Balls and Strikes
December 2011

Softball Magazine

ASA/USA SOFTBALL PRODUCES CHAMPIONS AT HOME AND ABROAD

EVERYTHING’S PEACHY
GEORGIA ASA COMMISSIONER AL DATTOLLO ON SUCCESS DOWN SOUTH

A YEAR TO CELEBRATE
2011 PROVES SUCCESSFUL FOR SOFTBALL’S NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY

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### Faces on the Field - Check in with some of ASA'S current athletes

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Greetings from the president!

Eight years ago I had the honor and privilege to serve this great organization as president. Never did I think that opportunity would come again. For the next two years I will have that honor and will do everything possible to be a successful president.

As we move into the 2012 season, ASA is working very hard at making the changes necessary to stay on top as the world leader in our sport. Economics play a very important role in the decisions we make. We will make every effort to keep playing softball as affordable and enjoyable as possible. We are in some tough economical times where sponsors are hard to find and families have to make some hard decisions. ASA is very aware of these situations and will always do whatever is necessary to provide the opportunities to everyone that wants to play softball.

ASA is addressing changes in our equipment and the standards by which we test bats and balls. We will continue to pursue those that use illegal and doctored equipment. At our 2011 Annual Council meeting held in November, we increased the penalties for those that get caught using illegal equipment. There is no place in our game for this type of behavior.

Online services offered by ASA have been improved. The ACE Coaching Certification program, RegisterASA and background checks for coaches and umpires will continue to be a priority for ASA.

ASA will continue to fund the USA Softball National Teams program. This year our Women’s team will play in the International Softball Federation (ISF) Women’s World Championship in Canada and the Junior Men’s team will play in the ISF Junior Men’s World Championship in Argentina. Our teams will be playing in games across the country as well and we encourage you to support our National Teams.

Men’s slow pitch will once again be nationally televised in the Border Battle as the USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team will play Canada on ESPN2 on June 30. ASA has made adult slow pitch a priority the past few years and will continue to develop programs to promote the adult slow pitch game.

In closing, it is a privilege to serve as President and I look forward to the challenges that lie ahead. I wish each of you a successful and fun season and look forward to seeing you at the ballpark.

Sincerely,

E.T. Colvin
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FACES ON THE FIELD

Every year, the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America has 365,000 Junior Olympic (JO) athletes playing on more than 78,000 teams while over 1 million adults play on nearly 106,000 teams across the United States. Meet Melanie Capener, John Czarnecki and Gwen Svekis, just three athletes who play ASA fast pitch and slow pitch.

**Melanie Capener, 15**
Eugene, Ore.  
Eugene Lightning  
ASA/USA Softball Girls’ Class A 16-Under Fast Pitch  
Catcher

**Favorite Thing**  “My favorite thing about playing softball is the sound of the ball smacking my glove on a third strike. I love the competition and the desire in everyone to play to the best of their ability and the family atmosphere surrounding the diamond.”

**Proudest Moment**  “My softball accomplishment I am most proud of in softball was when we played in the summer national tournament at the end of the season a few seasons ago. We played hard on Friday at the start of the tournament and lost in a double elimination to the best team in the state. We fought back long and hard to come back all the way to compete for first and second place and lost after winning six games that Sunday to get to that game. They were undefeated and in order to take first place, we had to beat them twice. Unfortunately, we lost but that day I was tested to see my ability to keep up. Throughout those 6 games that day, I caught each and every one. Taking only one inning to sit out and that was to re-tape my left hand. We ended up taking summer national’s Runner-Up and I earned Most Valuable Player. My team gave me the 2nd place, three foot trophy for my hard work.”

**John Czarnecki, 26**
Kenosha, Wis.  
WTP/Shenanigan’s/Happy Turf Men’s Slow Pitch B  
2B/P/OF

**Proudest Moment**  The softball accomplishment I am most proud of is very simple, being able to play with the same eight-plus guys year after year, growing with them, hanging out with them, and getting life advice from them.”

**Toughest Obstacle**  “The toughest obstacle that I have ever had to overcome was a hamstring tear. Unbelievably, 2 weeks after the tear I was able to play catcher and hit and although it still hasn’t fully recovered, I am doing just fine.”

**Role Model**  Brett Helmer. “He is a big dude not just name wise, but size wise and he proves that you can succeed when you’re not a size 32.”

**Gwen Svekis, 15**
Davie, Fla.  
Gold Coast Hurricanes  
ASA/USA Softball Girls’ GOLD 18-Under Fast Pitch  
Catcher

**The Beginning**  “When I was seven, cheerleading season ended and I wanted to keep doing something and softball tryouts were on the field next to us. My first day I threw a ball right at a girl’s back to get her ‘out’ and my coach yelled ‘This ain’t kick ball.’”

**Best Experience**  “The home runs I’ve hit in tight situations. Once down 6-2 at states, I hit a grand slam in the seventh inning with two outs. In districts last year, I hit a walk-off home run in the eighth inning and then in regionals a three-run home run when we were down 4-0.”

**Goals**  “To play at a major Division I school and compete in the NCAA Women’s College World Series in Oklahoma City and perhaps coach one day.”
Ultimate Fan Zone tickets on sale now

Ultimate Fan Zone tickets for the 2012 World Cup of Softball, which is tentatively scheduled for June 27-July 2 in Oklahoma City, are available now through a special presale that ends Dec. 16. Each $275 Ultimate Fan Zone ticket purchased through Dec. 16 will be accompanied by an authentic Nike USA batting jersey ($65 value), a Nike visor ($15 value) and a certificate announcing the purchase of an Ultimate Fan Zone ticket.

Ultimate Fan Zone tickets can be ordered through SoftballOutlet.com or by calling (800) 654-8337 through Dec. 16. All other tickets to the World Cup, excluding single session, will go on sale in February 2012. Single session will go on sale shortly before the event.

The Ultimate Fan Zone ticket includes premium seating for all six days of the World Cup, with Ultimate Fans placed in the first three rows of sections 7-13 of the ASA Hall of Fame Stadium, as well a parking pass, a USA Softball replica jersey and new to this year’s Ultimate Fan Zone ticket, a special photo opportunity on the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America’s Hall of Fame Stadium Field. The ticket also includes a USA Softball goodie bag and a private meal and autograph session with the 2012 USA Softball Women’s National Team during the World Cup.

Only Ultimate Fan Zone tickets purchased by 11:59 p.m. CT on Dec. 16 will also be accompanied by the batting jersey, visor and certificate.

Participating countries and the complete World Cup schedule will be announced at a later date at USASoftball.com.

Women’s National Team raises $56,900 to fight breast cancer

ASA/USA Softball donated $6,400 to Susan G. Komen for the Cure® of Central and Western Oklahoma on Oct. 15 following the Race for the Cure in Oklahoma City. The money, raised by an eBay auction of pink items used by the 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team athletes during July’s World Cup of Softball VI in Oklahoma City, brings USA Softball’s four year donation total to $56,900.

“Considering we have an entirely new team with all but three of us making our first National Team this year, we are all really pleased by the outcome of the auction,” Women’s National Team member Molly Johnson (Tucson, Ariz.) said. “Any donation really helps the cause and we’re proud to help make a $6,400 donation possible with the auction of our jerseys. So many people are affected by this disease and assisting the Susan G. Komen with this donation is the very least that we can do.”

Ken Eriksen joins Dot Richardson on PCA board

USA Softball Women’s National Team Head Coach Ken Eriksen has accepted a National Advisory Board position with the Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA). Eriksen (Tampa, Fla.), currently the head coach at University of South Florida, joins retired USA Softball athlete Dot Richardson, a two-time Olympic Champion, as the only softball related representatives on the board.

“It is such an honor to be asked to be involved with such a prestigious group,” Eriksen said. “I have been fortunate to have been around great coaches in the bat and ball game. From Robin Roberts, Jeff Davis, Ralph Raymond, Mike Candrea, and Jay Miller, I would say I have taken a little bit from each one to help me teach the athletes I work with. I have also been fortunate enough to have been involved with great elite athletes who all have a great outlook on life and sport.”
Ashley Hansen recognized at Stanford football game

USA Softball Women’s National Team Selection Committee member Sam Ducato presented Ashley Hansen (Chandler, Ariz.), now a Stanford senior, with her 2011 USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year trophy on Oct. 22 during the Homecoming football game at Stanford Stadium. In May, the then-junior shortstop was chosen as the top player in the college ranks.

Jennie Finch completes first marathon in NYC

On Nov. 6, retired USA Softball player Jennie Finch (La Mirada, Calif.) completed her first marathon in the official time of 4:05:26. Finch started the ING New York City Marathon dead last and for every runner she passed, Timex donated $1 to the New York Road Runners’ youth program. She ended up passing 30,397 out of 47,438 marathon runners.

Indiana ASA, San Antonio ASA under new leadership

Mick Renneisen was appointed the commissioner for Indiana ASA in November. He has served as the temporary commissioner for Indiana ASA since the March 27 passing of Dave Nolan, who held the Indiana ASA commissioner position since March 2010. Renneisen has been involved with the ASA as a slow pitch player since 1975 and in service roles since 1981, even serving on the ASA Board of Directors.

Stan Richardson is the new San Antonio ASA Commissioner. In 1970, he began playing fast pitch with an ASA team at the MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Fla. He has been a member of San Antonio ASA for 15 years, serving as vice president for the past 10.

Codi Warren joins staff in Oklahoma City

Codi Warren of Meeker, Okla., joined the ASA National Office staff as the Coordinator of Marketing and Communications, on Oct. 17. She will primarily oversee the ASA Softball website, administer the National Softball Hall of Fame and Museum and serve as “Inside Pitch” newsletter editor in addition to assisting in marketing and communication initiatives.

A former ASA athlete, Warren graduated from the University of Central Oklahoma in May of 2011 with a degree in History/Museum Studies and is currently pursuing her graduate degree.

EFUNDRAISING STARTS MAGAZINE DRIVE TO HELP FUND NATIONAL TEAMS

On Nov. 16, eFundraising, an official marketing partner of ASA/USA Softball, launched a simple way to raise funds and support the USA Softball National Teams program. In an effort to assist the USA program in future training and travel, eFundraising has created a magazine drive where they will donate 40-percent of the proceeds to the USA Softball Men’s and Women’s National Team programs.

Check out the magazine options at www.efundraisingonline.com/USASoftball/.


“I am thrilled eFundraising recognized our situation and wants to reach out and assist our National Teams program,” said Kaitlin Cochran (Yorba Linda, Calif.), current Women’s National Team member and a member of the ASA Board of Directors. “Wearing this uniform means so much to me and any group who wants to help us raise funds in order for more athletes in our game to have that same opportunity is amazing.”
It was another exciting year for the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America/USA Softball. While Team North Florida made history in the Junior Olympic (JO) ranks, the USA Softball Women’s National Team and the Men’s Slow Pitch National Team were dominant in international play. Coaches, umpires and more were honored with national awards and companies renewed their partnerships with the organization. Here is a look at headlines from 2011. 

THE NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY OF SOFTBALL
ASA/USA Softball announced Jan. 28 the selection of Ken Eriksen (Tampa, Fla.) and Karen Johns (Whippany, N.J.) as the head coaches of the Women’s National Team and Junior Women’s National Team, respectively. With his selection, Eriksen become the first male in the history of the program to represent USA Softball as both a player and head coach.

On January 31, Natasha Watley (Irvine, Calif.) and Johnny McCraw (Lake Wylie, S.C.) were announced as the USA Softball 2010 Female and Male Athlete of the Year. Lauren Chamberlain (Trabuco Canyon, Calif.) was also selected as the Junior Women’s National Team Athlete of the Year.

The 2011 Biennial Umpire-In-Chief (UIC) Clinic was held Feb. 3-6 in Oklahoma City. In addition to breakout sessions and guest speakers, Bill Humphrey (Midland, Mich.) was honored with the Merle O. Butler National Award of Excellence for his more than 30 years of service.

On Feb. 15, Combat Sports, Inc., renewed its partnership with the ASA 2K Men’s Slow Pitch Series. The series consists of designated ASA tournaments that each award a $2,000 travel certificate to the first place team to travel to the ASA Men’s Class A Slow Pitch National Championship.
FIELD HOUSE OPENS IN OKLAHOMA CITY

On Feb. 28, the ASA unveiled an addition to Oklahoma City’s ASA Hall of Fame Complex, a 10,000 square foot multipurpose Field House located behind the scoreboard of the main stadium field. It provides amenities for fans, teams and umpires including locker rooms, meeting space and restrooms.

LIBERTY MUTUAL RECOGNIZES ASA COACH

Denise White, an ASA Softball certified coach who leads the Northern Virginia Screaming Eagles, won a Positive Coaching Alliance Double-Goal Coach Award presented by Liberty Mutual, as announced on March 14.

MIKE CANDREA HONORED BY U.S. OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

Former USA Softball head coach and current ASA Director of Coaching Education Mike Candrea has helped earn the U.S. Olympic Achievement award for the University of Arizona, announced by the ASA on March 25. He led the Women’s National Team in Athens (2004) and Beijing (2008).

BOOMBAH EXTENDS PARTNERSHIP WITH ASA/USA SOFTBALL

ASA/USA Softball announced on April 1 an extension of its partnership with Boombah, Inc. as the official uniform provider of the USA Softball Men's Slow Pitch National Team through 2012.
HANSEN SELECTED AS USA SOFTBALL COLLEGIATE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Stanford shortstop Ashley Hansen (Chandler, Ariz.) was selected the 2011 USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year on May 31, marking the first time a non-pitcher claimed the title since catcher Stacey Nuveman Deniz (La Verne, Calif.) won the inaugural award in 2002. Hansen, also the 2011 Pac-10 Player of the Year, helped lead Stanford to a Super Regional Appearance, finishing the year with a .495 batting average, third best in the nation.

ARIZONA STATE FINISHES NO. 1 IN THE USA SOFTBALL POLL

Following an undefeated campaign at the 2011 NCAA Women's College World Series (WCWS) in Oklahoma City, Arizona State was voted No. 1 in the final ESPN.com/USA Softball Collegiate Top 25 Poll of the 2011 season, released on June 14.

NEW FACES FOR WOMEN’S NATIONAL TEAM

The 2011 USA Softball Women's National Team was named on June 17. Of the 18 athletes and one alternate named, only 2010 International Softball Federation (ISF) Women's World Champions Kaitlin Cochran (Yorba Linda, Calif.) and Ashley Holcombe (Fayetteville, Ga.) were on a previous National Team.

DALLAS ESCOBEDO NOMINATED FOR ESPY

USA Softball Junior Women's National Team member Dallas Escobedo (Glendale, Ariz.) was nominated the “Best College Female Athlete” ESPY (Excellence in Sports Performance Yearly) Award, ESPN announced June 25. Escobedo concluded her freshman campaign at Arizona State with a record of 37-3 in the circle. She pitched every inning of the WCWS for the Sun Devils, becoming the first freshman pitcher to win the Championship Game since UCLA's Heather Compton in 1990. Escobedo was born in 1992.

In partnership with the Aquafina Major League Baseball (MLB) Pitch, Hit & Run (PHR) program, ASA sent 12 softball athletes to Phoenix for the PHR National Finals on July 11 during MLB All-Star Week. ASA associations across the country assisted in hosting qualifying competitions.

After undefeated exhibition play in Bismarck, N.D., and Cincinnati, Ohio, the 2011 USA Softball Men’s National Team headed to Oklahoma City for the third edition of the Border Battle. The Red, White and Blue avenged last year’s loss with a 25-3 pounding of Canada live on ESPN.
WOMEN CLAIM FIFTH WORLD CUP OF SOFTBALL TITLE

Competing at the World Cup of Softball VI in Oklahoma City with a roster that included only two veterans, the USA Softball Women’s National Team rebounded from a loss at Canadian Open Fastpitch International Championship by taking the program’s fifth consecutive World Cup title. Team USA topped Japan 6-4 in the Championship Game.

FLORIDA GETS FIRST GOLD CHAMPION

Team North Florida of Dunnellon, Fla. claimed the 2011 ASA/USA Softball Girls’ GOLD 18-Under Fast Pitch National Championship with a 2-1 “if necessary” victory over Newtown Rock of Holland, Pa., on July 30 at the Sportsplex USA in Santee, Calif. They are the first Florida team to win the GOLD.

JUNIOR OLYMPIC PLAY ATTRACTS THOUSANDS

ASA completed Junior Olympic (JO) Championship play in early August, crowing over 25 National Champions. A total of 1,653 JO teams participated in JO National Championship play.

ASA, LIBERTY MUTUAL CONTINUE RELATIONSHIP

On Sept. 12, ASA announced it renewed its partnership through 2014 with the Liberty Mutual Responsible Sports program, which supports parents and volunteer youth sport coaches who enable children to succeed both on and off the field.
YARD SHARKS WIN INAUGURAL BRIGHT LIGHT AWARD PRESENTED BY MUSCO

The Carmichael, Calif., Yard Sharks 18-Under A team coached by Joe Price is the recipient of the inaugural Bright Light Award presented by ASA and Musco Lighting as announced Sept. 15. Created earlier this year, the award honors an ASA registered Junior Olympic (JO) team that has shown a commitment to its community through service and volunteerism.

MEN’S FAST PITCH NATIONAL TEAM FIELDED FOR 2011

Seventeen athletes were named to the 2011 USA Softball Men’s Fast Pitch National Team on Oct. 6. The athletes, who represent 12 states and the Six Nation Indian Reservation, plan to compete at the VIII Pan American Men’s Softball Championship in Hermosillo, Mexico.

VIRGINIA EARNS ASA COMPLEX OF THE YEAR

The James I. Moyer Sports Complex in Salem, Va., is the 2011 Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America Complex of the Year presented by Stabilizer Solutions, Inc., the ASA announced Oct. 6.

PINK AUCTION RAISES $6,400

ASA/USA Softball donated $6,400 to Susan G. Komen for the Cure® of Central and Western Oklahoma on Oct. 15 following the Race for the Cure in Oklahoma City. The money was raised by an eBay auction of pink items used 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team athletes during the World Cup.
10.23 WOMEN WIN PROGRAM’S EIGHTH PAN AM TITLE

With a Pan American Games roster full of 17 Pan Am rookies, the USA Softball Women’s National team recorded the program’s eighth Pan American Games Gold Medal with an 11-1 run-rule victory over Canada on Oct. 23 in Guadalajara, Mexico.

11.07 ASA LUNCHEON HONORS MEMBERS, TOURNAMENT HOSTS

On Nov. 7 in Myrtle Beach, S.C., ASA recognized members and tournament hosts during the Wilson Sporting Goods sponsored luncheon at the 80th Annual Governing Council Meeting. Almost 100 awards were given in three categories: years of service to ASA, registration increases and excellence in conducting ASA National Championships in 2011.

11.09 NATIONAL SOFTBALL HALL OF FAME GROWS BY 10

Ten individuals received softball’s highest honor on Nov. 9 evening as ASA inducted 10 members to the National Softball Hall of Fame at the 31st Annual celebration in Myrtle Beach, S.C. The Class of 2011 consists of Lori Harrigan (Fast Pitch Player), Julie Johnson (Umpire), Brian Martie (Fast Pitch Player), Rod Peterson (Manager), Lewis Secory (Sponsor), Gary Tharaldson (Sponsor), Tim Wahl (Fast Pitch Player), Max Wilkes (Meritorious Service), Al White (Modified Player) and Jim Wolford (Umpire).

12.08 JUNIOR WOMEN LOOK FOR WORLD TITLE IN SOUTH AFRICA

On Dec. 8, the 2011 USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team opens up play against Canada at the ISF IX Junior Women’s World Championship (19-and-under) in Cape Town, South Africa, making the first time the USA Softball women have competed in Africa. Team USA is the defending Junior Women’s World Champions, having defeated Japan in 2007.
The Liberty Mutual Responsible Sports program is designed to provide helpful advice and useful resources for youth softball coaches and parents that can be applied universally among youth athletes to help our children succeed both on and off the field.

**Parents**

As the parent of a youth softball player, you want the best for your child, on and off the field. The **Responsible Sport Parenting guide** provides helpful advice and useful resources that can help you fill the key roles of a Responsible Sport Parent.

**Coaches**

As a youth softball coach, you naturally want to prepare your team to win as many games as possible, and as a Responsible Coach, you want to prepare your players to win off the field, too. The Responsible Sport Coaching Guide can help you achieve both goals. **Get started today!**

**Earn a $2,500 grant for your softball team**

Each fall and spring you can earn one of the twenty $2,500 grants to be awarded for demonstrating responsibility in youth sports. Join the Community Grant Hall of Fame along with the other softball winning organizations and see how they won to improve your team’s chances at winning!

**Responsible Sports Season Evaluation Tool**

The new Responsible Sports Season Evaluation Tool, an easy to use online survey, allows you to share your valuable input on your child’s youth softball experience in an anonymous and confidential way to improve your league! Tell your administrator to sign up today! If you’re a softball coach, register your team to get started!

**Nominate your Coach for their hard work**

Nominate your coach for their dedication to youth softball. Nominate a coach you know for the Double-Goal Coach® Awards, presented by Liberty Mutual, and give them the recognition they deserve.

**Video & Podcast Library**

In the media library, watch Coach Candrea, Jessica Mendoza or a youth softball team in action demonstrating Responsible Sports principles and listen to the new podcasts series of sport celebrities.

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

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Responsibility. What’s your policy?
ASA LEadership Converges in Myrtle Beach for 80th Annual Council Meeting

The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America recognized members and tournament hosts during the Wilson Sporting Goods sponsored luncheon at the 80th Annual Governing Council Meeting on Nov. 7 in Myrtle Beach, S.C. Awards were given in three categories: years of service to ASA, registration increases and excellence in conducting ASA National Championships in 2011.

The first awards given out at the luncheon were the James Farrell Certificates and Awards of Excellence for excellence in conducting ASA National Championships. To attain the James Farrell Award of Excellence, named in honor of former St. Louis ASA commissioner and national office staff member James Farrell, cities must do an outstanding job of hosting ASA National Championship Tournaments. The host city must receive an overall rating 95 percent from the ASA Representative, Umpire-In-Chief and National Office. An additional seven cities were given a James Farrell Certificate of Excellence for obtaining a 90-94 percent rating.

Burlington, N.C., led the way by hosting seven ASA National Championships that reached at least a 95 percent rating. Salem, Va., hosted six of the highest rated ASA National Championships while Salem, Ore., hosted five.

The Triple Play award, for increasing adult teams, Junior Olympic teams and umpires, was awarded to Commissioner Don Meinel of Hawaii ASA and Commissioner Stoney Burke of Houston ASA. The most total registrations award went to Rodney Cobb on behalf of Texas ASA. The most JO registrations award went to Phil Gutierrez on behalf of the Southern California ASA. The most umpires registered went to Andy Loechner Jr. on behalf of the Pennsylvania ASA. All three associations received the same awards in 2010.

Among the awards of the afternoon were the service awards. In the service award category, 45 members were given the awards for their five, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40 or 45 years of service to the organization. Ron Boley (Portland ASA), Charles E. Moss, Sr. (Central Virginia ASA) and Jack Mowatt (Maryland-DC ASA) were recognized for their 30 years of service while Perry Coonce (Minnesota ASA) was acknowledged for his 35. Jim Carman (Southern New York ASA), Bill Maher (South Dakota ASA) and Bill Wooten (Northern California ASA) received their 40 year award and O.W. Smith (Nebraska ASA) received a 45 year plaque.

Another 25 were given benchmark awards for increases in the registering of adult and youth teams and umpires. The local associations receiving awards had to have an increase of at least 10 percent and/or an increase of more than 100 teams or umpires registered to get an award.
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After successfully hosting various ASA National Championships and two USA Softball National Teams in 2011, the four-field James I. Moyer Sports Complex in Salem, Va., was selected 2011 ASA Complex of the Year presented by Stabilizer Solutions, Inc.
We are extremely honored and humbled to receive this national award from the ASA. It is truly a reflection of not only our dedicated staff at the Moyer Complex, but also the relationship we have cultivated over the years with the folks at ASA,” said John Shaner, Salem Parks and Recreation Director. “We both try to go out of our way to put the players and the game of softball first, and this type of recognition shows that our hard work pays off. The City of Salem is very appreciative of his honor.”

In June 2011, the Moyer Complex hosted training camps for the USA Softball Women’s National Team and the Junior Women’s National Team as they prepared for international play. Most recently, the Moyer Complex hosted the 2011 ASA Fast Pitch Girls’ Class A 10-Under, 12U and 16U Eastern National Championships and the ASA Slow Pitch Men’s Class D Eastern National Championship. Multiple ASA National Championships are slated for Salem, Va., in 2012.

“When our events are hosted at the City of Salem Parks and Recreation Department’s James I. Moyer Sports Complex, we know that they will be conducted by a professional staff in a state of the art facility appropriate for our athletes, our coaches, our umpires and all of their supporters,” said ASA Executive Director Ron Radigonda. “The James I. Moyer Sports Complex is extremely worthy of the ASA Complex of the Year designation. Congratulations to everyone involved with making the Moyer Complex one of the best destinations for our organization.”

The Moyer Complex boasts four fields, which are built around the three story Moyer Tower. The ground level of the Tower houses a permanent concession stand. Among the features of the second floor are the tournament headquarters and meeting space, both of which have phone and wireless Internet hook ups.

The third floor of Tower houses the site supervisor’s office, public address (PA) announcers, official scorekeepers and clock operators. Audio units are located on Level 3, which enables playing the National Anthem or music on all four fields or on an individual field. There is also a master PA system which enables an override of all other PA systems.

The fields have a 50/30 lighting system, which is equal to the lighting for Triple A baseball stadiums. Each field is equipped with electronic scoreboards as well as permanent spectator seating with the option for additional portable grandstands. All fields are located near permanent men’s and women’s restrooms. For the convenience of athletes, coaches and umpires, all dugouts also have restrooms and water fountains. Dugouts are also equipped with intercom systems to the third floor of the Moyer Tower.

Photos courtesy of City of Salem, Va.
PowerChalk.com is the approved, licensed video analysis site of the Amateur Softball Association. This partnership between the ASA and PowerChalk.com allows coaches, players and parents to analyze and collaborate about pitching, hitting and positioning. Start by registering a free account at www.PowerChalk.com/ASA

**Video Analysis Benefits**

- Faster skill acquisition (visual learning)
- Increased insights through slow motion
- Real-time coach - player collaboration
- Collaboration from remote locations
- Analysis sessions replace rainouts
- Mobile learning w/ iPhone/iPad, Android
- Improved motion via visual modeling
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**Finally, a fundraiser that makes your coaches and players better!**

PowerChalk is available to leagues as a Gift Card fundraiser program. This no-cost, high impact fundraiser offers the card buyer an online motion analysis account at PowerChalk.com. Card buyers can upload their swing, pitch and field video (or their soccer kick and golf swing) and then analyze that clip in slow motion. PowerChalk installs no software and yet allows analysis and collaboration between coaches and players.

Register an account today and begin to add voice and markup while you control the video in slow motion or freeze frame.

See the order form on the reverse side for the fundraiser program details.
CALIFORNIA YARDSHARKS ARE ‘BRIGHT LIGHT’ FOR ASA

The Carmichael, Calif., Yard Sharks 18-Under A team coached by Joe Price is the recipient of the inaugural Bright Light Award presented by ASA and Musco Lighting. Created earlier this year, the award honors an ASA registered Junior Olympic (JO) team that has shown a commitment to its community through service and volunteerism.

“Musco Lighting is very proud to congratulate the first Bright Light Award winner, California Yard Sharks of Sacramento, Calif.,” said Musco’s Michele Smith, a two-time Olympic Champion with USA Softball. “The Bright Light Award is given to the team that is most involved in their community, volunteers their efforts and time to give back while making a difference to others. These values of team work, community, volunteerism, giving back and making a difference are core fundamentals of the Musco Team and mission. This award therefore, is a perfect fit with our company and ideals. We are proud of the Yard Sharks and wish them all the best in their 2012 season.”

The award and a Bright Light Award banner were presented to Sacramento ASA Commissioner Jeff Dubchansky, on behalf of the Yard Sharks, on Nov. 6 during the opening session of the 80th National Council Meeting in Myrtle Beach, S.C. Additionally, as the recipient of the 2011 Bright Light Award, the Yard Sharks will receive a $2,000 credit to use toward tournament fees for any 2012 ASA sanctioned events in the United States and 20 Bright Light Award T-shirts for athletes, coaches and staff.

“We are honored to have a team of the Yard Shark’s caliber representing the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) in their community,” said ASA Executive Director Ron Radigonda.

“What impresses me most about the Yard Sharks is that their service was not limited to volunteering on one Saturday for one organization. They made consistent contributions throughout the year in so many different ways. The Yard Sharks are truly an outstanding group of young women on and off the field.”

The Yard Sharks participated in many philanthropic events in 2011 including fundraising for Susan G. Komen for the Cure® Sacramento Valley. In January and February, the team worked with the Carmichael Softball League and the Ron Engle “K” Club Academy instructing young athletes and providing demonstrations on base running, catching, hitting, pitching and throwing. The Yard Sharks also facilitated an ice cream social for the Carmichael Softball League to help athletes, coaches and parents bond.

The Yard Sharks were also involved with Special Olympics Northern California in August, making the six consecutive year Yard Sharks assisted with local Special Olympics softball program. Among the duties that Yard Sharks performed at the tournament were announcing, field preparation and scorekeeping. Yard Sharks were also involved with both the Opening and Closing Ceremonies as well as skill assessments.

“When you do something good for others without a personal reward it teaches you to be less about self,” the Yard Sharks wrote in their application essay. “This binds you and your teammates in a way that is different than anything else because when you see a teammate being selfless you respect them even more. This creates unity and a positive spirit with others and can only strengthen your bonds between teammates. Volunteering together teaches all of us humility, respect, teamwork, and builds friendships. It takes us out of our comfort level and makes us join together to help others.”

Applications for the 2012 Bright Light Award presented by ASA and Musco Lighting will be accepted starting next spring. Additional information will be available at www.asasoftball.com.
MORE DOMINANCE

YOUR GLOVE IS YOUR GLOVE. CHOOSE WISELY.
Demand a glove that takes as much pride in perfection as you do. Cat Osterman has a reputation of dominance—and that doesn’t come without grinding out pitch after pitch to master her craft. Would you expect her to select a glove that was created with anything less than the Fastpitch delivery taken into consideration? Cat’s A2000, is crafted to perfection with an innovative knotless pinky design that keeps the back of the glove as smooth as possible, minimizing contact with the leg during the pitch delivery. Genius, right? More pride. More dominance. More win. Get more at wilson.com

Wilson. MORE WIN.
The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America recognized members and tournament hosts during the Wilson Sporting Goods sponsored luncheon at the 80th Annual Governing Council Meeting on Nov. 7 in Myrtle Beach, S.C. Awards were given in three categories: years of service to ASA, registration increases and excellence in conducting ASA National Championships in 2011.

The first awards given out at the luncheon were the James Farrell Certificates and Awards of Excellence for excellence in conducting ASA National Championships. To attain the James Farrell Award of Excellence, named in honor of former St. Louis ASA commissioner and national office staff member James Farrell, cities must do an outstanding job of hosting ASA National Championship Tournaments. The host city must receive an overall rating 95 percent from the ASA Representative, Umpire-In-Chief and National Office. An additional seven cities were given a James Farrell Certificate of Excellence for obtaining a 90-94 percent rating.

Burlington, N.C., led the way by hosting seven ASA National Championships that reached at least a 95 percent rating. Salem, Va., hosted six of the highest rated ASA National Championships while Salem, Ore., hosted five.

The Triple Play award, for increasing adult teams, Junior Olympic teams and umpires, was awarded to Commissioner Don Meinel of Hawaii ASA and Commissioner Stoney Burke of Houston ASA. The most total registrations award went to Rodney Cobb on behalf of Texas ASA. The most JO registrations award went to Phil Gutierrez on behalf of the Southern California ASA. The most umpires registered went to Andy Loechner Jr. on behalf of the Pennsylvania ASA. All three associations received the same awards in 2010.

Among the awards of the afternoon were the service awards. In the service award category, 45 members were given the awards for their five, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40 or 45 years of service to the organization. Ron Boley (Portland ASA), Charles E. Moss, Sr. (Central Virginia ASA) and Jack Mowatt (Maryland-DC ASA) were recognized for their 30 years of service while Perry Coonce (Minnesota ASA) was acknowledged for his 35. Jim Carman (Southern New York ASA), Bill Maher (South Dakota ASA) and Bill Wooten (Northern California ASA) received their 40 year award and O.W. Smith (Nebraska ASA) received a 45 year plaque.

Another 25 were given benchmark awards for increases in the registering of adult and youth teams and umpires. The local associations receiving awards had to have an increase of at least 10 percent and/or an increase of more than 100 teams or umpires registered to get an award.

Photos from the luncheon are available at www.facebook.com/asausasoftball/ on the official Facebook page of ASA/USA Softball.
ENGINEERED TO THE EXACT SPECIFICATIONS OF CHAMPIONSHIP ATHLETES.
The participant and umpire manuals with the “Official Rules of Softball” are one of the perks of Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America membership. For information on registration, contact your local association. Click here for contact information.

2012 ASA PLAYING RULE CHANGES

In November, members of the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America Governing Council examined dozens of proposed changes to the ASA playing rules. All 11 changes listed below passed and will become effective Jan. 1, 2012, unless otherwise noted.

Rule 2 Section 1 Table: Women’s Slow Pitch will have a maximum fence distance of 300 feet. Comment: Allows for complexes that hold Men and Women National Championships on the same fields more flexibility when assigning games to each field.

Rule 2 Section 1 Table: Men’s Adult Slow Pitch Only (Except Seniors) shall have a base distance of 70 feet. Comment: This was tried successfully last year in the A and B Classification of Men’s Slow Pitch and brought defense back into the game. It should be used in all classifications of Men’s Slow Pitch in 2012. (Except Seniors)

Rule 2 Section 1 Table: EFFECTIVE 2013. All Adult Slow Pitch (Except Seniors) shall have a base distance of 70 feet. Comment: Allows for more defense in all Adult Slow Pitch starting in 2013.

Rule 3 Section 1A [3]: Adds the sentence; this includes wooden bats that were made prior to 2000. Comment: Clarifies that wooden bats made prior to 2000 do not have to have the ASA Certification Mark and wooden bats made after 2000 must have the ASA Certification Mark on them to be legal.

Rule 3 Section 1A [4]: Exception: Senior Softball bats may be used in Senior Championship Play. Comment: Add an exception to Rule 3 Section 1 that Senior Softball bats may be used in Senior Championship Play only.

Rule 3 Section 1B: The knob will have a diameter of at least 1.6 inches with no sharp edges. The knob will be permanently attached to the bat and may be covered with grip tape. Comment: Changes the wording from “taped” to “covered” and “safety” tape to “grip” tape.

Rule 3 Section 1D: The Handle region of the bat must have a grip made of cork, grip tape, or other synthetic material that is permanently attached to the bat. No bare metal, wood or composite material may be exposed in this area. The grip shall not be less than 6” and not more than 15”. Any attachment such as a molded finger grip, flare cone or choke up device must be attached with grip tape. Resin, pine tar or spray substances are permissible on the Grip region only. Comment: Changes the wording from “safety” tape to “grip” tape, clarifies that no bare wood or composite material along with metal can be exposed and allows for the tape to be a minimum of 6 inches in length versus a minimum of 10 inches in length.

Rule 3 Section 7: The Characteristics of any approved equipment cannot be unnaturally changed. Examples include icing, cooling or heating of any equipment. Warming devices for bats are NOT approved. Comment: Science has proven heating of bats with warming devices adds to batted ball speed and are now illegal.

Rule 5 Section 8A[1]: Home run limit for Men’s Class A Slow Pitch is 10 Comment: Men’s Class A Slow Pitch home run limit increases from 8 to 10.

Rule 8 Section 1C[2] Exception: Add “The ball is live and on ball four the Batter-Runner may only advance to 1B unless a play is made on another runner or there is an errant throw.” Comment: Clarifies that in the game of Slow Pitch with stealing, the Batter-Runner is allowed to advance to 1B only on a base on balls unless another runner on base is played on or there is an errant throw.

Rule 8 Section 7L: When a runner intentionally contacts a fair batted ball that an infielder has missed. Comment: Clarifies the rule already in effect by replacing the word “kicked” with “contacts”.

DID YOU KNOW? Throughout the season, members of the National Umpire Staff examine various rules for the “Playing Rules and Clarifications” section of ASASoftball.com. Check out the website to learn more about the “Official Rules of Softball”.

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Larry Mays
2012
Canyon Lake, Calif. Manager

Prior to coaching the Gordon’s Panthers in 1982, Larry Mays played and managed competitive softball in Southern California. During his 24 years as head coach, the Gordon’s Panthers won 11 ASA Junior Olympic National Championship titles, five runner-up titles and four Hall of Fame championships, establishing their place as one of the most successful teams in ASA history. Mays also made appearances on the international scene when he served as head coach to the U.S. Pan American Trial gold medal team (1987) in Lima, Peru, the ASA Junior Olympic World silver medal team (1991) in Adelaide, Australia, and the Olympic Festival South gold medal team (1993) in San Antonio Texas. Throughout the 1990’s, Mays served as National team advisors to PR China, Holland, Italy and Spain and established the Olympic training program for players and coaches in Micronesia. In addition to his coaching career, Mays hosted close to 200 collegiate, national and international clinics where he taught both players and coaches. Mays has received numerous awards for his contributions, including: ASA Region 14 Coach of the Year (1994, 1995) and United States Olympic Committee Developmental Coach of the Year (1996, 1999). It is no wonder why people refer to Mays as one of softball’s finest teachers and coaches as well as one of their most sought after clinicians.

Jerry King
2012
Maysville, Ky. Slow Pitch Player

Growing up in Maysville, Kentucky Jerry King made a name for himself as a basketball player. After graduating from high school in 1962, King joined the Marine Corps, where he served for four years. After that he earned a basketball scholarship to Morehead State University where he played for four years. King made his softball debut in 1976, playing for Debois Chemical, where he earned his first ASA All-American title. Throughout the span of his career, King has earned numerous honors and awards, most notably five ASA All-American titles (1976, 1979-82), and he has also been a member of several ASA National Championship teams. In 1980, King gave his highest performance with Campbell’s Carpets, appearing in 133 games with a .721 batting average and boasting 191 home runs. In later years, King continued his success playing with the Joseph Chevrolet World Championship team (1994-1996), a team that was rated as one of the top five “50 and over” teams in the country. After his retirement, the honors and accolades continued to come in. King was among the first class inducted into the Columbus, Ohio Legends of the Game (2009). That same year King was honored for his athletic and civic achievements at the Veterans of Foreign Wars hall. King has also received honors from the House of Representatives as an Outstanding Citizen of the Commonwealth of Kentucky while also being named a Kentucky Colonel by Steve Beshear, the Governor of Kentucky. His success with Debois Chemical earned King the title of MVP of the ASA 1970s All Decade Team.

Denny Bruckert
2012
Gillespie, Ill. Manager

Beginning in 1961, Denny Bruckert has dedicated his life to softball. Growing up in a small town in Illinois, Bruckert fostered a love for fast pitch softball, a love that would endure well after his playing days were over. Rather than hang up his cleats, Bruckert turned to managing men’s fast pitch teams. After managing several successful teams, Bruckert was asked to manage the Decatur Pride of Decatur, Illinois in 1993. Bruckert led the Pride to three ASA National Championships and two runner-up titles prior to their disbanding in 2001. Bruckert did not give up on his passion, however, and continued his successful managerial career, winning three additional ASA National titles in 2002, 2005 and 2006 with three different organizations. Bruckert also left his mark on the international scene, serving as the assistant coach to the U.S. National team in 1996 and head coach to the 1999 U.S. Pan American silver medal team. Bruckert is also a member of the Illinois ASA Hall of Fame, and the ISC Hall of Fame.
Ivan "Ike" Wheeler  
2012  
Bossier City, La.  
Meritorious Service  
Ivan "Ike" Wheeler’s commitment and love for the game of softball is evident throughout his 59 years of involvement with ASA. While serving in the Air Force from 1954-1974, Ike was a member of the Strategic Air Command team, which won eight Air Force World Wide tournaments, and was selected to the All Air Force team twice. After retiring, he joined the Shreveport Parks & Recreation Department and continued his work on promoting ASA and softball. Ike has been a registered ASA umpire for over 56 years and has served as District Commissioner in the Shreveport area, ASA Player Representative, and Louisiana Umpire-in-Chief. In addition to these positions, Wheeler has been a member of the ASA National Indicator Fraternity since 1988 and a member of Louisiana ASA Hall of Fame since 2010. Some of his accomplishments he has achieved since joining ASA are: recipient of the Region 6 Award of Excellence (2009) and umpired four National Championships (1982, 1987, 1988, 1997) in addition to serving as either Tournament Director, Umpire Coordinator, or Housing Authority for 17 National Tournaments. Since 1978, Wheeler has successfully registered every team in the Shreveport Parks and Recreation Department for ASA, and has attended every Umpire-in-Chief clinic and ASA National Convention since 1982.

Leon Grunalt  
2012  
Manager  
Leon Grunalt began his softball career in 1955 on a local fast pitch team. He quickly developed a love for the game, and in 1958, he began his managerial career with local Detroit teams. After several successful seasons within local travel leagues, Grunalt found success in 1984 when his Budweiser sponsored team won the ASA Men’s 35 and over National Invitational. After ASA sanctioned this category in 1985, Grunalt’s team went on to win the National title for two consecutive years. Then, in 1988, Grunalt joined forces with Karl and Fred Nothdurft and with new sponsorship the Nothdurft slow pitch team was created. Under his leadership, the team won 37 consecutive games, compiled a record of 63-5 in national championship play and earned seven National titles. Grunalt managed nine ASA Slow Pitch National Championship teams before retiring in 1994. Grunalt has been a member of the Metro Detroit ASA Hall of Fame since 1994.

Chris Armijo  
2012  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
Umpire  
Chris Armijo has been an ASA umpire for almost 40 years, during which he has had a great impact upon both ASA and Michigan ASA. Prior to becoming an ASA umpire, Chris played on five ASA State Championship teams. Armijo’s credentials speak for themselves: he is a certified ISF umpire, an ASA Elite umpire, a member of the National Indicator Fraternity since 1984, a Gold Level member of the Medals Program, and a member of the Michigan ASA Hall of Fame since 1998. He was awarded the Michigan ASA Umpire Award of Excellence twice and has served as District 7 Commissioner and Umpire-in-Chief in addition to umpiring seven National Championships. His most noteworthy accomplishment, however, is his role in the creation of the Grand Rapids Area Slow Pitch Softball Association. Amidst budget cuts, Armijo spearheaded the movement for the volunteer organization which keeps softball teams participating in ASA. Armijo has had a great influence upon the Michigan ASA umpires, and has served as an avid supporter and promoter for ASA softball.
The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America Slow Pitch Championship season came to a close Oct. 2 at ASA Hall of Fame Complex in Oklahoma City as three National Champions were crowned in the Men's Class A, C and D divisions during the Slow Pitch Championship presented by Worth.

**MEN’S CLASS A**
Annihilation/PRI/Easton lived up to its name by capturing the 2011 ASA Men’s Class A Slow Pitch National Championship with a 25-5 run-rule win over R&M/Troupe/Easton.
R&M fell behind 10-1 after one inning against Annihilation and never recovered, not scoring in the second inning and scoring two runs each in the third and sixth innings. R&M collected only nine hits in the four-inning game and finished the double elimination tournament with a 3-2 record.

“I have played an ASA National every year since 1987 and I know I am old,” said Men’s Class A Most Valuable Player Brett Helmer. “But to me I am always going to come out here and support and do this and we worked really hard to put a good team together. We got some great sponsorship and obviously the guys played great too. We played consistent and you have to be consistent to win championships. I could not be happier for the guys, everyone played well.”

After the 10-run first, Annihilation exploded for 15 runs on 18 hits in the second inning to put the game in the record book despite going scoreless in the third and fourth innings. Annihilation finished unbeaten in five games, scoring 142 runs to 59 for the opposition. It had 32 hits in the Championship Game with Greg Connell leading the offense with four hits in five trips and six RBI. Geno Buck pitched all of the wins for Annihilation.

Helmer and teammate Travis Clark captured two of the tournament’s top awards. MVP Helmer finished hitting .826 (19-for-23) with five home runs and 17 RBI. Clark was the tournament batting champion with a .864 average recording 19 hits, 15 runs scored and seven doubles.

“This is pretty important to me to be National Champions,” said Clark. “Last year I was here and my team got double-dipped and it was not as nice. This year Jerry brought us out here and it was nice and it is just a great feeling to win.”

**MEN’S CLASS C**
West Coast Nitro/DeMarini (Citrus Heights, Calif.) won the 2011 ASA Men’s Class C Slow Pitch National Championship with a 15-7 victory over Hustlers (Cadiz, Ky.). A back and forth game with three lead changes through the fourth inning, West Coast had just a narrow 7-6 lead heading into the fifth inning.

But their bats came alive posting five runs in the top of the sixth to pad the advantage to 12-6. David Rosales highlighted the inning with a triple while finishing the game going 3-for-4 with three RBI.

The Hustlers failed to muster a run in the sixth while West Coast knocked in three more runs in the top of the seventh. Hustlers tried to mount a comeback recording one run in the bottom of the seventh, but the defense of West Coast prevailed.

**MEN’S CLASS D**
The Softball Junkies/DeMarini (Citrus Heights, Calif.) won the 2011 ASA Men’s Class D Slow Pitch recording a 15-7 title game victory against Boar’s Butt (Hackleburg, Ala.). Led by the offensive effort and pitching of tournament Most Valuable Player John Wheeler, the Junkies took command early with a 9-0 lead and never looked back.

The Junkies scored three runs in each of the first four innings for a solid 12-0 lead going into the fifth. It looked like a run-rule victory was coming, but Boar’s Butt rallied for seven runs in the bottom of the fifth making the game a little more interesting. Boar’s Butt posted its two allowed home runs that inning coming from Daniel Boyd and Doug Taylor.

But the pitching of Wheeler and the defense behind him held strong in the final outs taking home the 15-7 victory. Wheeler finished the tournament hitting .545 with 10 RBI and two home runs.
The 2011 Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America Women’s Open Slow Pitch National Championship trophy landed in familiar hands on Oct. 1 at ASA Hall of Fame Complex. Enough Said (Tallahassee, Fla.) defeated Armed Forces 16-2 in the “if necessary” game to capture back-to-back Women’s Open titles.

Ending the day with a 3-1 record and outscoring its opponents 44-17, Enough Said was led by tournament All American, Batting Champion (.867) and Most Valuable Player Aree Jenkins. The outfielder went 13-for-15 with 10 runs scored, one home run and five RBI.

“We really had a great time at the tournament this weekend,” said Jenkins. “The fact that we were able to have fun and come back and play even stronger tonight says a lot about us. It showed what we stand for and what this team is all about. We stick together. We are a family and to come out on top was the best way to end the season.”

The All Armed Forces team forced the “if” game on Saturday evening with a 7-6 victory in the championship game over Enough Said. Armed Forces led 5-1 in the third, but Enough Said pieced together a five-run push in the fifth to take the lead 6-5. However, Armed Forces stayed strong pushing two more runs across in the sixth for the eventual victory.

In the “if” game Enough Said opened the game with a 7-0 lead through two innings and never looked back. A five-run fourth inning highlighted by a Sirene Johnson home run pretty much sealed what would be the 16-2 run-rule victory.

The All Armed Forces women’s team started strong early Saturday morning putting up 22 runs to Quiet Storm’s (Killeen, Texas) 9 in the first game of the day. The Red, White and Blue then matched up with Derby Girls Combat (Seattle, Wash.) who earned a first round bye after finishing runner-up in the 2010 tournament. A tight contest that was knotted up at four-all in the third inning, Armed Forces added three runs in the top of the fifth for the eventual 7-4 victory. Armed Forces Shaqina Smith led all hitters in the game going a perfect 3-for-3 with three RBI.

On the bottom half of the six-team bracket, Ian’s Pride (Calhoun, Ga.) notched a morning victory with an 8-3 win over Hit List Softball (Moore, Okla.). Defending 2010 champion Enough Said (Tallahassee, Fla.), who earned a bye in the first round, then demonstrated its strength with a decisive 11-5 triumph over Ian’s Pride.

Enough Said then continued to go on a tear in the winner’s bracket final with an 11-3 win over Ian’s Pride. Jenkins assisted in the win tallying 4-for-4 outing with three runs scored and two RBI.

A rematch from earlier in the day, Derby Girls and Armed Forces squared off in the third place game and battled back and forth. With three lead changes, Armed Forces advanced to the championship game with a bottom of the seventh 6-5 victory after a Trina McGee line drive base hit to right field plated the winning run. Derby Girls Combat finished third in the tournament with a 2-2 record followed by Quiet Storm at fourth, Ian’s Pride in fifth and Hit List in sixth.
## 2011 ASA NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

### Junior Olympic Fast Pitch

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<td>Arizona Hotshots Gold-Davis</td>
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<td>Team North Florida</td>
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<td>Team Watley</td>
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<td>Firecrackers Brashbear</td>
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<td>Lasers Gold</td>
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<td>The Next Level-Delamater</td>
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<td>Team North Florida</td>
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### Junior Olympic Slow Pitch

<table>
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<th>Champions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Duncannon Girls</td>
<td>Duncannon, PA</td>
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<td>Castlewood</td>
<td>Castlewood, SD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jupiters-Hunting</td>
<td>Watertown, SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady Blue Eachen Refrigeration/BBL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northeast Orthodontics</td>
<td>Watertown, SD</td>
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### Adult Fast Pitch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Champions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASA Men's 23 Under Fast Pitch</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
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<td>ASA Men's Major Fast Pitch</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASA Men's A Fast Pitch</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASA Men's B Fast Pitch</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASA Men's C Fast Pitch</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASA Men's Masters 40 Over Fast Pitch</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASA Men's Senior 50 Over Fast Pitch</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASA Women's 23 Under Fast Pitch Eastern</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASA Women's A Fast Pitch</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASA Women's B Fast Pitch</td>
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### Adult Slow Pitch

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Champions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASA Coed D Slow Pitch Western</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASA Men's 16 Inch Slow Pitch</td>
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<td>ASA Men's Major 15 Inch Slow Pitch</td>
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<td>ASA Men's C Slow Pitch Eastern</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASA Men's C Slow Pitch Northern</td>
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<td>ASA Men's Slow Pitch Western</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASA Men's Slow Pitch Champ. Series</td>
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<td>ASA Men's Masters 40 Over Slow Pitch</td>
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<td>ASA Men's Masters 45 Over Slow Pitch</td>
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<td>ASA Men's Senior 60 AA Slow Pitch East</td>
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### Modified Pitch

<table>
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<td>Secory Flyers</td>
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### Adult Fast Pitch

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<tr>
<th>Champions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Broken Bow Jovis Travelers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Columbia River All Rockies</td>
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<td>Wolfpack</td>
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<td>East CPI Classics</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
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<td>West Houston Cagle</td>
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<td>Columbia River A1</td>
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<td>Airtronics</td>
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<td>VA Legends</td>
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<tr>
<td>USA Comets</td>
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<tr>
<td>ABCD's Marketing/Cobra's</td>
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### Junior Olympic Slow Pitch

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<tr>
<td>Crazy 88</td>
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<td>Tides</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memphis Baptist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annihilation/PRI/Easton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Precision</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertie's/Hub City Glass</td>
<td>Portland, OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBB/Evel Home/Johny's Hustlers</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Coast Nitro/DeMarini</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Coast Nitro/DeMarini</td>
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<td>Northwestern Mutual</td>
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<td>Russell's Paint &amp; Body Shop</td>
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<td>Boar's Butt</td>
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<td>Softball Junkies</td>
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<td>Softball Junkies</td>
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<td>Death Clutch</td>
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<td>Steichen Real Estate</td>
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<td>Wrecking Crew</td>
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<td>West Coast Monstas/TPS-So Cal</td>
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<td>Silskry Aircraft</td>
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<td>JI Inc.</td>
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<td>Dust-Tex</td>
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<td>Lewissville Masters</td>
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<td>Kinmore</td>
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<td>Carolina Cardinals 70+</td>
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<td>Ideal Hitters/Denison Drywall</td>
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<td>T-Time/Shelby Bar/Jo Jo Beanz</td>
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<td>The Cartel</td>
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<td>Arkansas Synergy/Rebekh Estates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enough Said</td>
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</table>
2011 ASA CHAMPIONSHIPS
BY THE NUMBERS

36,060
Athletes playing in National Championships

2,404
Teams played in National Championships

1,552
Umpires at National Championships

561
Teams in the Girls’ 18-U GOLD & ASA/USA National Championships

172
Teams at the ASA/USA Girls’ 16-U Fast Pitch Championships - College Station/Bryan, TX

630
Teams in the Girls’ Class A Fast Pitch Territories

562
Teams in Adult Slow Pitch Championships

433
Teams in the Girls’ Class B Fast Pitch Territories

150
Teams in Adult Fast Pitch Championships

104
National Champions

60
Cities hosted National Championships

* Numbers courtesy of the ASA Softball National Office
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GET STARTED AT A SOFTBALL FACTORY EVENT IN YOUR REGION!

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## Adult Fast Pitch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tournament</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Major</td>
<td>Aug. 2-5</td>
<td>Ashland, Ohio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Class A</td>
<td>Sept. 1-2</td>
<td>North Mankato, Minn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Class B</td>
<td>Sept. 1-2</td>
<td>North Mankato, Minn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Class C East</td>
<td>Aug. 31-Sept. 3</td>
<td>Salem, Va.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Class C West</td>
<td>Aug. 30-Sept. 2</td>
<td>North Mankato, Minn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s 23-Under</td>
<td>Aug. 2-5</td>
<td>Rolla, Mo.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Masters 40-Over</td>
<td>Aug. 24-26</td>
<td>College Station, Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Masters 50-Over</td>
<td>Sept. 7-9</td>
<td>Hayward, Calif.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Senior 60-Over</td>
<td>Sept. 21-23</td>
<td>Prescott, Ariz.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women’s Major</td>
<td>Aug. 2-5</td>
<td>Auburn, Ala.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women’s Class A</td>
<td>Aug. 2-5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Aug. 2-5</td>
<td>Auburn, Ala.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women’s 23-Under West</td>
<td>July 20-22</td>
<td>Clovis, Calif.</td>
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## Adult Men Slow Pitch

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<tr>
<td>Men’s Class A</td>
<td>Sept. 28-30</td>
<td>Oklahoma City, Okla.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Class B</td>
<td>Aug. 30-Sept. 2</td>
<td>Oklahoma City, Okla.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Masters 35-Over</td>
<td>Sept. 7-9</td>
<td>Mandan, N.D.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Masters 40-Over</td>
<td>Aug. 24-26</td>
<td>Ridgeland, Miss.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Masters 45-Over</td>
<td>Sept. 7-9</td>
<td>Salem, Ore.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Church</td>
<td>Aug. 10-12</td>
<td>Auburn, Ala.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Industrial</td>
<td>Aug. 24-26</td>
<td>Gadsden, Ala.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s 16 Inch Major</td>
<td>Aug. 31-Sept. 2</td>
<td>Mt. Prospect, Ill.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s 16 Inch Class A</td>
<td>Aug. 31-Sept. 2</td>
<td>South Bend, Ind.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Eastern Class C</td>
<td>Aug. 31-Sept. 3</td>
<td>Sterling, Va.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Eastern Class D</td>
<td>Aug. 30-Sept. 2</td>
<td>Columbus, Ohio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Eastern Class E/Rec</td>
<td>Aug. 31-Sept. 3</td>
<td>Sterling, Va.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Northern Class C</td>
<td>Aug. 31-Sept. 2</td>
<td>Rapid City, S.D.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Northern Class D</td>
<td>Aug. 30-Sept. 2</td>
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<td>Men’s Northern Class E/Rec</td>
<td>Aug. 31-Sept. 2</td>
<td>Sioux Falls, S.D.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Southern Class C</td>
<td>Aug. 30-Sept. 2</td>
<td>Spartanburg, S.C.</td>
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<td>Men’s Southern Class D</td>
<td>Aug. 30-Sept. 2</td>
<td>Montgomery, Ala.</td>
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<td>Aug. 30-Sept. 2</td>
<td>Tupelo, Miss.</td>
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<td>Men’s Western Class C</td>
<td>Aug. 30-Sept. 2</td>
<td>Spokane, Wash.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Aug. 31-Sept. 2</td>
<td>Yuma, Ariz.</td>
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## Championship Finals

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<tr>
<td>ASA Championship Series</td>
<td>Sept. 27-30</td>
<td>Oklahoma City, Okla.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Class C</td>
<td>Sept. 27-30</td>
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## Adult Women Slow Pitch

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tournament</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Location</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Open</td>
<td>Sept. 28-30</td>
<td>Oklahoma City, Okla.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Masters 35-Over</td>
<td>Aug. 24-26</td>
<td>Ridgeland, Miss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Eastern Class C</td>
<td>Aug. 30-Sept. 2</td>
<td>Dayton, Ohio</td>
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## Adult Coed Slow Pitch

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tournament</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coed Open</td>
<td>Sept. 14-16</td>
<td>Tallahassee, Fla.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coed Class C Eastern</td>
<td>Sept. 22-23</td>
<td>Canton, Ohio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coed Class D Eastern</td>
<td>Sept. 22-23</td>
<td>Rolla, Mo.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coed Class C Northern</td>
<td>Aug. 24-26</td>
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<td>Coed Class D Northern</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coed Class C Southern</td>
<td>Aug. 24-26</td>
<td>Tallahassee, Fla.</td>
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<td>Coed Class D Southern</td>
<td>Aug. 24-26</td>
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<td>Coed Class C Western</td>
<td>Aug. 24-26</td>
<td>Reno/Sparks, Nev.</td>
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<td>Coed Class D Western</td>
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## Senior Slow Pitch

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<th>Tournament</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tr>
<td>Senior 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75 East</td>
<td>Aug. 31-Sept. 3</td>
<td>Burlington, N.C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75 West</td>
<td>Sept. 1-3</td>
<td>Fort Collins, Colo.</td>
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## Junior Olympic Fast Pitch

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<td>ASA/USA Girls’ GOLD 18-Under</td>
<td>July 23-28</td>
<td>Oklahoma City, Okla.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASA/USA Girls’ Class A 10-Under</td>
<td>July 29-Aug. 5</td>
<td>Bloomington, Ind.</td>
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<td>ASA/USA Girls’ Class A 12-Under</td>
<td>July 30-Aug. 5</td>
<td>Moline, Ill.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASA/USA Girls’ Class A 14-Under</td>
<td>July 29-Aug. 5</td>
<td>Sioux Falls, S.D.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASA/USA Girls’ Class A 16-Under</td>
<td>July 29-Aug. 5</td>
<td>Montgomery, Ala.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASA/USA Girls’ Class A 18-Under</td>
<td>July 29-Aug. 5</td>
<td>Johnson City, Tenn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girls’ A 10-Under Eastern</td>
<td>Aug. 1-5</td>
<td>LaPlata, Md.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girls’ Gold 18-Under Eastern</td>
<td>Aug. 3-5</td>
<td>Ridgeland, Miss.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girls’ A 12-Under Southern</td>
<td>Aug. 2-5</td>
<td>Columbus, Ga.</td>
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<td>Girls’ A 14-Under Southern</td>
<td>Aug. 1-5</td>
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<td>Aug. 1-5</td>
<td>Ridgeland, Miss.</td>
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<td>Aug. 1-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girls’ A 12-Under Northern</td>
<td>Aug. 2-5</td>
<td>Rochester, Minn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls’ A 18-Under Northern</td>
<td>Aug. 2-5</td>
<td>Rochester, Minn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tournament</td>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>Location</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girls’ A 10-Under Western</td>
<td>July 30-Aug. 5</td>
<td>Roseville, Calif.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Girls’ A 14-Under Western</td>
<td>July 29-Aug. 5</td>
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Dates and locations are subject to change.

For the most up to date information on Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America National Championships, visit [ASASOFTBALL.COM](http://www.asasoftball.com).
ASSOCIATION PROFILE: GEORGIA AMATEUR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

Since merging with Atlanta ASA in January 2006, Georgia ASA has become one of the top associations for the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America. Georgia ASA consistently ranks in the Top 10 for Junior Olympic (JO) player and umpire registrations, and is a regular host for adult and youth National Championships.

At the 80th Annual Council Meeting in Myrtle Beach, S.C., both Columbus, Ga., and Cumming, Ga., received James Farrell Awards of Excellence for hosting an outstanding ASA National Championship in 2011. The Twin Creeks Softball Complex in Woodstock, Ga., was also previously named the 2008 ASA Complex of the Year.

The association is also home of two 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team athletes, Ashley Holcombe (Fayetteville, Ga.) and Rhea Taylor (Buford, Ga.), and 2011 USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team members Greg Connell (Moultrie, Ga.), JD Genter (Chickamauga, Ga.) and Brian Rainwater (Kathleen, Ga.).

After Georgia ASA Commissioner Al Dattolo returned from Myrtle Beach, he sat down with Balls and Strikes Online Magazine to talk about the success of the association.

In 2007, you transitioned from the At-Large Player Representative to the Georgia ASA Commissioner. What has been the greatest accomplishment for you as Georgia ASA Commissioner?

The greatest accomplishment has been initiating a program where Georgia ASA pays the national tournament entry fees for JO Teams that win berths at tournaments held within the State of Georgia. Also, the bringing together of the entire state into one organization from what was two distinct and separate organizations with different philosophies.

How has the association changed over the past five years?

The state has come together as one. After the initial merging, there was a great deal of hard feelings between the Atlanta and Georgia groups. Each was thinking the other was trying to impose its will on the other. Now everyone is working together toward the single goal of making Georgia ASA one of the top associations.

What do you feel are the strengths and weaknesses of Georgia ASA?

The strengths of Georgia ASA are its JO and umpire programs. This is due to hard work of JO Commissioners Katie Kay and Kim Townsend and the State Umpire-in-Chief (UIC) Jimmy Derrick. Right now the major weakness is the adult program. Adult registrations have declined over the past three years and we are trying to establish a program to bring the adults back.

Just looking on the Georgia ASA website, there is a strong network of people working throughout the state for the association. How large is the Georgia ASA staff?

The Georgia ASA Staff includes a commissioner, senior deputy commissioner, six zone Commissioners, five District Commissioners, two JO commissioners, a state UIC, a senior state assistant UIC, six zone UICs, 20 district UICs and numerous other volunteers. It is difficult to give an exact number.

Georgia ASA has a very extensive online presence, with an in-depth website, Facebook and Twitter. Who is responsible for Georgia ASA’s online image?

Our online presence is due to the hard work of our State IT Administrator, Brian Crane. Brian created and maintains our website plus is responsible for creating and maintaining our Facebook, Twitter and other social media programs.

What has been the benefit of that engagement for your association and your members?

Our online presence has simplified our communications. We can now contact coaches, umpires, players, etc. just by the push of a button. It also makes it easier for those individuals to contact
us. It also allows us to get important updates and information out in a quick and inexpensive manner.

Have there been any drawbacks to being so involved online?
As far as we are aware, there have been no drawbacks.

Recently, Georgia ASA started separate Facebook and Twitter accounts for umpires. Has this been successful? Would you recommend it to other associations?
This has been very successful. It has allowed us to keep the umpires updated on rule changes and rule interpretations. It has also allowed us to keep them informed about tournaments, etc. Georgia ASA feels this is very useful and would highly recommend it to other associations.

What advice do you have for other associations that want to improve their online presence?
The only advice I can give is to get online if you are not already there and expand as much as possible. Also, you need to find someone who is highly qualified to handle your IT program. Georgia ASA believes it has found the best in Brian Crane.

While Georgia ASA is very successful online, your association has no shortage of success offline. Rhea Taylor made her first USA Softball Women’s National Team this year and Ashley Holcombe returned to the team. Georgia athletes are also on the 2011 USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team. What was it like to see a local athlete make the squad?
It was very exciting to see Rhea selected for the first time. Georgia also has the great honor of having Ashley, who has been a Women’s National Team member since 2009, and it was great to see her selected throughout the years. We are also very proud of our USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team members. It has given Georgia players something to strive for.

And just last year, the East Cobb Bullets won the ASA/USA Softball Girls’ GOLD 18-Under Fast Pitch National Championship, becoming the first Georgia team to win an ASA/USA Softball National Championship. How did that impact your association?
It was a great honor for a Georgia team to win the National Championship, especially the GOLD. It has shown Georgia teams that we can compete with anyone. In fact, Georgia ASA had one of its best years in 2011 with six Top 10 finishes: second and fourth in the 172 team 16-Under A, fifth in 18U A, third and seventh in 14U A and ninth in 12U A.

Georgia ASA consistently ranks in the Top 10 for the number of Junior Olympic (JO) teams registered. What do you think attracts athletes to your program? Why do people play for Georgia ASA?
Athletes are drawn to ASA because they know it has the best qualified and trained coaches as well as highly trained umpires. They also know that it gives them a great opportunity to be seen by college coaches and advance their career. People play for Georgia ASA because they know that ASA is where champions play.

Georgia ASA hosted the 2010 GOLD and will host the Girls’ 14U Class B Fast Pitch Southern and 16U Class B Fast Pitch Southern next year. What makes Georgia such a good host for national tournaments?
Georgia is a good host for national tournaments because of its facilities and highly professional tournament directors. It also has outstanding softball weather. There is also outstanding entertainment and sites for the team members and their parents to experience.

Two of the National Championships hosted in your state last year, the ASA Fast Pitch Girls’ 16-Under Southern in Columbus and ASA Slow Pitch Men’s Church in Cumming, received James Farrell Awards of Excellence. In your opinion, what makes a good National Championship?
A good national Championship is dependent upon an outstanding tournament director and a highly professional tournament staff. Georgia has been blessed with a large number of these individuals whose goal is to host the best possible tournament.

What can we expect from Georgia ASA in 2012?
You can expect Georgia ASA to continue to strive to be the best in the nation. We are developing programs to bring the adults back, to better train our umpires and to provide more and better tournament sites for our championship play.

Thank you so much for chatting with us today Al. Is there anything else that you would like to add?
Just to wish the National Office staff and all 76 local associations a happy and safe holiday season and great 2012 softball year.
**Quotables from the ASA/USA Softball Facebook page**

The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America/USA Softball has more than 66,000 likes on Facebook and over 15,000 followers on Twitter, making softball’s National Governing Body one of the most popular amateur sports organizations online. Here is what people are writing to ASA/USA Softball on Facebook:

**William Mendiola**
on the USA Softball National Coaching School: “Thanks for putting this on. It was very informative and definitely gave me a whole new set of tools in my coaching tool box. Coaches [Mike] Candrea, [Mike] White and [Ken] Eriksen were excellent instructors. Nothing beats learning from the best!”

**Spencer Schulz**
on what he did recently to make himself a better umpire: “I read the rule book and I will be attending a National Umpire School in Fairfield, Calif., this year.”

**Connie Rector May**
on 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team member Michelle Moultrie: “One of the most OUTSTANDING young ladies to EVER play the game! Complete package and a testament to hard work!!!”

**Emma De Mars**
on the 2011 USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team traveling to Cape Town, South Africa, for the International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship: “Good luck ladies! Hope you go out and kick some butt! You guys will do great! Always stay strong through it all, show ‘em what we USA ladies can do! Best wishes!”

**Toni Rae**
on her favorite thing about softball: “The feeling of dirt in your pants and the amazing tan lines.”

**Bryan Smith**
on Larry Mays being inducted into the National Softball Hall of Fame in 2012: “Larry Mays is long deserving of this recognition. Great man, coach and teacher of the game. He still works with a handful of kids including my daughter. It’s just amazing to watch and listen to him not only teach softball but about the important things in life. He talks about not the number of Championships he has won but how proud he is to have helped many kids go to college and then for many to continue on as coaches. Congratulations Larry!”

**Jesse Auday**
on his ultimate goal in softball: “To become a restricted player!”

**Mike Papinchock**
on Julie Johnson’s induction to the National Softball Hall of Fame in 2011: “Congrats Julie… A well-deserved honor and award. You helped jump start my officiating career and got me started in both ASA and the NCAA. Enjoy the kudos and know that you are loved.”

**Bob Angeli**
on Jennie Finch completing the New York City Marathon with an official time of 4:05:26: “Pretty amazing considering she had a baby five months ago. She wasn’t too far off her goal of four hours either… Really impressive!”

Want to join the conversation?

“Like” ASA/USA Softball on Facebook
facebook.com/ASAUSASoftball

Follow ASA/USA Softball on Twitter
@ASAUSASoftball
DETERMINATION RINGS WITH EVERY HIT
And then, there was a 14-year-old girl. Shunned from making her middle school’s softball team because she didn’t have the ‘right’ last name, and too poor to take some upscale pitching lessons at one of the many sports centers scattered across her hometown. So for years, it has been just her and her daddy, using a pitching rubber he put in the yard for her to practice on. Her pitching. Him catching. Bucket after bucket of balls.

Of course, there have been all those moments that the girl would come rushing in the house with tears in her eyes, frustrated because her pitches were picking birds out of the sky rather than crossing anywhere near the plate. Swearing she was “never going to pitch again!” (Insert sound of glove being thrown against the wall) Her dad following closely behind, sweat on his brow - telling her she had to keep trying, to keep practicing.

But instead of using his “daddy” voice, he used his “coaching” voice - which was strong and stern, supportive albeit tough - because he too saw the greatness inside her, even before SHE realized it was there.

He would tell her after she had a particularly rough practice, “You cannot coach want — I cannot make you want it. You have to want it!”

She had been drudging away in recreation ball leagues since she was 10, like a diamond in the brick dust, armed with little more than a dream, just waiting to be found. Her dream, to stand in the pitching circle, with the ability to throw strikes across the plate with the likeness of Jennie Finch. Just she and the batter, proving to herself, to the world and to her daddy that she could do it! And now, too old for rec ball – she found herself on her first travel team, premiering as a starting pitcher on a Copper plus team.

She had taped plenty of college softball games, plenty of USA Softball duels on the diamond, always uber impressed with the tenacity of the girls she watched. She would watch a game and
then go back outside to hack it out with the pitching rubber.

When daddy wasn’t home to catch her, she threw balls at “Bob,” the pretend catcher designed to help her behind the plate. Some days, it was good she was throwing to Bob, because he never offered advice, or talked back to her. Never told her “to find it” or “to just breathe”. Yet, she also deeply missed the sharp snapping sound the ball made when it hit her father’s leather glove, echoing through the pasture behind her house.

Snap! “Good pitch!”

And she would turn right around, take a deep breath, and throw another.

Her story, is no different from the millions of other girls with a dream, who spend countless hours in the batting cages, pitching off a piece of cursed rubber, throwing down from home plate to second base, or catching 100 fly balls in a shady, wet outfield grass.

She is no different from the girls frustrated with a hitting slump, who cannot seem to put the bat on the ball for weeks, or even months at a time. Or for those who are standing with sore-cleated feet in the brick dust while a coach pounds hundreds of ground balls in their direction. The only thing that sets her apart and that perhaps sets talent apart in a sea of millions of girls who play softball, who dream of collegiate appearances or USA Softball opportunities is want.

If you watch a softball game, no matter how intense the competition – the girls who want it shine. They want the ball in right field. They want to hit one to the fence, or lay down the perfect bunt. They want to come back from a 3-0 count and strike a girl out. They want to run, want to slide, and want to do better each and every time they cross the foul lines onto the field. It is the one simple thing, which cannot be coached or taught. It has to come from within.

Want doesn’t come from talents and tools, from expensive coaches or composite bats. It doesn’t come from being on a travel or school team and it certainly doesn’t come from parental pressure, tough coaches, or practice.

Want comes from within.

When a girl has the “want”, everything else she needs to be a fierce success story will find its way to her. Don’t believe it; just ask any of the girls that play with the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America/USA Softball.

Want is what sets apart the best from the average – the hobby players from the competitors.

Want is what the game of softball is made up of. It is what provoked a 53 pound nine year after making an error to turn an unassisted triple play, and then hit a walk-off home run as a matter of redemption. Want is what made this girl-next-door 14-year-old hit the Copper plus division-pitching circle for the first time and strike out the first nine batters she faced. With each pitch that she heard the sharp snap and the umpire yell “Strike!” she would take a breath, find “the want” and throw another. Not only did she have the want, but she also realized that she was only as good as her next pitch, her next play, her next at bat. Something else her daddy taught her to help her keep “the want” alive.

About the author: Stef Daniel is a freelance writer hailing from Georgia. She can be reached at stefdaniel@live.com and you can keep up with her softball related works by visiting softballisforgirls.com.
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ASA NATIONAL UMPIRE SCHOOLS ANNOUNCED FOR 2011-12

The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America will host 16 National Umpire Schools, including Advanced National Umpire Schools for both fast and slow pitch, through Sept. 2012. The schools will take place in 15 different states: Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, Ohio, Nebraska, New York, North Carolina, Texas and West Virginia.

Each ASA National Umpire School is run by a team of National Umpire staff members, who serve as the clinicians. With a ratio of at least one clinician per 25-30 students, each participant will receive hands-on personal instruction on both fast pitch and slow pitch umpiring including base and plate mechanics. At the Fast Pitch and Slow Pitch Advanced Umpire Schools, instruction is focused on Fast Pitch or Slow Pitch only. The ratio is also one instructor per 10 students for the two Advanced Umpire Schools.

Registration fees for National Umpire Schools vary by location. To register for an upcoming National Umpire School or an Advanced Umpire School, please contact the school coordinator listed here. Not all schools are currently open for registration.

2011-12 ASA NATIONAL UMPIRE SCHOOLS

Dec. 9-11, 2011
Region 5
Montgomery, Ala.

Dec. 9-11, 2011
Region 7
Kiest Park, Texas

Jan. 20-22, 2012
Region 3
Morgantown, W.Va.

Jan. 27-29, 2012
Region 4
Burlington, N.C.

Jan. 27-29, 2012
Region 5
Tallahassee, Fla.

Feb. 3-5, 2012
Region 10
Bowling Green, Ky.

Feb. 10-12, 2012
Region 9
Oregon, Ohio

Feb. 10-12, 2012
Region 6
Tupelo, Miss.

Feb. 24-26, 2012
Region 13
Loveland, Colo.

Feb. 24-26, 2012
Region 14
Vacaville, Calif.

March 16-18, 2012
Region 1
Stratford, Conn.

March 16-18, 2012
Region 6
Jonesboro, Ark.

April 27-29, 2012
Region 8
Holland, Mich.

Sept. 7-9, 2012
Region 2
Victor, N.Y.

May 17-20, 2012
Slow Pitch Advanced Camp
Region 12
Lincoln, Neb.

June 19-24, 2012
Fast Pitch Advanced Camp
Region 7
Waxahachie, Texas
FLORIDA UIC MATT DUNBAR REPRESENTS USA AT 2011 PAN AMERICAN GAMES

By Codi Warren

Growing up as a premier cross-country runner, Florida Amateur Softball Association (ASA) Umpire-in-Chief Matt Dunbar fostered a strong desire to always be the best at anything he set his mind to. After graduating from high school, Dunbar became a member of the 3rd Infantry Division where he served for three years in Germany. It was here that Dunbar was introduced to softball.

After competing in the VII Softball Corps Championships and playing on the VII Corps Flag Football Championship team, winning became contagious. Once he returned stateside, Dunbar continued his championship run, playing for Fort Championship teams. As his playing career came to an end, Dunbar wanted to give back to the game that gave him so much.

As a player, Dunbar had his share of bad calls against him and his team and often thought “I can do that better.” This belief and his desire to give back to softball led to his decision to become an umpire. Through his hard work and dedication, Dunbar has created an impressive resume over the past sixteen years that includes becoming International Softball Federation (ISF) certified in 2001 and umpiring at the 2007 World Cup of Softball in Oklahoma City. Most recently, he was selected to umpire at the 2011 Pan American Games in Guadalajara, Mexico.

 Balls and Strikes Online Magazine caught up with Dunbar after his trip to the 2011 Pan American Games to discuss his experiences as an ASA and ISF umpire.

Congratulations on being selected to umpire at the 2011 Pan American Games! You’ve accomplished so much during your time as an ASA and ISF umpire. Where did your desire to play and umpire softball come from?

Some people may find this humorous about me. I grew up in the country on a farm in Rutland, Mass., and when I went to high school I was a pretty good cross country runner. My senior year I was captain of my team and we won many championships. I was recognized as one of the premier runners in the state. This is where my love of winning and being as good as I could possibly be extended from.

I joined the Army in 1974 and served three years in Wurzburg, Germany with the 3rd Infantry Division. When we weren’t in the woods training, we spent a lot of time engaged in recreational sports. There wasn’t much call for track runners so I started playing softball. I happened to play for a team that advanced to the VII Corps Championships, so it didn’t hurt that winning attitude when we had that kind of success. I also played on the VII Corps Flag Football Championship team two years running. Winning was contagious.

I rotated back stateside to Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., and continued playing on softball teams that won the Fort Championships a couple of time. There weren’t too many weekends you wouldn’t find me on a softball field. I have played softball wherever I have lived.

With such a long career in softball, what would you say has been your biggest challenge, and how did you overcome it?

I think the biggest challenge has been trying to avoid burn out. About four years into umpiring, I began to start to lose some enthusiasm for the game. I was working every chance I got and that meant slow pitch leagues which were three games a night, four nights a week and fast pitch tournaments on weekends that were often 12 games in a weekend plus high school and college. I was working 1,000 plus ball games a year in addition to a full time job. So, I cut down on the number of weekend tournaments and took up officiating volleyball and basketball for a change of pace. About this time I also became an ASA Umpire-In-Chief (UIC) for South Florida, so now I work softball all year round but not as many games and in different capacities.

From January through May I work high school and NCAA softball, then I put on my UIC hat for the summer and evaluate and train umpires earnestly. In August, I start getting ready for volleyball and mend up a little from the nicks and bruises I got from softball since volleyball is not nearly as physically taxing on the body. In November, I change gears again and work basketball.

I officiate basketball primarily as a way to get back in shape for softball as I generally put on a few pounds after the NCAA season ends in May. I have also experienced a level of success in volleyball having branched out to working some college and have officiated the Florida high school finals four times.

On occasion, an umpire may face tough adversity during a game. How do you handle rowdy or upset fans?

Having been a player and a fan, I understand the mentality of both. I think that to be a good umpire you have to have the ability to focus when you need to. A challenge most umpires face is to maintain focus and concentration throughout a game. Good umpires tend to take less grief from fans, which makes the job easier. You are still going to have those fans that feel it is their job and joy in life to harass the official. Those folks you have to tune out and understand them for what they are. I look at fans as a whole lot of evaluators giving me instant feedback. If one or two are giving me a hard time, that’s one thing, but if all of a sudden a lot of them are upset, then I may have just had a momentary lack of focus. That only has to happen once to snap you back to living in the moment. You can’t react to fans. There are more of them than you and once they draw a reaction from you....game over. Of course, that
is different than the fan that crosses the moral/ethical lines. When that happens, you must involve game management and let them handle it.

What were your thoughts when you heard that you had been selected to umpire at the 2011 Pan American Games?

Things come to you sometimes in the oddest set of circumstances. I was driving back on I-75 from my NCAA Regional Final in Gainesville, Fla. where I had just finished calling a great game in the IF Championship. My wife and I were singing along with the radio and I was trying to come down from the high of the game. I had just been thinking that the season was over, it was a good one and now it was time to change gears.

The phone rang and it was Kevin Ryan. He asked what I was doing the end of October and I asked what did he have in mind for me. He said, "Would you like to represent the United States and umpire at the Pan Am Games?" Without missing a beat I said to my wife, "Honey, would you check the calendar and see if I am free in October?" She gave me that puzzled look like, "Are you kidding?" I couldn’t hold back anymore and cried out, "Would I ever! If I have anything on the calendar, consider it canceled!"

You’ve umpired at two major International events during your career as an ASA Umpire, what types of emotions and feelings do you experience at that competition level?

The feelings of satisfaction are very gratifying. I do recognize that I have put in long hours of study, practice and sacrifice to get to where I am, so does my wife and family. Thank God they get it and get me and what drives me. It is very gratifying when others recognize it. It does humble you a bit too. There are a lot of great umpires in our country and a lot of them can do as good a job or better than I can. To know that you are going as the representative of your country’s umpiring program can be a little intimidating at first but then you just trust that you have the skills and the poise and just let the training take over.

In 2007, I had the privilege of working World Cup III. I worked third base in a Japan vs. USA game to a completely packed house. The buzz of the crowd and the atmosphere was just electric. I have never felt more alive than at that moment and I knew that I wanted that feeling again and again. In that regard, the Pan Am Games did not disappoint.

With so many nations participating at the Pan American Games, what was it like to work with people who speak a different language and have a different culture?

I have lived in Miami for 29 years so I am kind of used to different cultures, but it is still an eye opener to suddenly be immersed in a language and culture that is not your own. Thank God we all spoke umpiring! Interpreters helped too. In the middle of the week, the Canadian baseball team came out to support their softball counterparts. They were having such a good time so I had to go up in the stands on my off game and sit near them so I could hear something that was kind of like English.

How do you overcome the challenge of language barriers and cultural differences?

I smile a lot. I try to be pleasant and I stick to what we have in common: softball. People in other cultures do share some very basic human similarities. For the most part, we are all curious, we all want to share and get along and have a good laugh. There isn’t much that can’t be solved over a softball game, a good meal and a pint or two.

What would you say your biggest achievement has been in your career as an ASA umpire?

Umpiring at the World Cup III and the Pan Am Games obviously are big milestones in my umpiring career, however I get more satisfaction from the thanks I get for conducting clinics and umpires appreciating and understanding that I am genuinely interested in making them better umpires. I also appreciate it when coaches and players recognize and comment that we work hard to give them a better product.

Do you have any advice for people who might be considering becoming an ASA umpire?

Umpiring/officiating isn’t for everyone. You have to love the game. Umpiring can be a good source of making extra cash but it is not the sole reason. If it is, everyone will recognize that and it won’t be in a positive way. I made a decision early on in my career that if I wanted to be the best I need to associate with the best; I wanted to learn from the best and work for the best. It became apparent to me that ASA met those criteria, and that decision has served me very well. Never start to think you are bigger than the game. We are just part of the game.

You’ve umpired at several different levels in softball, ranging from high school to NCAA. What is the biggest difference between umpiring an ASA game and an International Competition?

There is a difference in the significance of games between ASA and international competition, that’s obvious. World Championships, Olympic Games and Pan American Games just sound more impressive to the casual observer; However, the disparity in talent in both the players and umpires in International competition can be huge. Softball is an American game. Our players are consistently of higher talent level and as a byproduct, our umpires perform on a higher average level compared to the rest of the world. ASA ball is consistently better than what is out there in the world - game to game.
Women win USA Softball’s eighth Pan American Games title
With a Pan American Games roster full of 17 rookies, the USA Softball Women’s National Team recorded the program’s eighth Pan American Games Gold Medal with an 11-1 run-rule victory over Canada on Oct. 23. In four innings, the Red, White and Blue put up 11 hits and completed the tournament with a perfect 9-0 record. As a team, they hit an impressive .428 throughout the week outscoring opponents 78-8. The pitching staff held opponents to a .145 batted average and recorded five shutout victories.

“With this new team we had to go out and find the best people that we could find to make a team, not necessarily the best players,” said head coach Ken Eriksen (Tampa, Fla.) “I know that we have the best 17 that make up a great team. The aspect of change for this program in 2011 was to find the right mix and I feel like we did that pretty well. I congratulate each and every player for a job well done.”


“This is simply just a great feeling to win and represent the United States” said Stacey May-Johnson (Reno, Nev.) May-Johnson finished the tournament hitting .522 with a team leading 12 RBI. In the Gold Medal Game, the third baseman was 2-for-3 with two RBI followed by Molly Johnson (Tucson, Ariz.) who was 2-for-2 with one RBI.

Lefty Keilani Ricketts (San Jose, Calif.) earned her fourth win of the tournament entering in relief in the Championship Game. She tallied a team-leading 22 strikeouts in 16.1 innings pitched over the week with a .43 ERA.

“It was great to come out and win all of our games here,” said Ricketts. “Our defense and offense was working hard every single game and it is a pitchers dream to have that behind you. This Gold Medal is what we have worked really hard for at the Pan Ams. It is great that all of our hard work all summer has paid off here in Mexico.”

Canada put a runner in scoring position right away in the top of the first inning when Melanie Matthews reached on a walk issued by starting pitcher Jordan Taylor (Valencia, Calif.). A stolen base advanced Matthews before Jen Yee also earned a base on balls. But Taylor shut down the momentum with a strikeout and groundout to head to the dugout.

With two outs in the first, Lauren Gibson (Pasadena, Md.) completely sent a rocket to dead centerfield in the bottom of the first for the 1-0 lead. The home run was the seventh for Team USA in the Pan Ams and a first for Gibson.

Canada came right back at the U.S. in the top of the second inning tying the game 1-1 when Victoria Hayward drove an RBI base hit through the left side scoring Heather Ebert who earlier reached on a walk. With two Canadian runners on and one out, the U.S. called for relief and Ricketts entered the circle. A heads up play by shortstop M. Johnson who threw the ball to catcher Ashley Holcombe (Buford, Ga.) at home plate recorded out No. 2 before Stacy May-Johnson (Reno, Nev.) snagged a ground out to halt the Canadian threat. Kaitlin Cochran (Yorba Linda, Calif.) was hit by a pitch to start the second inning and moved 60 feet with a stolen base, her second of the week. Jenae Leles (Sacramento, Calif.) then moved her to third with a ground out and Valerie Arioto (Pleasanton, Calif.) drove in the go-head run with an RBI triple for the 2-1 advantage. M. Johnson then roped her first of two hits in the game moving Arioto to home and the solid 3-1 lead.

With bases loaded in the bottom of the third thanks to a Moultrie bunt single, R. Taylor reaching on a Canadian throwing error and an intentional walk to Gibson, May-Johnson made Canada pay connecting on a two RBI line drive single through the left side for the 5-1 difference. The runs kept coming as Leles drove in her eighth hit of the Pan Ams for two RBI and a 7-1 comfortable lead.

Team USA was not satisfied again in the fourth as they added four more runs for the eventual 11-1 walk-off run rule victory. Pinch runner Taylor Hoagland (Flower Mound, Texas) scored on a throwing error by the Canadian catcher, pinch hitter Christi Orgeron (New Orleans, La.) doubled for an RBI and also scored on a fielder’s choice. Kelly Grieve (Asheville, N.C.) was responsible for the final RBI of the game that sealed the Gold Medal as she hit the ball hard to left field scoring Gibson for the win.

Canada recorded just three hits in the contest and finished the tournament at 7-3 overall earning the Silver Medal. Cuba also shared the podium with the Bronze Medal after falling to Canada 4-0 in the morning.

EXTRAS

For photos and videos from the Pan American Games, visit the official ASA/USA Softball Facebook page at facebook.com/asausasoftball
After Tre’ Harding and Trey Simmons attended the exhibition between the 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team and Junior Women’s National Team earlier this summer in Bowie, Md., they wrote and recorded three songs about USA Softball. Click here to listen to “USA Softball Anthem”, “World Champs” and “USA Softball Reloaded” on the JT2 Facebook page.
PAN AMERICAN GAMES ROSTER

Valerie Arioto ............................................................... (Pleasanton, Calif./California senior)
Whitney Canion ............................................................... (Aledo, Texas/Baylor junior)
Kaitlin Cochran ............................................................... (Yorba Linda Calif./Arizona State 2009)
Lauren Gibson ............................................................... (Pasadena, Md./Tennessee junior)
Kelly Grieve ............................................................... (Asheville, N.C./Tennessee 2011)
Taylor Hoagland ............................................................ (Flower Mound, Texas/Texas junior)
Ashley Holcombe ............................................................. (Fayetteville, Ga./Alabama 2009)
Molly Johnson ............................................................... (Tucson, Ariz./Kentucky 2010)
Stacy May-Johnson ....................................................... (Reno, Nev./Iowa 2006)
Jenae Leles ................................................................. (Sacramento, Calif./Arizona 2009)
Meagan May ................................................................. (Spring, Texas/Texas A&M junior)
Michelle Moultrie .......................................................... (Jacksonville, Fla./Florida senior)
Christi Orgeron ............................................................ (New Orleans, La./ULL junior)
Keilani Ricketts ............................................................. (San Jose, Calif./Oklahoma junior)
Jordan Taylor ................................................................. (Valencia, Calif./Michigan 2011)
Rhea Taylor ................................................................. (Buford, Ga./Missouri 2011)
Chelsea Thomas ............................................................. (Pleasantville, Iowa/Missouri junior)

HEAD COACH:
Ken Eriksen ............................................................... (Tampa, Fla./Head Coach at University of South Florida)

ASSISTANT COACHES:
Mike Larabee ............................................................... (Fayetteville, Ark./Head Coach at the University of Arkansas)
Tairia Flowers ............................................................. (Tucson, Ariz./Head Coach at Cal State Northridge)
Mike White ................................................................. (Eugene, Ore./Head Coach at the University of Oregon)
The World Cup of Softball and Border Battle will return to the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America Hall of Fame Stadium in Oklahoma City from June 27-July 2, 2012.

For $275, you can experience softball’s premier international tournament with VIP treatment. Each Ultimate Fan will enjoy a private meet and greet with the 2012 USA Softball Women’s National Team and exclusives not available to other ticket holders. Other perks of the Ultimate Fan Zone ticket include:

- A reserved seat in the first three rows of the stadium
- Parking in the stadium lot
- Photo opportunity on stadium field
- Customized USA Softball replica jersey

CLICK HERE TO PURCHASE AN ULTIMATE FAN ZONE TICKET

PRE-SALE
Purchase an Ultimate Fan Zone ticket at SoftballOutlet.com through Dec. 16, 2011, and receive an authentic Team USA batting jersey ($65 value) and Nike visor ($15 value) as a bonus. All Ultimate Fan Zone tickets purchased during the special December pre-sale will also include a certificate announcing the purchase.
“Kids today are visual learners and without a doubt, the USA Softball Animated Playbook will be a great resource to teach young players the responsibilities involved in playing defense. Defense is a big factor in winning and hopefully everyone can enjoy learning defensive play on their own computer. The Animated Playbook will be a resource for every player learning the game of softball.”

– Mike Candrea, two-time U.S. Olympic Team Head Coach

The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America is proud to introduce this instructional DVD aimed at coaches of all levels.

Learn the finer points of team play as taught by two-time U.S. Olympic Team Head Coach Mike Candrea.

For more information, visit SoftballOutlet.com or call (800) 654-8337.
Ten Questions with Lauren Gibson

By Jamie M. Blanchard

In just her first season with the USA Softball program, Women’s National Team second baseman Lauren Gibson (Pasadena, Md.) made her presence known. She was a top performer at the Canadian Open FastPitch International Championship and the World Cup of Softball. Following the Pan American Games, where the USA Softball program claimed an eighth Gold Medal, she was singled out as USA Softball’s Female Athlete of the Month for October.

Gibson started eight of the nine games that she appeared in at the Pan American Games in Guadalajara, Mexico. With nine hits in 17 plate appearances, Gibson batted .529 with eight runs scored and eight RBI in the nine game span in which Team USA went undefeated.

She was walked four times, twice she was hit by a pitch. Gibson hit a double, three triples and a home run, which came in the Championship Game, for a 1.118 slugging percentage. She did not strike out the entire tournament. On the base paths, she was perfect, stealing a team high three bases.

After the University of Tennessee junior infielder returned to Knoxville, Tenn., from Mexico, she sat down with Balls and Strikes Online Magazine.

Congratulations on winning the Pan American Games in Guadalajara, Mexico. How did it feel to stand on the podium and listen to the “Star Spangled Banner” with a Gold Medal around your neck?

It is the most amazing feeling you could ever imagine. It’s just unexplainable how amazing it was to stand on the podium with the Gold Medal around your neck, representing your country. When you’re standing on the podium, it’s just a “wow” feeling. All the hard work and everything you’ve done has helped make your dream come true.

USA Softball was dominant in Mexico, outscoring opponents 78-8 in a perfect 9-0 run. Five members of the team hit .500 or better, including you. What is it like to be on a team where everyone makes such a strong contribution?

It’s just so relaxing. It’s nice to know that if you go up there and don’t have one of your better at bats, it doesn’t matter because the girl behind you has your back.

You were singled out as a top performer, earning USA Softball’s nomination for the U.S. Olympic Committee Female Athlete of the Month, where you finished in the runner-up spot. Were you surprised about the nomination?

Yes, I was very surprised by the nomination because there are so many amazing athletes from USA Softball and so many girls on my team did such a great job. They deserve it as much as I do. I’m surprised I finished second because there were so many good athletes nominated.

Coming into the USA Softball season, there was a lot of talk about the 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team having too many new faces to succeed like past USA teams. What message do you think you and your teammates sent in Guadalajara?

Our team is very young with a bunch of new faces but it doesn’t matter how many new faces you have. What matters is the chemistry between the girls, the effort they give and what we’re all working toward. As a team, we worked together for the same goal, to win one game at a time and to become the best we can be. That’s all you can really ask for. Our team had some of the best chemistry. You would’ve never known that this was our first year playing together.

You have competed in several large scale events in the past including the World Cup of Softball and the NCAA Women’s College World Series. But what was it like playing in front of sold out crowds in another country with USA across your chest?

Playing at the World Cup and the World Series was so crazy and so much fun but it’s totally different when you’re on foreign soil. Everyone in the stands, except for a few, are cheering against you and hope you mess up. It didn’t matter who we were playing at the Pan American Games, the crowd always chanted for the opposing team. What’s funny is that we never let it bother us. All we cared about was winning for the name across our chests.

The Pan American Games is a multi-sport event with thousands of athletes competing in dozens of sports like basketball, gymnastics and taekwondo.

What was it like to be in that diverse atmosphere?

It was really cool. At the Athlete’s Village, we actually roomed above
some of the men’s handball players. We really had no idea what handball was all about so we ended up going to see one of their games. It was so much fun learning about a new sport. But most importantly, it was nice to know there was a big group of us supporting each other. There was always a friendly U.S. athlete asking when we played and how our games went.

What was your favorite off-the-field moment in Guadalajara?

My favorite moment in Guadalajara was the night after we won the Gold Medal. We all went to a concert thing they had in the village and learned how to salsa. It was just a fun way to finish off a great trip.

If you had to pick the most memorable moment of the season, on-the-field or off, what would it be?

I would say the most memorable moment was Michelle Moultrie’s birthday because it was in Canada, during our first tournament all together. It was just so great to see a group of girls who didn’t really know each other pull together to surprise a teammate for her birthday. I’d say this was a night that brought us all closer to each other.

While the 2011 USA Softball season has come to a close, the 2012 USA Softball Women’s National Team Selection Camp is in January. Are you excited to start the process of making your second National Team? Does having veteran status help ease the nerves?

I’m really excited to get back and see all the girls again. Yeah, it’s nice to be a veteran but I wouldn’t say it eases the nerves just because there are so many great softball players out there and we’re all wanting a spot on the team.

The collegiate season also officially starts in February. What are your goals for the season? Can the University of Tennessee make it back to Oklahoma City?

Our goal is to make it to the World Series. I feel that we have a good chance of making it back to Oklahoma City as long as we stay focused and just keep working hard to get better every day.
For the first time in the history of the USA Softball program, the women are competing on the African continent. The 2011 USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team arrived in Cape Town, South Africa, on Dec. 1 for the IX International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship (19-Under).

“I am so excited for this competition,” said catcher Chelsea Goodacre (Temecula, Calif./Arizona freshman). “The Junior Women’s World Championships will be our legacy, the thing that everyone will remember most. I know I am speaking for every member on our team when I say we are ready to bring home the Gold Medal.”

The United States, seeded No. 1 in the tournament, defeated Australia 7-1 in a scrimmage on Dec. 3. The team opens pool play on Dec. 8 against Canada. Team USA is scheduled to play six other Pool A opponents: China on Dec. 9; New Zealand on Dec. 10; South Africa on Dec. 11; Botswana on Dec. 12; Czech Republic on Dec. 13; and Puerto Rico on Dec. 14. Playoffs are Dec. 15-16 with the medal games scheduled for Dec. 17. Team USA defeated Canada, Botswana and Puerto Rico among others at the last Junior Women’s World Championship in 2007.

“I was nervous but excited for the trip to South Africa,” pitcher Dallas Escobedo (Glendale, Ariz./Arizona State sophomore) said following the team’s first practice in Cape Town on Dec. 2. “Nervous because of the travel time to get here, excited because I get to see my USA girls again and play for the Junior Women’s World Championship with them. We had a good first practice today and we’re ready for the challenge of defending Team USA’s title.”

Team USA enters the competition as the reigning Junior Women’s World Champions, having went 10-0 at the 2007 tournament in Enschede, The Netherlands. In the Championship Game, the U.S. topped Japan 3-1. Team USA has played in each of the six previous Championship Games held, defeating China for the inaugural title in 1987, losing to Japan in 1991, defeating Japan in 1995 and losing to Japan in 1999 and 2003 before reclaiming the top spot from Japan in 2007.

Japan plays in Pool B with Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chinese Taipei, Germany, Russia and Zimbabwe. The Aussies won the Bronze Medal at the 2007, 2003 and 1995 ISF Junior Women’s Worlds.

The U.S. qualified for the Junior Women’s World Championship in August 2010 by winning the III Pan American Championships (18-Under) in Bogota, Colombia, with a 9-0 record that included two wins against Canada and another against Puerto Rico. In the Championship Game, Team USA defeated Canada 3-1. The two teams also met in pool play during that event with the U.S. claiming a 3-0 victory. In the semi-final, the Americans defeated Puerto Rico 6-1.

Since competing in Bogota, the USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team played in a summer exhibition series against the 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team in Tampa, Salem, Va., and Bowie, Md. The team rejoined in Cape Town for the first time since early July.

“Since the USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team took shape in June 2010, the ultimate goal has been leaving the 2011 International Softball Federation Junior Women’s World Championship with a Gold Medal,” Head Coach Karen Johns (Whippany, N.J.) said. “I am excited for these young women to have the opportunity to compete for the Junior Women’s World title after months and months of looking forward to the tournament. With the 17 athletes we have on our roster, I am confident that the goal of being Junior Women’s World Champions can be achieved. The United States will be very well represented in Cape Town.”
2011 USA SOFTBALL JUNIOR WOMEN’S NATIONAL TEAM

Ally Carda ...................................................... (Elk Grove, Calif./UCLA freshman)
Lauren Chamberlain .......................... (Trabuco Canyon, Calif./Oklahoma freshman)
Cheyenne Cordes ................................……. (Fairfield, Calif./California freshman)
Cheyenne Coyle ............................................. (West Hills, Calif./Florida sophomore)
Jessica Damico ........................................... (Gray Summit, Mo./Florida freshman)
Dallas Escobedo ........................................... (Glendale, Ariz./Arizona State sophomore)
Amber Freeman ........................................... (Lakewood, Calif./Arizona State freshman)
Erin Gabriel ................................................. (Poland, Ohio/Poland Seminary High School senior)
Chelsea Goodacre ....................................... (Temecula, Calif./Arizona freshman)
Lauren Haeger ........................................... (Phoenix, Ariz./Florida freshman)
Kylee Lahners ............................................. (Laguna Hills, Calif./Washington freshman)
Destinee Martinez ............................ (Corona, Calif./Oklahoma sophomore)
Kourtney Salvarola .............................. (Arnold, Md./South Florida sophomore)
Cheyanne Cordes ................................. (Laguna Hills, Calif./Florida sophomore)
Nyree White ............................................. (Eugene, Ore./Stanford freshman)
Hallie Wilson ............................................ (North Tustin, Calif./Arizona freshman)
Chelsea Zgrabik ..................................... (Nokomis, Fla./Florida Gulf Coast sophomore)
Shelby Pendley* ....................................... (Albuquerque, N.M./Arizona freshman)
Madison Shipman* ................................. (Valencia, Calif./Tennessee sophomore)
*named to the team but withdrew due to injury.

Head coach:
Karen Johns ........................................................................... (Whippany, N.J.)

Assistant coaches:
Suzy Brazney ............... (Huntington Beach, Calif./head coach Golden West College)
Tony Rico ............................. (Huntington Beach, Calif./coach Worth Firecrackers)

Volunteer assistant coach:
Joe Salvatore ............................ (Monroe Township, N.J./coach New Jersey Breakers)

Batting practice pitcher:
Michael White ..................................................... (Eugene, Ore./head coach Oregon)

Live scoring and stats for USA Softball games are available at USASoftball.com

SCHEDULE

USA vs. Canada
Dec. 8 • 7:30 p.m.

USA vs. China
Dec. 9 • 2:30 p.m.

USA vs. New Zealand
Dec. 10 • 12:30 p.m.

USA vs. South Africa
Dec. 11 • 4:30 p.m.

USA vs. Botswana
Dec. 12 • 12:30 p.m.

USA vs. Czech Republic
Dec. 13 • 5:30 p.m.

USA vs. Puerto Rico
Dec. 14 • 2 p.m.

TBD (Playoffs)
Dec. 15 • TBD

TBD (Playoffs)
Dec. 16 • TBD

TBD (Medal Round)
Dec. 17 • TBD

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MEN’S FAST PITCH NATIONAL TEAM TAKES SHAPE

Seventeen athletes were named to the 2011 USA Softball Men’s Fast Pitch National Team in October. The athletes, selected for the team by the Men’s Fast Pitch National Team Selection Committee based on previous ASA and USA Softball play, represent 12 states and the Six Nation Indian Reservation.

The men were scheduled to represent the United States at the VIII Pan American Men’s Softball Championship in Hermosillo, Mexico, Nov. 18-26, but the tournament has been postponed by the International Softball Federation (ISF). The tournament will serve as the regional qualifier for the ISF XII Men’s World Championship March 1-10, 2013, in Auckland, New Zealand.


Seven of the 17 team members have previous USA Softball Men’s Fast Pitch National Team experience. Tyron McKinney (Louisville, Ky.) was also a member of the 1997 Junior Men’s Fast Pitch National Team while Kevin Castillo (Sapulpa, Okla.) and Zach Warne (Sioux Falls, S.D.) were on the 2005 Junior Men’s roster.

“Although we have selected a young team to represent us at the qualifier, we as a committee believe it was a necessity to grow our program and our overall depth,” said Head Coach Peter Turner (Stockton, Calif./Head Coach San Jose State University). “I believe we have the talent to compete at the highest level and my staff and I look forward to guiding this team to the top of the podium.”

Turner has been leading the program since 2002, when Team USA won the Gold Medal at the Pan American Men’s Softball Championship in Guatemala. Joining Turner on the coaching staff are assistant coaches Thad Brown (Modesto, Calif./Volunteer Assistant Coach San Jose State University) and Avon Meacham (Upper Marlboro, Md.). The three coaches also comprised the staff for the 2009 Men’s World Championship, where Team USA finished in fourth place, missing the medal stand by one game.

2011 USA SOFTBALL MEN’S FAST PITCH NATIONAL TEAM ROSTER

Kevin Castillo (Sapulpa, Okla.)
Tommy Crouch (DeKalb, Ill.)
Roman Foore (Rosemont, Minn.)
Jaime García, Jr. (Kansas City, Kan.)
Josh Johnson (Bay Minette, Ala.)
Mike Joseph (Six Nation Indian Reservation, Ontario, Canada)
Sean Kelly (Marshall, Mich.)
Trevor Kelly (Marshall, Mich.)
*Adam LaLonde (Ashland, Ky.)
*Tyron McKinney (Louisville, Ky.)
*Blake Miller (Eugene, Ore.)
*Matt Palazzo (Pleasant Hill, Iowa)
*Travis Price (Corona, Calif.)
Robert Rosthenhausler (Tucson, Ariz.)
*Marcus Tan (Union City, Calif.)
*Chase Turner (San Jose, Calif.)
Zach Warne (Sioux Falls, S.D.)

* Previous National Team member

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   www.BollingerASA.com

Bollinger and ASA ~ Team in up to the 49th year!
As the stockings were being hung by the chimney with care, Balls and Strikes Online Magazine talked to athletes, coaches and parents about their favorite parts of the holidays and the traditions in their families.

At our house, we have this thing called ‘Elf on the Shelf’. Very popular. Each year Lucy, my daughter Abbi’s name for the elf, comes and visits our house starting the day after Thanksgiving and she leaves on Christmas Eve. The idea behind Elf on the Shelf is that she is there to watch what goes on and report back to Santa. Each night Lucy flies back to the North Pole and tells Santa how Abbi was that day and then she returns the next morning. Guess who has to move the elf every night? Good ol’ Daddy Clause. Each morning the first thing Abbi wants to do is go find Lucy. Sometimes some mornings take longer than others to find Lucy because I forget where I put the elf. It’s a great way to start the morning off. I love seeing the excitement in Abbi as she is looking for and finding the elf. Priceless.” – Brian Rainwater, USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team

“My favorite holiday tradition is being with my family. As long as I’m with my family I am happy. They mean everything to me.” – Jessica Damico, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team/Florida freshman

“I don’t have too many big traditions because my family is pretty small. My mom is an amazing cook, though, so I’ll have to say Christmas dinner is my favorite tradition. That and getting stockings. I know I’m 23 but I still love getting my stocking.” – Jordan Taylor, USA Softball Women’s National Team

“Watching the 25 Days of Christmas on ABC Family is my favorite tradition. Anything Christmas related and the smell of a fresh Christmas tree in the house! I think December is my favorite month of the year even though it is cold.” – Molly Johnson, USA Softball Women’s National Team/Kentucky assistant coach

“I love everything about Christmas, from the music, to shopping, to wrapping presents but mostly love when I find the perfect present for someone and they really appreciate the effort I put in to finding that perfect gift.” – Suzy Brazney, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team assistant coach/Golden West College head coach

“My favorite holiday tradition is having dinner Christmas Eve with my family, driving around to look at lights then opening up our new Christmas pajamas.” – Ally Carda, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team/UCLA freshman

The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America National Office wishes you a joyful holiday season and a happy and prosperous New Year!
“My favorite tradition is having Christmas dinner with my family. We do not get to be together as a whole family very often, so I love being able to see everyone and spend time together going to church, and having a big meal.” – Christi Orgeron, USA Softball Women’s National Team/ULL senior

“My favorite part of the holidays is our family Thanksgiving and our Christmas white elephant gift exchange. I’m Greek and have a huge family. When all of us get together for any occasion, it is loud and fun filled.” – Jenae Leles, USA Softball Women’s National Team

“My favorite holiday tradition has to be getting a Christmas tree and setting it up with my mom. She travels a lot and I’m away at school so when we can spend a day together and especially getting a tree, it’s a special time. What better way to spend time with my mom than to get ready for Christmas?” – Chelsea Zgrabik, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team/Florida Gulf Coast sophomore

“I really enjoy Christmas. Christmas has always revolved around quality family time. There is something special about Christmas that brings my family together with the best of spirits.” – Brian Wegman, USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team

“We open presents at 12:01 Christmas morning. I got tired of the kids waking me up at 3 a.m., so we all just stay up and wait. The kids try every year into letting them start early, not happening.” – Debbie Barnes, Arizona Force mother

“My favorite holiday tradition is letting my kids decorate the Christmas tree.” – John Raines, Team Terenine dad

“My favorite winter holiday tradition is right after Thanksgiving putting up the tree with my family and taking out all the ornaments that have accumulated over the years. The ones I made when I was younger aren’t the best looking and kind of embarrassing but my parents make me put them up anyways. Or riding around the neighborhoods looking at all the lights and Christmas decorations.” – Erin Gabriel, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team/Poland Seminary High School senior
**LIABILITY INSURANCE ($2,000,000 per occurrence with a $5,000,000 aggregate)** — This policy covers you in the event you are sued for bodily injury, personal injury or property damage to others while officiating games, leagues and tournaments involving ASA registered teams and the event has been authorized by an ASA Commissioner and/or his/her designee or authorized by ASA. Coverage is provided for defense costs to include legal fees, court costs and investigative costs.

**EXCESS ACCIDENT MEDICAL EXPENSE INSURANCE** — Accidental injury arising out of the amateur softball activities of the umpire is covered. These include ASA sanctioned activities, games, leagues and tournaments involving ASA registered teams, practices, clinics. The medical expense coverage is provided on an excess basis. This means that this insurance comes into play only after other group or individual medical insurance or any other health plan has paid out its benefits. Payments are limited to the usual and customary charges for reasonable and necessary medical services, along with a 90/10 coinsurance benefit. The policy contains a surgical schedule which sets forth dollar maximums for specific surgical procedures. Thus, some medical expenses may not be covered in full.

### Excess Medical Expense Benefit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deductible</th>
<th>Maximum Benefit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$250</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
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**Accidental Death & Dismemberment**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Death Benefit</th>
<th>Dismemberment Benefit</th>
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<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
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**INSURANCE COVERAGE WHILE OFFICIATING OTHER SPORTS**

ASA umpire associations, ASA Commissioners, or UIC’s can now purchase accident and liability coverage, as well as game fee reimbursement as a result of injury, for their umpires who officiate other sports. Coverage is only $22, but must be purchased with a minimum of 10 umpires. (Premium is $220 minimum).

As part of the registration fee, each umpire receives insurance coverage, the Official Rules of Softball Umpire Edition and quarterly issues of Balls and Strikes Softball Magazine online.

Because an umpire is registered with the ASA, they can obtain rule interpretations, attend ASA rule clinics and the regular and advanced National Umpire Schools. An umpire uniform and leisure wear program is available to each registered umpire. Included are clothing, souvenirs and publications. Request the new catalog today.

Only ASA registered umpires are selected to umpire in metro, state, regional and national tournaments. There are now more than 100 ASA national championships.

Only ASA registered umpires are eligible to apply for ISF (International Softball Federation) certification which offers the opportunity to umpire in world championships, the Pan American Games and other international events.

ASA Umpires can qualify to umpire in ISF Events held at beautiful ISF Headquarters in Plant City, FL.

ASA Umpires are eligible to apply for the UMPIRE MEDALS PROGRAM available in blue (3 yrs.), bronze (5 yrs.), silver (15 yrs.) and gold (20 yrs.), just for being a registered ASA Umpire. A complete line of leisure wear styles is available, along with trophies, plaques, watches, etc.

ASA Umpires are eligible to apply for the NATIONAL INDICATOR FRATERNITY and be recognized for their umpiring experience in a registry in the ASA Hall of Fame and Umpire Manual.

Qualified ASA Umpires can apply for ELITE UMPIRE status within the ASA. Those selected individuals will receive a lapel pin, a navy ASA/USA “Elite” cap, membership card, framed certificate and their name listed in a registry in the ASA Hall of Fame.

Only through the ASA program are training aides available for umpires and umpire organizations. These aides include an animated mechanics DVD, Clinic guide, Power Point presentations, the umpire examination, meeting quizzes and the case book on CD.

### INSTRUCTIONAL DVD

- **#680 Umpire Mechanics - Umpire Mechanics an animated DVD. The Amateur Softball Association of America (ASA), The National Governing Body of Softball, is proud to introduce this ASA Umpire Mechanics DVD aimed at all levels of ability. This DVD Covers Plate Mechanics including Stance, Set Position, The Pitch Movement, Plays at the Plate and Base Mechanics Including Starting position, Tag Plays, Force Plays, Plays at 1B, Inside/Outside Theory, Adjustment from Primary Position, Fly Ball Coverage, Between Innings Mechanics. Price $34.95**

- **#682 Fast Pitch Mechanics 2 Umpire System - NEW An animated look that examines the starting positions, movement and proper angles and distances of the Two Umpire Fast Pitch Systems. Price $19.95**

- **#684 Mechanics 3 Umpire System – NEW An animated look that examines the starting positions, movement and proper angles and distances of the Three Umpire Fast Pitch Systems. Price $19.95**

- **#685 Umpire Mechanics 3 DVD Set - NEW An animated look that examines the starting positions, movement and proper angles and distances of the One and 2 Umpire Slow Pitch, Two Umpire Fast Pitch Systems, and 3 Umpire Fast Pitch System. Price $39.95**

- **#Gen 61 2012 Umpire Casebook & Clinic Guide – 2012 Casebook and Umpire Clinic Guide: The 2012 Casebook contains specific scenarios to help explain when a rule would apply and when it would not. Price $15.00**
**CAPBUDDY**

The plastic Ball-Cap Buddy is easy to use for washing Ball-Caps in the washing machine or the top rack of the dishwasher. Use for standard, duck-billed hats and visor.

$5.00

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**FITTED PRO MESH UMP CAP WITH EMBROIDERED ASA® LETTERS**

- **#402FM** Field, 3-inch 8-stitch bill, fitted navy Pro-Mesh cap.
- **#402BM** Combo, 2½-inch 6-stitch bill, fitted navy Pro-Mesh cap.
- **#402PM** Plate, 2-inch 4-stitch bill, fitted navy Pro-Mesh cap.

(*see available sizes in fitted cap chart.) $17.00

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**FITTED WOOL CAP WITH EMBROIDERED ASA® LETTERS**

- **#402FL** Field, 3-inch 8-stitch bill, fitted navy wool cap.
- **#402BL** Combo, 2½-inch 6-stitch bill, fitted navy wool cap.
- **#402PL** Plate, 2-inch 4-stitch bill, fitted navy wool cap.

(*see available sizes in fitted cap chart.) $15.00

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**ADJUSTABLE UMP CAP WITH EMBROIDERED ASA® LETTERS**

- **#402FSL** Field, 3-inch 8-stitch bill, navy mesh cap. Adjusts to S-M (6 ¼ to 7 ¾)
- **#402FLL** Field, 3-inch 8-stitch bill, navy mesh cap. Adjusts to L-XL (7 ¼ to 7 ¾)
- **#403CK** Combo, 2½-inch 6-stitch bill, ProMesh FlexFit cap. Flex sizes S-XL. Sm 6 ½ to 6 ¾, Med 7 to 7 ¼, Lrg 7 ¼ to 7 ½, XL 7 ¾ to 8.

$17.00

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**FITTED UMP CAP (NO LETTERS)**

- **#402FP** Field, 3-inch 8-stitch bill, fitted navy wool cap.
- **#402BP** Combo, 2½-inch 6-stitch bill, fitted navy wool cap.
- **#402PP** Plate, 2-inch 4-stitch bill, fitted navy wool cap.

(*see available sizes in fitted cap chart.) $10.00

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**CAPKEEP**

$10.00

(Cap not included)

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**CAPBUDDY**

$5.00

(Cap not included)

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**ORDER ONLINE @ OFFICIALGEAR.COM**
**UMPIRE BASE PANTS** **WOMEN’S SIZES ALSO!**
Fechheimer® polyester knit pants with metal zipper closure. Pant features snug fit, rubberized waistband-2 zones of stretch, two western-cut pockets, creases set and pressed.

- **#PG** Gray Men’s Base pants - Waist size: 28-54 $45.00
- **#PGW** Gray Women’s Base pants - Size: 8-20 $45.00
- **#PB** Navy Men’s Base pants - Waist size: 28-54 $45.00
- **#PBW** Navy Women’s Base pants - Size: 8-20 $45.00

**UMPIRE PLATE PANTS** **WOMEN’S SIZES ALSO!**
Same as Umpire Base Pants (description above) with fuller cut to accommodate shin guards.

- **#PPG** Gray Men’s Plate pants - Waist size: 28-54 $47.00
- **#PPGW** Gray Women’s Plate pants – Size 8-20 $47.00
- **#PPB** Navy Men’s Plate pants - Waist size: 28-54 $47.00
- **#PPBW** Navy Women’s Plate pants – Size 8-20 $47.00

**UMPIRE POLO W/ASA LETTERS (POWDER BLUE)**

- **#130** ASA® approved Pro-Style Polo Shirt with ASA® embroidered on chest. Shirt features Polyester Air mesh fabric, moisture absorbant finish, soil release fabric, 3 button placket, extended length cut split-tail, colorfast.
  - Size: S, M, L, XL $25.00
  - Size: XXL $27.00
  - Size: XXXL $29.00
  - Size: XXXXL $31.00
  - Size: XXXXXL ($130 polo shirt only) $35.00

- **#135** Same as above W/O ASA letters.
- **#138** Same as #135 with left chest pocket

**UMPIRE POLO W/ASA LETTERS (NAVY)**

- **#140** ASA® approved Pro-Style Polo Shirt with ASA® embroidered on chest. Shirt features Polyester Air mesh fabric, moisture absorbant finish, soil release fabric, 3 button placket, extended length cut split-tail, colorfast.
  - Size: S, M, L, XL $25.00
  - Size: XXL $27.00
  - Size: XXXL $29.00
  - Size: XXXXL $31.00
  - Size: XXXXXL ($140 polo shirt only) $35.00

- **#145** Same as above W/O ASA letters.
- **#170** Same as above Navy color with ASA Letters.
- **#175** Same as above Navy W/O ASA Letters.

**LONG SLEEVE POLO SHIRTS**

- **#160** ASA® approved Pro-Style Polo Shirt with ASA® embroidered on chest. Shirt features Polyester Air mesh fabric, moisture absorbant finish, soil release fabric, 3 button placket, extended length cut split-tail, colorfast to hold color.
  - Size: S, M, L, XL $32.00
  - Size: XXL $34.00
  - Size: XXXL $36.00
  - Size: XXXXL $38.00

- **#165** Same as above W/O ASA Letters.
- **#170** Same as above Navy color with ASA Letters.
- **#175** Same as above Navy W/O ASA Letters.

**UMPIRE PRO STYLE POLO SHIRT**

- **#118** Black Pro Style Umpire Polo Shirt. Shirt Features Polyester Air Mesh Fabric, moisture absorbent finish, soil release fabric, 3 button placket, extended length cut split-tail, colorfast to hold color. Left chest pocket.
  - Size: M, L, XL $25.00
  - Size: XXL $27.00
  - Size: 3X $29.00
  - Size: 4X $31.00
  - Size: 5X $35.00

- **#128** Same as above in Red.

**UMP T-SHIRT**

- **#1006** White Hanes Beefy-T, with ASA Umpire screened on left chest. 100% cotton, preshrunk.
  - Size: M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL $15.00
- **#1005** Same as above in Navy with white print.
  - Size: M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL $15.00

**UNDER ARMOUR HEATGEAR T-SHIRT**
Lightweight micro-pique fabric with a generous, loose fit, this tee is an essential for umpires. Anti-pick and anti-pill ensures your tee will stand up to the rigors of the game. Odor control keeps it odor-free.

- **#150** Navy Size: S-XXL $29.00
- **#152** White Size: S-XXL $29.00
ULTRAJOJC
#CPJ Black short combines traditional jock with a 85/15% Nylon/LYCRA® support girdle. Features comfortable form fitting pouch, that can be used with or without athletic cup, provides support for hamstring, groin and abdominal muscles.
Size: M 30-34, L 34-38, XL 38-42, XXL 42-46 $29.00
#CPP Same as Above but in Long Pant Style
Size: M 30-34, L 34-38, XL 38-42, XXL 42-46 $39.00
#CB60 Ultrajoc Hard Cup.
Traditional hard cup designed to fit Ultrajoc #CPJ and CCP (above). Durable, Copolymer cup with soft rubber gasket. $6.50

UMPIRE SHORTS
#TW Teamwork® ASA® approved. Navy Umpire short features Pro Weight 14 oz polyester fabric, relaxed roomy cut, western-style front pockets, dual welted inset rear pockets, metal zipper closure, Pro Gripper waitband and a 7” inseam.
Size: S 28-30, M 32-34, L 36-38, XL 40-42, XXL 44-46 $25.00
Size: XXL 44-46 $28.00
Size: XXXL 48-50 $30.00

HEXPAD UMPIRE SHORT
Knee-length compression short with HexPads protecting upper and inner thigh. Conforms to and stretches with your body for continuous protection. hDc Moisture Management Technology for heat control, comfort and performance. Cup pouch for optional cup. Fabric 80% Nylon/20% Spandex.
Size: S 28-30, M 32-34, L 36-38, XL 40-44, XXL 44-46, XXXL 48-50
#B754 SHORT S-XXL $59.00
#B730 PANT M-XXXL $79.00

ASA PULLOVER JACKET
#U2001 ASA® approved pullover jacket. Microfiber shell with Stripes over the shoulder. Nylon tricot lining, stand-up collar with elastic waistband, two slash pockets.
Size: S, M, L, XL $57.00
Size: XXL $59.00
Size: 3XL $61.00
Size: 4XL $63.00
Size: 5XL $65.00
#U2003 Same as above with no ASA® Letters

UMPIRE GARMENT BAG
#2008 Keep your uniform clean with this durable, navy ASA garment bag. Features inside loop for hangers and external locker strap. Will hold several shirts and jacket. 36” Length by 24” Width.
NAVY $29.00

UMPIRE MOCK TURTLENECK
#1007 White long sleeve mock turtle neck with navy ASA® on collar, 100% extra heavyweight cotton, double needle stitching on neck and bottom hem, ribbed cuffs.
Size: M, L, XL $29.00
Size: XXL $31.00
#1008 Same as above in Navy.
The season for giving
Perfect gifts from SoftballOutlet.com

By Jamie M. Blanchard

What do you purchase a centerfielder who has everything? Or buy for the umpire who says he wants nothing? What do you put in the stocking for the softball mom? Or send to the grandparents across the country?

With the holidays just around the corner, the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America/USA Softball has gifts for everyone. Here are gift ideas to make the 2011 holiday season bright for any ASA/USA Softball supporter:

GIFTS FOR ATHLETES

Starting at $18, SoftballOutlet.com features several T-shirts perfect for softball athletes including the "It’s in My Blood", "Pain is Temporary", "Play Like a Girl" and "Shut Up and Pitch" T-shirts. Athletes can complete their look with softball themed earrings, bracelets and necklaces, which retail from $2.95-$10. The most popular jewelry items include the "There’s No Crying in Softball" bracelet at $3.95 and the twisted softball stitch necklace at $10.

Animal print headbands are on sale for $4.95 while glitter headbands, made famous by Jennie Finch, are $9.95.

SoftballOutlet.com also offers stripped and weighted training softballs that are perfect for pitching practice. Prices vary from $14 for a stripped ball to $19.95 for a set of weighted balls.

GIFTS FOR COACHES

With the USA Softball Animated Playbook DVD released in September, the coach on your Christmas list can learn common game-related scenarios from two-time U.S. Olympic Team Head Coach Mike Candrea, the current ASA Director of Coaching Education. The DVD retails at SoftballOutlet.com for $34.95.

“Kids today are visual learners and without a doubt, the USA Softball Animated Playbook will be a great resource to teach young players the responsibilities involved in playing defense,” Candrea said. “Defense is a big factor in winning and hopefully everyone can enjoy learning defensive play on their own computer. The Animated Playbook will be a resource for every player learning the game of softball.”

SoftballOutlet.com offers five other DVDs that feature Candrea as well as former USA Softball athletes Andrea Duran, Amy Hillenbrand, Caitlin Lowe and Cat Osterman. The box set of Fundamentals of Pitching, Fundamentals of Hitting, Slapping and the Short Game, Hitting Drills and Defensive Drills DVDs retails for $139.95.

Another great item for coaches is the Diamond iX3 notebook available in optic yellow and black. For only $9.95, the 7-by-9 inch notebook includes a memo pad and a business card holder. Or purchase an “Eat. Sleep. Coach.” T-shirt for $8.

GIFTS FOR UMPIRES

Earlier this year, ASA released a follow up to ASA Umpire Mechanics Volume I to help umpires expand their skills. The new ASA Umpire Mechanics Volume II DVD is an animated instruction DVD that gives umpires a look at the one, two and three umpire systems, including the proper positions and movements for each system. The full set can be purchased for $39.95 or separately at $19.95 per disk.

The 2012 Casebook and Umpire Clinic Guide DVD was also recently released. Retailing for $15, the combined DVD contains specific scenarios to help explain when a rule would apply and when it would not.
For $39, umpires can enjoy the low-profile umpire’s field bag for on-the-field essentials. The bag has a main compartment for face masks and balls as well as small front zippered pocket for rule book, indicator and brush, inside pocket for keys, wallet and other small items and dual water bottle pockets. The bag comes with a fence hook to make it easily accessible. Also, for easy carrying, the bag has a rubberized grip handle plus a shoulder strap. OfficialGear.com also offers Diamond equipment bags for $39-$159.

And why not pick up some essentials like a wooden handle plate brush for $4 or one of the five different flipping coins on sale for $5? OfficialGear.com has items for as low as $1.95.

**GIFTS FOR FAMILY**

Available in sizes small through double extra large, the softball mom pink and green long sleeve T-shirt is just $22, making it an affordable gift for any softball mom. Another softball mom T-shirt is available for $18, the same price as the softball dad ringer T-shirt.

Younger brothers and sisters can sport the “My Big Sis Plays Softball” onesie. Retailing at $10 in pink or blue, the onesie comes in four different sizes from six months to 24 months.

Softball rain ponchos ($3.95) are the perfect way for families to stay dry during a rainy day at the ballpark.

**GIFTS FOR FANS**

The 2012 World Cup of Softball Ultimate Fan Zone ticket is the must-have item for any USA Softball fan.

When the World Cup of Softball tentatively returns to Oklahoma City from June 27-July 2, 2012, Ultimate Fans will be the only fans in seated in the first three rows of the ASA Hall of Fame Stadium. The Ultimate Fan Zone package, on sale now at SoftballOutlet.com for $275, also includes a parking pass, a USA Softball replica jersey and new to this year’s Ultimate Fan Zone ticket, a special photo opportunity on the field. Each ticket also includes a USA Softball goodie bag and a private medal autograph session with the 2012 USA Softball Women's National Team during the World Cup.

Each Ultimate Fan Zone ticket purchased by 11:59 p.m. CT on Dec. 16 will be accompanied by an authentic Nike USA batting jersey ($65 value), a Nike visor ($15 value) and a certificate announcing the purchase of an Ultimate Fan Zone ticket, all which will be shipped in time for Christmas.

Once the Dec. 1-16 pre-sale of Ultimate Fan Zone tickets ends, Ultimate Fan Zone tickets will only be on sale again starting in February. All other all-session World Cup tickets will also go on sale in February while single session tickets will go on sale in the summer.

And while at the World Cup, why not sport a "Kiss me, I’m a fan” T-shirt for $22? If a trip to Oklahoma City is out of the question, fans can still get autographed photos and posters signed by former USA Softball athletes including Monica Abbott, Crystl Bustos, Finch and Natasha Watley. Unsigned posters are currently 2-for-1. SoftballOutlet.com retail price varies.

**GIFTS FOR ANYONE**

Some of the most popular items at SoftballOutlet.com are perfect for any softball supporter, on or off the field. Softball Hotflops ($19), softball sandals ($9.95) and fast pitch softball flip flops ($9) keep feet stylish while T-shirts start at just $10. The $39 fast pitch hoodie is perfect for fall and winter ball.

A rubberized case for iPhone4 or the iPod Touch 4 is available for $8.95 while skins for Blackberries, iPhones and iPods are only $6.95. Other fun gifts include the "I Like To Get Dirty" softball tote bag ($14.95), National Softball Hall of Fame coffee mug ($7.99), softball golf ball ($4.95), ASA Softball magnet ($3) and mini-optic yellow softball keychain ($2.95),
WHAT ASA ATHLETES WANT THIS YEAR...

If gifts from SoftballOutlet.com are not enough for those on your list, consider one of the gifts members of the USA Softball National Teams program have on their list.

“I’m not really sure what I want this year. I’m more excited about being able to buy my family and friends presents.” – Jordan Taylor, USA Softball Women’s National Team

“The gift I want the most this year would have to be this pair of jeans that have the St. Louis symbol on them. I like them very much.” – Jessica Damico, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team/Florida freshman

“As boring as it sounds, I always enjoy gift cards because they can be used for a while. But there isn’t anything I really need.” – Molly Johnson, USA Softball Women’s National Team/Kentucky assistant coach

“My gift I want most this year will be a little before Christmas, but I want our USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team to be able to hoist the trophy at the International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship in Cape Town, South Africa. Seeing that will make my Christmas and my year.” – Suzy Brazney, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team assistant coach/Golden West College head coach

“The gift that I want most this year is time with my family. Life is such a gift and a blessing from God that I am grateful, though it can be very challenging at times, for all the moments I get to spend with the ones I love.” – Christi Orgeron, USA Softball Women’s National Team/ULL senior

“I really want an iPad2.” – Jenae Leles, USA Softball Women’s National Team

“What is the gift I want most this year? That’s a toughie. I really would like a new camo jacket. I’m not very particular on my gifts as far as expensive ones, but I do need a new jacket, or maybe even a new pair of cowboy boots.” – Chelsea Zgrabik, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team/Florida Gulf Coast sophomore

“What do I want the most this year? Some say I am hard to buy for, so I want the same gift that I always want, Visa gift cards, gift cards to sport stores, and/or money. That way I can go get what I want or need and don’t have to go through the hassle of taking things back. However, we recently acquired five acres of land, and my daughter has become very involved in showing livestock — we’ve had goats and now a pig named Angus, so it looks like overalls and a pitchfork may be a more practical gift this year.” – Brian Rainwater, USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team

“I really just want to relax and be with my friends and family. And having a break from school is always a great gift.” – Erin Gabriel, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team/Poland Seminary High School senior

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“I really just want to relax and be with my friends and family. And having a break from school is always a great gift.” – Erin Gabriel, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team/Poland Seminary High School senior

“I would love a pair of Nike Free Run shoes.” – Lauren Chamberlain, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team/Oklahoma freshman

“I want to win the Junior Women’s World Championship.” – Ally Carda, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team/UCLA freshman
For your official source for softball merchandise, visit:

softballoutlet.com

or call

800-654-8337
The start of the New Year marks a fresh beginning. Balls and Strikes Online Magazine asked athletes, coaches and even an Amateur Softball Association (ASA) commissioner about their plans to make 2012 a better year on and off the field.

"My New Year's resolution is to challenge myself to get better daily. My goal each day is to be better than I was the day before. I resolve to pursue excellence in every aspect of my life, whether it be in school, softball, my family, and/or my faith." – Christi Orgeron, USA Softball Women's National Team/ULL senior

"My goal is not to make the 2012 NCAA Women's College World Series with Oklahoma. My goal is to win the NCAA Women's College World Series with Oklahoma." – Lauren Chamberlain, USA Softball Junior Women's National Team/Oklahoma freshman

"In 2012, I want to have another great year of softball and I want to cut back on my Red Bull habit. I didn't say I was going to stop completely but I am going to work on it." – Tony Rico, USA Softball Junior Women's National Team assistant coach/Worth Firecrackers head coach

"I've lost five pounds on the way to losing 60. My resolution is to lose 55 more." – Joe Alfonse, Massachusetts ASA commissioner

"My goal for 2012 would have to be to play to the best of my ability and give 100-percent every day of my freshman season at Florida. I want to prove that I am where I am for a reason. My resolution is to be the person that I am all the time. Always be myself." – Jessica Damico, USA Softball Junior Women's National Team/Florida freshman

"My goal is to stay healthy – no injuries – and to complete all the random tasks and jobs that Coach Lawson gives me at Kentucky." – Molly Johnson, USA Softball Women's National Team/Kentucky assistant coach

"I want try to some different workout programs like P90X or CrossFit. I love finding new ways to work out." – Jordan Taylor, USA Softball Women's National Team

What is your New Year’s resolution?
Log on to our Facebook page to share your visions for the future.
“I don’t normally make New Year’s Resolutions but my goal would be to help my [Golden West College] team meet their full potential this upcoming spring season.” – Suzy Brazney, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team assistant coach/Golden West College head coach

“My New Year’s resolution is to be more focused on task completion. I struggle to concentrate for a period of time on one objective. Doctors call it Attention Deficit Disorder but I prefer to call it ‘Too much activity in a tiny little brain… Hey look, a squirrel!’” – Brian Wegman, USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team

“My goals are to work as hard as I can and help the UCLA Bruins win an NCAA Division I Softball National Championship.” – Ally Carda, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team/UCLA freshman

“My New Year’s resolution for the most part is going to get A’s and B’s because I start my major courses in the spring. Other than that I would like to save up some money so I can buy a new car in the summer.” – Chelsea Zgrabik, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team/Florida Gulf Coast sophomore

“My New Year’s resolution this year is to give up Starbucks. It’s putting a hole in my pocket.” – Jenae Leles, USA Softball Women’s National Team

“My New Year’s resolutions are to continue to make my wife and daughter happy, continue my walk with the Lord and to stay in shape. But hey, round is a shape too.” – Brian Rainwater, USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team

“I’m going to work as hard as I can to have a good freshman season at Cal. I also want to do well in school because my education is important to me.” – Cheyenne Cordes, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team/Cal freshman

“I want to help Stanford get back to the NCAA Women’s College World Series.” – Nyree White, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team/Stanford freshman

“My New Year’s resolution would be to take more time to appreciate the people around me and what they do for me.” – Erin Gabriel, USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team

“Our goal is to repeat as South Carolina State Champions.” – Lonnie Wright, Swamp Donkeys head coach

What is your New Year’s resolution or goal for 2012? Log on to our Facebook page to share your visions for the future.
Team USA’s Molly Johnson, Taylor Hoagland, and Whitney Canion take a quick picture with Pan American Games Mascot Leo before taking the field in Guadalajara, Mexico.

SEE IF YOU CAN FIND THE SIX DIFFERENCES IN THESE TWO PICTURES!

1. Red headband on right
2. Blue stripe on wall
3. Pan Am Games logo gone off shirt
4. Middle head band gone
5. Wristband on right gone
6. Leo the mascot reflection in back doorway
Balls & Strikes Magazine
Softball

GIVING IT

110%

CAN SAVE YOU UP TO 15%.

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