 15 Hall of Fame.

Mike Trotter (Eagle Point, Ore.), a men’s fast-pitch pitcher, and Jim Bedard (Spokane, Wash.) were inducted during the annual Region 15 council meeting in Spokane on January 25. Trotter was inducted as a player and Bedard in the contributor category.

Bedard has been the Spokane ASA Adult Player Representative since 2001 and has served as the ASA NW Region 15 Adult Player Representative.

Bedard has been involved in softball since starting as a player in fastpitch in the Tri-Cities in 1969. During his career he has been involved in three phases of the game – fast pitch, modified pitch and slow pitch – as either a player, coach or sponsor. Most of the time he wore all three hats at once. He even coached a women’s modified team for a couple of years.

League championships and high finishes were commonplace for Bedard’s teams. In one 26-year stretch, his men’s modified teams were either first or second with two undefeated seasons. He added four men’s modified and one co-ed city championship to that mix, a five-year run of Men’s A Modified fall league titles and later three league titles in Men’s Senior Slow Pitch.

Bedard played in four ASA National Championship Tournaments, two in Men’s Modified, one Men’s 40-Over Modified and Men’s Senior Slow Pitch. He also coached two of those teams.

He sponsored his first team in 1978 when he owned the Forum Tavern in Spokane Valley and in recent years with his company Bedard & Associates. He has sponsored at least one team in the 35 seasons since.

Bedard continues as a player, coach and sponsor but his game of choice these days is in the Men’s Senior Slow Pitch program in Spokane.

Trotter was a gifted athlete when his playing career got started in his hometown of Longview, Wash. To take advantage of his speed and hitting, he started as an outfielder before he switched to pitching when he joined Weyerhauser Timber with team manager Ron Burke teaching him the windup. He added to his arsenal as his career took off with Ron Danders introducing him to the rise ball, which became his best pitch.

His career was interrupted locally in 1964 when he was drafted into the service, joining the Marine Corps. He was a helicopter pilot during two tours in Vietnam but he found time when he was stateside to play some fast pitch in Florida and California. His Santa Ana team won the All Navy League and he was named MVP.

He came out of the service in 1969 and returned to Portland where he resumed his dominating career. Because of work-related moves the next several years, he found himself frequently switching teams. During one of his more extended stints with Brown’s Masonry in Lake Oswego, he had an 85-13 record. His next stop was Medford, where he strung together a record of 144-1.

Not surprisingly, because of his pitching and hitting he was picked up often for tournaments. Included among his 40 ASA National Championship tournaments is a current streak of playing in every Men’s Fast Pitch 55-and-Over National Championship since the classification was started.

One career highlight was when he faced ASA and Region 15 Hall-of-Famer Jimmy Moore in an ASA Men’s Fast Pitch 45-and-Over National Tournament where his team won 1-0 in eight innings. Another was when, at age 70 he pitched his team of youngsters, the Southern Oregon Bandits, to the Championship of the Seattle Open.
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<<< BOOK NOW AT HHONORS.COM/SOFTBALL <<<
ASA/USA Softball is happy to announce that Devin Loehrs (Edmond, Okla.) has been hired as the Registration/Technical Support for the ASA/USA Softball National Office staff in Oklahoma City. Many of our ASA/USA members already know Devin as he has been around the National Office since 2007 when he started working part-time.

“I am looking forward to my opportunity to better the softball community,” said Loehrs “When I started as a part timer at the National Office nearly seven years ago, I learned quickly to appreciate the greatness of this organization and its members. The ASA/USA Softball legacy of success is not easy to accomplish but I’m ready to take on the challenge!”

Beginning in 2007, Loehrs has served as both an intern and part time Technical Support staff member, particularly with the RegisterASA department. As part of his duties, Loehrs assisted with designing the website features and formats, trained and assisted administrative users on RegisterASA and created instructional manuals/how-to guides for users. Loehrs has also worked in the press box with ASA/USA Softball Tournament Directors at the ASA Hall of Fame Stadium assisting with scorekeeping and announcing.

“It is always great to be able to hire someone that has previous experience with our organization,” said ASA/USA Softball Executive Director Craig Cress. “Devin Loehrs has been with ASA/USA Softball for many years as a part time employee and has performed numerous duties at a very successful level. We are extremely fortunate to have him on the ASA/USA Softball National Office Staff.”

In addition to his work with ASA/USA Softball, Loehrs worked at Trinity OKC as a Church Plant Missionary where he helped develop a new website layout. He also worked as an intern at Quail Springs Baptist Church in Oklahoma City where he led, hosted, created and budgeted church events.

Loehrs is currently enrolled at the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond, Okla. He is majoring in Business Management with an emphasis in Human Resources and will graduate in the Summer of this year. He graduated from Edmond Memorial High School in 2009. Check out this profile on Devin from the June, 2011 issue of Balls & Strikes!
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AS THEY TAKE ON THE WORLD.
A lot of scorebooks made their way around the country this past month as ASA/USA Softball donated over 1,000 to Special Olympics State Associations, Puerto Rico and Canada. ASA/USA Softball is proud to annually donate scorebooks to Special Olympics in addition to raising funds at each Annual Council Meeting. ASA/USA Umpires also dedicate their time to umpire the Special Olympics North America (SONA) Softball Invitational Tournament.
World Cup heads to Irvine!
Athletes named to WNT Selection Camp

With renovations underway at the ASA Hall of Fame stadium, the 2014 World Cup of Softball will move to Irvine, Calif. and be played at Bill Barber Park in conjunction with the Champions Cup July 7-12. The World Cup, an ISF sanctioned event, will include some of the top teams in the world including Team USA, Japan, Canada, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Chinese Taipei and Venezuela.

The complete World Cup of Softball game schedule, including special promotions and autograph sessions will be announced at a later date. Ultimate Fan Zone tickets will go on sale March 1 and general admission tickets on March 21. Visit www.socalasa.org for more information or email WorldCupIX@aol.com with any questions.

In other news

Twenty-four athletes were named invitees for the 2014 USA Softball Women’s National Team Selection Camp to be held June 9-12. Athletes will vie for 17 spots on the 2014 USA Softball Women’s World Championship team roster that will compete for the International Softball Federation (ISF) World Championship in Haarlem, Netherlands this August.

Click here to see the 24 athletes who have received an invitation to tryout for the Women’s National Team.

During the five-day selection process athletes will participate in position drills as well as simulated games and be evaluated by the Women’s National Team Selection Committee (WNTSC). Following camp, athletes will depart on a three-city tour of exhibition games in which they will be further evaluated.

Once selected, the 17 athletes who make up the 2014 USA Softball Women’s World Championship team will compete in six different events throughout United States, Canada, Italy and the Netherlands. Fans in the United States will get three opportunities to see Team USA with two exhibition stops, Morgantown, W.V on July 3 and Waldorf, Md. on July 29, as well as the World Cup of Softball IX in Irvine, Calif. July 7-12.

*Additional athletes may be invited to USA Softball Women’s National Team selection camp at a later date.

2014 Women’s National Team Schedule

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<td>June 13</td>
<td>Exhibition Games</td>
<td>Lynchburg, Va.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 17</td>
<td>Exhibition Games</td>
<td>Findlay, Ohio</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 19</td>
<td>Exhibition Games</td>
<td>Purcellville, Va.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 22</td>
<td>Women’s National Team Roster Announced</td>
<td>Morgantown, W. Va.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 2-3</td>
<td>Exhibition Games</td>
<td>Irvine, Calif.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 5-13</td>
<td>World Cup IX</td>
<td>Surrey, B.C., Canada</td>
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<td>July 14-21</td>
<td>Canadian Open FP</td>
<td>Waldorf, Md.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 28-29</td>
<td>Exhibition Games</td>
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<td>August 6-10</td>
<td>Italian Softball Week</td>
<td>Haarlem, Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 12-24</td>
<td>XIV ISF Women’s World Champ.</td>
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The 15th annual Delaware ASA Hall of Fame (HOF) Induction was held on February 9. Over 125 people were in attendance to honor another cast of talented and remarkable men and woman who would join an elite class of former softball players, umpires, and state commissioners. Since the inception of the organization, the Delaware ASA HOF has honored over 32 incredible people. The latest inductees were: Diane Carden (Newark, Del.), Jake Ryan (New Castle, Del.), and Joseph Spadafino, (Dover, Dela.).

Class of 2012

Diane Carden is an amazing umpire. Her career began in 1978 in the state of New Hampshire when she helped her father officiate in a local men’s slow-pitch league. Since that time, Diane has worked at all levels, from high school to NCAA Conference Championships including the Colonial Athletic Association, Patriot League, Big East, and Big 12. Diane not only umpired at prominent college championships but also at the DIAA high school championships. She has traveled up and down the East coast and to Oklahoma where she displayed her talents at the Women’s Major Fast Pitch Nationals and the illustrious ASA/USA 18-Under GOLD Fast Pitch National Championships. Her signature was left on many diamonds and because of this she has received numerous awards including “Elite” status in the ASA Umpire Awards Program. Diane also is a member of the National Indicator Fraternity, an honor she’s held since 2000. She has served as the Delaware State Umpire Association (DSUA) President and currently serves in administrative roles as as the Deputy Umpire-in-Chief for DASA, as DSUA Assignor for High School and New Castle County Leagues, and as the DIAA State Rules Interpreter for the National Federation of State High School Sports (NFHS). Diane’s career is actually just taking off with the best yet to come!

Class of 2013

John “Jake” Ryan started playing fast pitch softball with Stahl Post #30 in the Major Fast Pitch League in New Castle County. From 1961-1968, Jake played and managed Local #42 and Kum-On-Inn teams which featured DASA HOF pitcher Jimmy Rogers and Father Frank Kavanaugh as catcher. As slowpitch began to take off, Jake played for Five Points, a team that quickly established itself in the Central Atlantic Region. In 1975, Jake formed and managed the Delaware Diamonds, a team that competed in the prestigious Metro League in New Castle County before retiring in 1978. Soon after he began administrative roles, serving as DASA Commissioner for four years. In his short stint he elected officers, held quarterly meetings, registered over 900 adult and youth teams and traveled extensively to make the program top rate. Missing the game of softball, Jake came back in 1996 as a 61 year old to play for the Grey Rocks in the George Fantini Senior League. He played in numerous Senior Tournaments throughout the Mid-Atlantic area before his playing career officially ended in 2006.

Joe Spadafino is known as the best power hitter to come out of Delaware. The lefty slugger has been involved in softball for over 20 years and has played against elite athletes such as Carl Rose, Mike Manshanko, Rusty Bumgardner and Jimmy Powers. He has played ASA slow pitch softball at the highest level, including in the Super Division on some of the best teams. His career began in Dover where he was twice named the Softball News Player of the Year. He was also on the Softball News All-Decade team and earned the MVP award at the 1988 first State Games. In 1992, his Taylor Brothers team finished fifth in the ASA Major tournament and in 1993 was named a Third-Team ASA All-American. In 1995, Joe played for Williams Softball, a team that finished runner-up at the ASA Super Nationals. Today, Joe is still involved with sports, only from another angle; he is coordinating the Newark Parks and Recreation Department. Joe is not only a vibrant softball player, but the gentle giant has a heart of gold!
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Words Unlimited, a Rhode Island statewide organization of sports writers, sportscasters and sports publicists, held its 68th annual Sports Awards Banquet on Sunday, February 16. At the banquet, Rhode Island ASA Commissioner Bev Wiley received the Amby Smith Award, which is named after Amby Smith, a Rhode Island newspaper veteran, athletic supporter and humanitarian.

Bev Wiley became a trailblazer for gender equity and opened many doors to provide opportunities for girls and women in sports through her involvement in the Women’s Sports Foundation, the YMCA and the R.I. Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women. Wiley has been the Rhode Island ASA/USA Commissioner since 1992 and is the Athletic Compliance Officer at CCRI.

From CCRI.edu

There are few individuals in Rhode Island who have been involved in sports on more levels than Bev Wiley. The list of her involvement includes being the Rhode Island ASA/USA Commissioner; serving as the public address announcer for Brown University; working as compliance officer at the Community College of Rhode Island; being involved with the Women’s Sports Foundation; serving as president of the Rhode Island Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women and serving as a member of the Advisory Board for the Rhode Island Sports Commission.

In addition to her sports involvement, she also is on the board of directors at School One and a trustee with the Community College of Rhode Island Foundation. She served on the advisory board of the Providence After School Alliance (PASA) and has worked as the summer recreation director for the town of Foster, R.I., among many other community activities.

In 1980, she was appointed a deputy commissioner for Rhode Island ASA and ran all aspects of the Women’s program. In 1992, she was appointed Commissioner, serving as only one of six women out of 76 to hold that position. Locally she is responsible for registering players, teams and umpires in all levels of play and has the responsibility for awarding and supervising ASA-sanctioned tournaments, appointing the umpire-in-chief, Junior Olympic commissioner and deputy and district commissioners as well as promoting ASA/USA softball and providing opportunities for youth and adults to play and officiate at all age levels. Along with her role as state commissioner, she is also a member of the ASA Board of Directors as one of two Eastern territory vice presidents. On the national level, she serves on the Long Range Planning, Hall of Fame and Communications committees and is chairwoman of the Boys and Men’s Fast Pitch Committee.

Wiley has been involved with softball on every level as a player, coach and umpire. As a player she earned a reputation for coming up with the key hit or defensive play and competed in several national tournaments. As an umpire she worked across all levels and began training many of the top umpires who are still working today. However, it was probably as a coach that she made the most impact.

Toward the end of her playing career she became a player coach and later head coach in slow pitch, helping her team earn berths to several ASA national tournaments. Later, she moved on to the fast pitch side by becoming a volunteer assistant coach at Brown University, where she would assist the coaching staff members with their daily duties and was the head statistician. From there she went on to become head coach at North Smithfield Junior High School in 1998 and 1999.

In 1997, along with other local women business leaders, she started GirlsRI (Girls and Women in Rhode Island Love Sports) to foster the growth and recognition of girls and women in sports in the community. GirlsRI provides awareness, opportunity and education in all areas of sports and physical fitness, while increasing access to financial grants and awards for local athletes and sports groups.

Wiley is not done yet and has no plans to slow down despite this lifetime achievement award. She will look to continue to follow her passion for sports by continuing to be a positive role model for adults, youth, student-athletes, coaches and other administrators. Wiley lives in Foster and has one son, Dan, who also works at CCRI.
Fourteen umpires from ten countries will partake in the X International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Men’s World Championship in Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada later this year the ISF announced recently. The list includes three umpires from the United States based on their performances umpires with ASA/USA Softball.

Umpires selected from the United States are Casey Waite (Boise, Idaho), David Hardage (San Diego, Calif.) and Larry Tait (Holly, Mich.). Waite has been an ASA umpire for over 15 years, is a member of the National Indicator Fraternity, is an Elite Umpire and has silver status in the ASA Umpire Medal Program. Hardage is also an Elite Umpire. Tate has been a member of the National Indicator Fraternity since 1998, has gold status in the ASA Umpire Medal Program and is an Elite Umpire.

“It’s a real honor to represent the ASA and USA at the Junior Men’s World Championship,” said Waite. “This has been a long road in preparing and working hard, and to see my goal of being able to work on the world stage has been fulfilled.”

“I’m both humbled and grateful to be selected for the Junior Men’s World Championship,” said Hardage. “I will do my very best to represent the ASA, the ISF and USA Softball to the best of my abilities.”

The ISF Junior Men’s World Championship will take place July 11-20, 2014 at the Pepsi Softball Centre in Whitehorse and include teams from 12 countries.

“I’m honored and humbled to be selected to work such a prestigious tournament,” said Tait. “I thank all of the umpires that have gone before, establishing the great training programs that we have available to us today that give us these opportunities.”

The USA Softball Junior Men’s Fast Pitch National Team will look to improve on a fifth place finish from the last ISF World Championship in 2012. The 17-player roster, plus alternates, that will compete in Whitehorse was announced earlier this year. Click here to view the USA Softball Junior Men’s roster.

ISF X Junior Men’s World Championship Umpires

Jason Carter (Australia)
Abel Metaboge (Botswana)
Terry Richter (Canada)
Daryl Helmer (Canada)
Scott Maclaren (Canada)
Valdimir Liss (Czech Republic)
Thomas Lohnert (Germany)
Motoichi Ueda (Japan)
Bob Gieskins (Netherlands)
Gavin Shepherd (New Zealand)
Casey Waite (USA)
David Hardage (USA)
Larry Tait (USA)
Manuel Tovar (Venezuela)
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With the Olympics on everyone’s minds, Liberty Mutual Insurance Responsible Sports invites you to watch some of the USA Softball National Team members who are proud to wear the red, white and blue:

2013 USA Softball National Team member Lauren Gibson shares how she stays focused for the next at-bat. She explains how she handles getting upset after a bad at-bat by sharing how she knows that anyone would love to be in the spot she is right now. “Anybody would kill to be in this spot right now, and I’m here. So, I can’t really be upset right now.”

Watch Lauren Gibson >>

World Cup Gold Medalist Valerie Arioto discusses the lessons she has personally learned through sports. “I think, through any sport, kids can learn so many life lessons such as hard work, dedication, and motivation. Anything I’ve learned through my life has been through sports, so I’m very lucky for that and I hope other kids get the opportunity to do that as well.”

Watch Valerie Arioto now >>

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National Umpire Schools
Photos taken from Florida and Missouri
National Umpire Schools

Left: Missouri ASA and St. Joseph, MO hosted a National Umpire School on February 21-23. Sixty-two umpires from four states took part. Lead instructor Larry Montgomery and national staff members Dave Epperson and Jim Ballengee did an outstanding job as presenters. Missouri state UIC Jack Walker led the local hosting efforts and was back with nearly a dozen volunteers who secured facilities, food and other supplies.

Photos from the National Umpire School in Altamonte Springs, Fla. 1. Steve Seither’s wife, Vickee, made two cakes for the umpires. 2. Instructors and attendees at the Umpire School. 3. Director of Umpires Kevin Ryan gives indoor instruction. 4. Paying close attention!
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**THREE EASY WAYS TO INSURE SOFTBALL:**

1. Contact your ASA Commissioner. Visit www.ASASoftball.com for contact info
2. Contact RPS Bollinger Sports—ASA Department, Ph: 800-526-1379 • ASAInfo@Bollinger.com
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Almost anyone who has ever played a sport will say they play for “the love of the game.” When Pete Palma, the recipient of the Missouri ASA Umpire Years of Service Award, recounts how he became an umpire, he’ll say, “I was a bad ballplayer. I couldn’t hit the ball.”

Mr. Palma remembers striking out and losing his temper. While it wasn’t his best moment as a player, the umpire’s reaction inspired him to become an umpire himself.

“In those days it was just fast pitch. There was no slow pitch. I was playing for a team and I struck out, and when I struck out, I threw the bat,” Mr. Palma said. The bat hit the bat boy, who happened to be the coach’s son.

“I think he wanted to kill me,” he said. “The umpire came over to me and said, ‘You know, I’d throw you out of here, but I’m going to leave you in here because you’re safe in here. You’re out of the game, but you stay on the bench.’”

Shortly after that game, he decided to try a different position on the field: as an official.

“When this umpire said that to me, I got to thinking, ‘You know, I’m not a ballplayer and this umpire is really nice to me, so I think I’ll try that.’ I started then and just kept on doing it.”

Mr. Palma has “kept on” umpiring for 56 years. In that time, he has served ASA/USA as the district commissioner for St. Joseph, Umpire-in-Chief for the state of Missouri, worked national tournaments, and has been the director of tournaments. Also, Mr. Palma helped establish the St. Joseph Umpires’ Association and has held every office within the organization over the years.

When asked about receiving the service award, he said it was an “extra special” occasion. “When you live and eat and breathe softball and they want to give you something like this, it’s just outstanding.”

Joey Rich, the Missouri ASA state commissioner, presented Mr. Palma with his award on Saturday.

“I still umpire a little myself, but I’m sure I’m not going to make it to 56 years,” Mr. Rich said. “It was an honor to honor him in front of some of his peers and other umpires.”

In addition to honoring Mr. Palma for his service, ASA hosted umpires from across the nation to participate in a two-day workshop. The event focused on game runs and mechanics. Jack Walker, the event organizer, said that in conjunction with refining technique, the event allows umpires to meet fellow officials from around the area.

“It gives all these levels of umpires the opportunity to come together and visit, talk, see how they do things,” Mr. Walker said. “One of the best tools is watching other umpires.”

As vital as training is, Mr. Rich said “having thick skin” also is an asset. Mr. Palma knows that to be true, too.

“You make a call, one team likes it and the other doesn’t, but that goes away,” Mr. Palma said. “I’ve met a lot of wonderful people through this.”
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The camp will cover Hitting, Slapping, Defense, Pitching, Catching, and Mental Training. There will also be a Q&A session with the USA Players. There will be an autograph and picture session for the campers at the end of each day.

CAMPERS WILL NEED:
Proper attire, mitts, bats, water bottles, and bagged lunch.

CAMP PACKAGES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Package A</th>
<th>Package B</th>
<th>Package C</th>
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<td>$45</td>
<td>$75</td>
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<tr>
<td>for a 1 hour Session on Saturday</td>
<td>for a 4 hour All-Around Camp on Sunday</td>
<td>for 2 1-hour Sessions on Saturday and the All-Around Camp on Sunday</td>
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CAMP SCHEDULE:
Saturday March 8:
Morning Session 9am-12pm, Afternoon Session 1pm-4pm

Sunday, March 9:
All-Around Camp 10am-3pm
(lunch break 12pm-1pm)

REGISTRATION:
Registration will begin February 7, 2014
For more information,
Contact: Brenda Petty, Phone: (270)-779-2689
www.bpettyasa@aol.com

Register online at http://www.kyasa.org
(Registration will begin 2/7/14)
Ten athletes have been named to the 2014 USA Softball Men’s Fast Pitch National Team. An additional seven athletes plus alternates will be named to the squad in August following the conclusion of the National Team Selection Camp in early August. The USA Men’s Fast Pitch National Team will compete at the IX Pan American Games/International Softball Federation (ISF) World Championship qualifier event in Parana, Argentina, October 19 – November 3.

All 10 athletes named to the roster competed with the USA Softball Men’s Fast Pitch National Team at an international event in Altamonte Springs, Fla. in January. The remaining seven athletes plus alternates will be named to the roster on August 8, following the ASA/USA Softball Men’s National Team selection camp which will be held in South Bend, Ind. following the ASA Men’s Major National Championship July 31 – August 3. Invitations to the selection camp will be issued in early July.

In addition to the IX Pan American Games qualifier, the 2014 USA Softball Men’s Fast Pitch National Team will compete in a Labor Day tournament in Elkland, Pa. August 29 – September 1 as well as attend a training event September 26 – 28 in preparation for October’s qualifying tournament.

For more information on the USA Softball Men’s Fast Pitch National Team and to follow their events throughout the year, visit USASoftball.com.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frank DeGroat Jr</td>
<td>Ringwood, N.Y.</td>
<td>Catcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lucas Goring</td>
<td>Minneapolis, Mn.</td>
<td>Outfield</td>
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<tr>
<td>Josh Johnson</td>
<td>El Paso, Texas</td>
<td>Pitcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony Mancha</td>
<td>Las Cruces, N.M.</td>
<td>Pitcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chris Miljavic</td>
<td>Easton, Mo.</td>
<td>Infield</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nick Mullins</td>
<td>Toms River, N.J.</td>
<td>Infield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt Palazzo</td>
<td>Pleasant Hills, Iowa</td>
<td>Outfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobby Rosthenhausler</td>
<td>Tucson, Az.</td>
<td>Catcher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pat Sadgal</td>
<td>Richland, Wash.</td>
<td>Outfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derrick Zechman</td>
<td>Watsontown, Pa.</td>
<td>Infield</td>
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