Greetings!

Now that we are already three months into the New Year, I hope that you and the teams in your area have begun league play and are currently preparing for tournament play. No matter your involvement in the Amateur Softball Association (ASA), I wish you the best of luck for the 2011 season. Thank you for supporting ASA.

I noticed from the final production report for 2010 that our registration numbers are down across the board. As president and someone who has been involved with this organization for years, I’m very concerned about that and hope that you are too.

In 2011, I’d like for each local commissioner to make increasing their individual registrations and umpires a goal. For the commissioners of associations not using individual registrations, I also hope that you make it a goal to start individual registrations this year. Achieving those one or two goals will be very beneficial to our organization, not just in your area but nationally as well.

I also encourage those people involved in our local associations, especially commissioners and Junior Olympic (JO) commissioners, to get out there and make leagues aware of some great resources they have by being involved with ASA. Talk about our ACE coaching certification, which former USA Softball Women’s National Team Coach Mike Candrea is involved with, and background checks. Both of those are ways ASA shows we’re committed to the safety of our players.

In the coming months, we have got to put forth our best effort to recruit new leagues and retain our current leagues. We need to do everything we can if we want to stay the No. 1 softball association in the country.

Again, good luck to each and every one of you for the upcoming season. May you achieve all of the goals you have set.
A note from The Inside Pitch editor
Jamie Blanchard

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

Can you believe the 2011 season is already underway? Last weekend at the ASA Hall of Fame Complex in Oklahoma City, we welcomed a couple hundred 12-Under and 14U youth players as well as four Division I college teams—Auburn, Illinois-Chicago, Oklahoma and Oklahoma State.

Despite a bout of cold weather, the action went of without a hitch, and has made everyone here at the National Office excited for all of the great games to come this year at the NCAA Women’s College World Series, the World Cup of Softball VI and more. We hope that you’ll be able to join us.

As we move forward in the season, please remember to utilize the National Office and the resources we have available. We recently launched a new website, TournamentASA.com, to help with tournament management. We also have other helpful documents on the ASA Portal including logos, in high resolution, and full page advertisements for national programs like Liberty Mutual Responsible Sports. Videos are also on the Portal.

Through the National Office, you can also purchase “Play ASA” banners as well as sales kits, which have proved helpful in recruiting not only new sponsors but new leagues and teams.

Please remember to reach out to us if you need help. Together we can keep ASA as the country’s No. 1 softball organization.

Missouri ASA Awards Banquet attracts 100

The Missouri ASA 25th Annual Awards Banquet was held on Feb. 12 at Seven Springs Winery in Linn Creek, Mo., with over 100 people in attendance. The banquet was part of the 27th Annual State Convention.

Among the highlights of the banquet, retiring Missouri ASA Umpire In Chief Kermit Daniel was presented a Lifetime Achievement Award for over 40 years involvement with softball, and he was given a custom made Missouri ASA Hall of Blue ring. Charlie McCartney of St. Joseph was inducted into the Hall of Blue, created by Missouri ASA in 1993 to honor umpires. Mike Cavender of Jefferson City, Mike Halloran of St. Joseph, Clayton Fleeman of Pleasant Hill and Don Edwards of Lawson were inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Other awards presented at the award banquet included two student scholarships and Hall of Champion Awards to Northwest Implement boys fast pitch 16-Under and 18U teams for winning national championships.

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Mahoney: ‘TournamentASA is an administrators dream’

to grow their local tournaments which in turn grow ASA National Championships,” said Greg Light, TournamentMVP founder and creator. “ASA has always been the premier association and to get the chance to work with them directly is really a great opportunity for me and others.”

For the commissioner and the local tournament director, TournamentASA offers full control over what is displayed for their tournament including uploading a tournament logo, adding sponsors and hotels with their logos and links to a sponsor or hotel’s website. Once teams begin registering for their tournaments, tournament directors have a registration manager that allows them to keep track of all the teams, the registered division, payment status, and roster files. When ready, tournament directors can enter pool game schedules and create ASA single, double or 3-game brackets for their tournament. Another feature offered is updating the brackets with live results and allows the host to keep track of teams as they check-in at the tournament.

“TournamentASA is an administrators dream,” said Mary Mahoney, KC Metro ASA Junior Olympic Commissioner. “It’s easy to use and the coaches and teams love it! It’s so much more than just a site for tournament listings. You can post as much information as you want for any tournament you’re hosting. It only takes a couple minutes to load a tournament. We’ve seen an increase in tournament participation and I know it’s because we use this website to promote and advertise our events. I can’t wait for other associations to get on board. Teams are looking for a way to find ASA events around the country and this site will do just that.”

For the coach, TournamentASA makes it easy to keep track of all the ASA tournaments their team is registered to play in for the season. The system will keep a detailed list of their tournaments and their non-qualifying roster is available for print or online viewing. Several search tools are also available for coaches to find tournaments that best fit their teams while also viewing other teams already registered and their results for the season. Payment for tournaments is decided by the tournament director, but coaches can allow for an email invoice or PayPal with immediate notification of registration.

For more information, visit TournamentASA.com.

Questions can also be directed to Greg Light of TournamentMVP at via e-mail at greg@tournamentmvp.com or at 312-715-8687.

ASA starts new partnership with PowerChalk, Inc.

The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America announced Feb. 24 a three-year agreement with PowerChalk, Inc., to be an official video analysis system provider of ASA Softball. The maker of the world’s first and only cloud based video analysis system, PowerChalk allows coaches, players and umpires to analyze and share video without installing software.

To check out the new website, visit www.powerchalk.com/ASA.

“The ASA team is excited for the collaboration that PowerChalk creates between a coach and player. It is easy to use and affordable priced,” said Executive Director Ron Radigonda said. “I encourage our teams, coaches and umpires to use this product to help further develop their skills in our ever-changing sport.”

Here is how it works:

1. Film your swing, throw, pitch, etc. on your camcorder or phone. The site accepts virtually all common movie formats.
2. Use your net connection or our iPhone app to upload captured video clips to your ASA account. Share, protect and manage your video library with the online tools.
3. Use the powerful built-in video telestrator to play, pause, markup and voiceover your videos. Videos can be placed side by side or full frame to facilitate detailed analysis and comments.
4. Collaboration with PowerChalk takes 3 forms: a) shoulder-to-shoulder analysis b) record analysis as a new video c) broadcast your screen to multiple team members using the built-in screen sharing. Recorded analysis sessions can be shared free of charge to web, iPhone and Droid users.
5. The ASA will begin marketing the program to all members beginning in March. Each member can sign up for a free 30-day trial and enjoy an introductory pricing initiative of over 50% off. PowerChalk’s latest tool introduced is the “PowerCast”, a revolutionary feature that allows coaches to share their analysis screen live – to a player or to their entire team.

Chaz Henry, founder and CEO of PowerChalk says, “Although major league teams use PowerChalk, we all know the real action is on the softball diamond! We are proud to partner with the ASA, and look forward to being of service to their valued members.”

For more information, visit www.powerchalk.com/ASA.
Dick Edinger, John Bell, Ron Edinger, Dick Raymond and Jim Edinger, all who are retired ASA umpires inducted into the Idaho ASA Hall of Fame, with the exception of Bell, were honored during a luncheon at the recent National Umpire School in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Umpires who were also honored but were unable to attend the luncheon were Larry Musgrove, Chuck Norton, Al Crager, Bob Martin who is deceased.

Bell was presented with the Red Halpern award for his service to Idaho ASA as a 30 years umpire and coach.
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.

There’s an insurance company that understands the value of those lessons.

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

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- Easy player registration
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Clubspaces is your best solution!

Clubspaces is the Official Online League Management System of ASA. Our tools are designed to help you easily manage your league and improve communication between players, parents and coaches.

And it gets better — this program is FREE to all ASA Leagues.

- FREE League and Team Websites
- Professionally Designed ASA Website Templates
- Online Registration & Secure Payment Processing
- Auto Game Scheduler
- Central Calendar
- Group Email
- 24/7 Customer Support & No Hosting Fees

Get Started Today!

www.ClubSpaces.com/ASA

The Liberty Mutual Responsible Sports Community Grants race is on! Registration is now open for the grant period which runs March 1-May 31, 2011.

What does this mean? Since ASA Softball and Liberty Mutual Insurance have partner together, we've been able to award seven softball leagues a $2,500 grant.

First step: Go to ResponsibleSports.com/Grant to register your team or league.

After registering, parents, coaches, friends, neighbors, anyone, can help earn points for your team/league by completing a 10 question quiz that takes 5 minutes. It's that easy.

—Ron Radigonda, Executive Director of ASA
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BY NIK RULE, MUSCO LIGHTING PR COORDINATOR

The sight of athletes jogging on the field before a game may seem tedious at times. Yet, what may look like a relatively ordinary activity can be one of the most important preparations before an athletic contest or practice. Sports training experts, doctors, and world class athletes all agree that a proper warm up prior to any type of competition is an essential part in an athlete reducing the risk of injury and enhancing on the field development.

However, sending athletes out to warm-up without a plan or purpose isn’t going to help keep them injury free. Therefore to find out the proper way for baseball and softball players to warm-up we sat down with two-time Olympic Gold Medalist Michele Smith.

Question: What should coaches have athletes do to properly warm-up?

Michele: Athletes at all levels should participate in some form of what I like to call a dynamic warm-up. A lot of people think that to warm-up you should just stretch, and that isn’t true. Stretching cools you down and you don’t want to stretch a muscle that has not been used.

Question: What types of activities are in a dynamic warm-up?

Michele: Any sort of thing where you are moving forward and bringing the heart rate up is a good thing. An athlete should take a couple laps around the field, karaoke, high knees, and lunges, anything that gets blood flow to the muscles. After 10-15 minutes the muscles should be warm and if you have a couple of tight spots then you can stretch a little bit.

Question: With practice schedules being tight, what tips can you give coaches that will allow time for a dynamic warm up and also accomplish some basic fundamentals?

Michele: One of the things that I always recommend is to have player’s warm-up with their gloves on. This teaches them to use their hands properly and run with the glove arm. Since so many practices run for only an hour and a half it’s unrealistic for coaches to spend 15-20 minutes on a dynamic warm-up. So try to implement as many things into the warm up as possible – for instance running with the glove and running around the bases at a gradual pace. This provides a good opportunity for players to practice proper fundamentals on the base path. Techniques like sneaking a peek, rounding the base properly, going for extra bases and looking at the third base coach are all those little things that a team can do during the warm-up that also teach fundamentals.

Agility drills can also be used during the dynamic warm up that work on quick feet - such as a drop step, back peddling, and types of techniques that are going to make them better while playing in the field.

Question: Should different age groups do different activities during warm-ups?

Michele: For younger players it’s important to use the warm-up to teach skill as well as get the body physically ready like we talked about before. For the older players their bodies aren’t as flexible so it’s more about getting through the proper warm-up and making sure that the body is loose.

Softball is one of the most explosive sports. A dynamic warm-up is a way for coaches to train their athletes while also getting them ready for them ready to perform at a high level while reducing the chance of an injury.
The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America announced Feb. 15 a renewal with the Combat Sports Group for the 2011 ASA 2K Men’s Slow Pitch Series. The ASA 2K Series presented by Combat is in its fourth year of existence and 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. The first place team at each tournament will also receive a Combat prize pack that includes three bats, 15 batting shirts, shorts and hats.

“Combat Sports is extremely excited to once again partner with ASA and the 2K Series,” said Johnny McCraw, Combat National Promotions Manager. “The series was a huge success last year and we look forward to bigger and better things this year. We are planning on attending every event to continue promoting our new product line, as well as the game of softball and the ASA. We look forward to this partnership for many years to come.”

Teams will also be awarded points based on their finish in each ASA 2K event. The team with the most points at end of Series will also win a Combat prize if they attend the ASA Men’s A National Championship.

“ASA is thrilled to be partnering again with Combat Sports on the 2011 2K Series of tournaments,” said ASA Executive Director Ron Radigonda. “The 2011 series line-up has eight participating tournaments and we challenge slow pitch teams to take advantage of this opportunity to compete to become the 2011 ASA Men’s Class A National Champion.”

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 in Oklahoma City, September 30-October 2. 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.

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.

For an initial list of ASA 2K Men’s Slow Pitch Series events, and additional information on the Series, please click here.

2011 Men’s Slow Pitch Restricted Player List includes 97

The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America, the National Governing Body of Softball in the United States, announced today the 2011 Men’s Slow Pitch Restricted Player list. Players on the ASA RPL may only play Class A and any team that participates in ASA may not have more than five (5) players from the ASA RPL.

For the Men’s Masters 35-Over, 40-Over, and 45-Over Slow Pitch divisions the teams may have two (2) players from the RPL and two (2) Class A rated players or no players from the Restricted Player List and four (4) Class A rated players.

Click to view the 97 people named to the 2011 ASA Men’s Slow Pitch Restricted Player list.

Per the ASA Code, the players on the Men’s Restricted Player List were determined by the ASA Slow Pitch Restricted Player Committee. Any appeals regarding this list can be made to the players local commissioner who will forward it to the ASA National Office for further review by the ASA Slow Pitch Restricted Player Committee. Please do this in writing and be sure to include statistics, teams played against, and a reason why you feel you should be removed from the RPL in any appeal. To find out who your commissioner is, please click here.
Players of the Week

Dallas Escobedo of Arizona State, Reina Gaber of Houston, Michelle Moultrie of Florida and Chelsea Thomas of Missouri have all claimed the honor of being named a USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Week this season.

For Week One (Feb. 7-13), Escobedo made an outstanding collegiate debut with a 4-0 record including two wins over ranked opponents at the Kajikawa Classic in Tempe, Ariz.

“It’s an amazing honor to be named USA Softball Player of the Week in just my first week as a Sun Devil, though overall it was really great to see my team out there getting things done on the field and at the plate,” Escobedo said. “We have a long season ahead of us and I need to continue to stay focused and do my thing as we make each step towards all of our goals for this season.”

Escobedo’s best performance came against ranked opponents then-No. 22 Oklahoma State and then-No. 6 Oklahoma. She recorded 11 strikeouts against both teams, shutting out Oklahoma State 1-0, on a two-hit performance. She allowed six hits and three runs against Oklahoma for her fourth win and second complete game. On the week she worked 18.1 innings, allowing opponents a .143 batting average.

For Week Two (Feb. 14-20), Gaber, a sophomore, made two pinch-hit performances that led Houston to two wins over then-No. 16 LSU, which helped the Cougars to their first Top 25 ranking of the year.

Facing LSU for the first time in the Hilton Houston Plaza Invitational on Saturday, Gaber, a utility player, was called in to pinch hit in the bottom of the sixth inning. She capped off the Cougars’ battle to overcome a 4-0 deficit when her long sacrifice fly to center field knocked in a run to tie the game 4-4, eventually sending the contest into extra innings. Houston went on to win 5-4 in eight.

When asked to pinch hit again when the Cougars played LSU in the Classic’s finale on Sunday, Gaber shook off the pressure and produced for her team for a second time. With sophomore Ashleigh Jones on third in the bottom of the eighth, Gaber hit a single to bring Jones home and bust up the no-hitter LSU starter Rachele Fico had kept alive for nearly eight innings. Houston defeated LSU with a score of 1-0 in eight.

“I’m in shock, but really proud. I couldn’t do the things I do without my team. If my team hadn’t held off LSU and kept it at 0-0 all game, then I never would’ve had the chance to get that hit so it’s a total team effort,” said Gaber. “I hope that this is just one of many awards that brings out program recognition. We beat three ranked teams this weekend and we just want to work on getting better.”

For Week Three (Feb. 20-27), Moultrie took the honor after hitting .588 in one of the mostly highly competitive tournaments of the season, the Cathedral City Classic in Palm Springs, Fla. She had three triples including a career-high two against Utah, a game where she was a perfect 3-for-3. She posted nine RBI on the weekend, drawing three walks.

The junior centerfielder had the game-winning or game-tying RBI in three of Florida’s five games at the Cathedral City Classic, including a victory over then-No. 3 (tie) UCLA with a double to left field and two RBI. She also hit a double to left field against then-No. 12 Texas for two RBI in the bottom of the ninth for the win and an RBI triple against Utah.

“It’s a big honor for me to be named National Player of the Week. I just want to thank God for blessing me and our team,” said Moultrie. “It was really fun for us to be out in California playing good softball against good competition.”

Thomas went 3-0 during Week Four (Feb. 28-March 6), with two perfect games and a 0.00 ERA over 20.0 innings.

After sitting out much of 2010 with a medical hardship, the redshirt sophomore earned her first win of the year against Drake, pitching the first perfect game for Missouri since Feb. 17, 2002, and first seven inning perfect game for the Tigers since April 26, 1991. She worked seven innings in the March 2 contest against Drake, striking out 11 for a 5-0 win.

Following a 7-0 win against Southeast Missouri State on March 4, where she struck out 10, Thomas extended her record to 3-0 on the week with a perfect game against Missouri State. The Tigers beat Missouri State, 11-0 in six innings, with Thomas striking out a school record 15 batters, edging her own record of 14.

On the weekend, she issued 36 strikeouts to one walk and held opposition to a 0.48 batting average.
THE AMATEUR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION (ASA) OF AMERICA AND MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL® (MLB™) INVITE YOU TO HOST AN AQUAFINA® MLB™ PITCH, HIT & RUN™ (PHR) LOCAL COMPETITION!

It's time to mark your calendar for the PHR. Host a free Local Competition this Spring (March-early May) and provide this great opportunity for the youngsters in your community. Space is limited this year, so we encourage you to visit www.mlb.com/phr and register today. If you do not have a date/time in mind yet for your event, the system will allow you to enter TBD and we will follow-up with you in early 2011.

Hosting a free PHR competition provides boys and girls ages 7-14 the opportunity to showcase their baseball and softball skills. Participants have the chance to advance through four levels of competition, including Team Championships hosted at Major League ballparks, and the 2011 PHR National Finals hosted during MLB All-Star Week.
ASA partner Batters UP USA still seeking 10 ASA-generated youth programs for ’11

Some 30 percent of our nation’s children have fallen victim to childhood obesity epidemic. For the first time in our great nation’s history, the current generation of youth could be sicker – and die younger – than their parents. What to do?

Studies have shown that children who are active in sports do better in school than those who do not participate in athletics. And we all know that the keys to our future as we move deeper into the 21st century are good health and a quality education.

That’s where Batters Up USA comes in.

By introducing boys and girls who otherwise would not have a chance to experience the wonderful team sports of softball and baseball, Batters Up USA contributes free equipment to help start up fun, non-competitive ball programs at parks & rec facilities, community centers, and after-school programs around the country.

In 2009, Batters Up USA oversaw the creation of 44 programs serving more than 10,000 kids in 20 states by contributing equipment – bats, balls, gloves, helmets, and catcher’s gear – through grant funding. The evolving program has become so efficient that it only costs about $270 per 100 children to supply the essential bats, balls, and bases.

And 2010 was a record year for Batters Up USA with 41 new programs that have resulted in our adding 8,600 more kids and 10 new states – a sizeable uptick for a movement that had totaled 10,400 kids in 43 programs across 20 states in its first four years.

Last year, Batters Up USA joined up with Major League Baseball in contributing an assortment of equipment in support of programs in a dozen different cities as part of the rapidly growing MLB “Jr. RBI” program for children ages 6-12. In addition to 50 aluminum ball bats, Batters Up USA donated 50 Tee Ball sets, 20 batting helmets, and 36 dozen softballs – all told, about $3,600 in wholesale value.

The greatest opportunities for future expansion of this program are at parks & rec centers, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, and YMCAs – and that’s where ASA comes in. Through a grant from the Amon G. Carter Foundation, Batters Up USA added 10 new programs through its long-standing partnership with ASA.

Now, we want to do it again. “ASA has given us so much support in the past, and we want to return the favor,” said Jess Heald, Batters Up USA executive director.

To get the process started, go to BattersUpUSA.org and simply click on the “Equipment Grants” link. Please consider joining forces with this grass-roots program to get kids off the couch and onto the ball fields of America. Thank you.

For more information on Batters Up USA, visit BattersUpUSA.org or contact Jess Heald at (575) 758-8125 or at playballusa@msn.com.

Take a break from interest payments in 2011

Take a break from interest payments in 2011 with the Amateur Softball Association Visa Signature® Card that offers 0% Intro APR on purchases and balance transfers for nine billing cycles! Plus, you’ll earn one point for every net dollar spent anywhere Visa is accepted, whether you use your ASA Visa Signature® for everyday purchases or that major purchase you’ve been waiting to buy. Now is the time to apply!

The Amateur Softball Association Visa Signature® Card also provides great benefits, including:

• 1,000 bonus rewards points with your first purchase
• Unlimited rewards points
• No preset spending limit
• Special Signature advantages such as Concierge Services®

Plus, with every Visa Signature Card purchase, U.S. Bank will make a contribution to support the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America.

Click here to apply today! Offer ends April 30.

1 The 0% introductory APR does not apply to Cash Advances and is valid for the first nine billing cycles on Purchases and Balance Transfers. Thereafter, the APR may vary and as of 01-01-11, the undiscounted variable APR for Purchases and Balance Transfers is 9.99%- 21.99% (depending on your credit history). The variable APR for Cash Advances is 23.99%. Cash Advance fee: 4%, $10 minimum. Convenience Check fee: 3%, $5 minimum. Cash Equivalent fee: 4%, $20 minimum. Balance Transfer fee of 3%, $5 minimum. There is a $2 minimum finance charge when interest is due. The annual fee is $50. Foreign Transaction fee: 2% of each foreign purchase transaction or foreign ATM advance transaction in U.S. Dollars. 3% for each foreign purchase transaction or foreign ATM advance transaction in a Foreign Currency.

2 Accounts must be open and in good standing (not past due) to earn and redeem points.

3 Certain restrictions and exclusions may apply. Individual transactions are evaluated by U.S. Bank based on factors such as suspected fraud, Account history, credit record, payment resources, revolving balances, prior cash advances, and safety and soundness considerations. If U.S. Bank authorizes a transaction that causes you to exceed your revolving credit line, then you must pay, as a part of your monthly minimum amount due, the amount by which your new balance exceeds your credit line.

4 Cardmembers are responsible for the cost of any goods or services purchased by Visa Signature Concierge on cardmembers’ behalf.
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
Important information regarding ASA Insurance Plans for 2011

Following are the changes to the ASA Insurance Program for 2011:

1) Umpire Accident deductible increased from $100 to $250.

2) Umpire Accident coverage while traveling directly to and from an assignment has a sub limit of $25,000.

3) Umpire, Team, Individual Registration, Tourn/Clinic Accident policies have a 90/10 coinsurance.

4) Team, Individual Registration, Field Owners, Tourn/Clinic Liability policies have a property damage deductible of $1,000.

5) Sports Officials Accident deductible increased from $100 to $250.

6) Sports Officials game fee reimbursement limit decreased from $5,200 to $2,500.

7) Effective date change: Team, Sports Official, Field owners and Accident/Travel policies renewed prior to April 1st, will have an effective date of 1/1/2011. If renewed on or after April 1st, the effective date is the day after postmark on the envelope. As in the past, the effective date on new policies is the day after postmark on the envelope.

If you have any questions, please contact Margaret Schubkegel at Bollinger, 1-800-350-8005, ext 8236.
USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team named for 2011

Eleven veterans are among the 15 athletes selected for the 2011 USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team, which will be coached by Steve Shortland (San Antonio, Texas), the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America announced today. Shortland, now in his third year as head coach, will lead Team USA through July’s Border Battle III game against Canada in Oklahoma City.

“First of all, I want to thank ASA for continuing the USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team and the Border Battle for a third year. I’m honored to be a part of it again,” Shortland said. “The national exposure that the sport of slow pitch softball has gotten over the last two years is tremendous and we have a whole new group of fans because of it.”

Highlighting the roster are three-time Men’s Slow Pitch National Team members Rick Baker (West Harrison, Ind.); Rusty Bumgardner (Gastonia, N.C.); Brett Helmer (Cicero, N.Y.); JD Genter (Chickamauga, Ga.); Johnny McCraw (Wylie, S.C.), the 2010 USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team Player of the Year; and Brian Wegman (Hamilton, Ohio). All were on the inaugural squad.

“Being selected to the USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team for a third consecutive year is an amazing feeling,” said Helmer, a utility player. “I know I speak for all of us when I say that being a part of this team is an absolute honor and privilege.”

Returning to Team USA for their second campaign: Bryson Baker (Magalia, Calif.); Don Dedonatis Jr. (Kissimmee, Fla.); Andy Purcell (Naples, Fla.); Brian Rainwater (Kathleen, Ga.); and Dennis Rulli (Moorpark, Calif.).

“It’s an honor to be back playing for Team USA,” said Purcell, a pitcher who rejoins the program after his absence in 2010. “It was unfortunate I couldn’t make it to Border Battle II but I look forward to doing everything in my power to help Team USA get a victory this year. I am extremely excited about this opportunity. It’s not very often that someone has the chance to wear USA across their chest and I’m very thankful to be one of the few selected.”

Playing in the Red, White and Blue for the first time this year are Dal Beggs (Gainesville, Fla.), Geno Buck (Red Wing, Minn.), Greg Connell (Moultrie, Ga.) and Bobby Hughes (Jonesboro, Ark.).

“Playing for Team USA in the Border Battle III vs. Team Canada is an opportunity of a lifetime for any slow pitch player,” Beggs said. “I train hard all year to be as good a player as I can possibly be and to be rewarded with an invitation for the USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team is the ultimate gratification.”

The Border Battle, which is slated for July 24 at 3 p.m. during the World Cup of Softball VI at the ASA Hall of Fame Complex in Oklahoma City, will be broadcast live on ESPN. In preparation for the Border Battle, both Canada and the USA will play exhibition games during the World Cup against local slow pitch teams at the Hall of Fame Complex, although the schedule has not yet been finalized.

In 2010, the Canadian Men’s Slow Pitch Team upset the USA in the second Border Battle with a 30-29 victory, evening the Border Battle series at one victory apiece for Canada and the USA. In 2009, Team USA won the battle 30-23.

“Last year’s loss still weighs heavy in the hearts and minds of everyone involved and Team Canada will be even more focused for this year’s game,” Shortland said. “Accordingly, our 2011 roster represents the finest talent this nation has to offer and I’m confident this phenomenal combination of eleven Team USA veterans and four newcomers is ready for the challenge. With the series tied, this year’s event should be an epic battle. The only guarantee I’ll make is we will prepare harder than we ever have for this year’s game — that I can promise.”

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, and can be purchased online now at SoftballOutlet.com or by calling 800-654-8337. Single session are expected to go on sale July 5.

The Ultimate Fan Zone package also includes a private autograph session and meal with the 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team, tentatively scheduled for Sunday morning and only open to Ultimate Fan Zone ticket holders, as well free parking and a replica USA Softball jersey. For an additional $50 (a total price of $325), Ultimate Fans can upgrade to an authentic Nike jersey. Additional events for the Men’s Slow Pitch National Team are to be announced.
The USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team will prepare for the International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship with exhibition games against the 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team, the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America announced today. The team will also briefly train in Tampa, Fla., Salem, Va., and Bowie, Md., in addition to playing in the exhibitions.

For the roster of 2010-11 USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team athletes, please click here.

“Since the team was formed last summer, their ultimate goal has been to win the Gold Medal at the Junior Women’s World Championships,” said Junior Women’s National Team Head Coach Karen Johns (Whippany, N.J.). “Playing against the USA Softball Women’s National Team, the best team in the world, will be invaluable for them as they prepare for the challenge of the junior teams from Canada, Japan and the other international softball powerhouses. The USA has an amazing group of junior women representing them. I know they are looking forward to the opportunity of playing in Florida, Maryland and Virginia before taking on the world, and they will be ready for the challenge.”

Joining Johns on the Junior Women’s National Team staff are Suzy Brazney (Huntington Beach, Calif./Head coach at Golden West College), Stacy Iveson (Prescott Valley, Ariz./Head coach at Yavapai College), Tony Rico (Huntington Beach, Calif./Coach for the Worth Firecrackers) and Joe Salvatore (Monroe Township, N.J./Coach for New Jersey Breakers). Rico, coach of the Worth Firecrackers, is making his first coaching appearance with the program while the three other assistants were instrumental in the team’s Gold Medal showing at the III Pan American Championship in Bogota, Colombia, in August.

The Junior Women’s National Team will play against the National Team June 24-25 at the University of South Florida, where team member Kourtney Salvarola (Arnold, Md.) currently plays under the direction of Ken Eriksen (Tampa, Fla.), who is also the USA Softball Women’s National Team Head Coach. The teams will clash again on June 29 at LewisGale Field, home of the Salem Red Sox, in Salem, Va., and July 1 at Prince George’s Stadium, home of the Bowie Baysox, in Bowie, Md.

For ticket information on the three exhibitions, please visit USASoftball.com. Tickets for the exhibitions in Salem and Bowie are currently on sale with ticket information for Florida to be announced.

The Junior Women’s National Team will hold practices June 23-26 in Tampa, June 27-29 in Salem, June 30-July 1 in Bowie as well as Dec. 2-6 in Cape Town, South Africa, the site of the Junior Women’s World Championship.

Competition at the Junior Women’s World Championship is Dec. 7-17. Last August, Team USA, which is currently has a record of 9-0, qualified for Junior Worlds by taking the Gold Medal at the III Pan American Championships (18-Under) with a 3-1 defeat of Canada. Canada, Bronze Medalists Puerto Rico, fourth place finisher Brazil and fifth place finisher Argentina also qualified out of Bogota.

Assistant coaches named for women’s teams

The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America and USA Softball announced today the full coaching staffs for the USA Softball Women’s National Team and USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team for competitions in 2011. With Ken Eriksen (Tampa, Fla./Head Coach at USF) and Karen Johns (Whippany, N.J.) at the head of the Women’s and Junior Women’s programs respectively, the assistants for the year include nine different coaches with three making first-time coaching appearances with the USA Softball Women’s National Team program and one with the Junior Women’s National Team program.

Joining Head Coach Johns on the Junior Women’s National Team staff are Suzy Brazney (Huntington Beach, Calif./Head Coach at Golden West College), Stacy Iveson (Prescott Valley, Ariz./Head Coach at Yavapai College), Tony Rico (Huntington Beach, Calif./Coach for the Worth Firecrackers) and Joe Salvatore (Monroe Township, N.J./Coach for New Jersey Breakers). Rico, coach of the Worth Firecrackers, is making his first coaching appearance with the program while the three other assistants were instrumental in the team’s Gold Medal showing at the Ill Pan American Championship in Bogota, Colombia, in August.

In preparation for the International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championships, Dec. 6-17, 2011 in Cape Town, Africa, the 2010-11 Junior Women’s National Team will compete against the 2011 Women’s National Team at three exhibition sites.

For information on tickets to the exhibitions in Tampa, Fla., Salem, Va., and Bowie, Md., please go to USASoftball.com. Tickets for the Salem and Bowie exhibitions are currently on sale.

The USA Softball Women’s National Team will have four different sets of assistant coaches to assist Eriksen in a winning season. The staff features new faces including Olympic Gold Medalists Tairia Flowers (Tucson, Ariz./Head Coach at Cal State Northridge) and Stacey Nuveman (La Verne, Calif./Assistant Coach at San Diego State), who retired their cleats following the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, China. Mike White (Eugene, Ore./Head Coach at the University of Oregon) is also making his first appearance with the team following a successful career as a USA Softball athlete in the Men’s Fast Pitch National Team Program.

The following are the assignments for this summer with the selection of the staff for the Pan American Games, October 17-23 in Guadalajara, Mexico, to be made after the Women’s National Team Selection Camp, June 13-17 in Chula Vista, Calif.

**EXHIBITIONS (WOMEN’S NATIONAL TEAM VS. JUNIOR WOMEN’S NATIONAL TEAM)**

- June 25, 2011 in Tampa, Fla. Mike Larabee (Fayetteville, Ark./Head Coach at Arkansas), Nuveman and White
- July 1, 2011 in Bowie, Md. Flowers, Larabee and White

**CANADIAN OPEN FAST PITCH WOMEN’S INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP**

- July 9-17, 2011 Larabee, Nuveman and White

**WORLD CUP OF SOFTBALL VI**

- July 21-25, 2011 Flowers, Nuveman and White

**JAPAN CUP**

- July 28-31, 2011 Kate Drohan (Chicago, Ill./Head Coach at Northwestern) and White

*Additional coach may be announced at a later date*

Drohan, Gordon Eakin (Provo, Utah/Head Coach at BYU), Flowers, Iveson, Larabee, Nuveman, Karen Weekly (Knoxville, Tenn./Co-Head Coach at Tennessee) and White will all serve as coaches at the Selection Camp.

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**National Foundation for Cancer Research joins softball teams in fighting cancer**

The National Foundation for Cancer Research is teaming up with softball players around the country for a nationwide fundraiser entitled “Beat Cancer with a Bat!” Any softball team, whether high school, college, or community-based, can participate by dedicating proceeds from one or more games to be donated to NFCR.

“There are countless ways you can help fund cancer research, but a great place to start is by utilizing the talents you already possess,” said Franklin C. Salisbury Jr., President of NFCR. “Fundraising programs like ‘Beat Cancer with a Bat’ allow you to do what you love and help save lives at the same time.”

NFCR is providing numerous resources to help participants get started, including an event manual and cancer information materials. The campaign lasts throughout the end of the year.

To sign up or get more information, click here or visit www.nfcr.org/beatcancerwithabat.
The Sunshine State Games, Florida’s Olympic-style sports festival, invites you to play in any of the over 25 sports offered throughout the year. Whether a novice or an expert, the Sunshine State Games offers diverse sports competition to suit the competitive needs of all Floridians.

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• Slapping and the Short Game
• Hitting Drills
• Defensive Drills

The Bullets of Tallahassee, Fla., pose with their awards after winning the Championship game of the 2010 Florida's Sunshine State Games.
Field House opens at OKC’s Hall of Fame Complex

With the start of the 2011 season at Oklahoma City’s Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America Hall of Fame Complex only days away, the ASA unveiled an addition to the facility, a 10,000 square foot multipurpose Field House. The Field House, located behind the scoreboard of the main stadium field, provides amenities for fans, teams and umpires.

For photos and videos from the ribbon cutting, please click here.

“The ASA Hall of Fame Complex is the premiere softball facility in the nation. Growing up, every player dreams of the opportunity to play on this complex’s Stadium Field, whether for their college team or in the Red, White and Blue jersey of Team USA,” said ASA Executive Director Ron Radigonda. “It is a proud moment for ASA to enhance our already outstanding complex with the addition of the Field House, which can be utilized by everyone who visits. On behalf of the ASA, thank you to Oklahoma City and everyone involved with the ongoing enhancements of the facility.”

The Field House offers a number of amenities including team meeting and locker room space, complete with restrooms as well as dry erase boards and wireless Internet access. Umpires also have changing rooms, for both females and males, as well as a common area. The Field House can also serve as protection from severe weather.

Other features of the Field House addition include public bathrooms, both female and male, that are accessible from outside the facility, and eight permanent parking spaces with a bus turn-around point, offering easy access to the building. The Field House also offers handicap access to the main Stadium Field.

In the off season, the Field House can be used to host clinics and community events. The space can be converted from one large meeting room to four smaller meeting rooms.

The ASA Hall of Fame Complex schedule is highlighted by the NCAA Women’s College World Series, June 2-8, which features the top eight teams in Division I softball playing for a National Championship. From July 21-25, the complex plays host to the top athletes in international softball with the World Cup VI, which features the 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team playing teams from Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, Great Britain and Japan. The 2011 USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch Team will play Canada on July 23.

Tickets to the World Cup/Border Battle are on sale online through SoftballOutlet.com or by calling 800-654-8337. To purchase tickets to the NCAA Women’s College World Series, go to NCAA.com or call Oklahoma City All Sports Association at 405-236-5000.

For a complete schedule of 2011 events, click here.
Opening weekend in Oklahoma City

The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America’s Hall of Fame Complex in Oklahoma City opened for the 2011 season with a 12-Under, 14U and college tournament, dubbed The Preview, March 4-6.

In The Preview, three ranked teams—then-No. 11 Oklahoma, No. 15 Oklahoma State and No. 25 Auburn—battled with Illinois-Chicago. In the marquee game of The Preview, Oklahoma topped Oklahoma State 7-0. Other game scores from the tournament: Auburn 3, Illinois-Chicago 2; Auburn 4, Oklahoma State 3; and Oklahoma 5, Illinois-Chicago 3.

For a complete schedule of 2011 events, click here.
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