WOMEN’S NATIONAL TEAM DEBUTS
WNT deafeats Junior Women’s National Team 13-1, 12-0

The 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team made their first appearance Saturday in Plant City, Fla., in two controlled exhibition games against the 2010-11 USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team at Plant City Stadium. With both teams playing their compatriots for experience before heading into international play, the Women’s National Team defeated the Junior Women’s National Team 13-1 in Game 1 and 12-0 in Game 2.

For 11 members of the Women’s National Team, including NCAA Women’s College World Series (WCWS) co-Most Outstanding Player Michelle Moultrie, the Plant City exhibitions marked their first time in a USA uniform. Other newcomers to the program are Whitney Canion, Lauren Gibson, Kelly Grieve, Taylor Hoagland, Stacey May-Johnson, Christi Orgeron, Keilani Ricketts, Brittany Schutte, Rhea Taylor and Chelsea Thomas.

“We are really a young team as we have had only one practice heading

‘WOMEN’S NATIONAL TEAM’ CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

For softball fans, this is the best time of the year. Everyone is in full swing and some of you are even beginning to prepare for Championship play. Softball is dominating ESPN and our National Teams are competing throughout the country. Whether you are a coach, player, umpire, field worker or just overall fan, good luck this season. Enjoy it!

The pinnacle of Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America play is in the USA Softball National Team program. This summer, please support those athletes, as we have four active teams (Women’s, Junior Women’s, Men’s Slow Pitch and Junior Men’s Fast Pitch). The athletics and competitiveness of these athletes is amazing to see in person so please be sure to come out and watch.

Every young athlete aspires to be on a USA Softball National Team so make sure your athletes know of the opportunity to watch our elite athletes not only in person but on TV. The Women’s National Team will have six games on ESPN/ESPN2 from July 21-25 and the Men’s Slow Pitch Team will be live on ESPN on July 23.

On of our primary concerns among those involved with ASA is the rising cost of insurance. We are doing the best we can to keep the costs to a minimum but we need help from everyone involved in the ASA. As play continues throughout the summer, please ensure that our facilities maintain their high quality. Please be aware of any potential hazards out on the field of play. If you notice anything that could injure someone, alert the tournament director or field manager so they can make sure that it is taken care of before someone is hurt.

While ASA does have some troublesome areas, we have great athletes. We have great coaches. We have great umpires. We set the standard for tournaments because of our directors and volunteers. Thank you! We are the nation’s best softball organization because of you.
A note from The Inside Pitch editor
Jamie Blanchard

Welcome to the June 2011 edition of The Inside Pitch, the official newsletter of the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America.

Can you believe the 2011 college softball season is already over? What an exciting time to be a fan of college ball, as Arizona State and Florida gave us an NCAA Women's College World Series (WCWS) to remember. With both teams represented in the USA Softball program, both on the 2011 Women’s National Team and 2010-11 USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team, it is also a great time to be a fan of USA Softball.

With several players leaving the program in the past few years, we have a number of new players who are eager to uphold the tradition of USA Softball. Please support these women as well as the men on our 2011 USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch Team and the men involved in our Junior Men’s Fast Pitch National Team program. For a list of their events, visit USASoftball.com.

The Women’s National Team and Junior Women’s National Team are tuning up for international play on their tour of the East Coast. If you’re not able to watch the women in Bowie, Md., on July 1, the only remaining exhibition stop, we would love to have you join us for the World Cup of Softball VI, which is the only chance to see international fast pitch and slow pitch this year in the U.S. Also, there will be an autograph signing each day of the World Cup, July 21-25, making it even better event.

For those of you who will not be able to join us here, we hope that you will support the World Cup by watching the action live on the ESPN/ESPN2. Seven games, including three on Saturday, will be aired.

We also encourage you to connect with us through our Facebook and Twitter pages. Make sure that you are a fan or follower if you want the inside scoop on the event including live photo and score updates from the World Cup.

Although we are embarking on a very busy time here in the National Office, please reach out to us if there is anything we can do to help you better your association, league or team. We want you to be the best that you can be so the ASA can continue to be the nation’s No. 1 softball organization.

Talk to you next month.

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Salem, Ore., hosts successful umpire camp

The 2011 Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America Advanced Fast Pitch Umpire Camp was held at Wallace Marine Park in Salem, Ore., June 7-12. Sixty umpires from throughout the country and one from Australia traveled to participate in one of the best Advanced Fast Pitch Umpire Camps ever.

“Our goal was to provide the best atmosphere for learning for each camper,” said John Garrett, Advanced Camp Coordinator.

Camp goals included having all the umpires filmed while participating in each of the drills so they can see the personal adjustments to make to their mechanics. Each umpire was filmed at all three field positions during the evaluation portion of the tournament.

According to Heydyn Wood, the only Australian umpire in attendance, “The 2011 ASA Advanced Fast Pitch Umpire Camp was an experience that I will remember and treasure for the rest of my life.”

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At the camp, umpire Megan Rabin of Seattle tracked the ball during evaluation tournament (top) and umpire Heydyn Wood of MaGill, Australia, worked on the third strike call (bottom).
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into tonight. I was pretty excited for our athleticism, that we had eight different people hit home runs and for the pitch counts of our pitchers,” said National Team Head Coach Ken Eriksen (Tampa, Fla.). “We have some basic base running and defensive play we need to go over but as far as an assessment of the first game, I would give it a B. We have a long road to be really, really good but I am excited. These are some good ball players, 1-18, so it’s nice to see them start to come together as a unit. It just takes time to really start to gel and through our exhibitions and training, we will be able to do that before international play.”

Kaitlin Cochran, Ashley Holcombe and Jenae Leles were all members of the 2009 Women's National Team while Cochran and Holcombe were also on the squad that won the 2010 International Softball Federation (ISF) Women's World Championship. Valerie Arioto, Molly Johnson, Megan Langenfeld and Jordan Taylor have international experience as pick up players for previous tournaments in Canada, Japan, and Venezuela. Arioto, Johnson, Langenfeld, Leles and Taylor also played on the USA Softball Women's Futures National Team at the 2010 World Cup of Softball in Oklahoma City.

The Women's National Team had no offensive shortage, taking advantage of a Junior Women's National Team that tinkered with defensive lineups throughout the night. The juniors used all but two members of its pitching staff in Game 1, saving incoming Florida pitcher Lauren Haeger and Dallas Escobedo, the co-Most Outstanding Player of the WCWS, for Game 2. Haeger struck out a team high three batters while Ally Carda, Escobedo and Nyree White each had a pair of strikeouts.

“For me as a pitcher, it was all about learning how to hit your spots better and working more off the plate than I am used to. Hitting wise, it was a great learning experience facing some great pitchers at top level,” said Carda of her experience facing the National Team. “For us as a team to put the ball into play against these great pitchers was amazing. For me I would like to get ahead in the count as that was my struggle tonight. As a team, we have great chemistry. We just need to work on putting all our base hits together because we are spreading them throughout the game now.”

Cochran, Gibson and Holcombe all had home runs for the National Team in Game 1 while Arioto, Haogland, Leles, Orgeron and Schutte had homers in Game 2. The National team hit 10 hits in the first game. In Game 2, they had a combined 12 hits.

For the juniors, Carda, Destinee Martinez and Hallie Wilson had a hit in Game 1 with Carda scoring Martinez on a sacrifice fly in the top of the sixth. They improved to five hits in Game 2. Carda, Lauren Chamberlain and Cheyenne Cordes each had one while Chelsea Goodacre contributed a pair. The team had 11 runners left on base throughout the doubleheader.

“We learned that you can’t throw a fatty down the middle. These girls are no joke. They have power. We need to execute the little things. Individually I need to learn how to hit the ball,” said Cordes. “As a team we have the chemistry we just need to pull it together.”

The Junior Women’s National Team athletes have not competed as a unit since the III Pan American Championship (18-Under) last August in Bogota, Colombia, where they went 9-0 for the Gold Medal. With the Colombian event serving as a qualifier for the ISF IX Junior Women's World Championship in December, their focus is on preparing for the competition in Cape Town, South Africa.

The Women's National Team and the Junior Women's National Team will hold exhibition doubleheaders in Salem, Va., on June 29, and Bowie, Md., on July 1 before heading separate ways. The Women's National Team will continue on to the Canadian Open Fastpitch International Championship, July 9-17, in Surrey, B.C., and then the World Cup of Softball VI, July 21-25, in Oklahoma City. Ticket information for upcoming appearances is available at USASoftball.com.

The Women’s National Team will seek the program's ninth Pan American Games title, Oct. 17-23, in Guadalajara, Mexico for the final competition of 2011. Two months later, the juniors head to South Africa to close out the year for USA Softball.

For more information on USA Softball, visit USASoftball.com.
ESPN networks to air seven games from July 21-25

Seven World Cup of Softball VI games, including the women’s fast pitch Championship Game and the men’s slow pitch Border Battle, will air across the United States this July on ESPN, ESPN2 and ESPN3.com, the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) Hall of Fame Complex, Remington Park in Oklahoma City, ASA to host 2012 Jim Thorpe Native American Games

The official announcement was made May 26 that Oklahoma City will be the site of the 2012 Jim Thorpe Native American Games. The games will take place June 10-17, 2012 at different venues throughout Oklahoma City including the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) Hall of Fame Complex, Remington Park and Oklahoma City University. Nathan Hart, official spokesman of the Games made the announcement, along with Lt. Governor, Todd Lamb and other state and local officials.

Oklahoma City, ASA to host 2012 Jim Thorpe Native American Games

The Games, which will feature more than 4,000 Native American athletes, will celebrate the 100th anniversary of Jim Thorpe’s record-setting Olympic performance in Sweden. “On behalf of the State of Oklahoma, I am pleased to welcome the Jim Thorpe Native American Games to Oklahoma City next summer,” Governor Mary Fallin said. “This event will allow us to showcase our state’s rich Native American heritage and also to celebrate the accomplishments of one of Oklahoma’s and the world’s greatest athletes, Jim Thorpe.”

The Games will be comprised of 11 competitive sports, sporting exhibitions, an art show and traditional entertainment. The competitive sports include: baseball, softball, basketball, tennis, stickball, golf, track and field, cross country, wrestling, beach volleyball and martial arts. Remington Park will be the host site for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, the Native American Art Exhibition, and traditional cultural exhibitions throughout the week. It will also be the site for an NFL Punt, Pass and Kick competition and a 5K Run. The Native American communities know the importance and value of supporting healthy lifestyle choices for their youth. Some of the many benefits of the Games will include promoting leadership development, increasing cultural awareness and most importantly, motivating young people to achieve great things.

To be eligible to compete in the Games, participants must have a CDIB card. Entry forms can be downloaded from JimThorpeGames.com.

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Building effective parent/coach relationships can help everyone have a more productive and beneficial season. Research shows when parents support our children’s teachers, students learn more. This concept can be transferred to softball, where kids will have a better experience if we work in unison with the coach to create a positive youth sports environment.

Sometimes, it’s easier said than done. That’s why we’ve created an entire section dedicated to helpful tips and tools for ways to approach the coach.

A couple strategies to take into consideration:
• Empower your child to speak: there are several advantages to having your children, rather than you, speak directly to the coach. Many coaches are more open to suggestions from players than from parents. The biggest plus is that this can be an empowering experience for children, even if they don’t get the change they want
• When you need to intervene: Sometimes it calls for parent comment, sometimes it best left to talk to your athlete and restrain from approaching the coach over every action you see or hear

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1. DAILY NUTRITION
Keeping your softball player healthy happens every day – not just game day. Their body needs a steady supply of nutritious food for peak performance. The USDA recently updated its dietary guidelines and while not athletic specific, it’s a good place to start when planning meals and snacks. Most nutrition experts and trainers agree that eating several times a day – 3 meals and snacks, provides a balanced and even source of fuel. When planning a diet:
• Make whole grains, high fiber fruits and vegetables a part of each meal and snack.
• Provide protein with each meal – it’s important to build, maintain and repair muscles.
• Fresh food is best. Limit junk and processed foods.
• Eat a variety of foods to ensure getting needed nutrients.
By taking advantage of seasonal fruits and vegetables you can provide variety for your softball player without breaking your budget. Try shopping locally to get the freshest food available. Find your local farmer markets – vendors can help with recipes and encourage you to try different produce not always available in the bigger chain stores.

2. TRAINING AND PRACTICE
In practice and play most softball players are active in short bursts. For this reason, a regular diet with a moderate increase in carbohydrates and lean protein during training and play will fit most players’ needs.

3. PRE-GAME MEALS
This meal helps provide endurance and focus to last the game. It is not the time to try something new that may cause stress to the digestive system. Some other guidelines:
• Eat about three hours before competition. The closer to game time, the smaller the meal.
• Low-glycemic foods like whole grain cereal and bread, most fruits and nuts will sustain blood sugar levels.
• Eating some protein will help prevent hunger during the game.
• Avoid high fiber, spicy, fried, or milk-based foods that can cause issues like gas and heartburn.
During tournaments and double-headers a carbohydrate-rich snack between games will help players stay in top form. Bagels, baked chips, animal crackers, granola, fresh fruit, energy and nutrition bars, and graham crackers are good examples of easy snacks to have on hand. A little planning can go a long way on how well they’ll finish the game.

4. HYDRATION
Becoming dehydrated can affect performance and when taken to the extreme, will affect the player’s health. That’s why it’s important to stay hydrated. Some studies show following a schedule is the best method:
• Try drinking at least 16 ounces a couple of hours before practice or game.
• During practice drink 5 to 10 ounces every 15 to 20 minutes.
• You can check how much you need to drink by weighing yourself before and after practice. Drink about 2-3 cups for every pound lost during activity.
• One gulp is equal to one ounce.
Water is ideal when hydrating during normal activities, however during long sessions of exercise, sports drinks will help replace electrolytes and replenish carbohydrates.

5. POST-GAME MEAL
A post-game meal or snack consumed within 30 minutes will help replenish and refuel the body’s depleted stores and encourage muscle repair.
Good nutrition can affect performance and health of the athlete. It’s a year-round effort and it’s important to accommodate training, off-season, and game days.
Dallas Escobedo up for an ESPY Award

USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team member Dallas Escobedo is nominated for the “Best College Female Athlete” ESPY (Excellence in Sports Performance Yearly) Award, ESPN announced Friday. Escobedo concluded her freshman campaign at Arizona State with a record of 37-3 in the circle, including a 10-0 post season that led the Sun Devils to an NCAA Division I Softball National Championship.

Fans can vote for Escobedo online at espn.com/espyfs, by mobile device also at espn.com/espyfs, or on the ESPN Facebook page. In addition, fans can follow the official ESPY’s Twitter page and tweet about their favorite nominees, using the tag @ESPYs to have their votes counted. The deadline to vote is July 9.

Hosted by comedian Seth Myers, the ESPYs will take place at 8 p.m. CT on July 13 at the Nokia Theater in downtown Los Angeles, with the ceremony broadcast live on ESPNHD.

Nominated in the “Best College Female Athlete” category are Penn State volleyball player Blair Brown, Notre Dame soccer player Melissa Henderson, USC swimmer Katinka Hosszu and Connecticut basketball player Maya Moore. Like Escobedo, Henderson and Brown led their teams to a National Championship.

At the 2011 NCAA Women’s College World Series (WCWS) in Oklahoma City, the Arizona State freshman was named the Co-Most Outstanding Player for pitching Arizona State to the title. She pitched every inning of the WCWS for the Sun Devils, becoming the first freshman pitcher to win the Championship Game since UCLA’s Heather Compton in 1990. Escobedo was born in 1992.

Arizona State beat Florida 14-4 and 7-2 in best-of-three Championship Series. In Game 1 of the finale, she allowed five hits while striking out seven. Escobedo allowed four hits in Game 2. She struck out five. She finished the season with 326 strikeouts.

In the first week of the season, February 7-13, Escobedo was named the USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Week following a 4-0 collegiate debut. She was 4-0 at Kajikawa Classic in Tempe, Ariz., that week, working 18.1 innings, holding opponents to a .143 batting average.

Junior men hold development camp in California

The USA Softball Junior Men’s Fast Pitch National Team Development Camp was recently held at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista, Calif. With over 30 athletes in attendance, the camp focused on fundamental skills and game situations all the while focusing on preparations for the 2012 International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Men’s World Championships in Parana, Argentina.

Team USA will be led by head coach Tim Lyon (Milford, Conn.) and assisted by Gary Mullican (Yorba Linda, Calif.) and Scott Standerfer (Ashmore, Ill.). “The coaching staff has been scouting and gathering information for the past two years and we are excited to finally get onto the field and begin preparations for the 2012 World Championships,” said head coach Tim Lyon.

The camp kicked off on June 20 and continued through June 24 with scrimmage games scheduled for every afternoon session. Click here for a list of athletes involved in the pool of players considered for the World Championship team.

The ASA is also pleased to announce that Tim Sonnentag of Marathon, Wis., has contributed significant financial support for the USA Softball Junior Men’s Fast Pitch Team for training camps and the development of players. Along with his commitment to develop the Junior Men’s program, he and his family have also established the Sonnentag Family Scholarship. The scholarship was established in order to promote educational opportunities for members of the USA Softball Junior Men’s National Team Players Pool and to encourage good citizenship and volunteerism.

“I am glad to I can help support the USA Junior Men’s National Team. I have worked with Tim and Scott before and know their dedication to getting the boys team back where it belongs,” said Sonnentag. “This is a great game and I know this will help develop young players and pitchers.”

For a schedule of events for the Junior Men’s Fast Pitch program through 2012, log on to USASoftball.com. Schedule is subject to change.
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Athletes blog for USASoftball.com

In February, 2010-11 USA Softball Junior Women's National Team members Cheyenne Cordes, an outfielder from Fairfield, Calif., and Chelsea Goodacre, a catcher from Temecula, Calif., started blogging biweekly for USASoftball.com. They will be blogging through the International Softball Federation (ISF) IX Jr. Women's World Championship (19-and-under), December 6-17, 2011, in Cape Town, South Africa, giving aspiring National Team members and fans alike a glimpse into the life of an elite ball player.

Click here to read the Junior Women's National Team blog.

Recently, three-time USA Softball Women's National Team member Ashley Holcombe Bell and Megan Langenfeld, now in her first season with the team, also blogged about the 2011 USA Softball Women's National Team Selection Camp, this June in Chula Vista, Calif.

For the Women's National Team program blog, click here.

Men’s Slow Pitch National Team starts season with two wins at McQuade tournament in Bismarck, N.D.

In front of 2,500 fans at the Sam McQuade Sr. Budweiser Charity Softball Tournament in Bismarck, N.D., the 2011 USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team opened their season on June 24 with a pair of wins. The Red, White and Blue claimed 22-11 and 37-24 season on June 24 with a pair of wins over the Gene Were All-Stars, a squad of top players from the Dakotas.

Game 1 was knotted at four runs a piece until the bottom of the fourth inning when Team USA put up a 12 spot, taking a 16-4 lead. In the fourth, Team USA sent 15 batters to the plate and used five of their 10 allowed home runs. The Red, White and Blue added two runs in the fifth and then put another four up on the board in the sixth, easily outpacing the All-Stars 22-11.

USA rookie Greg Connell (Moultrie, Ga.) led the offensive effort in Game 1 as he went 4-for-4 with five RBI on two doubles and two home runs. Rusty Bumgardner (Gastonia, N.C.), Brett Helmer (Cicero, N.Y.) and Dennis Rulli (Moorpark, Calif.) all had 3 hits each while Bumgardner and Helmer also contributed three RBI each. Winning pitcher Andy Purcell (Naples, Fla.) helped his own cause by contributing a three run blast in the fourth.

The Gene Were All-Stars came out strong in Game 2, holding a 16-6 lead after three innings of play. But the fourth inning proved to be the turning point for Team USA. In the top of the inning, the National Team sent 28 batters to the plate, putting 24 runs on the board for a 30-16 lead. With the All-Stars unable to recover from the devastating offensive outpouring from the Red, White and Blue, the game was called at 37-24 after six innings because of the run rule.

Connell continued his hot streak in going a perfect 6-for-6 in Game 2. Brian Wegman (Hamilton, Ohio) was also 6-for-6 with six RBIs, even more impressive because he did not have the assistance of the long ball. For the game, Team USA went to the plate 61 times and produced 37 runs on 36 hits.

Several other Team USA members that had impressive numbers as well. Rick Baker (West Harrison, Ind.) was 4-for-5, three of those were home runs, and six RBI. Helmer went 3-for-3 with five RBI. Making his Team USA debut, winning pitcher Geno Buck (Red Wing, Minn.) supported his cause by going 4-for-5 with 4 RBI's. Other first time National Team members Dal Beggs (Gainseville, Fla.) and Bob Hughes (Jonesboro, Ark.) played well in their first outing wearing the Red, White and Blue, as Beggs was 4-for-5 with three RBI and four runs scored and Hughes was 3-for-5, including a home run, producing two RBI.

“Team USA players, coaches and the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America/USA Softball staff want to thank the McQuade Tournament Committee and North Dakota ASA for their generous hospitality and the opportunity to be a part of this nostalgic and successful ASA Invitational Tournament which benefits so many great charities,” said ASA Director of Membership Services Craig Cress. “We also want the citizens of North Dakota to know that our hearts go out to those affected by the flood in the area.”

After playing a doubleheader in Bismarck, the Men’s Slow Pitch National Team will play Team Cincinnati at 7 p.m. and 9:30 on July 14 at Cincinnati’s Mid-America Ballyard, 6960 Blue Rock Road. An autograph signing with the Red, White and Blue will follow the second game. Admission to the event is $3 at the gate.

Following the action in Cincinnati, Team USA leaves for Oklahoma City, where they will compete in two-days of exhibitions before taking on the Canadian Men’s Slow Pitch Team July 23 at 3 p.m. CT in Border Battle III. The Border Battle will be aired live on ESPN.

In the Border Battle II played last July, Team Canada held off a last inning rally by the 2010 USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team to escape with a 30-29 win. Team USA, which led only once in the game at 16-15, trailed 30-25 entering the bottom of the seventh inning but gave fans hope of a 2009 repeat, when the Americans won 30-23 after trailing early.

Tickets for the Border Battle and the Oklahoma City exhibitions are on sale now as a part of the World Cup of Softball VI Ultimate Fan Zone ticket package, which costs $275 with a replica Team USA jersey and $325 for an authentic Nike jersey. Tickets are also available in the All Session Reserved ticket package ($75) and the All Session General Admission ticket package ($40). Single session tickets go on sale July 5.

To purchase World Cup tickets in advance, call 800-654-8337 or visit SoftballOutlet.com. Walk-up tickets are also on sale at the ASA Hall of Fame Stadium during the event.
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References

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Hansen named 2011 USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year

The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America announced June 1 that Stanford shortstop Ashley Hansen (Chandler, Ariz.) was selected the 2011 USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year. Hansen, also the 2011 Pac-10 Player of the Year, helped lead Stanford to a Super Regional Appearance, finishing the year with a .495 batting average, third best in the nation. For the first time since 2002, the inaugural year of the USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year award, softball’s highest award was not given to a pitcher. Three-time Olympian Stacey Nuveman (La Verne, Calif.) was the inaugural winner and is the only other position player to have won this award.

“My team has been there for me through thick and thin this year, really the past three years. I know that its not just me out there. I have eight other girls in the lineup who are capable of getting the job done and that takes a lot of pressure off of me,” said Hansen. “I wish we were here but congratulations to the eight teams here and good luck this weekend.”

More outstanding than her batting average or her on base percentage (.558) was the fact that in 192 at-bats, the junior only struck out five times all season, making her the second toughest player in the nation to strike out. Also named the Pac-10 Batting Champion, her average is the highest single season mark in school history. Hansen is just the second Stanford player to be named to the All-Pac-10 first team in each of her first three seasons. She also set a new Stanford single season record for hits in a season with 95, breaking Jessica Mendoza’s record of 94 set in 2000.

“From the first day that she set foot on campus, we knew she was not only a special player but a special person. If you are around her you see right away how likeable she is and how she just does things the right way. You don’t become the player she is without a lot of hard work and dedication while learning from those around you,” said Stanford Head Coach John Rittman. “This is huge for Stanford and our program to have someone recognized as National Player of the Year. I am so proud of Ashley and all her accomplishments. She is such a team player and very deserving of this honor.”

To advance to Oklahoma City, Arizona State eliminated then-No. 17 Texas A&M 3-2 and 3-4 in the Super Regionals, following run rule victories over North Dakota State and Long Beach State in Regionals. The Sun Devils also beat San Diego State 6-1 to clinch the Regional in Tempe, Ariz.

In the Championship Series of the WCWS, Arizona State convincingly defeated then-tie No. 5 Florida 14-4 and 7-2. The Sun Devils started their week in Oklahoma City with a 3-1 win over Oklahoma, then-tied for No. 12, a 6-5 win over Florida and a 4-0 win over then-No. 15 Baylor 4-0. Sun Devil ace Dallas Escobedo was named the co-Most Outstanding Player of the WCWS along with Florida’s Michelle Moultrie.

Florida (56-13, 21-7 SEC) finished the season ranked No. 2 in the nation. Alabama (53-11, 19-6 SEC) finished the season at No. 3 after being eliminated from the WCWS by the Gators.

Rounding out the Top 10 teams of the 2011 season are No. 4 Baylor (47-15, 11-7 Big 12), No. 5 California (45-13, 15-6 Pac-10), No. 6 Missouri (53-10, 15-3 Big-12), No. 7 Oklahoma (43-19, 10-8 Big 12), No. 8 Oklahoma State, No. 9 Georgia (51-14, 17-9 SEC) and No. 10 Stanford (42-17, 10-11 Pac-10).

USA Softball honors 14 as Players of the Week

Fourteen players from 12 schools were selected as a USA Softball Player of the Week in the 2011 season. Click here for a complete list of Players of the Week.

No athlete won the award multiple times this season. In 2010, Danielle Lawrie of Washington, the eventual 2010 USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year, set the record by being named USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Week three times in a season. She was also the 2009 Player of the Year.
ASA
Men’s B Slow-Pitch
National Championship

Compete September 2-4 for the ASA Men’s B Slow-Pitch National Championship. The top two teams will receive reasonable transportation costs not to exceed the cost of fifteen airline tickets and eight hotel rooms paid for by ASA to compete in the Men’s A Slow Pitch National Championship on September 29 - October 2 in Oklahoma City. This transportation can only be used by the players on the national championship final roster plus one manager and one coach - not to exceed 15 total persons.

For more information contact
Steven Embree - 405-425-3446 - sembree@softball.org

September 2-4, 2011
Oklahoma City

Entry Fee: $350
Deadline: August 28, 2011
Pointstreak providing live real time scoring for GOLD

Pointstreak Sports Technologies Inc. and the Amateur Softball Association of America (ASA) are excited to announce they have reached an agreement to make Pointstreak the official provider of real-time scoring, official statistics and tournament administration services to the 2011 ASA Girls’ 18-Under GOLD National Championship. This prestigious event will consist of 64 of the nation’s best teams and is widely considered the most prominent ASA Junior Olympic tournament. Competition will take place at the Sportsplex-USA facilities in the greater San Diego area from July 24-30, 2011.

“We are thrilled to be working with Pointstreak this year at the 18-Under GOLD in San Diego,” said Julie Bartel, ASA/USA Softball Director of Marketing and Communications. “We feel the products and tools they offer will enhance this championship and provide information and statistics for all fans and participants. The ASA is committed to making their championship experiences the best in the country and we look forward to this new endeavour.”

Pointstreak Stats’ Fast Pitch platform will streamline the process of capturing and delivering game statistics for the ASA Girls’ 18-Under GOLD National Championship. All game events, including scores, standings and statistical information will be captured directly at the diamond and seamlessly delivered to the ASA GOLD tournament website in real-time for the benefit of players, fans and media partners. Anyone will be able to follow along with games pitch-by-pitch via the web or mobile device on Pointstreak’s “Game Live” feature, a real-time flash application that streams play-by-play softball results over a 3-D graphical image of a Fast Pitch diamond.

“Our partnership with the ASA will allow us an opportunity to further coalesce with the Fast Pitch community to provide rich and relevant content for players, fans, scouts and media partners,” said Paul Pettipiece, Vice President of Baseball Operations of Pointstreak Sports Technologies Inc. “The ASA 18-Under GOLD National Championship is amongst the top tier of fast pitch competition in North America and we look forward to having the ability to provide real-time, interactive scores and official statistics to their stakeholders via the web and mobile applications.”

Stu Alderman starts new position with Neighborhood Club on July 1

After a nation-wide search, the Grosse Pointe, Mich., Neighborhood Club named Stuart Alderman as its new Executive Director. Alderman is currently the Director of Recreation for the City of Troy Recreation Department. He has been with Troy’s recreation department for nearly 26 years. Before that time, he spent eight years in Oak Park’s Recreation Department.

When asked what made him interested in the Neighborhood Club, he cited its “rich history of providing quality recreation and enrichment programming to the community. Two of my children have participated in Neighborhood Club activities since they were young. They participated in sports programs and some enrichment activities. It was rewarding and great for them to have that opportunity.” He said he looks forward to being a part of the Neighborhood Club team as it enters into a new phase. “The proposed expansion of the facility is enticing and will be an outstanding opportunity for the community,” Alderman said. “I enjoyed working on the construction of a community center in my current position and the ‘new’ Neighborhood Club will be an exciting venture to experience.”

Alderman’s involvement in community recreation is extensive. A past winner of Michigan Recreation and Park Association’s Presidential Award and Program Leadership Award, he was a Volunteer Super Captain for Super Bowl XL in Detroit in 2006 and Volunteer Point Guard Leader of the NCAA’s Final Four in Detroit in 2009. In 1991 he was named the Troy Chamber of Commerce’s “Hometown Hero.” He currently belongs to, among other professional groups, the Michigan Recreation and Park Association where he was the association’s president in 2006, National Recreation and Park Association, Northwest Parks and Recreation Association, on the Advisory Board of the Detroit Metro Sports Commission. He also serves on several committees for the Metro Detroit Amateur Softball Association (ASA) as its current Commissioner and is a national voting council member for ASA; and served on the Board of Directors for the Michigan Senior Olympics.

Alderman played a key role in the revival of the youth sports skills football competition, Punt, Pass & Kick. PP&K was once a national program sponsored and conducted by an automobile company that was eliminated in the mid-to-late 1970’s. Alderman had enjoyed participating in the program, so he started a local program 1981. He approached the Detroit Lions 26 years ago and they agreed to get involved. The Lions then recommended it to the National Football League. A meeting was set in New York with Alderman and NFL officials to learn more about the program, resulting in a national program being instituted in 1992. This program continues today. Alderman served as state chairman during this entire period and also serves as a consultant to the NFL for the program.

When asked about his hopes for the future of the Neighborhood Club, Alderman responded, “These are some exciting times for the Neighborhood Club as it celebrates 100 years of existence. With the addition of a new facility on the horizon and a joint partnership with Beaumont Hospital, the Neighborhood Club will take on a new twist in the future. I hope to continue expansion of offerings that the public will be able to enjoy and that people look to the Neighborhood Club as a destination in the community.”
Thirteen umpires from five countries will partake in the World Cup of Softball VI and Border Battle III in Oklahoma City, the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America announced June 20. The World Cup of Softball, a women’s fast pitch event that includes six countries, is July 21-25 at the ASA Hall of Fame Stadium while the men’s slow pitch Border Battle is July 23.

“The World Cup of Softball VI and Border Battle III showcase the world’s best teams in fast pitch and slow pitch,” ASA Supervisor of Umpires Kevin Ryan said. “To be selected as an umpire for either of the events is an honor and a privilege, something that every umpire should aspire to. To be able to umpire with umpires from around the United States and around the world is a thrill these 13 umpires will cherish for the rest of their careers.”

Umpires for the World Cup are Australia’s Howard Watt, Canada’s Ian Brown, Czech Republic’s Jan Hora, Japan’s Yoshiko Ogasawara, and the United States’ Cindi Brunot (Lantana, Fla.), Bryan Smith (Lansing, Mich.), Traci Stoelting (Avon, Ind.) and John Wright (Olympia, Wash.). The umpires will work 18 international softball games that feature Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, Great Britain, Japan and the recently named 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team.

“I am in total awe of being selected by the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America to represent all of the hardworking umpires in this organization. While I may be the person selected, I represent all of the great umpires that I have had the pleasure to work with and learn from over the years,” Wright said. “Umpiring at the World Cup of Softball has always been a goal of mine. But being realistic, it was one of those goals I thought I probably would never have the chance to achieve. The odds were against me. I knew I had a really slim chance at being chosen from all of the great umpires ASA has so it’s amazing to be headed to Oklahoma City for this event. I’m so grateful for the chance. It is going to hit me soon.”

Five umpires have been selected for the Border Battle including Lance Davidson of Canada. The U.S. umpires are Paul Bosshardt (Naples, Fla.), Paul Drake (Oregon, Ohio), Devin Hubble (Lander, Wyo.) and Paul Kraimer (Maple Plain, Minn.). In addition to the Border Battle, a game that will be internationally televised on ESPN, the umpires will also work a series of exhibitions July 21-22 that will help Canada and the U.S. Prepare for competition.

“My commissioner, Scott Gagnon of Minneapolis ASA, called me up a couple months ago and said ‘What are you doing at the end of July?’ I said ‘I don’t know.’ He asked me if I could get someone to watch my kids so I could umpire the Border Battle. Wow,” Kraimer said. “I said ‘No kidding. I’ll bring the kids if I have to.’ I just have to say thanks to the ASA for inviting me to do this. It is an honor and a privilege that has left me kind of speechless. Out of the 35,000 umpires in this organization, four of us were chosen. It’s a nice little club to be a part of.”

Tickets for the World Cup and Border Battle are now on sale. A ticket to the Border Battle is included in all-session ticket packages for the World Cup, which are $275 and $325 for the Ultimate Fan Zone premium seating in the first three rows of the stadium, $75 for other reserved seating and $40 for general admission seating. Single session general admission tickets are expected to go on sale July 5, 2011.

Tickets can be purchased online now at SoftballOutlet.com or by calling 800-654-8337.

Six World Cup games and the Border Battle will air across the United States this July on ESPN, ESPN2 and ESPN3.com with additional 150 countries across ESPN’s international networks including ESPN America, ESPN Pacific Rim, ESPN Australia HD, ESPN Brazil HD, ESPN Israel, ESPN Middle East, ESPN Africa, ESPN Caribbean and ESPN2 Caribbean receiving coverage. The complete TV schedule can be found at USASoftball.com.

The World Cup and Border Battle are events sanctioned by the International Softball Federation.
Hilton HHonors™ Snapshot
3600 hotels. 10 distinct brands. 81 countries. 1 world-class program

Hilton HHonors is the leading guest reward program, giving frequent travelers a fast way to earn the rewards they want most. It is the only guest reward program to offer Points & Miles and No Blackout Dates with no capacity controls at more than 3,600 hotels worldwide.

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FREE STAYS
Just by staying at one of our properties, you can earn points towards a free night at any of our ten distinct hotel brands, which start at just 7,500 points.

BLUE
Achieve by enrolling
• Redemption stays with no blackout dates
• Late check-out* & Express check-out
• Complimentary weekday newspapers
• Spouse stays free

SILVER
Achieve with 4 stays or 10 nights
All Blue on property benefits, plus:
• 15% bonus on all Base Points
• Complimentary access to hotel owned and operated health clubs during stays

GOLD
Achieve with 16 stays, 36 nights, or 60,000 Base Points
All Silver on property benefits, plus:
• 25% bonus on all Base Points
• eCheck-In
• On-property benefits such as free internet, breakfast, and room upgrades**

DIAMOND
Achieve with 28 stays, 60 nights, or 100,000 Base Points
All Gold on property benefits, plus:
• 50% bonus on all Base Points
• Guaranteed room on reservations made 48 hours prior to arrival†

† Hilton HHonors points required for a free reward night range between 7,500 points for a Category 1 hotel and up to 80,000 points for Waldorf Astoria Hotel & Resorts
* Must be requested and is subject to availability  ** Please see program Terms and Conditions at HHonors.com for more details  † Not applicable to extraordinary demand dates as determined by the hotel
Background

The Missouri Amateur Softball Association (ASA) is a massive non-profit that oversees over 2,000 individual teams, 300+ umpires and thousands of players across The Show Me State. Missouri ASA offers teams for both young and old, male and female and for first timers and experienced players, as well. Summers are busy with games, statistics and logistics and the fall off-season is shrinking every year as parents, players and officials look to get next year’s information earlier and earlier.

Challenge

When you have thousands of eager softball players and hundreds of dedicated volunteers looking to you for information, clear, concise communication is going to be your top priority. Previous to discovering Clubspaces, Missouri ASA was using Microsoft Frontpage to build and maintain the official association website, which doubled as the primary communication tool.

Missouri state commissioner Joey Rich:

“The biggest thing that we use Clubspaces for is the association website itself. Microsoft Frontpage was okay, but it wasn’t a tenth as easy as Clubspaces. I can update my website from anywhere in the world, all I need is a computer. Before, I had to be on my computer with my software and it was nowhere near as easy to manipulate as Clubspaces.”

Solution

Missouri ASA made the move to Clubspaces two years ago and the transition was smooth.

“We did the initial testing with Clubspaces and we got a lot of extra attention from your staff in terms of how we were going to set the whole site up. I gave them an idea of what I’d like the site to look like and they came up with several possibilities for me to choose from. I was able to pick the general format and the colors, so that helped get it started.”

It wasn’t long before Missouri ASA began using Clubspaces for more than just website building. In the two years since their site went live, it has begun using Clubspaces dynamic online player registration, payment processing, state tournament scheduling, team creation and more. It is looking at adding umpire registration and management in 2011. Missouri ASA also links to the Clubspaces-driven national ASA website that offers additional resources for softball enthusiasts from coast to coast.

Clubspaces also helped to alleviate some of the communication and logistical issues Missouri ASA was having, as well. It utilizes a combination of social media, timed email blasts and frequent website updates to keep players, coaches and volunteers in the loop.

“You have to keep that information pipeline stocked up, you’ve got to have new information on your site or people will stop coming to it.”

Clubspaces is the Official Online League Management System of ASA
Missouri ASA also uses its Clubspaces website to grant limited access to high-level volunteers so they can efficiently distribute forms, instructions and waivers.

“All district officers in our nine districts have access to a special page of forms that is used just by them and volunteers. There is a link on the main website that says “districts only” and “commissioners only” and they can go on there to save time. That page is the first place they look if they have a question and it is password protected so only they can get on there.”

**Result**

The goal of Clubspaces is to save coaches, volunteers and even league commissioners time and effort.

“I would say Clubspaces saves me a good six hours a month, and that’s probably conservative. Over the course of a year, I would say that Clubspaces saves me anywhere between 75 to 100 work hours. Saving this kind of time per year is a big deal. “

Missouri ASA is a vibrant, healthy organization that has more demands put on it every year and Clubspaces is helping to meet that challenge.

**Clubspaces is the Official Online League Management System of ASA**
USA’s Erin Gabriel learns life lessons through softball

Before leaving for the USA Softball exhibitions on the East Coast, 2010-11 USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team member Erin Gabriel shared what she has learned through softball. Earlier this month, she was named the Gatorade’s Ohio Player of the Year for her impressive junior season at Poland Seminary High School, becoming the first Ohio softball player to win the award twice.

The past year has been an incredible ride. I have had the opportunity to pitch in two state final games and a Pan American Championship (18-Under) game in Bogotá, Colombia. I have received many personal honors to reward my softball accomplishments. To paraphrase Lou Gehrig, “I consider myself the luckiest girl on the face of the earth.” Everything that I accomplished on the field in the last year is secondary to what playing softball has taught me about life off the playing field.

All person accolades aside, I have learned invaluable lessons over the past year. To start, I have learned the value of being part of a team and playing for my teammates over playing for myself. How many times have you heard about the game of softball, “It all starts in the circle”? Well for a pitcher, it all starts in the field, having the confidence to make a pitch knowing that your teammates have your back. Giving up a run and knowing that your team will support you with their bats. I now understand the true meaning of teamwork and being a part of collective goal.

I have also learned that sometimes you work very hard and don’t succeed. When that happens, you have to have the resiliency to bounce back on your feet for the next opportunity. If you don’t bounce back, the opportunity could pass you right by as you are lying there feeling sorry for yourself. In 2010, my high school team lost the state Championship Game 1-0 on a home run. In 2011, we used that loss to fuel our state championship win.

Walking onto a field with the letters USA across my chest was a very proud moment for me. That moment also represented the achievement of a goal. Pitching against Canada taught me that working hard also means that dreams do come true. I was actually on the field pitching for my country against teams from other countries. Even now, that sometimes doesn’t seem real! Playing for my country is such an honor and a privilege. It is very humbling to think that I now am one of a very small community of women chosen to represent USA softball.

Lastly, I have learned about giving back to others or “paying it forward.” So many people from the small community where I have grown up have given me a lot in order to make everything I have accomplished in the past year possible. I could have never succeeded at this level without that support. These individuals have never expected anything in return other than a “thank you” and some never even expected that. Now, I am in a position to help others, and I realized that helping someone else is the best way to say “thank you” to the people who have helped me.