ASA/USA joins forces with Long Haul Bombers Tour

ASA/USA Softball is proud to team up with the Long Haul Bombers Stadium Power tour for the 2014 season! An effort to increase visibility of the ASA/USA Slow Pitch program, the recently titled ASA Long Haul Bombers Stadium tour kicks off its 11th year in early April and travels to approximately eight Major League Baseball (MLB) Stadiums throughout the country showcasing some of the best hitters in the game in a competitive series seeking the Manufacturers Cup title.

“We have long witnessed the success and popularity of the Long Haul Bombers tour and are excited to be involved in 2014,” said ASA/USA Softball Executive Director Craig Cress. “This tour highlights our highest level athletes in the sport of slow pitch softball and demonstrates to a different fan base the athleticism, talent, technique and power of the slow pitch swing.”

The ASA Long Haul Bombers Power tour highlights a collection of the world’s greatest softball home run hitters. Four teams, representing Combat, DeMarini, Easton, Miken, of softball super stars stage one-of-a-kind home run derbies at MLB Stadiums across North America. Each slugger gets 15 swings and a home run is worth one point, except the last pitch, known as the money ball, worth two points and can be the tie-breaker. Six of the eight participants will qualify for the finals of the Stadium Power Tour, scheduled to take place at the 2014 ASA/USA Men’s Super National Championship, August 22-24 in Fort Worth, Texas.

“We are excited as are the MLB clubs we perform at to have ASA/USA Softball as the Official Partner of Long Haul Bombers stadium power tour,” said John Daniels, CEO of Long Haul Trucking. “For the tour to be aligned with the National Governing Body of Softball adds a lot of credibility and exposure to our already popular hitting displays. We are looking forward to 2014 to be our best season yet.”

In 2013, Team Miken’s Denny Crine won the “Hit Off” Challenge while Team Easton’s Brett Helmer, Brian Wegman and Scott Kirby claimed the Manufacturers Cup with 33 total points.

“The Bombers tour is one of the most exciting events for slow pitch softball in this country,” said Don Cooper, Senior Vice President of Sales for Combat Sports. “To showcase the upper level athletes in the MLB arenas definitely puts our sport and athletes on a huge platform and shows fans the strength, power and entertainment value of upper level slow pitch.”

Follow along all season long at www.softball360.com for point standings, features and stories during the Power Tour.

IN THIS ISSUE

9 Illinois National Umpire School
Seventy-five umpire attend!

11 Dallas ASA offers scholarships
Two student-athletes can win!

14 Arizona National Umpire School
Record-breaking number attend!

20 Bob Mauger inducted into HOF
Inducted into New Jersey ASA Hall of Fame

2014 ASA Long Haul Bombers Stadium Tour

As of March 12, 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>CITY</th>
<th>MLB STADIUM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 12</td>
<td>San Diego, Calif.</td>
<td>Petco Park - Youth Night/Exhibition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 16</td>
<td>Houston, Texas</td>
<td>Minute Maid Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 23</td>
<td>Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
<td>Great American Ballpark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 5</td>
<td>St. Petersburg, Fla.</td>
<td>Tropicana Field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 6</td>
<td>Arlington, Texas</td>
<td>Global Life Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 18</td>
<td>Detroit, Mich.</td>
<td>Comerica Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 23</td>
<td>St. Louis, Mo.</td>
<td>Busch Stadium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 30</td>
<td>San Diego, Calif.</td>
<td>Petco Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 22-23</td>
<td>Fort Worth, Texas</td>
<td>Bombers Tour Finals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Additional locations to be added include are Atlanta, Ga. (Turner Field), Seattle, Wash. (Safeco Field), Miami, Fla. (Marlins Park), and Minneapolis, Minn. (Target Field), and New York, N.Y. (Citi Field).
A note from the President of ASA/USA Softball

Phil Gutierrez

The past four months since I assumed the duties as President of our prodigious softball association have passed rather quickly. Winter is over, at least for those of us who don’t live in the Northern or Northeast portions of our country, and spring has arrived bringing with it the start of softball and baseball seasons. Spring and summer are absolutely the best seasons for our great sport as that is when the greatest number of softball games are played. This year will bring much of the same, only better. The college and high school seasons are in full swing as are the ASA/USA Softball leagues, both fast pitch and slow pitch, as we play through to the playoffs and championship play. Good luck, but keep in mind that preparation increases your chances at luck.

As we move closer to summer let’s make sure we are prepared for the upcoming championship season. Check to ensure that all your players are ASA/USA Softball registered and that they have the appropriate identification. Please make sure that all required championship documentation is completed or available for completion. Remember to check to ensure that your coaches are background checked and an appropriate number have been ACE certified. Contact the Player Representative, Junior Olympic Commissioner or State/Metro Commissioner in your area should you have any questions, such as eligibility, pick-up players, age classification, Code changes, etc. Additionally, should you have rule questions or simply need a rule situation clarified, contact the Umpire-in-Chief in your area. These ASA/USA Softball volunteers are all there to assist with any softball need you may have.

This summer the World Cup of Softball IX, an International Softball Federation (ISF) sanctioned event, has been moved from Oklahoma City to Bill Barber Park in Irvine, California. The event, featuring some of the top Women’s National Teams in the world including Canada, Chinese-Taipei, Japan, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Venezuela and USA, will be played July 7 – 13 in conjunction with the Champions Cup, a Southern California ASA showcase tournament. For general admission ticket as well as stadium seating ticket information and other information please visit www.socalasa.org or email worldcupIX@aol.com. Following the World Cup, Team USA will travel to compete in the Canadian Open Fast Pitch International Championship July 13-21, Italian Softball Week August 6-10 in Azzano, Italy and the ISF Women’s World Championship Augusts 12-24 in Haarlem, Netherlands.

In addition, this summer our USA Junior Men’s National Team will travel to Whitehorse, Canada to participate in the X ISF Junior Men’s World Softball Championship in July 11-20. On their way to Whitehorse Team USA will tour through Northern California, Oregon and Washington making stops in cities that include Heyward, Stockton, Medford, Salem and Seattle to hone their skills in preparation for the softball world championship.

In all, a lot of softball to be played, coached and spectated in the coming months. Let’s get out and enjoy our great game, the game America and the world plays.

Thank you!

Have a question for President Gutierrez? Send it to president@softball.org!
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Hello everyone and welcome to the March 2014 issue of The Inside Pitch, the official newsletter of ASA/USA Softball!

I know that a couple issues ago we discussed the benefits of social media, but this issue I wanted to turn the focus onto one outlet: Instagram. I’m sure most of our members have heard this term, some of you may even use the app already! In case you missed it, Instagram is an online photo and video sharing app that allows users to take photos/videos, apply cool filters and share them on a variety of social media platforms! Basically, you can make pictures and videos really cool to look at and share them with your followers! It’s like Photoshop...but on your phone/tablet!

So what are the benefits of creating an Instagram account for your association? There are plenty, but I’ll focus in on a few!

1. **It connects you to people all over the world.** Through images/videos, you open yourself up to a completely new demographic of people! Over 150 million people use Instagram, so take advantage and share why they should be playing ASA/USA Softball!

2. **It helps build your business personality.** One great thing about Instagram is it’s ability to convey a personal side of it’s users. What I mean by this is that your followers get the chance to see photos or videos of things they normally wouldn’t get to see! A perfect example is a photo of a team during pre-game, or video of a team in a dugout cheering on their teammate. You’re promoting different aspects of the game while showing the core values that our sport offers: fun, camaraderie and physical fitness!

3. **A picture really is worth a thousand words.** Think about some of the most iconic images: an American sailor kissing a woman in Times Square or students putting flowers into soldiers guns during the “Flower Power” age. People love to look at attention-grabbing images. You can show off the benefits of Playing ASA/USA in a dynamic way that your followers can see!

4. **It encourages engagement.** Ask followers to participate! Use special hashtags (#PlayASA, #Softballisinnmyblood) or share photos of themselves Playing ASA! Post an open-ended question like "I play softball because______ " and see what your followers respond with!

5. **It promotes our organization!** Perhaps the No. 1 reason to have an Instagram account is the obvious: it promotes ASA/USA Softball! Promote our 100+ National Championships, a camp or clinic your association is hosting or one of Team USA’s tour stops this summer! Show folks what they’re missing and maybe the next time you have an event, they’ll be there!
The ASA/USA National Office is excited to welcome Preston Haddock (Yukon, Okla.) as the Systems Administrator/Programmer. Haddock will be responsible for programming mobile applications for ASA/USA and assisting with programming/database maintenance for ASA/USA websites. Haddock will also provide technical support for the National Office staff.

“I’m excited to join the National Office staff for ASA/USA Softball,” said Haddock. “As the National Governing Body for Softball, ASA/USA sets itself apart as the leader in all aspects of the game, including the newest technology trends. To be able to help launch the association further into the age of technology is a challenge I’m looking forward to taking on.”

Haddock served as a web developer for Advanced Academics in Oklahoma City where he lead a team in converting all online courses to be accessible to people with disabilities. He has also worked as a web developer for Mathis Brothers in Oklahoma City, where he managed several company websites.

Haddock graduated from Yukon High School in 2011, where he was a member of the Business Professionals of America (BPA). He obtained a Certificate of Mastery from Canadian Valley Technology Center for Computer Repair and Programming in 2011, where he was the BPA President, a National Technical Honor Society member and project leader for Local Area Network (LAN) parties. He has over 20 certificates for Windows, PC repair and program coding, including HTML, PHP and Javascript.

Gina Petersen (Petaluma, Calif.), Albertano Guzman (Angleton, Texas) and Stacey Elliott (Maple Valley, Calif.) are the first three winners of the 2014 season in the ACE Coaching Certification awards. For a third-consecutive year, ASA/USA Softball has teamed up with sponsors Pocket Radar™ to provide coaches like Petersen, Guzman and Elliott with a prize pack. At every odd-numbered 1,000th milestone, ASA/USA Softball will award that coach with a brand new Ball Coach Training Tool, courtesy of Pocket Radar™ ($300 value).

Petersen, a coach with Northern California ASA, got her start in coaching once her two daughters took up softball.

“The online instructions and tools that ACE offers to coaches are very beneficial,” said Petersen. “No other programs out there come close to what ASA/USA Softball has to offer teams and they provide exceptional coaching updates and training opportunities. This season, I hope my team learns more skills and has a successful year.”

Elliott is a coach with the Seattle ASA who got her start in coaching once her daughter took an interest in softball. Her passion for the game started from a young age when she herself played.

“I’ve been an ACE Coach since I can remember,” said Elliott. “I think it’s important that all coaches, regardless if they are in the dugout or not, support the program and get certified because it shows our commitment to the sport and is a great example to our players. If we ask that our players take the game serious, we should too!”

With a team goal of attending the Girls’ 16-Under Class A Western Nationals (held in Clovis, Calif.), Elliott plans to keep her team competitive in every tournament. Along with her husband, who is also a coach on the team, Elliott continues to be passionate about the game while helping the girls compete and have fun.

“We’ve always considered ASA/USA Softball as the gold standard in softball. When we plan our season we always look to ASA/USA tournaments first.”
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Eleven National Team veterans and five rookies comprise the 2014 USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team roster, which was announced on March 7. The team will travel to Kitchener, Ontario, Canada this July to play a series of exhibition games (along with the Future’s SP Team) and cap it off with Border Battle VI, against the 2014 Canadian Men’s Slow Pitch National Team on July 26 at Peter Hallman Ballyard.

The team will be coached by Steve Shortland (Converse, Texas) who is making his sixth-consecutive appearance as the head coach of Team USA.

“This is a fantastic group of players with a phenomenal mix of talent and skill,” said Shortland. “It’s always a benefit to have veteran players on our roster who have participated on Team USA before. But I’m also excited about the opportunity to spend time with our four newcomers and welcome them into this rare fraternity. I’m confident these 16 players will represent their country and ASA/USA Softball with distinction both on and off the field and I truly look forward to sharing this experience with them”

Eight returners and eight rookies comprise the 2014 USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch Future’s Team roster, which was announced March 14.

The team will be coached by Billy Messina (Simi Valley, Calif.) and Rob Humphrey (Burlington, Iowa). This marks Messina’s second year at the helm of the Future’s team while Humphrey led Long Haul/JJs/Doerflinger/Easton to the Men’s Class A Slow Pitch National Championship title in 2013.

“I would like to thank ASA/USA Softball for this opportunity,” said Humphrey. “It is truly an honor and a privilege to represent my country. I grew up playing ASA and I can’t wait to take the field with the best players in the game. I would also like to thank my family because without their support I would not be where I am today.”

### 2014 Men’s National Team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
<th>Swings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bryson Baker</td>
<td>Woodland, Calif.</td>
<td>Easton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Bazat</td>
<td>Columbia, Mo.</td>
<td>Easton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Blackburn</td>
<td>Indian Trail, N.C.</td>
<td>Louisville Slugger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travis Clark</td>
<td>Kenosha, Wis.</td>
<td>Easton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denny Crine</td>
<td>Henderson, Nev.</td>
<td>Miken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon Dillon</td>
<td>Anderson, Ind.</td>
<td>Miken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Filby</td>
<td>Delaware, Ohio</td>
<td>Worth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Hall</td>
<td>Gastonia, N.C.</td>
<td>Worth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brett Helmer</td>
<td>Cicero, N.Y.</td>
<td>Worth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Kirby</td>
<td>Miramar Beach, Fla.</td>
<td>Easton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Larsen</td>
<td>Vancouver, Wash.</td>
<td>DeMarini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff McGavin</td>
<td>Macomb, Mich.</td>
<td>Combat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donovan Pokraka</td>
<td>Englewood, Colo.</td>
<td>DeMarini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luis Reyna</td>
<td>Tampa, Fla.</td>
<td>Easton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC Watson</td>
<td>Grand Prairie, Texas</td>
<td>Louisville Slugger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Wegman</td>
<td>Hamilton, Ohio</td>
<td>Easton</td>
</tr>
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### 2014 Men’s Future’s Team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
<th>Swings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dale Brungardt</td>
<td>Vancouver, Wash.</td>
<td>DeMarini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josh Carter</td>
<td>Yuba City, Calif.</td>
<td>Miken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameron Cox</td>
<td>Mebane, N.C.</td>
<td>Combat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Greinert</td>
<td>St. Mary’s, Md.</td>
<td>DeMarini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westy Guill</td>
<td>Fresno, Calif.</td>
<td>Combat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neil Haglund</td>
<td>Brooks, N.Y.</td>
<td>Louisville Slugger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave Kessler</td>
<td>Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
<td>Louisville Slugger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cory Large</td>
<td>Bedford, Texas</td>
<td>Easton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jonathan Lenz</td>
<td>Sugar Land, Texas</td>
<td>Easton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faron Miller</td>
<td>Goshen, Ind.</td>
<td>DeMarini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bryce Oliveira</td>
<td>Hannah, Hawaii</td>
<td>Easton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyle Pearson</td>
<td>Panama City, Fla.</td>
<td>Easton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam Rockoff</td>
<td>Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.</td>
<td>DeMarini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Umscheid</td>
<td>Kenosha, Wis.</td>
<td>Easton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy Vitcak</td>
<td>Oakdale, Minn.</td>
<td>Easton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Zirkle</td>
<td>Kanakee, Ill.</td>
<td>Easton</td>
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</table>
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AS THEY TAKE ON THE WORLD.
Umpires from around the Midwest traveled hundreds of miles to attend the 2014 National Umpire School in East Moline March 1.

Seventy-five umpires attended the three day class, which was part of the Amateur Softball Associations national tour. Umpires get lectured and participate in drills to help them better themselves as an umpire.

“What we basically do at these schools is what we refer to as mechanics,” said Jim Craig, Eastern Territory Director who has been umpiring for 41 years.

Craig leads classes ranging from communicating with other umpires, to making sure your loud and punctual when making a call.

Students range from more than 20 years experience, to first time umpires. Danielle Warner is a 20-year-old college student who will be officiating for the first time this summer.

“I had honestly no idea that there were like specific angles and positions that an umpire always had to be in. I kind of just thought you had to follow the ball,” said Warner.

Warner’s father has been umpiring for several years and she attributes her passion to him. Beginners like Warner had a prime opportunity to learn from some of the best officials in the country.
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Dallas ASA recognizes the importance of student athletes to being actively engaged in community service and giving back and wishes to promote the importance of giving back to the community. Therefore, Dallas ASA has established the Community Service Scholarship for graduating seniors who best personify an ongoing commitment to “exemplary community service.”

The Community Service Scholarship(s) will be awarded in the amount of $1000 each to two (2) Dallas ASA registered student-athletes who are graduating seniors that will continue their education to a post-secondary institution.

**Application Requirements**

- Must be a Dallas ASA registered player for at least one year
- Student must have completed a minimum of 36 hours of independent community service hours within the past twelve months
- Student must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 for all core high school course work
- Student must submit the completed application form, link included on Dallas ASA website
- Students must include a minimum of two letters of recommendations from coaches, teachers or other business professionals
- Service hours received in the past twelve month must be noted on a separate sheet and include the community service completed, the name of the agency where the community service was provided, as well as the dates of service and total hours earned

**Essay**

Students must submit typed short essay on their community service experience, not to exceed 200 words.

**Evaluation**

The evaluation process will consist of a review of all submitted application materials by the Dallas ASA Scholarship Review Committee. The application must include all of the following to be considered complete:

- Application form
- Post-secondary institute acceptance letter
- Letters of recommendation (on letterhead)
- Essay

**Instructions for Submission**

All materials submitted with the application become the property of the Dallas ASA and will not be returned to applicants.
General admission tickets, as well as regular stadium seating tickets, are now available for the 2014 World Cup of Softball IX, which will be held July 7-13 in Irvine, Calif. Slated to be played at Bill Barber Park (Deanna Manning Stadium) in conjunction with the Champions Cup, a Southern California ASA showcase, the World Cup, an International Softball Federation (ISF) sanctioned event, will include some of the top teams in the world including Team USA, Japan, Canada, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Chinese Taipei and Venezuela.

Click here to place your order.

“We’re excited to bring this great event to the west coast,” said ASA/USA Executive Director Craig Cress. “The enthusiasm and support that we’ve received from the Southern California ASA shows the dedication they have to continuing the legacy of the World Cup. We can’t wait for athletes, coaches and fans to experience the world of international softball as the teams prepare for the ISF Women’s World Championships in Haarlem, Netherlands in August.”

The complete World Cup of Softball game schedule, including special promotions and autograph sessions will be announced at a later date. Visit www.socalasa.org for more information or email WorldCupIX@aol.com with any questions.

Twenty-four athletes received an invitation to try out for the Women’s National Team, which will compete in a series of exhibitions in Virginia, Ohio and West Virginia before taking on their first international opponents at the World Cup. Following the World Cup, Team USA will travel internationally to compete in the Canadian Open Fast Pitch International Championship July 14-21 in Surrey, B.C., Canada, Italian Softball Week August 6-10 in Azzano, Italy and the ISF Women’s World Championship in Haarlem, Netherlands August 12-24 where they’ll look to improve on a silver medal finish from the previous World Championship. Click here to see the 24 athletes who have received an invitation to try out for the Women’s National Team.

For updates on the USA Softball Women’s National Team and events throughout the 2014 season visit USASoftball.com.

2014 Women’s National Team Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 13</td>
<td>Exhibition Games</td>
<td>Lynchburg, Va.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 17</td>
<td>Exhibition Games</td>
<td>Findlay, Ohio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 19</td>
<td>Exhibition Games</td>
<td>Purcellville, Va.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 22</td>
<td>Women’s National Team Roster Announced</td>
<td>Morgantown, W. Va.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2-3</td>
<td>Exhibition Games</td>
<td>Irvine, Calif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 5-13</td>
<td>World Cup IX</td>
<td>Surrey, B.C., Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 14-21</td>
<td>Canadian Open FP</td>
<td>Waldorf, Md.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 28-29</td>
<td>Exhibition Games</td>
<td>Azzano, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 6-10</td>
<td>Italian Softball Week</td>
<td>Haarlem, Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 12-24</td>
<td>XIV ISF Women’s World Champ.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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BE A PART OF OUR LEGACY!

THE USA SOFTBALL LEGACY CLUB PROVIDES FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO USA SOFTBALL NATIONAL TEAM PROGRAMS AND ATHLETES THROUGH ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP GIVING. THESE CONTRIBUTIONS ASSIST IN SUPPORTING COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH TRAINING TEAMS FOR INTERNATIONAL PLAY AND TRAVEL FOR COMPETITION. LEGACY CLUB MEMBERS ARE FRIENDS, ALUMNI AND ADVOCATES OF USA SOFTBALL WHO RECOGNIZE THE VALUE OF CONTINUING THE LEGACY ESTABLISHED BY THOSE IN THE PAST WHO HAVE WORN THE RED, WHITE AND BLUE.

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The ASA/USA Softball National Umpire School (NUS) held at the Rio Vista Recreation Center and Softball Complex February 21-23 was a tremendous success and made history in the Rocky Mountain Region 13. There were over 130 participants involved with the school with 109 being students which set a record for all National Umpire Schools previously held in Region 13.

ASA/USA President Phil Gutierrez attended the NUS, serving as the “Guest of Honor”.

“The NUS was well planned, extremely well attended and almost flawlessly executed. The students were enthusiastic and energetically participated in everything they were asked to do. The staff was “Johnny on the spot” with any question or situation that arose, taking care of all needs and requests without hesitation. The Arizona ASA Umpire Program is in very good shape for the future with all the young volunteers they have on staff or otherwise assisting with the program, that’s a great credit to Wally Latall as the State UIC.”

The National Umpire School in Peoria, Az. consisted of a staff of four instructors from the ASA/USA Softball National Umpire Staff: Malcolm Boyles, Gene Harrison, Richard Crocker and Joe Robinson. The National Staff Instructors were assisted by NUS Staff Assistants from the Arizona ASA Umpire Staff: Aaron and Kasey Burns, Rich Eddings, Wayne Fulton, Tim Jackson, Justin Lauby, Lester Mast, Don McCombs, Geri Magwire, DeWayne Nelsen, Donna Shurtz, John Vecs and Andy Williams. Utah State UIC Ralph Andersen was also in attendance while Wally Latall was the NUS Coordinator.

On Friday night the NUS featured a meet and greet with the Instructor Staff. Each student received a “School Bag” that contained two T-Shirts, the NUS Drill Book, a handout on body language, a post-game self evaluation check list, a 2014 Umpire’s Manual, the 2014 Umpire Exam, Bat Ring, and a school notebook with pen. Saturday morning kicked off the NUS, with students receiving classroom instruction on 2014 rule changes, working the bases and angles and distances. Saturday afternoon instruction included base drills, base drills and more base drills. Students practiced on the softball fields, which were marked to provide a true and accurate picture of where umpires need to be for a variety of plays. The distance for trailing and the location of the holding zone were also marked out. The students were then treated to a BBQ dinner that featured hamburgers and hot dogs.

After dinner all Elite Umpires in the School were recognized during a ceremony that featured Joe Coates being presented with his Elite Umpire plaque. The students then formed four breakout groups and took the 2014 ASA NUS Test and discussed the rules associated with the questions. After the test, instructors gave various mechanics situations with the students and talked about appropriate positioning, movement and mechanic for the given situation.

On Sunday morning students were back in the classroom for plate mechanics and then out to the field for a signals drill, followed by plate mechanics. Students also worked the plate calling balls and strikes with the aid of pitching machines for the fast pitch umpires and a pitcher from a local slow pitch team for the slow pitch umpires. The school concluded with the presentation of mementoes to the National Umpire Staff instructors and the presentation of the school certificates, coin and photo.

Base off the evaluation forms, students indicated that the instruction was outstanding and that the hospitably displayed by the AZ ASA was superb.

“The Friday turn-out was impressive but even more impressive was the participation of the students,” said Malcom Boyles. “The umpires established their level of participation for the weekend, both physically and mentally. The training ASA/USA provides is the foundation of umpire success. The umpires who attended left with new tools to take home and share.”
From StudentSports.com/Softball

Taylor Hoagland had quite the year in 2013: she graduated from the University of Texas where she was a 1st Team All-American, played for the USA Softball National Team that took the silver medal at the World Cup and got a coaching job as an assistant at Amherst College, a Div. III school in Amherst, Mass.

A native of Texas, Taylor played club ball for the Schutt Avengers for several years until the team disbanded and then joined the Texas Glory where she played for Head Coach Kevin Shelton.

We spoke to Taylor recently to find out what she’s at today and to get her viewpoints on all things softball related

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SSS.com: Can you tell us what you’re doing at Amherst, what your roles are and what it’s like to be on the other of the player/coach relationship?

TH: There’s only two of us coaches here, the head coach (Shannon Doepking) and myself, so we split responsibilities and collaborate on others. I help with recruiting, scheduling, budgets, community service, recruiting e-mails and I do infield and we split hitting. A lot of the stuff I’m familiar with and there are some new things, like the office side, budgets and scheduling, but I’m pretty comfortable with where I’m at and what I’m doing.

SSS.com: Could you see coaching become a life-long career for you?

TH: It’s hard to say, I’m only in my first year, but I’m very happy—it’s a great place and I have a great boss and job. I’m blessed in that there are a lot of good things going on for me right now and I can’t see myself doing anything else.

SSS.com: What does it feel like to put on the National team jersey, wearing the red, white and blue and represent your country?

TH: It’s so awesome, it’s something a lot of girls aspire to do—it’s every little girl’s dream—but to have it actually happen is something I can’t put into words. I’m in my third year and it’s still awesome. There are only 17 girls on the team, these are the only ones chosen to represent the USA, and it’s so incredible to be included.

SSS.com: Describe what this year’s team is like in terms of personality, culture and attitude?

TH: Every team is different, even if it’s the same people. I love all the girls— it’s like a family. Even though we come from all over the country, we’re all here for the same reason and have the same goals. There are girls from universities like Oklahoma, Cal, ASU, Florida and Washington and we all come together to win.

SSS.com: What, in your opinion, is the biggest issue facing the ongoing development and growth of softball?

TH: I think that the biggest issue is there are too many people trying to break off and do their own thing. We don’t have the support from everyone in the community to go in the same direction. I feel there are people getting into the sport to make money and it’s watering it down and not building softball up. I’d like to see more people come together and build it up in the same direction and not break apart. It’s at all levels— travel ball, college, even the professional level. It’s a common factor that I’ve seen. I wish they’d do it more like baseball where they’re doing something right in how the corporate structure is working for them.

SSS.com: Looking back on your storied career, what are you most proud of?

TH: There’s two experiences that I’ll never forget: the first was getting back to the World Series when Texas was long overdue and the second was making the U.S. National team. That solidified my career and, besides the Olympics, there’s nothing else I’d want to accomplish. Everything else is just a cherry on top!

SSS.com: When talking to younger players, what are some ideals you try to teach them?

TH: I always put the emphasis on school, especially now that I’m at an academically strong program, and on understanding how important it is to do well. I’ve been fortunate to have a career in softball but for 90 percent of those who come out it’s not an option and they need something to fall back on. Also, I emphasize having a strong work ethic and that you get out of it what you put in it. The thing about softball is, you can fail seven times out of 10 tries, but you have to get up and do it again and if you succeed—one of those three times out of 10—you’ll be a success.
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Liberty Mutual Insurance sat down with USA Softball’s Raven Chavanne to get her thoughts on making a strong comeback from her setback.

In our exclusive Take 5 interview, Raven shared the lessons learned from her challenges with an ongoing battle with injuries to her right throwing shoulder.

Raven said she was very frustrated with all her injuries and didn’t play up to her usual standards during her junior season at University of Tennessee. After the season, Raven decided to have surgery on her troublesome shoulder.

Raven turned her setback into a comeback – in a big way. She learned how to be more patient during her rehab process, and was thrilled to be playing free of shoulder pain for the first time in what felt like forever. Raven believes a positive attitude is vital to turning any setback into a comeback. She encourages young athletes who are dealing with injuries or other setbacks to stay positive and avoid feeling sorry for themselves as best as they can.

“You will feel frustrated, especially if you’re coming back from a major injury,” says Raven. “But once you’re back to your full ability, you will be so glad you took the time to get better.”

To read the full Take 5 interview with Raven, visit ResponsibleSports.com.
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PROUD PARTNER
Mauger inducted into HOF
National Umpire Staffer Bob Mauger
inducted into NJ ASA Hall of Fame

From Cape May County Herald
Bob Mauger has instructed thousands of umpires that their goal is to always "concentrate on each pitch and each play, hustle all of the time, and put themselves in the best position for each call while hoping to work a perfect game."

In early March, the South Dennis resident became just the third umpire inducted into the New Jersey ASA Hall of Fame. A retired state corrections officer, Mauger has officiated the sport since 1976. He didn’t stop playing the game until 1988.

"A couple of the veteran umpires at that time told me they thought I’d be pretty good at it," said Mauger, who started assigning Cape May County softball umpires in 1978. "I thought I would enjoy it and make a few bucks at the same time. Back then it was $10 for a one-umpire system and $8 for two umpires. So until 1988, I played and umpired."

Mauger was nominated for the Hall of Fame by his long-time colleague, ASA 6th District umpire-in-chief (UIC), Gary Van Camp. "Bob’s commitment and dedication to ASA is second to none," said Van Camp, a Seaville resident. "Bob hit some home runs as a player, but he hit many more as a UIC for ASA. He’s done a great job!"

Entering this, his 39th year "behind the dish," the 64-year-old has served on the ASA National Umpire staff since 2006. He was deputy UIC for the Garden State in 1993 before being elevated to New Jersey's highest ranking ASA official five years later.

Forever passionate about the game of softball, Mauger’s nostalgia for his own impressive credentials is surpassed by the obvious emotion he feels for the development of younger umpires he’s mentored all the way to prestigious National Tournament officiating.

"Getting umpires to take that next step toward national tournaments is very rewarding for me," said Mauger, who shares a home with his spouse, Jill, and their son, Matthew. "When my guys take the field in that environment I feel like I’m back out there in those types of tournaments."

Tuckahoe’s Mike Jones is vice president of ASA 6th District and one of many Mauger pupils.

"Bob is a great mentor because he teaches you the right way to umpire a game," said Jones. "He’s a stickler for the rules and mechanics of the game. He strives for perfection out of all umpires. If it wasn’t for Bobby taking the time I wouldn’t be where I am."

Mauger, a stand-out multi-sport high school athlete in Ohio, has umpired five ASA National Championships. He served as crew chief for the Coors Light/ASA Championships in 1997. He is a member of the prestigious ASA National Indicator Fraternity and has achieved all four levels of the Association’s medal program.

"The National Championships were always awe-some," said Mauger, a charter member of the ASA slow pitch Elite Umpire program. "You work very hard to be the best you can be. I’ve always been on the championship crew since my first national tournament in 1985. I’ve been on the plate twice for championship games. I was assigned the 'if' game once. The 1997 Coors Light event in Fort Myers had a $100,000 prize. Part of my game was televised on ESPN."

Winner of the 2003 Mid-Atlantic ASA UIC Memorial Award, Mauger is relentless in his teaching and demands that all umpires do the job the correct way.

"You must concentrate on each pitch and play," said Mauger, who serves as a high school and collegiate softball umpire and as softball rules interpreter for the Atlantic and Cape May County high school umpire group. "You must hustle all of the time and be in the best position for each call. You must always hope to work a perfect game."

Mauger, who also has two adult children, Bob III and Amy, along with two grandsons, says when he retires from the ASA national staff he’ll "just continue to be what I’ve always been, an umpire." He’ll also continue to impart his vast wisdom of the vocation.

"Game management is most important and that entails rule knowledge, positioning and controlling the players," said Mauger, "The one word to use is integrity. An umpire must maintain integrity throughout his or her career by never taking short cuts."
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**THREE EASY WAYS TO INSURE SOFTBALL:**

1. Contact your ASA Commissioner. Visit www.ASASoftball.com for contact info
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In late 2011, the Arizona ASA Umpire Staff developed an Umpire Recognition Program to recognize umpires who have distinguished themselves through their on field performance at the local level, during State Championship Play and in many cases other Championship Play and during National Championship Play. Also taken into consideration during the selection processes are the umpire’s overall cooperation, support, enthusiasm and loyalty to Arizona ASA.

At first the program included a wide variety of categories and an overall Umpire of the Year Category. In 2013 the program was further refined and it is envisioned will remain as it is today for many years to come. The Umpire Recognition Program includes a District Umpire of the Year (can be either Fast Pitch or Slow Pitch) and an overall Umpire of the Year (can be either Fast Pitch or Slow Pitch).

The Umpire of the Year Award is presented to the Umpires selected in front of their peers at the Annual District Rules and Mechanics Clinics conducted in each District. Each Umpire of Year receives a “Home Plate” Plaque, appropriately inscribed, with their name, year and Award Title.

The 2013 Umpire of the Year Award Winners were:

- Arizona ASA Umpire of the Year – Robb Dunn (Slow Pitch Umpire)
- Prescott Valley, AZ, North District Umpire of the Year – Mike Sabo, Lake Havasu City, Ariz.
- South District Umpire of the Year – Rick Padilla, Tucson, Ariz.
- Central District Umpire of the Year – Matt Orlando, Chandler, Ariz.
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Maryland Slow Pitch Hall of Fame
On March 9, 15 individuals were inducted into the Maryland Slow Pitch Softball Hall of Fame as the Class of 2014. These inductee’s join the other 100+ members who are in the Maryland SP Hall of Fame, whether as a manager, promoter, player, sponsor or umpire. Also receiving an award at the Banquet was Lee Hood, who was the recipient of the Charles C. Phoebus Award. The honor was established to award someone who exhibits the enthusiasm and dedication to the game.

Maryland Slow Pitch Hall of Fame 2014 Inductees
• Rayner Banks (East Baltimore, Md.) - Promoter
• Tim Enders (Westport, Md.) - Manager
• Aspasia Goode (Palmer, Md.) - Player
• Gary Hornberger (Edmondson Heights, Md.) - Player
• Charlie Keenan (Randallstown, Md.) - Player
• Phil Miller (Rosedale, Md.) - Player
• Marion Mills (Compton, Md.) - Player
• Gene Perkins (Riveria Beach, Md.) - Player
• Steve Pope (Mount Airy, Md.) - SR Player
• Steve Ramey (Chaptico, Md.) - Umpire
• Edmond Ritter (Arbutus, Md.) - SR Player
• Robert Taylor (Williamsport, Md.) - Manager
• Donnie Warthen (Violetsville, Md.) - Sponsor
• Johnny Watson (Hillcrest Heights, Md.) - Sponsor
• Raymond Wimbrough (Portsmouth, Va.) - SR Player

Washington Metro Slow Pitch Hall of Fame
On March 1, 13 individuals and one team were inducted into the Washington Metro Slow Pitch Softball Hall of Fame as the Class of 2013. Held at the Knights of Columbus in Arlington, Va., the banquet was a great success! Visit the Washington Metro SP Hall of Fame Facebook page for more photos!

Washington Metro Slow Pitch Hall of Fame 2014 Inductees
• Donna Linkous Hager - Player
• Glenn Monroe - Player
• Johnny Creamer - Player
• Lori Grimm - Player
• Kenny Ruffo - Master Player
• Margie Ridgley - Player
• Phil Miller - Player
• Tony Onley - Master Player
• Luis Benitez - Master Player
• Chet Young - Manager
• Rodney Barber - Umpire
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