Balls and Strikes

Get Ready to Play ASA

Softball aims for Hall of Fame spot | National Teams named | ASA 2K Series returns

www.asasoftball.com
MADE IN THE USA

Schutt Batter’s Helmets, Catcher’s Masks and Fielder’s Guards

schuttsports.com
OWN THE SPLIT-SECOND

YOU SPEND HOURS IN THE CAGE. YOU PRACTICE EVERYDAY. YOU TRAIN YEAR ‘ROUND. AND WHEN THE GAME IS ON THE LINE, YOU HAVE A SPLIT-SECOND TO MAKE ALL THAT TIME WORTH IT. WE OWN THAT SPLIT-SECOND.
DETERMINATION
RINGS WITH
EVERY HIT
March 2012

Letter from the President
E.T. Colvin addresses the season ahead

Faces on the Field
Meet the athletes who play ASA

News and Notes
Headlines from the national, international softball world

Get Ready for ASA Play
Frequently asked questions for ASA Softball season

Membership Spotlight
Jenna Wilson shares ‘Where I’m From’

Sister Cities
Joe Alfonse helps Americans, Europeans forge connection

Umpire Spotlight
Christie Cornwell umpires in Cape Town, South Africa

Athletes of the Year
Three are best of Red, White and Blue

Men’s Slow Pitch National Team Program Grows
Two USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Teams named

Women’s National Team Named
Twelve athletes secure spot on World Championship team

Molly Johnson’s Double Life
Tucson, Ariz., native excels as athlete and coach

Junior Women’s National Team Wins World Championship
Cape Town, South Africa witnesses USA golden moment

Fan Spotlight
Rappers Harding, Simmons have USA Softball beat

U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame Considers Softball
2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team, Lisa Fernandez on 2012 ballot

Jennie Finch Makes a Pitch for Softball
Olympic Champion addresses International Olympic Committee

College Corner
Following five weeks at No. 2, Alabama rolls to top ranking

From the Vault
Unique items in National Softball Hall of Fame and Museum archive

Executive Director
Ron Radigonda

Editor
Jamie Blanchard

Contributors
Joe Alfonse
Julie Bartel
Sean Cartell
E.T. Colvin
Luanne Freeman
Murray Johnson
Codi Warren
University of Alabama Athletics
Mississippi State University Athletics
National Umpire Staff
SEC Digital Network
University of South Florida Athletics

Design
Old Hat Creative
www.oldhatcreative.com

The Official Publication of
The Amateur Softball Association / USA Softball

Visit us on the Internet: www.asasoftball.com & www.usasoftball.com
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
- Built-in electronic playbook

**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.

See the order form on the reverse side for the fundraiser program details.
WELCOME TO THE 2012 SEASON, AMATEUR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION (ASA).

Before the season starts, I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who chooses to participate in our association, whether it is an athlete, coach, umpire or the many roles in between. ASA Softball is the leading softball organization in the country because of members like you.

As we venture into the 2012 season, I encourage you to take advantage of the many benefits that ASA is providing to members this year, including the continuation of the ACE (Achieve, Certify, Educate) Coaching Certification Program, the Liberty Mutual Responsible Sports Community Grant program and our National Umpire Schools. Hertz Rent-a-Car, Hilton Worldwide, United Airlines and more continue to support our organization. We also have new partnerships with PR® Bars and the Sports Authority, which will help those companies provide discounted products to those involved with ASA Softball. For more information on all the perks available to you, visit ASASoftball.com.

Last month, the 2012 schedule for the ASA/USA Softball National Identification Program was announced, and there are events being held all over the country by the Softball Factory, which is partnering with us for the program. With the program, ASA/USA Softball and Softball Factory have created a great way for young ASA athletes to get the levels of exposure needed to further their playing career, including with USA Softball, while also giving our organization a chance to provide additional skill developments and top notch experiences.

USA Softball has inspired many of our current athletes to get on the field. Through April 9 at TeamUSA.org/HallofFame/, I ask you to support some of the greatest players that have passed through our program. The 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team and three-time Olympic Champion pitcher Lisa Fernandez are nominees for the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame. If the team is inducted in the team category and/or Fernandez is inducted as an individual, it would mark the first time our sport is included in the prestigious U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame.

With the International Olympic Committee (IOC) voting next year on the possible inclusion of softball in the 2020 Olympic Games, getting our athletes into the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame is a great way to send the IOC a message about our sport. The induction takes place just prior to the 2012 Olympic Games in London and having softball involved would be a tremendous boost for our sport.

Thank you all for everything that you do and are continuing to do. On behalf of everyone at ASA Softball, I wish you a successful 2012 season.

E.T. Colvin, President
Amateur Softball Association of America
**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 Rhonda Burton, Zoe Conley, Ashley Marie Jacobchick, Abbey Mae McKee, Crystal Nicole Metz and Haley Grace Vanderford, six of the athletes who play ASA fast pitch and slow pitch.

---

**Rhonda Burton, 32**  
DuBois, Pa.  
The Friendly Tavern  
Women’s Slow Pitch  
**SS**

**Favorite Thing**  
“I turn into a different person when I step onto the softball field. And I love who that person is. No one can ever guess how old I am, because I play like I’m 18. I hold nothing back out on the field, and always determined with every play to make it my best.”

**Proudest Moment**  
“I’ve led my team to championships, to playoff titles, and most of all I’ve been the glue that has kept this team together for so long. I am playing now with girls that I played with when I was 12 years old. I am currently the coach, manager and shortstop for my team, as well as coaching my 9 year old daughter’s fast pitch team. Softball, literally, is my life.”

**Role Model**  
Natasha Watley. “She reminds me of myself.”

---

**Zoe Conley, 15**  
Berkeley, Calif.  
Lady Magic  
Girls’ 18-Under GOLD Fast Pitch  
P/2B/RF

**Favorite Memory**  
“The best experience would have to be winning my first tournament. I pitched in five games on Sunday and was so tired I didn’t even go to school the next day.”

**Toughest Obstacle**  
“The toughest obstacle I’ve had to overcome is my height. I’m only 5’2” so I often have to prove myself, especially as a pitcher.”

---

**Ashley Marie Jacobchick, 28**  
Mandan, N.D.  
Leingang Construction, Inc.  
Women’s Recreational Slow Pitch  
**LCF**

**Role Models**  
“Definitely Alicia Hollowell and Jolene Henderson”

**Goal**  
NCAA Division I softball scholarship

---

**Her Start**  
“I began playing softball when I was 8 years old. I joined our local parks and recreation little league team. Then moving on and playing Junior Olympics and now I play in our local recreation league. I am currently the President of the Mandan Women’s Slow Pitch Softball Association.”

**Favorite Thing**  
“My favorite thing about playing softball is being outdoors enjoying the sport. Nothing else matters at that moment. I love absolutely everything about the game and the competitiveness it brings to my team. I love to have fun and enjoy a good game.”

**Best Experience**  
“The best experience I have had in softball so far is enjoying it with my family and friends. My father has been our coach for 10 years now, and it is something I will cherish forever.”
Do you want to be profiled in “Balls and Strikes Online Softball Magazine” in the future? Click here for information on how to submit your profile and photo.

ABBY MAE MCKEE, 15
Maineville, Ohio
Cincy Magic ’96
Girls’ 16-Under A Fast Pitch
LF/3B

Proudest Moment “Last year as a freshman, I singled in my first at-bat with the varsity softball team. That was pretty cool.”

Role Models “I really respect the girls that have gone on to play on with the USA Softball Women’s National Team, like Jennie Finch, Monica Abbott, Crystl Bustos, Caitlin Lowe, Cat Osterman and Natasha Watley. I think they dedicated themselves to the game and have helped bring fast pitch to where it is today. It is fast, exciting and very competitive.”

Goals “My short term goal is to always win the next tournament. My long term is to play college ball.”

CRYSTAL NICOLE METZ, 13
Kokomo, Ind.
Howard County Inferno
Girls’ 12-Under A Fast Pitch
1B/P

Toughest Obstacle "In my first season ever when I was 6, I was playing pitcher. A girl got up to bat and hit a line drive right into my nose and mouth, there was blood everywhere and it hurt for days. This was before I loved the game, so I wanted to quit and never play again. It was hard getting back out there and playing again, but I am glad that I did.”

Role Models "I have several role models in the game. I would have to say the Alabama Softball team and coaches past and present. They called us the morning that we lost my dad. They also surprised us by coming to our house to play Wii with my brother and me. That means a lot, because our mom was and us were having a tough time and they made us smile and we forgot about being sad for that time. They also have helped a lot for our city when we had the tornado. They are great ball players on the field and continue to make the fans proud.”

Haley Grace Vanderford, 10
Tuscaloosa, Ala.
Hillcrest Thunder
Girls’ 10-Under A Fast Pitch
P/SS

Toughest Obstacle “Jennie Finch of course. Although, I recently met Morgan Melloh who played for Fresno and Indiana University and Olympic Champion Crystl Bustos, and admire them too.”

Role Models “I have several role models in the game. I would have to say the Alabama Softball team and coaches past and present. They called us the morning that we lost my dad. They also surprised us by coming to our house to play Wii with my brother and me. That means a lot, because our mom was and us were having a tough time and they made us smile and we forgot about being sad for that time. They also have helped a lot for our city when we had the tornado. They are great ball players on the field and continue to make the fans proud.”

Her Advice "My advice to other young players is to never give up and practice to be the best athlete that you can be. Parents and coaches play a big role in your life to help you along the way.”

Do you want to be profiled in “Balls and Strikes Online Softball Magazine” in the future? Click here for information on how to submit your profile and photo.
Every day, millions of lives are shaped with a softball and a little open space.

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

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.

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

Liberty Mutual
Official Sponsor of

Responsibility. What’s your policy?
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 you 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 sing 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.

For more information, visit ResponsibleSports.com/Softball and the join the movement today!
The world’s best softball returns to Oklahoma City June 27-July 2 as the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America Hall of Fame Complex hosts the World Cup of Softball VII and Border Battle IV. Tickets for the six country event are now on sale by phone at 800-654-8337 or online at SoftballOutlet.com.

All-session tickets, which are $275 for the Ultimate Fan Zone reserved seating in the first three rows of the stadium, $80 for other reserved seating and $45 for general admission seating, can be purchased by phone at 800-654-8337 or online at SoftballOutlet.com. An official World Cup program is included with all-session tickets. Single session general admission tickets will be on sale in early June.

Now in its seventh year, the World Cup lineup is highlighted by the 2012 USA Softball Women’s National Team. The World Cup, an International Softball Federation (ISF) sanctioned event, also features the women’s fast pitch teams from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Puerto Rico and the Netherlands.

The Canadian Men’s Slow Pitch National Team, the USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team and the USA Softball Men’s Futures Slow Pitch National Team are also competing in Oklahoma City.

For more information on the World Cup of Softball, visit USASoftball.com.

In January, the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America announced that 28 events including the NCAA Women’s College World Series, the World Cup of Softball VII and Border Battle IV will be hosted this year at the ASA Hall of Fame Complex in Oklahoma City. From March through October, the country’s premier softball facility will host 89 days of fast and slow pitch events for both youth and adults as well as postseason events for high school, junior college and Division I college ball. The ASA/USA Softball Girls’ GOLD 18-Under Fast Pitch National Championship will also return to Oklahoma City this year for the first time since 2009.

Visit ASASoftball.com for the complete schedule.

The International Softball Federation (ISF) announced Feb. 13 that the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America/USA Softball will host the 2015 ISF Junior Women’s World Championship. Following approval by the world governing body’s Board of Directors, the event is tentatively slated for Aug. 7-16, 2015, at the ASA Hall of Fame Complex in Oklahoma City.
Three associations under new leadership

Henry “Hank” Koritkoski of Middletown, Conn., has been appointed the commissioner for Connecticut ASA. He has been an ASA umpire since 1974 and has held administrative roles since 1981. Koritkoski is taking over for Ed Austin, who stepped down in 2011 and will continue his service with ASA as a Commissioner Emeritus.

David Myers of Lakewood, Colo., has been appointed the commissioner for Colorado ASA. He began his career with the ASA in the 1970s as an umpire. Since 2011, Myers has taken more administrative roles with the Colorado ASA and has served as the Slow Pitch commissioner up until his appointment as the state commissioner.

Dan Pfeffer of Maple Grove, Minn., has been appointed the commissioner for Minnesota ASA. Pfeffer started his career with the ASA in 1987 when he began playing in adult slow pitch leagues. Currently, he serves nationally on two different committees: the Restricted Players List (RPL) Committee, and the National Slow Pitch Player Classification Committee (At-Large member).

Renovations to the National Softball Hall of Fame and Museum and Gift Shop are underway at the ASA headquarters in Oklahoma City. The museum and gift shop is temporarily closed and will reopen before the 2012 NCAA Women’s College World Series.

Current renovations began in December 2011, and plans include a new entrance for the museum and gift shop, the installation of an elevator in the museum and an expansion to the gift shop that will display umpire clothing and accessories from OfficialGear.com. The remodel will also feature additional Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act accommodations with new bathrooms and front doors to allow easier access for visitors. The redesigned Olympic Room will feature digital media and text panels that summarize the 1996-2008 Olympic Games.

Follow the construction at ASASoftball.com.

A remodeled National Softball Hall of Fame and Museum is expected to open in May.
USA Softball donates to Softball South Africa

In an effort to help Softball South Africa grow its program, USA Softball donated its training equipment from 2011 International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship, including ISF certified balls, ball buckets and screens to the organization. The hand over took place just prior to the medal games on Dec. 17 in Cape Town, South Africa.

For more information, visit asasoftball.com/youth/.

Tickets on Sale for NCAA Women’s College World Series

All-session tickets for the 2012 NCAA Women’s College World Series are now available for purchase. The 31st annual Women’s College World Series will take place May 31-June 6 at ASA Hall of Fall Stadium in Oklahoma City. All-session tickets, that include access to a minimum of 14 games and up to 17 games, range in price from $70 to $100. Purchase tickets at NCAA.com/WCWS or call 866-208-0048.
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, W and A2000 are registered trademarks of Wilson Sporting Goods Co.
GET READY FOR ASA PLAY

The start of the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America season is just around the corner with National Championship play just a few months away for some. Before you get into the swing of things, get the answers to some of the most frequently asked questions in ASA Softball.

Q. Where can I get a copy of your Official Rules of Softball?
A. The “Official Rules of Softball”, the participant manual that governs Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America play, is a benefit of membership. For information on receiving a participant manual, contact your local association commissioner. The National Office does not sell participant manuals.

Q. How do I register my team with the ASA?
A. All registrations are done at the local level through your association, not the National Office. While many associations use Register ASA, a program run out of the National Office, please contact your local association commissioner for the most accurate information on how to register your adult or youth team.

Q. How do I know if my bat is approved for ASA play?
A. On our national website, we maintain a section called “Certified Equipment”, which has the most up to date information on approved bats. Only items that are certified equipment can be used in ASA play. Remember that equipment may be subject to testing at games and tournaments, and could be ruled invalid for use, even if it is a certified bat. Should you have concerns with equipment testing, contact the Umpire-In-Chief of the event as soon as possible.

Q. What is the best bat to use for ASA Softball?
A. ASA does not offer recommendations on equipment, other than enforcing the use of “Certified Equipment”. For a list of bats that are approved for ASA play, click “Certified Equipment” at ASASoftball.com.

Q. Where can I find a team to play with?
A. The National Office does not provide assistance with finding teams. However, contact your local association as they may know what is available in your area.

Q. How much does it cost to register with ASA?
A. Costs are determined locally and vary with each local association.

Q. Where do I find ASA tournament listings?
A. A number of associations publish tournament listings on their association website or TournamentASA.com. For more information, contact your local association.

Q. Do I need to be ACE Certified to coach my team?
A. The National Office requires that one Junior Olympic (JO) youth team coach present in the dugout during National Championship play must be certified through the ACE (Achieve, Certify, Educate) Coaching Certification Program. Additionally, all JO team personnel in the dugout must have passed a background check. Local associations may have stricter requirements for JO coaches. Contact your local association commissioner for the most accurate information regarding JO coaching requirements in your area.

Q. How do I become an ASA umpire?
A. Becoming an ASA umpire is something that you must do through your local association. For information, contact your local Umpire-in-Chief.
**Q. Who do I contact with a general question?**

**A.** If the question arises at a tournament, it is best to address the question to the tournament director or the UIC. General questions that do not arise from a tournament should be directed to the local association. If your association cannot answer it, they will reach out to the appropriate person at the National Office.

**Q. How can our team get financial assistance?**

**A.** At the national level, there are several opportunities for financial assistance including the Liberty Mutual Responsible Sports Community Grant Program, which awards $2,500 grants to youth sports leagues and teams, and the Bright Light Award, which recognizes an outstanding Junior Olympic team with $2,000 towards ASA tournament fees. Information on both can be found at ASASoftball.com/youth/.

Through a partnership eFundraising, ASA also offers an extensive collection of traditional and non-traditional fundraising options for teams including chocolate bars and scratch cards. Log on to www.asafundraising.com for information on fundraising.

Additional opportunities may be available through your local association.

**Q. Who do I contact with a rule question?**

**A.** If you are at a tournament, it is best to address the rule question to the tournament UIC. At other times, address rule questions to your local association UIC.

**Q. How do I contact the National Office?**

**A.** Local associations are put in place to help facilitate a relationship between the National Office and the organization’s nearly three million members. Thus, most issues must be resolved at the local level, not through the National Office. Before contacting the National Office, contact your local association commissioner to see if they are able to answer your question. If your association commissioner cannot answer it, they will reach out to the appropriate person at the National Office. National Office contact information can be found by clicking “Contact Us” at ASASoftball.com.

**Q. Can we get discounts when traveling for tournaments?**

**A.** In addition to the discounts that you may receive by using tournament partners, Hilton Hotels offers discounts to ASA teams when booked through www.hhonors.com/teammusastays. Hilton also donates a portion of the proceeds from bookings to USA Softball.

Hertz Rent-a-Car also offers discounts to ASA members including up to $15 off a weekend rental. For more information, download the Hertz discount card through ASASoftball.com.

When using Journey House Travel (800-726-0051) for bookings, additional discounts may be available.

---

**POCKET RADAR™, POWERCHALK™ SUPPORT ACE PROGRAM**

In an effort to thank and award those coaches who achieve an ACE (Achieve, Certify, Educate) Certification, the ASA has teamed up with sponsors Pocket Radar™ and Powerchalk™ to provide ACE coaches with rewards from sponsors. Every time the ACE Program reaches a 1,000th milestone, ASA will award that coach with a Pocket Radar ($200 value) and the next coach with a custom Powerchalk account ($100 value).

The ACE Coaching Certification Program is a new certification program, developed and designed to provide softball coaches of all levels – from beginning coaches to experienced veterans – an opportunity to certify as a coach with a national softball organization. With ACE, coaches are better prepared to handle the everyday situations youth softball coaches encounter.

ACE is online at RegisterASA.com.

Jason Epps (Cypress, Texas) is the 6,000th certified ACE Coach and Maria Conn (Flat Rock, Mich.) is the 6,001st certified ACE Coach of the 2012 season, bringing the number of awarded ACE coaches to 12. Previous recipients of the complimentary Pocket Radar and custom Powerchalk account are Rodney Holder (Magnolia, Texas), Kimberly Moore (Oxford, Ga.), Amye Scrivener (Prince Frederick, Md.), Dan Proffer (Grand Blanc, Mich.), Brian Gorniak (Glen Carbon, Ill.), Katherine Egbert (Hillsborough, Calif.), John McCauley (Malone, N.Y.), Karen Hughes (Henderson, Nev.), Chalise Brown (Conroe, Texas) and Julie Cox (Albany, Ore.).

“The professionalism and top-notch level of play with ASA Softball is second to none,” said Epps, who helps coach his daughter’s team. “The emphasis of quality over quantity training and the instructional videos are, in my opinion, the best benefits that the ACE program has to offer. It reminds me clearly of why we are doing what we are doing, which is to not just better our athletes as a player, but to better our children in the long run. Softball will end one day for our girls, but the life lessons we instill in them will not. For the 2012 season, I want my daughter to excel on and off the field and have fun, and our team goals are to continually improve and play at the best competition levels available.”
TEN REASONS WHY ANYONE AND EVERYONE SHOULD PLAY ASA

1. The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America is the National Governing Body of Softball in the United States as recognized by the U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC) and the International Softball Federation (ISF)
2. ASA is not-for-profit 501 C3 organization
3. ASA offers affordable competitive and recreational sport to females and males ages 8-80
4. ASA values safety and provides affordable insurance to athletes, coaches and umpires as well as field owners
5. ASA offers the ACE (Achieve, Certify, Educate) Coaching Certification Program and expert training opportunities annually, which includes background checks on all coaches in ASA National Championship Play
6. ASA provides recreational, league, tournament and National Championship play
7. ASA has the most knowledgeable and professionally trained umpires in the country
8. ASA is the best of the best in competition, providing the pipeline to all USA Softball National Teams in fast pitch and slow pitch
9. ASA is the leader in equipment standards and certification
10. ASA is where champions play
Nike Softball Camps

For more information or to Register
1-800-NIKE-CAMP
(1-800-645-3226)
USSPORTSCAMPS.COM/SOFTBALL

NIKE Softball Camps Sponsored by USA Softball

WEST
Rainbow Sports Complex, N. Cal
Freedom Park Complex, N. Cal
Twin Creeks Softball Complex, N. Cal
Cal State Monterey Bay, N. Cal
UC Santa Barbara, C. Cal
Just Softball – Mt. Sac, S.Cal
University of San Diego, S. Cal
San Diego City College, S. Cal
UNR & the Reno Sports Complex, NV
Willamette University, OR
Embry Riddle University, AZ
Metro State, CO

EAST
Fairfield University, CT
Curry College, MA
Amherst College, MA
Dan Duquette Sports Academy, MA
Gettysburg College, PA
SUNY Cortland, NY
Adelphi University, NY
The Lawrenceville School, NJ
New Jersey Jackals, NJ
The College of New Jersey, NJ
Salisbury University, MD
Shepherd University, WV
Greensboro College, NC
Columbus State, GA
Southeastern University, FL

CENTRAL
University of Dallas, Irving, TX
South Campus Complex, Houston, TX
Concordia University, WI
Westminster University, MO
Davenport University, MI
Defiance College, OH
St. Catherine University, MN

The NCAA does not endorse or affiliate with camps/services. The parent/guardian of a prospective student-athlete should ensure that programs are in compliance with NCAA bylaws. Nike and the Swoosh design are trademarks of Nike, Inc. and its affiliates, and are used under license from Nike, Inc. NIKE is the title sponsor of the camps and has no control over the operation of the camps or the acts or omissions of US Sports Camps.
POWER UP YOUR PROFITS
WITH OUR SUPER LINEUP OF PROVEN FUNDRAISERS

Request our free fundraising guide and become an instant fundraising hero! Filled with low cost, high profit fundraisers, you’ll discover all-new campaigns and learn how to double your impact with the power of an online fundraising page!

$20 OFF COUPON IN EACH GUIDE!

Get a free fundraising guide by calling
1.866.830.5014
or visit ASAFundraising.com
Where I'm From

by Jenna Wilson

I’m from the red dirt on the diamond
From the pentagon we call home plate
From the Easton bat to the DiMarini
From the worn out cleats to the holes in my socks
From the scars from sliding without the proper equipment
From the dirt stains all down our face
The hours of practice and running laps
The gallons of Gatorade
From the summer’s afternoon heat
The anticipation of the next pitch
From the game I love and the sisterhood of a team
From the victory and the loss
I’m from the red dirt that covers the diamond

Jenna Wilson is a 13-year-old catcher for the Indiana Strikerz, a Girls’ 14-Under Class A Fast Pitch team in Richmond, Ind. She wrote the poem as a school assignment that asked students to reflect on what they like to do and how it has impacted their lives.
Let our team help you insure your teams!

THREE EASY WAYS TO INSURE SOFTBALL:

1. Contact your ASA Commissioner
   Visit www.ASASoftball.com for contact info

2. Contact Bollinger Sports—ASA Department
   Ph: 800-526-1379 • ASAInfo@BollingerInsurance.com

3. Visit the ASA Insurance & Risk Management Website
   www.BollingerASA.com
The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America celebrated 24 members from all four territories for their service to the organization at the Junior Olympic (JO) awards banquet Feb. 3 in Oklahoma City. The banquet was part of a two day instructional workshop sponsored by Bollinger and Markel Insurance that aimed at strengthening the organization’s JO program.

Highlighting the service award recipients were Manuel Gomez, JO commissioner for the Nor Cal ASA, and M. Bruce Kaufmann, JO commissioner for Newark ASA, who were honored for their 30 years of service. Five leaders were recognized for 20 years of service, five for 15 years, two for 10 years and 10 for five years.

The JO workshop continued Feb. 4 as ASA President ET Colvin started the day off with an address to the workshop attendees. Assistant Director of Membership Services Chris Sebren and Supervisor of Umpires Kevin Ryan also presented on the 2012 ASA code and rule changes that will affect the JO program, followed by Sebren discussing the importance of consistent forms and paperwork. Workshop attendees received information on hosting recruitment tournaments, how to write legislation and rule proposals and tournament play options.

The workshop concluded with an open discussion for all participants. On Saturday evening, attendees were also treated to dinner at the ASA Hall of Fame Complex Fieldhouse, which opened last spring. The JO Workshop is held every other year in Oklahoma City, rotating with the Umpire-In-Chief Clinic.

**SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rob Combs, Oregon ASA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Chris Chance, Mississippi ASA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Michael Cox, New Mexico ASA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tommy Hunt, Alabama ASA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Hutcherson, Maryland-DC ASA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassi Rogers, Sacramento ASA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carolyn Shafer, Oklahoma ASA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne Straiton, Vermont ASA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Tom Williams, Ohio ASA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Wirth, Florida ASA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Austin, Fort Worth ASA</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ron Zimmerman, Iowa ASA</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave Forte, Central California ASA</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brenda “Bunny” Petty, Kentucky ASA</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Schuck, So Cal ASA</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patricia Spirito, New Jersey ASA</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renee Williams, Nebraska ASA</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Bennett, Portland ASA</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bart Magellan, Great San Joaquin ASA</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Spears, Ohio ASA</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Either, Rhode Island ASA</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merton Ishida, Hawaii ASA</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuel Gomez, Nor Cal ASA</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M. Bruce Kaufmann, Newark ASA</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Regional JO Commissioner
The last few years have been successful for Ohio Amateur Softball Association (ASA). Not only has the association ranked among the 76 local associations for registering both adult and Junior Olympic (JO) teams, and recruited more coaches and umpires, the association produced its first National Team athlete in Erin Gabriel. The pitcher from Poland, Ohio, won two Gold Medals with the 2010-11 USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team.

Ohio ASA hosted multiple 2011 ASA National Championships with more scheduled for 2012. The association will also have more national appeal when it hosts the 2012 USA Softball Women’s National Team Selection Camp and exhibitions in Ashland in June.

Ohio ASA Commissioner Warren Jones, a member of the ASA Board of Directors and the USA Softball Men’s Fast Pitch National Team Selection Committee, sat down with Balls and Strikes Online Magazine to talk about his association and the future of the national organization.

Thanks for taking the time to chat with us Warren. What has been the greatest accomplishment for you as Ohio ASA Commissioner? My greatest accomplishment as the Ohio ASA Commissioner is helping the organization get stronger through good communication. I really like talking to and working with all of the ASA teams and umpires. One of our greatest strengths is that we’re accessible to our customers. I am also proud of having ASA National Championships come to Ohio because it gives our local athletes a chance to compete at the highest level in their own backyard.

What are some of your association’s goals for 2012? Every year, we want to increase the number of teams and umpires who register with Ohio ASA. We’re also working on getting more teams to play in our state championships.

Ohio ASA consistently ranks near the top for the number of Junior Olympic (JO) teams registered. What do you think attracts athletes to your program? Why do people play for Ohio ASA? There are benefits available through ASA Softball that cannot be found through any other organization. I think what really sets us apart though is that we’re friendly. We’re always accessible to our members. Communication is important to us too. We also host quality tournaments with good teams and umpires. Our events are very competitive.

In addition to serving as the commissioner, you are also a member of the ASA Board of Directors. What’s the outlook for 2012? The outlook for the organization is good but we are always looking for ways to get better. We’re continuing to grow our organization at the grassroots level, which really helps the 76 local associations that make up the ASA. If the 76 associations are strong, the ASA as a whole will always be in great shape. In the current economy, it is tough finding sponsors. But we will continue to work and find them so we can grow the game on the local level and promote the game with national TV broadcasts. We have the USA Softball Women’s National Team and our two Men’s Slow Pitch National Teams on ESPN and ESPN2 on June 23 and June 27-July 2, which is something we’re very proud of.

You’re also very involved in the USA Softball side of the organization, even serving on the Men’s Fast Pitch National Team Selection Committee. Why is USA Softball important to you? USA Softball is a great way to promote softball nationally and internationally. The National Team programs also help keep ASA/USA Softball in the forefront of this great sport. With the distinction of being the National Governing Body for the sport of softball in the United States, and being the only U.S. softball organization recognized by the International Softball Federation (ISF) and U.S. Olympic Committee, we have something that money can’t buy. We give talented individuals the opportunity to wear USA on the front of their uniforms and represent their country. No other organization can do that. I’ve talked to a lot of the players that have worn the USA uniform and they say it’s one of the greatest things that has happened to them. It’s a great honor and responsibility for ASA to have the USA Softball program.

What is coming up for the men’s fast pitch program? We have two teams to get prepared for upcoming ISF World Championships. This summer, we will finish selecting a Junior Men’s Fast Pitch National Team and then they will play in a few events so we’re prepared to play in Argentina in November for the World Championship Gold Medal. We will be selecting a Men’s team hopefully in July and play somewhere in January to prepare our team to play in the World Championship in March 2013.

Ashland, Ohio, was chosen to host the 2012 USA Softball Women’s National Team Selection Camp. You’re also
hosting the Women’s National Team and the Women’s Elite National Team in an exhibition doubleheader in June. Why do you bring USA Softball to Ohio? Ohio has a rich tradition of fast pitch softball, especially Ashland. I would rank Ashland people’s knowledge and enthusiasm for fast pitch among the top. We’ve had the good fortune of seeing many great players and teams play in Ashland. I just want to keep that tradition up by bringing top notch fast pitch players to our area. It’s a good opportunity for our local athletes to see the opportunities available to them in the future by playing ASA.

How does the local community benefit from USA Softball events? Any time you can bring an event such as the National Team camps or exhibitions, the entire community benefits. Hotels, restaurants and gas stations owners benefit because USA Softball brings in fans from not just Ohio but a lot of other states. It’s also a good time to show off your community on a national stage and show the national stage to your local members.

Ohio ASA recently produced a National Team athlete for the first time. Erin Gabriel of Poland, Ohio, made the 2010-11 Junior Women’s National Team. What was it like to see a local athlete make the squad? It was remarkable to see Erin get the opportunity to wear the Red, White and Blue. I was very proud of her because with her talent and drive, she truly deserved to be a member of the Junior Women’s National Team. Having Erin make that team was also a great opportunity to show people all over the country that Ohio has great players and college coaches need to come here and recruit or miss out.

Do you think there are more National Team spots on the horizon for Ohio ASA? Yes I do, I get around to a lot of tournaments and see the athletes that we have here. I know they can play. Nothing against the ladies that made the Junior Women’s National Teams in the past, but we had some ladies that didn’t get a tryout that were as good or better. We just need more exposure in Ohio. The new USA Softball National Team Identification Program through Softball Factory should really help in that respect.

What is your favorite memory from being involved in ASA/USA Softball? There is not one specific memory, they are all good. I have met great friends through this game. Being able to play the great game of ASA Softball and having my family there to watch most of my games is an experience I will always remember. On the USA Softball side, I really enjoy being able to bring the events to Ohio where the people are extremely knowledgeable of the game. Opportunities of traveling to locations in the world that I never thought I’d be going and meeting new people are too numerous to mention. Some of the people I’ve met, I really cannot hardly believe. I’ve met people like TV and radio broadcasters, mayors, heads of foreign countries and of course, the best fast pitch softball players in the world. I’m very thankful.

Thank you again for taking the time to chat with us Warren. Is there anything else that you would like to add? Sometimes I pinch myself to see if I’m dreaming because ASA/USA softball has allowed me to be involved in so many great things, go so many places and most of all being involved with so many good people both here and abroad. With ASA/USA Softball, we have a great thing going in Ohio and across the country.
Manage your league more efficiently online. It’s easy!

Start with Clubspaces. End the Hassle.

Clubspaces is the official online league management system of ASA for a reason. It’s built to automate manual processes and integrate all operations—from registration to fundraising to volunteer recruitment—within one solution. You’ll free up hours and hours of time each season! That translates into a huge savings of cost and sanity, letting you focus on the game instead of on the administration.

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

Get Started Today!

www.Clubspaces.com/ASA
or call 888.427.9170

ASA has strengthened our partnership with Clubspaces this year by integrating Clubspaces with Register ASA. Over the years, we have seen our leagues continue to save time and money by taking advantage of all the league management tools Clubspaces has to offer. Clubspaces is ideal for all ASA leagues.

—Ron Radigonda, Executive Director of ASA

*Note: Online registrations may be charged credit card processing and transaction fees. Please call for quote 888.427.9170 Option 3, Option 1
People who attended the 2011 Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America Council Meeting in Myrtle Beach, S.C., can attest that we were blessed to have warm sunny days, not too cool evenings and just a hint of rain. We were able to do a little sight-seeing here and there. Perhaps some people even got to play a round of golf or two or take in some of the other local attractions that Myrtle Beach is famous for. And yes, we got to meet with old friends.

Many of us also had the opportunity to meet with Ami Baran from Israel, who is the Vice President of the European Softball Federation. He tirelessly worked to meet many of the commissioners and their staffs in hopes of creating opportunities for both European and American softball players and coaches to travel across continents in the hopes of both playing and teaching softball.

Ami met and exchanged contact information with many people interested in this project. We hope that by creating sister-city partnerships we can find like minded softball organizers who can form and maintain relationships that will last long into the future. The whole purpose of this is simple: find cities and towns that have an interest in working with players and coaches perhaps from their "home" country.

Right here in Massachusetts, we have one or two recently graduated softball players volunteering to go to Europe to coach at the youth level and possibly play on some of the European club teams. We also have coordinated with Tufts University and Emerson College who during their fall “spring training” are willing to host a European coach to show them how they run their programs.

We’ve talked about this project of creating a sister-city relationship for almost 18 months now. While it’s building slowly — Europe sent two coaches over this past fall to work with USA Softball Women’s National Team Head Coach Ken Eriksen at the University of South Florida, we are working to create more opportunities for both our own American players as well as the Europeans. Working with a host city and finding a local team to host one of our own teams would definitely bring new meaning to ‘travel’ softball.

Many times over the past 18 months, France has offered to put up a team at their training facility and provide them with the opportunity to be tourists as well as softball players. This is just one instance alone. I’ve come to learn first-hand that the European community is just as passionate about softball as we Americans.

The one thing they lack though is the same amount of resources that we have here. Part of the hopes and goals of creating this sister city partnership is that we can find ways to donate equipment such as bats, gloves, catchers and umpires equipment to Europe. They still lack a manufacturing presence for a lot of these items. Ron Radigonda, the executive director of ASA/USA Softball, has coordinated with both the Europeans and the U.S. military to airlift some of these donated items overseas once we acquire enough.

So as we prepare for this 2012 softball season...
SomaLife, the makers of gHP Sport proudly announce the release of SomaSport™ to ASA Members

10-DAY SAMPLE BOTTLE YOURS FOR FREE!*  

*Shipping and handling not included.

- What is SomaSport?
- How does SomaSport work?
- Why was SomaSport created specifically for amateur athletes?

To learn more about this amazing product visit...

www.SomaSport-Softball.com

Find out what the ASA Stars are saying about this revolutionary athletic performance enhancement supplement...

RUSTY BUMGARDNER
CHRISTIAN DOWLING
JOHNNY MCCRAW
SHANNON HIGGINBOTHAM

Leaner! Faster! Stronger!

For any additional info or orders contact
MICHAEL COOPER, Executive VP
561-596-6796 or michael@ghpsport.com
Christie Cornwell makes a name for herself INTERNATIONALLY

By Codi Warren

Softball has played an important role in North Carolina ASA umpire Christie Cornwell. Even before entering into the umpire profession, Cornwell’s love of the game led her through both a high school and collegiate career. Upon completing her Master’s degree in Education for counseling from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, her passion for softball continued as she became involved in the world of sports officiating.

Cornwell began umpiring with the ASA in 1993 as an umpire for both men’s and women’s slow pitch softball, after which she progressed to fast pitch. Over the course of her career, Cornwell has officiated at a number of ASA National Championships, including ASA/USA Girls’ 18-Under Gold Fast Pitch and Women’s Major Fast Pitch. In 2006, two years after becoming an International Softball Federation (ISF) umpire, Cornwell stepped onto the international scene when she officiated in her first World Cup of Softball in Oklahoma City. Since that inaugural event, Cornwell has officiated in five ISF events and the 2011 NCAA Women’s College World Series (WCWS) in addition to her duties as both an ASA and NCAA official. Her most recent assignment led her to Cape Town, South Africa, where she represented the U.S. at the 2011 ISF Junior Women’s World Championship.

Despite a hectic officiating schedule, Cornwell took the time to speak with Balls and Strikes Online Magazine about the role that ASA, ISF and NCAA officiating has played in her life.

First of all, congratulations on being selected to represent the U.S. at the 2011 ISF Junior Women’s World Championship. You’ve umpired at several major events throughout your career, so do you still get nervous or anxious before hitting the field?

I always have some butterflies before any contest because I want to execute my duties flawlessly. I want to work at the top of my abilities for the good of the game, the athletes, the coaches, and the fans. For the Junior Women’s World Championships, I was so proud and honored to have been chosen to represent the USA as an umpire, any nerves I may have had were quickly overshadowed.
Where would you rank the trip to South Africa among your career highlights as a softball official?

It was absolutely at the top of my experiences with ISF. It was a wonderful championship to work.

With 15 teams participating at the 2011 Junior Women’s World Championship, how was your experience in such a diverse atmosphere?

It was an amazing experience to travel halfway around the world to work softball. There were 22 ISF umpires from all over the world and our common language was softball. Many of us could not carry on more than a first grade level conversation with one another because of the language barriers, but we could work in unison on the field without speaking a word. That was so incredible.

Did you get to spend any time out and about in South Africa?

South Africa was a wonderful place. I did not have much time to sight see because we were at the stadium all day working, but what I did see was beautiful. The local people were very friendly and welcoming, and spoke English which was a bonus. They did everything possible to be sure we all had a wonderful experience. The host and local committees did an outstanding job. They made special efforts to be sure the umpires had what we needed to perform well.

You not only officiate ASA and ISF events, but you also umpire at several NCAA games throughout the year. Do you find it hard to manage your time? Between all the events, life must be pretty busy.

Time management is critical to success in any profession or avocation, but yes, my life does get pretty busy for months at a time. I am so fortunate to have wonderful coworkers and support staff that assist in the office so I can be out working softball games! I also have wonderful friends and family that come out to support me, watch games, and help care for my dog, Izzy. I think it is safe to say she is not a fan of softball season because it often keeps me away from home, or creates very long days. However, I love being an umpire and I love my job so I find a way to do both.

Speaking of family members, does anyone else in your family umpire?

No. My father was a football player and my sister swam and excelled in soccer. So far, I am the only umpire.

What type of personal or professional training did you go through in order to become an umpire?

I have been attending umpire camps and clinics since I started umpiring in 1993. Some of those were classroom style, and others were on the field. Going to camps and clinics is a vital part of becoming an accomplished and skilled umpire. I have also had many mentors along the way that have taken me under their wing, worked with me, graded my performance, given countless hours of their time and energy to help me improve and progress up the ranks. Being a skilled umpire is both an art and a science. One has to study the science and mechanics of umpiring and apply them accurately and diligently in order to be an effective member of any crew. Honing one’s craft and being able to handle the adversity and the unexpected is where the art comes in.

Fans are notorious for giving umpires a difficult time if they view a call as “wrong” or “bad”. Has your training helped you assess how you handle tough situations while calling a game? How do you handle the negative feedback you might receive?

Working as a softball umpire is always a challenge. Softball is a competition, given that, there is often one side that will be unhappy with any given call or situation. Umpires tend to make 50-percent of the people on the field unhappy with any given call. That is to be expected and is part of the umpiring experience and it is important not to personalize it. As an umpire, it is important to remain calm and detached from the “heat of the moment.” At times, the most negative
feedback can be what comes from within. We all want to do well and know when we have missed a pitch or kicked a call. It is unfortunate, but it happens. One of the most difficult things is to disengage and block the negative self-talk. Mastering the art of staying positive internally and focusing on the job at hand is critical to peak performance. The pressure can be intense at times. In those cases I try to go back to my roots as an athlete to stay focused and overcome the mental and physical challenges that officiating can bring.

**What would you say has been the best experience you have had as an umpire? Is there a particular event that you participated in that is the most memorable for you?**

I have been so fortunate to have had the support of the ASA, the North Carolina ASA and the ISF. These organizations have given me many wonderful opportunities to work some of the greatest softball on earth! The most memorable events have been the World Cup (2006, 2007 and 2010), the Junior Women’s World Cup (2005), the ASA Women’s Major Fast Pitch National Championship (2004), and the Junior Women’s World Championship (2011).

I have also had wonderful support as a college softball umpire from my coordinators, past and present, and from the NCAA Softball Umpire Program. I have been blessed with many wonderful college softball opportunities including several NCAA post season championships. The pinnacle of my college umpiring career took place in 2011 at the ASA Hall of Fame Complex where I had the honor and privilege of working the NCAA Women’s College World Series.

**Since you umpire on the international scene, how do you handle the cultural differences/language barriers that you and your fellow officiating crew might encounter?**

We are all there to work softball games and no matter where we come from, the ISF mechanics and rules are the same. So in that, we have one common language: “softball”. Beyond that, it is very enjoyable getting to know one another and comparing cultural similarities and differences. There are typically enough umpires that speak enough different languages that we can all communicate verbally on some level, even if it is basic, or through another umpire. It all seems to work out nicely.

**A lot of players have superstitions that they stick to before and after games. Do you have any routines that you follow as you get ready to call a game?**

For me, the biggest rituals I have involve the mental preparation I undergo before any contest. I use mental imagery in preparation for every game. I have a few great playlists that have been created for me by friends that inspire me, motivate me, steady me, and help me prepare mentally for a game. I also have a favorite pair of socks with a breast cancer ribbon on them that I will wear. I have a family member and a friend who are fighting, and beating, breast cancer. I wear those socks on every plate game as a way to honor them and all those fighting a contest of their own. I also have a lucky pendant that I carry in my pocket on every game.

**Do you have any advice for umpires who may want to participate at high-level competitions?**

Find a mentor. Get to know someone who is working at the level to which you aspire and pick their brain, ask questions, and learn from them. Watch them work or ask them to watch you work. Copy things they do well that make them stand out above the rest. Go to camps and clinics and always continue to learn or video tape yourself and watch the film. Sometimes we see things in our “mind’s eye” differently than film portrays it, but film does not lie. Continue to read and study the manual and rules book because there is always something to be learned and improved upon.
Experience the Best in Life and Support the Game America Loves to Play!

The Amateur Softball Association Visa® Signature Card lets you enjoy unique privileges and rewards while you support ASA and USA Softball. Show your enthusiasm for one of America’s favorite sports!

Exclusive Signature Rewards and Cardmember Privileges:

• Rewards points with every net purchase—and no limit to the number of points you can earn¹
• 1,000 Bonus Points with your first purchase
• No pre-set spending limit²

• Redeem points for free air travel, merchandise, gift certificates, cash and more
• 24-hour concierge service, and VIP access to special entertainment, dining and sporting events like the Super Bowl and the Olympic Games
• Other valuable Visa benefits, like a low introductory rate³, no annual fee, and Visa’s Zero Liability protection from unauthorized purchases⁴

You’ll also SAVE 10% when you use your ASA Visa Card issued by U.S. Bank at softballoutlet.com or officialgear.com.

Apply Today!

Call 888-327-2265 ext. 70002, or visit asasoftball.com or usasoftball.com

¹Accounts must be open and in good standing (not past due) to earn and redeem points. ²Absence of pre-set spending limit does not mean unlimited spending. Individual transactions are evaluated based on factors such as Account history, credit record, payment resources, revolving resources and prior Cash Advances. ³Low introductory rate does not apply to Cash Advances and is valid for the first six billing cycles. Details will be provided to Cardmembers. ⁴Some limitations may apply. Details will be provided to Cardmembers.

© 2009 U.S. Bank
CHALLENGE OF UMPIRE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

How You Can Help ASA Softball Expand the Umpire Program

With the declining number of umpires registering each year, the challenge of recruiting umpires and then retaining them beyond two or three years is a mighty task. Here are some thoughts on how to maximize your efforts and turn the tide in an upward direction.

Throughout our lives, and especially as umpires, we have been able to meet many people from all walks of life and all parts of the country. Some become close friends and some, just acquaintances. With this in mind, let’s explore the art of recruiting and retaining by reflecting back on an old rhyme: “Make new friends, but keep the old... Some are silver and the others gold.”

RECRUITING: In order to find new umpire candidates, we may employ time tested methods such as advertising in the local newspaper, on the radio or through public service announcements that are provided by some local TV stations. In addition, we can create flyers and actually make phone calls to those leads we received throughout the umpiring year. As association leaders, we can even put out a challenge to all our fellow umpires to bring in “just one” new candidate. While these may still be viable ways to get a perspective umpires to meetings, the times have changed.

Technology age is here to stay—and can be a great method of recruiting umpires. The Internet allows us to reach out further than we have ever been able to, especially with social media and websites such as Craigslist, Facebook and Twitter, just to name a few. We can now create an email blast that can not only encompass our local umpire group, but coaches, managers, players and the like. These tools can open the door to a number of people waiting to see what we have to offer.

THE MESSAGE: As in any “friendship”, there has to be common ground and most importantly mutual respect, driven by a sense of commonality. The ASA Softball community has many benefits that are mutually shared by all their umpires. It is our job to let our new friends know about benefits such as state of the art training and the opportunity for advancement to National Championships and even international championships. Our umpires are also offered a modern up-to-date website on the national level in addition to the local website, which will keep both old and new umpires informed.

The trepidation of learning a new trade can sometime be overwhelming. Inform them that the ASA makes available clinics, both for rules and mechanics, as well as other tools including instructional DVDs and PowerPoint presentations to enhance their learning experience.

Many local associations develop a buddy or mentoring programs to individually serve every new umpire that needs one. It can be formal or informal, as long as it pairs a qualified and interested veteran with a newer umpire. As in umpiring, communication is the key to the success of any program like this.
UNDERSTAND YOUR CUSTOMER: The individuals you are welcoming into your group will have varying amounts of knowledge and experience in umpiring, differing physical capabilities and most of all diverse reasons why they were attracted to our avocation. It is important to get a feel for who they are, more as a group at first, than as an individual. To that end, be careful that you keep similar groups together. If it is possible, separate candidates and newer umpires from the veterans group, as working with experienced umpires can be overwhelming for those who know very little and understand even less.

Be cognizant of the amount of money it will cost a first year umpire to register and buy uniforms and equipment. Try, to the best of your ability, to make them aware of what they can expect the first year in assignments based on their availability. For some, umpiring is a means to create a second income. Let them know how, how much and when they can expect their game fees. Make them aware that background checks are becoming a way of life in all parts of the country. Being proactive and honest in answering all questions will have a lasting effect on the type of “friendship” that is created with the new candidate.

THE CLOSE: There is really no formal close. The lines of communication should always be open, not only between the mentor and their candidate, but between those who are part of and also represent the local association. Observations and evaluations whenever possible should let the new umpire know where they are, where they need to go and what they have to do to get there. Positive reinforcement coupled with good constructive advice, allows the umpire to feel good about what they have done well and identify what they can do better. If time and resources permit, place a follow up call or two to these newer umpires to see how things went during the year and what can be done to make the next year better. In addition to reaching out to new umpires, call those umpires who chose not to register in the previous year to see how the experience can be improved. Reaching out to current and former umpires most importantly shows your concern and gives them a real sense that they are wanted and needed.

Remember, most of all, not everyone is equal. That goes not only for their ability, but for what motivates them to umpire. Whether they desire to work National Championships or to work in their local leagues, “some will be Silver and others Gold” but all equally important to the ASA family.
PROGRAM SUMMARY

PHR annually reaches over 650,000 boys and girls between the ages of 7 to 14. The program includes four levels of competition, with top performers in all 30 markets competing at Major League ballparks, followed by the National Finals at the MLB All-Star Game. PHR is FREE to both hosts and participants.

Register today to host a Local Competition – [www.mlb.com/phr](http://www.mlb.com/phr)

TIMELINE/LEVELS OF COMPETITION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Competitions:</td>
<td>Administrative kits distributed to Local hosts in February with events being hosted in March, April or early May.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sectional Competitions:</td>
<td>Local winners advance to Sectional Competitions in late May.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Championships:</td>
<td>Hosted in all 30 Major League Ballparks. Qualifiers compete in a pre-game competition and recognition ceremony.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Finals:</td>
<td>The top participants nationwide take part in the National Finals competition as a part of MLB All-Star Week in July.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STEPS TO HOSTING A PHR LOCAL COMPETITION

- **Register to Host:** Visit [www.mlb.com/phr](http://www.mlb.com/phr) and register your free event.
- **Receive Support Materials:** Receive a free administrative kit, which will include a handbook, strike zone banner, registration forms, posters, participation cards, awards, etc.
- **Event Day:** Host your 1-day competition with a handful of volunteers and pass along awards and advancement information to the winners (provided by PHR Headquarters).
- **Report Results:** Submit results online and mail in registration forms (pre-paid postage provided).
Product Description

SportaFence™ is a revolutionary new design that allows softball and baseball outfield fences to be easily moved from field to field. It quickly adjusts to specific field dimensions.

Advantages

- Custom design for every field
- Easy set-up
- Fast, on-the-fly, distance adjustment
- Quick, easy transfer from field to field
- Security for fields and events
- High durability
- High impact design
- Stores easily

Product Features

- Heavy-duty portable chainlink fence panels: 6ft H x 10ft L / Weight: 175 lbs. (also available in 5'H x 10'L)
- Constructed of durable galvanized steel with 8-gauge coated chainlink fence material.
- Connectors secure panels together to form one continuous fence.
- Legs collapse for easy storage.

References

ASA Official Portable Fence; NCAA Women’s Fastpitch “World Series” Division I, II & III Championships Series; City of Woodland, City of Santa Maria, Salem VA, etc.
USA SOFTBALL
ATHLETES OF THE YEAR

CONNELL, CORDES AND MAY-JOHNSON
EARN INDIVIDUAL ACCOLADES

USA Softball experienced another successful year in 2011. The Women’s National Team topped the Pan American Games. The Men’s Slow Pitch National Team owned the Border Battle. The Junior Women’s National Team claimed the International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship. While the victories were team efforts, three athletes established themselves as the best of the Red, White and Blue. Meet the USA Softball Athletes of the Year.

ROOKIE INFELDER MAY-JOHNSON, who saw time at shortstop and third base, came out of retirement in 2011 to make her first USA Softball Women’s National Team at 27-years-old. She started 27 of 28 games the United States played at the Canadian Open Fast Pitch International Championship in Surrey, B.C., Canada, the World Cup of Softball in Oklahoma City and the Pan American Games in Guadalajara, Mexico. While the Red, White and Blue finished second in Canada, where May-Johnson earned the Defensive Most Valuable Player award, the team won a fifth straight World Cup title and seventh consecutive Pan American Games Gold Medal.

“When you play on a really good team like the USA Softball Women’s National Team, it is easier to play well,” said May-Johnson, who is also an assistant coach at Iowa. “It’s easier to play defense when you are behind a good pitcher who strikes everyone out. It’s easy to hit well when the people before you are on base and when the batters behind you are dangerous. Sometimes when you’re on a really good team, you win these neat awards like the USA Softball Female Athlete of the Year, but I know this award is not all for me. It’s the people around me that I have to thank for helping me perform at this level.”

At the plate, May-Johnson went 33-for-79 for .418 overall, ranking her first on the team in hits and at-bats while placing her third among National Team members in batting average. She had four doubles, a triple and a team-high six home runs for a .722 slugging percentage. May-Johnson had a team-high 26 runs scored and a team-high 30 RBI, nine more than her nearest teammate.
CONNELL, A ROOKIE on the Men’s Slow Pitch National Team, played in five of the team’s games at the McQuade Sr. Budweiser Charity Softball Tournament in Bismarck, N.D., the Team Cincinnati exhibitions in Cincinnati and exhibitions in Oklahoma City and also played Border Battle III against Canada in Oklahoma City. For the season, he was 29-for-34 (.853) with 25 runs scored and 27 RBI. He also hit 10 home runs in 2011.

“It is a great honor to be named the USA Softball Male Athlete of the Year. When you play softball, you work hard all year but you never expect to receive an award like this,” Connell said. “I was excited just getting selected to be one of the 15-men to play for the USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team this year. To be chosen over the other 14 players, the best of the best in our sport, as the Athlete of the Year is just an honor. I’m very excited and am thankful for this opportunity.”

His best performance came in the team’s opening game of the season against the Gene Were All-Stars, a squad of top players from the Dakotas, at the McQuade tournament. He led the offensive effort going 4-for-4 with five RBI on two doubles and two home runs. In the second game of the tournament, Connell continued his hot streak in going a perfect 6-for-6. During the exhibition games in Cincinnati, he went 8-for-10 with seven runs scored and six RBI.

Connell once again was an outstanding performer at Border Battle III, going 9-for-11 with seven runs scored and 11 RBI in the exhibition action. He was 2-for-3 with two runs scored and three RBI in Team USA’s 25-3 Border Battle victory over the Canadian National Team.

CORDES, A CAL FRESHMAN, helped lead the United States to the Gold Medal at the International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship, Dec. 6-17, in Cape Town, South Africa. She was the only member of the team to start in all 11 games in Cape Town and one of two athletes to play in all 11 games. While seeing time at shortstop and primarily at third base, she also led Team USA in hits (15), extra base hits (seven), RBI (12) and stolen bases (three).

“It is such a tremendous honor to be named the Athlete of the Year for the USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team,” Cordes said. “Words cannot describe how it feels to receive this award. It was a wonderful opportunity to wear USA across my chest the past two years and win two Gold Medals with such an awesome group of girls, who I love playing with. To be named the Athlete of the Year, it is a complete surprise. Everyone on the team is amazing, they’re so good, and everyone did their part to help us win the ISF Junior Women’s World Championship. I’m really honored. Thank you to USA Softball for this award and the experience of playing for my country.”

At the plate, Cordes went 15-for-26 (.577) with one of her hits, a fifth inning double, breaking open Japan’s no hitter on Dec. 16. She had a team-high 12 RBI, only six less RBI then all of Team USA’s opponents combined, and 10 runs scored, third most on the team. Cordes hit three doubles, a team-high two triples and a team-high two home runs. Both home runs, a solo blast and a three-run bomb, came in the second inning of Team USA’s Dec. 14 game against Puerto Rico. Her tournament slugging percentage of 1.077 was the highest on the team. She was walked five times, third most on the team, and struck out only one time in the entire tournament. On the base paths, she was 3-for-4, also making her the team leader in stolen bases.
THE BEST PLAY IN OKC
WORLD CUP AND BORDER BATTLE RETURN

WORLD CUP OF SOFTBALL
OKLAHOMA CITY
VII

#7 JORDAN TAYLOR
#12 BRIAN WEGMAN
#9 KAITLIN COCHRAN

JUNE 27-JULY 2
ASA HALL OF FAME COMPLEX
TICKETS: SOFTBALLOUTLET.COM OR 1-800-654-8337
GROUP DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE
Boombah’s one-step manufacturing process and direct sales approach has a combination of price and performance that cannot be rivaled.

In an industry where many companies tout utilization of aerospace grade composites, Boombah took it one step further and assembled a team of engineers with roots in the aerospace industry. We then challenged them to develop a design and manufacturing process to support our continued commitment to bring the best products at the best price directly to you.

From that challenge CompLogic was born - a proprietary manufacturing process utilizing High-Pressure Compaction with multi-layered composites.

Made in the U.S.A.

Offered direct to you at $159.99

Approved for use in ASA, USSSA, NSA, and ISA

Charge

Available in 32/22 33/23 34/24

The Charge's featured technology

A precise formula of aerospace grade carbon fiber and woven glass are unified through extreme molecular compression, transforming the taper into an energy catalyst. The result is EHE1 - Extreme Handle Elasticity.

The double barrel construction is fused through our proprietary CompLogic manufacturing process bringing you all the kick you will need - and all that is allowed by the governing bodies of softball.

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO BOOMBBAH.COM
Twelve veterans and two rookies comprise the 2012 USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team roster while 14 other athletes make up the inaugural 2012 USA Softball Men’s Futures Slow Pitch National Team. The teams will play each other in the Slow Pitch Showdown on June 27, shown live on ESPN2 from the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America Hall of Fame Stadium in Oklahoma City, while the National Team will also play June 30 in the Border Battle IV against the 2012 Canadian Men’s Slow Pitch Border Battle Team.

Boombah, Inc., will serve as the official uniform supplier for both the Men’s Slow Pitch National and Men’s Futures Slow Pitch National Teams.

Highlighting the roster for the National Team are four-time Men’s Slow Pitch National Team members Rick Baker, Brett Helmer, Johnny McCraw, the 2010 USA Softball Male Athlete of the Year, and Brian Wegman. All were on the inaugural squad in 2009 and have continued to represent the United States each year since.

Returning to Team USA for their third campaign are Bryson Baker, Don DeDonatis III, Andy Purcell, Brian Rainwater and Dennis Rulli.

“I’d like to thank ASA/USA Softball for giving me and the other players the opportunity to represent our country,” Rulli said. “It is truly an honor to be a part of this team and I feel privileged to get the opportunity to join my fellow teammates for a third year. The Border Battle has helped take slow pitch to a new height and has brought men’s slow pitch softball a tremendous amount of national exposure. This event is truly beneficial for our sport and I hope that it continues for years to come so that younger players have a chance to participate. Every member chosen to be a part of this should be proud because they’ve earned it.”

Dal Beggs, Geno Buck and Greg Connell have made the National Team for the second time. In 2011, Connell won the USA Softball Male Athlete of the Year award after going 29-for-34 (.853) with
25 runs scored and 27 RBI. He also hit 10 home runs in 2011, his rookie season.

“Anytime you get to the opportunity to play among the 14 best players in the nation is always an honor,” Connell said. “I feel honored to be given another chance to represent my country, especially when we have such an exciting schedule for this year. Not only do we get to play in the Border Battle IV, but we also get to play against the USA Softball Men’s Futures Slow Pitch Team and we will be televised twice on ESPN. It’s going to be a blast.”

Two rookies, BJ Fulk and Ryan Thiede are also on the roster for the Men’s Slow Pitch National Team.

The roster for the Men’s Futures Slow Pitch National Team is Kevin Bazat, Travis Clark, Anthony Dress, Kevin Filby, Jeremy Isenhower, Chris Larsen, Bubba Mack, Tommy Melton, Lee Powers, Luis Reyna, Nick Robertson and Jimmy Salas. Isenhower and Larsen were on the 2010 National Team.

The Men’s Slow Pitch National Team program is served by coaches Steve Shortland and Randy Raper.

Created in conjunction with the inaugural Border Battle slow pitch competition against Canada in 2009, the Men’s Slow Pitch National Team program is now in its fourth run. With a dominating 25-3 performance last year in Oklahoma City, Team USA took a 2-1 lead in the Border Battle series. The Americans also won Border Battle I 30-23 but Canada evened the series in 2010 with a 30-29 win.

The Border Battle IV is scheduled for June 30 at the ASA Hall of Fame Stadium in Oklahoma City. In addition to participating in that game, the 2012 USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch National Team will also take on Futures in the Slow Pitch Showdown on June 27, the opening night of the World Cup of Softball VII in Oklahoma City. Both the Slow Pitch Showdown and Border Battle will be followed by autograph sessions.

Slow Pitch Showdown and Border Battle tickets are included in all-session tickets to the World Cup, June 27-July 2 in Oklahoma City. All-session tickets, which are $275 for the Ultimate Fan Zone reserved seating in the first three rows of the stadium, $80 for other reserved seating and $45 for general admission seating, can be purchased now by phone at 800-654-8337 or online at SoftballOutlet.com. An official World Cup program is included with all-session tickets. Single session general admission tickets will be on sale in early June.

The Ultimate Fan Zone package also includes a private autograph session and meal with the USA Softball Women’s National Team, tentatively scheduled for Sunday at a local hotel and open only to Ultimate Fan Zone ticket holders, as well as free parking and a replica USA Softball women’s jersey customized with a name and number of the fan’s choice.

Both the National Team and Futures will participate in exhibitions prior to their match-up in Oklahoma City.

For more information, visit USASoftball.com. •
NEW FOR 2012

AVARICE
SLOWPITCH 98

AVARITIA
FASTPITCH

VISIT COMBATSPORTSGROUP.COM TO BUY THEM NOW!
The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America announced Feb. 15 that the Combat Capital City Classic, held April 20-22 at the ASA Hall of Fame Complex in Oklahoma City, kicks off 2012 ASA 2K Men’s Slow Pitch Series presented by Combat. Now in its fifth year of existence, the ASA 2K 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 National Championship in Oklahoma City. The first place team at each tournament will also receive a Combat prize pack that includes three bats, 15 batting shirts, shorts and hats.

"We are thrilled to continue our partnership with Combat on the 2012 ASA 2K Series tournaments," said ASA/USA Softball Executive Director Ron Radigonda. "This year, we have provided an additional qualifying tournament and we encourage all our slow pitch teams to participate in this extra opportunity. The ASA Hall of Fame Complex is home to the nation's top softball tournaments like the NCAA Women's College World Series (WCWS) and the World Cup of Softball. The ASA 2K Men's Slow Pitch Series is the premier event for our adult slow pitch participants, and it provides our fans a chance to see the best of the best for the 2012 ASA Men's Class A National Championship."

In order to participate in the ASA Men's Class A National Championship in Oklahoma City, teams must compete in either an ASA 2K event or ASA Territorial National Championship. Teams will be awarded points based on their finish in each ASA 2K event with the team who earns the most points at end of Series also winning a Combat prize should they attend the ASA Men's A National Championship in Oklahoma City Sept. 28-30. Points are awarded as follows:

- First place-60 points
- Second place-40 points
- Third place-30 points
- Fourth place-20 points
- Fifth place-15 points

• All other teams receive 10 points

If a team repeats as winners in more than one of the ASA 2K events, the certificate will be distributed to the top finishing team that has yet to receive an award. These cash certificates are only redeemable upon arrival in Oklahoma City and subsequent participation in the ASA Men’s Class A National Championship Finals. The ASA Class A Men’s National Championship team will also receive a Combat prize pack that includes 15 bats, bat bags and batting fleeces.

"Combat Sports is extremely excited to enter a third season supporting the ASA 2K Series," said Johnny McCraw, Combat National Promotions Manager. "The series has been a huge success the last two years and we look forward to 2012. We are planning on attending events and having demo products available to promote our new product line. We can’t wait to get to the fields."

Each tournament site is free to incorporate local rules they see fit provided that they restrict each participating team to five players that appear on the ASA Slow Pitch Restricted Players List. It is also required that teams submit a complete roster to the tournament director prior to their ASA 2K events.

California, Indiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon and Tennessee are set to host ASA 2K events in 2012.

For more information on the 2012 ASA 2K Men’s Slow Pitch Series presented by Combat, visit ASASoftball.com.
NIKE FREE ADVANTAGE
SUPER NATURAL MOVES
THE NIKE FREE ADVANTAGE SHOE WORKS WITH YOU. ITS FLEXIBILITY ENHANCES NATURAL
MOTION IN MULTIPLE DIRECTIONS, WHILE STRATEGICALLY PLACED LASER CUTOUTS PROVIDE
VENTILATION AND TRAINING SPECIFIC SUPPORT. IT’S DESIGNED FOR STRENGTH CONDITIONING
AND CROSS-TRAINING WORKOUTS. NIKEWOMEN.COM
Twelve athletes have been named to the 2012 USA Softball Women’s National Team, the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America announced in January. An additional five athletes will be named to the squad, which will compete at the International Softball Federation (ISF) Women’s World Championship, following a 2012 USA Softball Women’s National Team and USA Softball Women’s Elite National Team Selection Camp in June.

The 12 athletes who were named to the roster by the USA Softball Women’s National Team Selection Committee (WNTSC) are Valerie Arioto (Pleasanton, Calif./Cal senior), Kaitlin Cochran (Yorba Linda, Calif./Arizona State 2009), Lauren Gibson (Pasadena, Md./Tennessee junior), Ashley Holcombe (Fayetteville, Ga./Alaska 2009), Molly Johnson (Tucson, Ariz./Kentucky 2010), Stacy May-Johnson (Reno, Nev./Iowa 2006), Jenae Leles (Sacramento, Calif./Arizona 2009), Michelle Moultrie (Jacksonville, Fla./Florida senior), Keilani Ricketts (San Jose, Calif./Oklahoma junior), Jordan Taylor (Valencia, Calif./Michigan 2011), Rhea Taylor (Buford, Ga./Missouri 2011) and Chelsea Thomas (Pleasantville, Iowa/Missouri junior). All athletes who have been named to the 2012 USA Softball Women’s National Team helped Team USA to the Gold Medal at the 2011 World Cup of Softball in July in Oklahoma City.
TOP ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: Ashley Holcombe (Fayetteville, Ga.) is on her fourth USA Softball Women’s National Team selection since 2009. At the plate last year, she was 11-for-36 (.306) with five runs scored and four RBI.

Molly Johnson, a Tucson, Ariz., native, was injured last season but started in 11 of 13 games played. She was 15-for-30 (.500) with nine runs scored and 10 RBI. She hit five doubles.

Stacy May-Johnson of Reno, Nev., is the 2011 USA Softball Female Athlete of the Year. She went 33-for-79 for .418 overall in 2011. May-Johnson had a team-high 26 runs scored and a team-high 30 RBI, nine more than her nearest teammate.

SECOND ROW: Jenae Leles of Sacramento, Calif., is on the Women’s National Team for the third time since 2009. In 2011, Leles started in 23 of 24 games played. She was 17-for-62 (.274) with 19 RBI and seven runs scored.

Michelle Moultrie of Jacksonville, Fla., started in 19 of 24 games played in 2011. She hit .355 (22-for-62) with three doubles and four triples. Moultrie had 23 runs scored and 15 RBI.

THIRD ROW: Keilani Ricketts of San Jose, Calif., went 8-2 record in the circle last year. She pitched 41.1 innings, striking out 48 batters. At the plate, she was 3-for-8 with two RBI and a run scored.

Jordan Taylor of Valencia, Calif., returns to the Women’s National Team after 7-0 record in the circle last year. She pitched 44.2 innings for Team USA, the most of anyone on the American pitching staff. Taylor struck out a team high 65 batters.
Cheer on the USA Softball Women’s National Team at the World Cup of Softball VII, June 27-July 2, in Oklahoma City. Tickets on sale now at SoftballOutlet.com.

LEFT TO RIGHT: Rhea Taylor of Buford, Ga., went 23-for-63 (.365) with 24 runs scored and five RBI last year. On the base paths, Taylor was 9-for-11, leading the 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team in stolen bases.

Chelsea Thomas of Pleasantville, Iowa, had a 4-2 record in the circle in 2011. She pitched 41.1 innings, tying her with Keilani Ricketts for second most on the team. Thomas was also second on the team for strikeouts with 60.

2012 USA SOFTBALL WOMEN’S NATIONAL TEAM SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| June 10-12, 2012 | Women’s National Team Selection Camp  
Ashland, Ohio          |
| June 14, 2012   | Exhibition doubleheader  
Women’s National Team vs. Women’s Elite National Team  
Summersville, W.Va.    |
| June 18, 2012   | Exhibition doubleheader  
Women’s National Team vs. Women’s Elite National Team  
Ashland, Ohio          |
| June 23, 2012   | Title IX 40th Anniversary Celebration Game  
Women’s National Team vs. Canada  
Oklahoma City          |
| June 27-July 2, 2012 | World Cup of Softball  
Oklahoma City            |
| July 4-9, 2012  | Canadian Open FastPitch Championship  
Surrey, B.C., Canada     |
| July 13-22, 2012 | ISF Women’s World Championship  
Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada |

City and the 2011 Pan American Games in October in Guadalajara, Mexico.

Athletes who have accepted an invitation to try-out for one of the five remaining spots on the Women’s National Team and the 2012 USA Softball Women’s Elite National Team are Whitney Canion (Aledo, Texas/Baylor junior), Lauren Chamberlain (Trabuco Canyon, Calif./Oklahoma freshman), Raven Chavanne (Thousand Oaks, Calif./Tennessee junior), Amanda Chidester (Allen Park, Mich./Michigan senior), Dallas Escobedo (Glendale, Ariz./Arizona State sophomore), Kenzie Fowler (Tucson, Ariz./Arizona junior), Taylor Hoagland (Flower Mound, Texas/Texas junior), Meagan May (Spring, Texas/Texas A&M junior), Megan Langenfeld (Bakersfield, Calif./UCLA 2010), Christi Orgeron (New Orleans, La./ULL senior), Ellen Renfroe (Jackson, Tenn./Tennessee sophomore) and Jessica Shults (Valencia, Calif./Oklahoma junior). With the exception of Chidester and Renfroe, all athletes have played USA Softball previously on a Women’s National Team, Women’s Futures National Team or Junior Women’s National Team.

Throughout the spring, additional athletes will be invited to the June Selection Camp, where the remaining members of the 2012 USA Softball Women’s National Team and the 17-athlete roster for the 2012 USA Softball Women’s Elite National Team will be decided. Following the Selection Camp, members of both teams will play each other in exhibition games before the Women’s National Team heads to competition.

The Women’s National Team will compete at the World Cup of Softball in Oklahoma City, the Canadian Open Fast Pitch International Championship in Surrey, B.C., Canada, and the World Championship in Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada. The Women’s Elite National Team was scheduled to compete at the World University Games in Colorado Springs, Colo., but the event was canceled.

Additional events may be added at a later date. ●
You're not just buying lights. You're buying the support of the Musco team committed to getting it right by providing service and support you can rely on today and for the next 25 years. That means you won't have to worry about maintaining your lights until she’s your age.

To learn more visit: www.musco.com/generations
SPECIAL OFFER FOR MEMBERS!

GO TO WWW.PRBAR.COM AND USE CODE “SBP15” AT CHECKOUT TO RECEIVE YOUR 15% DISCOUNT ON PR*BARS!
PARTIAL PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE USA SOFTBALL NATIONAL TEAM PROGRAM.
(SAMPLE PACKS + SHIPPING RATES ARE NOT DISCOUNTED)

PR*BAR IS THE OFFICIAL PERFORMANCE NUTRITION BAR OF ASA/USA SOFTBALL

PR*BAR HELPED FUEL THE 2011 USA SOFTBALL WOMEN’S NATIONAL TEAM TO THEIR WORLD CUP OF SOFTBALL VICTORY!

WWW.PRBAR.COM 800-397-5556
MOLLY JOHNSON: SETTING THE STANDARD FOR UK SOFTBALL

LEXINGTON, Ky. – Molly Johnson’s schedule is so packed that even the most avid color-coding, tab-applying, e-mail flagging, highly organized person might become overwhelmed at the number of tasks for which she is responsible.

University of Kentucky assistant softball coach, Team USA squad member and graduate student are the main three titles that characterize the former Wildcat letterwinner (2007-10) and within those are a plethora of responsibilities and expectations she must fulfill.

Not only is that juggling act not a problem for Johnson, she accomplishes those tasks at a high level on a daily basis without stress.

“She could be juggling 20 different things and you’d never even notice,” said Kentucky senior Brittany Cervantes, a former college teammate of Johnson. “One thing I really admire about Molly is that she is calm about everything. It’s just the way she carries herself; she is always on time, if not early and finds time to workout and coach and be ready for practice. She always has everything in check. That’s one of her great qualities – she is very organized.”

Let’s put this in perspective.

Not only is Johnson a former Kentucky player and current assistant coach. She is the first and only All-American in program history and, in her first season in the coaching box, helped lead the Wildcats to their best-ever season with a 40-16 overall record and the school’s first-ever NCAA Super Regional appearance.

Not only does Johnson play for Team USA, she also led the United States in batting average during the Pan Am Games – in which the US won the Gold – with a sizzling .706 clip. She was 12-of-17 at the plate in eight appearances with four doubles and eight RBI.

Not only is Johnson a student. She is pursuing her master’s degree in sport leadership at which she excels at the highest level in the classroom and was an NFCA Academic All-American during her playing days.

Bottom line, Johnson just gets the job done.

Rachel Lawson knew that Johnson was destined to be a coach the first time she ever met her standout infielder in the summer of 2007.

Lawson had just been hired from Western Kentucky with the charge to turn the University of Kentucky program into a championship contender. She knew that Johnson would be one of the players that would help get the Wildcats turned in the...
right direction.

Sure, her numbers as a freshman had been impressive. Johnson batted .340 as a rookie and led her team in doubles with 11. She had been a two-time Southeastern Conference Freshman of the Week selection, playing primarily third base that first year.

But it was something else about Johnson that caught Lawson’s eye. “Early on, she wanted to go into medicine, but the day I met her I could tell, just being outside on the ballfield, she was a rat; she wanted to be out on the field all day,” Lawson said. “It took her a while to approach us about coaching, but I knew the day I met her that she wouldn’t be in medicine. I knew that, one day, she would have a natural transition to our coaching staff.”

Even before Johnson joined Kentucky’s coaching staff, she was finding ways to make her teammates better on a daily basis. She was a very cerebral player and was able to effectively communicate what she saw to others. “She had great instincts as a player,” Lawson said. “She can play every position on the field in a thinking way, not just an athletic way and she can articulate that to other people on the team. Things that are simple to her are very complex to other people and she was able to explain them. Those are the things you need to be able to do as a good coach.”

Cervantes said that Johnson was always a leader when she played for the Wildcats, and helped her teammates adjust to Lawson’s new coaching style during the transition. “Coach Lawson kind of has her own unique coaching style and she and Molly were definitely on the same page,” Cervantes said. “When Molly was a player, she wasn’t the most outspoken, but she led by example. She was a natural-born leader and she was always making sure that she understood everything and that everybody on the team understood it, as well. Those were early signs that she was going to be a quality coach.”

Johnson knew what good softball looked like. She grew up in Tucson, Ariz., during the height of the Arizona program’s success and watched as a different group of Wildcats competed among the nation’s elite.

She wanted to have the opportunity to help be a part of building a successful program at Kentucky. The idea of being one of the cornerstones of a great softball tradition was one that was very appealing to Johnson. All things considered, she has done just that. “Playing at Kentucky was a great experience,” Johnson said. “I knew I wanted to come to the East and knew I could help build a program. When Coach Lawson got here, she really got the ball rolling in turning things around. It was fun from a player’s perspective, but it has been even better to stay here.”

Right around the time Lawson met Johnson and knew her pupil was destined for a future in coaching, Johnson began to toss around the idea. She was working camps in the summer and realized that no other line of work was better suited to her interests and passion.

“I think after my freshman year, working camps in the summer initiated my interest in it,” Johnson said. “The way it worked out was that the players were coaching some of the teams at camps. That started me working all the camps every summer and in the fall, and that just solidified it. Just being part of the sport and being outdoors really makes me happy and it’s what I love to do.”

For the complete story, visit www.secdigitalnetwork.com.
1 DREAM...
1 CHANCE...
1 DAY...

POWERED BY SOFTBALL FACTORY

OPPORTUNITY IS EVERYTHING

www.softball-factory.com | 855.822.5115

YOUR ROAD TO COLLEGE SOFTBALL STARTS HERE
OFFICIAL SCOUTING PARTNER FOR ASA/USA
SOFTBALL FACTORY LAUNCHES ASA/USA SOFTBALL NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM

THE AMATEUR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION (ASA) of America/USA Softball and Softball Factory announced Feb. 13 the initial 2012 schedule for the launch of the ASA/USA Softball National Identification Program. Unveiled in December 2011, the National Identification Program will help identify female fastpitch players for the USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team (JWNT) Selection Committee, while also providing athletes with additional college exposure and skill development through Softball Factory.

The ASA strives to give players opportunities to participate in the USA Softball program. With the Softball Factory as an Official Scouting Partner for ASA/USA Softball, this partnership will help facilitate that mission through various identification events and college recruiting guidance for ASA participants.

The following are the first 13 Softball Factory events of the 2012 with additional events possible. The participating divisions will be 16-Under and 14U with the primary focus of the partnership on the National Identification Program, powered by Softball Factory.

For information on registering, visit Softball-Factory.com.

Players who attend the National Identification Program must be ASA registered and will be entered into an identification pool for the USA Softball JWNT Selection Committee to review for possible selection. The USA Softball Junior Women's National Team captured the 2011 International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship Gold Medal in December in Cape Town, South Africa, with a 4-1 victory over Japan. The bi-yearly Junior Women’s World Championship will be contested again in 2013 in Canada.

"I absolutely loved being a part of the USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team," said 2011 NCAA Women’s College World Series (WCWS) co-Most Outstanding Player Dallas Escobedo of Arizona State. "In the two years I was on the team, I traveled to Colombia and South Africa. I was able to experience amazing cities and play international softball against young women who love the game just as much as I do. I was also able to develop awesome relationships with my teammates which made the experience that much better."

All participating players will also be considered for Softball Factory player development events and will receive guidance on the college recruiting process.

Players in the 18U division will also be provided with an opportunity to participate in Softball Factory workouts, during which the players will be evaluated based on their future college potential. In addition to improving softball skills, Softball Factory works with potential college players and their parents on both the academic and athletic aspects of the college search process.

For information on registering, visit Softball-Factory.com.

Players who attend the National Identification Program must be ASA registered and will be entered into an identification pool for the USA Softball JWNT Selection Committee to review for possible selection. The USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team captured the 2011 International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship Gold Medal in December in Cape Town, South Africa, with a 4-1 victory over Japan. The bi-yearly Junior Women’s World Championship will be contested again in 2013 in Canada.

"I absolutely loved being a part of the USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team," said 2011 NCAA Women’s College World Series (WCWS) co-Most Outstanding Player Dallas Escobedo of Arizona State. "In the two years I was on the team, I traveled to Colombia and South Africa. I was able to experience amazing cities and play international softball against young women who love the game just as much as I do. I was also able to develop awesome relationships with my teammates which made the experience that much better."

All participating players will also be considered for Softball Factory player development events and will receive guidance on the college recruiting process.

Players in the 18U division will also be provided with an opportunity to participate in Softball Factory workouts, during which the players will be evaluated based on their future college potential. In addition to improving softball skills, Softball Factory works with potential college players and their parents on both the academic and athletic aspects of the college search process.

For information on registering, visit Softball-Factory.com.

Players who attend the National Identification Program must be ASA registered and will be entered into an identification pool for the USA Softball JWNT Selection Committee to review for possible selection. The USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team captured the 2011 International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship Gold Medal in December in Cape Town, South Africa, with a 4-1 victory over Japan. The bi-yearly Junior Women’s World Championship will be contested again in 2013 in Canada.

"I absolutely loved being a part of the USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team," said 2011 NCAA Women’s College World Series (WCWS) co-Most Outstanding Player Dallas Escobedo of Arizona State. "In the two years I was on the team, I traveled to Colombia and South Africa. I was able to experience amazing cities and play international softball against young women who love the game just as much as I do. I was also able to develop awesome relationships with my teammates which made the experience that much better."

All participating players will also be considered for Softball Factory player development events and will receive guidance on the college recruiting process.

Players in the 18U division will also be provided with an opportunity to participate in Softball Factory workouts, during which the players will be evaluated based on their future college potential. In addition to improving softball skills, Softball Factory works with potential college players and their parents on both the academic and athletic aspects of the college search process.

For information on registering, visit Softball-Factory.com.

Players who attend the National Identification Program must be ASA registered and will be entered into an identification pool for the USA Softball JWNT Selection Committee to review for possible selection. The USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team captured the 2011 International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship Gold Medal in December in Cape Town, South Africa, with a 4-1 victory over Japan. The bi-yearly Junior Women’s World Championship will be contested again in 2013 in Canada.

"I absolutely loved being a part of the USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team," said 2011 NCAA Women’s College World Series (WCWS) co-Most Outstanding Player Dallas Escobedo of Arizona State. "In the two years I was on the team, I traveled to Colombia and South Africa. I was able to experience amazing cities and play international softball against young women who love the game just as much as I do. I was also able to develop awesome relationships with my teammates which made the experience that much better."

All participating players will also be considered for Softball Factory player development events and will receive guidance on the college recruiting process.

Players in the 18U division will also be provided with an opportunity to participate in Softball Factory workouts, during which the players will be evaluated based on their future college potential. In addition to improving softball skills, Softball Factory works with potential college players and their parents on both the academic and athletic aspects of the college search process.
Cheyenne Tarango will always remember Dec. 17 as “one of the greatest days” of her life.

Just one day after the 2011 USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team fell to Japan in the semifinals of the 2011 International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship in Cape Town, South Africa, a Tarango grand slam helped the Americans to a 4-1 defeat of Japan in the Gold Medal Game. The Red, White and Blue also topped Chinese Taipei 12-3 in the six inning Bronze Medal Game.

Tarango (Anaheim Hills, Calif./Tennessee freshman) provided all the offense the Americans needed to claim the title, a second straight for the USA Softball program. With bases loaded in the bottom of the fourth, she hit the first home run of her USA Softball career, a grand slam home run over the left field fence.

“Honestly in my head, I was just thinking about a base hit,” said Tarango, who appeared in six games in the tournament. “I thought that if I could just get the first RBI, Lauren Haeger would be able to take care of the rest.”

Pitcher Haeger (Phoenix, Ariz./Florida freshman) did her part in the circle, allowing only five hits to a Japanese team that pounded three U.S. pitchers for 11 hits and nine runs a day earlier. The sole run crossed the plate in the sixth when a Kylee Lahners (Laguna Hills, Calif./Washington freshman) fielding error allowed third baseman Mina Yamashiro to score.

“I felt really honored that my team had faith in me,” Haeger said. “I was so excited. To get to pitch against Japan in any game is awesome, let alone the Gold Medal Game. I feel honored to have had the chance to pitch a game like this for my country.”

Haeger struck out eight batters including the last two.

“I was really excited to just get in the Gold Medal Game and play,” she said. “I was hitting my spots and doing everything right today. I was throwing hard. Everything, every pitch worked out.”

The United States finishes the tournament with a record of 10-1, the only loss being the 9-0 five inning loss to Japan.

“It is always tough to take a loss like we did to Japan last night but I think that it was good for them,” Head Coach Karen Johns (Whippany, N.J.) said after the Gold Medal Game. “It showed them how much they wanted to have a Gold Medal around their neck and gave them the motivation to fight for it. I am so proud of them and how they performed today. Without a doubt, they deserve to be called Junior Women’s World Champions.”

Team USA has played in each of the six previous Championship Games held at Junior Women’s Worlds, 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.

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.

The members of the USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team hail from seven states and 11 universities. Team members are 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), Haeger, Lahners, Destinee Martinez (Corona, Calif./Oklahoma sophomore), Kourtney Salvarola (Arnold, Md./South Florida sophomore), Tarango, Nyree White (Eugene, Ore./Stanford freshman), Hallie Wilson (North Tustin, Calif./Arizona freshman) and Chelsea Zgrabik (Nokomis, Fla./Florida Gulf Coast sophomore).

Coyle was named to the roster in late July by the USA Softball Women’s National Team Selection Committee (WNTSC) after Shelby Pendley (Albuquerque, N.M./Arizona freshman) withdrew from the team due to injury. Madison Shipman (Valencia, Calif./Tennessee sophomore) also withdrew from the team due to injury in September and was replaced by Damico.

The Junior Women’s National Team is coached by Johns with assistants Suzy Brazney (Huntington Beach, Calif./head coach Golden West College) and Tony Rico (Huntington Beach, Calif./coach Worth Firecrackers). Joe Salvatore (Monroe Township, N.J./coach New Jersey Breakers) serves as the volunteer assistant coach. Michael White (Eugene, Ore./head coach Oregon) is the batting practice pitcher.

Team USA went 10-1 en route to the Gold Medal at the 2011 International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship.

Game 1: United States 11, Canada 4 (5)
Game 2: United States 5, China 0
Game 3: United States, New Zealand 0 (6)
Game 4: United States 8, South Africa 0 (5)
Game 5: United States 17, Botswana 0 (3)
Game 6: United States 15, Czech Republic 0 (3)
Game 7: United States 12, Puerto Rico 3 (5)
Quarterfinals: United States 7, Australia 4
Semifinals: Japan 9, United States 0 (5)
Bronze Medal Game: United States 12, Chinese Taipei 3
Gold Medal Game: United States 4, Japan 1

Watch members of Team USA get interviewed at a community event
Watch the Red, White and Blue march into the Opening Ceremony
Watch the Americans receive their Gold Medals
Watch the United States flag get raised at the Medal Ceremony

For more videos from the 2011 International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship in Cape Town, South Africa, visit Facebook.com/ASAUSASoftball/.
“THIS DEVICE WILL HELP YOUR TEAM GET BETTER – BE BETTER.”

Coach Clint Myers, Arizona State University
Head Softball Coach, 2008 & 2011 National Champions

FIND OUT WHY THE NATION’S TOP COACHES USE POCKET RADAR

SPECIAL ASA PRICE
$179.99 BUY NOW

PocketRadar.com/ASA
888.381.2672

CLICK HERE TO SEE IT IN ACTION

PROUD SPONSOR OF USA Softball
USA SOFTBALL MUSIC TO JT2’S EARS

BY JAMIE M. BLANCHARD

When 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 were just average fans. Now the two are song writers with the attention of USA Softball athletes and supporters across the country.

Harding and Simmons, both of Waldorf, Md., were inspired to write songs by the exhibition games and the team’s later successes at the World Cup of Softball and Pan American Games. They also wrote about the USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team winning the 2011 International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship.

Balls and Strikes Online Magazine talked to Harding and Simmons about their music.

How did you become interested in USA Softball and the 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team?

Simmons: I began watching softball on ESPN during the NCAA Division I Softball tournament. We attended one of the games and have been interested in the sport since. Some of the current Women’s National Team players are athletes we have followed ever since they were young in college.

Harding: I became interested in USA Softball back when Jennie Finch and Cat Osterman were on the team. I watched how they won almost every game that they played and became a big USA Softball fan after that. When the 2011 team came to Bowie, Md., I met a few of the players and they were extremely nice and outgoing. Some of the players even gave me wristbands which was probably the highlight of that night. After the game I began to talk to some of the players online and it was amazing how they remembered who I was.

Did you ever expect that the team would hear the song?

Harding: I knew that there was a chance that they would hear the song but I never thought that we would get the feedback that we did. When we make a song for them, we tag them in a video on Facebook and hoped that they listen.

Simmons: We have had communication with a few of them over Facebook and Twitter but we weren’t sure if they would actually listen to them. I believe we were very lucky they actually listened to it.

What inspired you to write a rap song about the 2011 USA Softball Women’s National Team winning the Pan American Games?

Harding/Simmons: The song writing all started back in the summer when we made the first song about them titled “USA Softball Anthem”. We wanted to write that song because meeting the team was an amazing experience and we figured that we would show them how much they meant to us through song. When we released that song, we got a lot of positive feedback and we began to talk to the players periodically. When the team won the World Cup of Softball we made a second song titled “World Champs” and after that song we got a lot of positive feedback again. Before the Pan American Games, I told a few players that we would make another song if they came back home with a Gold Medal. Once we found out that they won, we created the third song that you heard titled “USA Softball Reloaded”.

What has been the reaction of the athletes?

Simmons: After hearing the first song they were truly shocked and excited I believe. They told us how much they loved each of the songs.

Harding: The athletes say that they love our songs and that we’re amazing or the best. Keilani Ricketts seems to be the biggest fan of our songs.

Thank you for taking the time to chat with Balls and Strikes Online Magazine. Is there anything that you two would like to add?

Simmons: Thank you for the interview. I would like to give a shout out to USA Softball for everything they have done. I would also like to shout out ASA Softball for their support and allowing for this wonderful opportunity to share our music in Balls and Strikes Online Magazine.

Harding: I support USA softball and I will continue to do so for the rest of my life. It is amazing how dominant the program is and how outgoing the players are. I never thought that I would be able to speak to the players like Keilani Ricketts and Jordan Taylor that I have watched on television for a long time. In the near future I hope that they are able to play in Bowie, Md., again or that I can attend the World Cup of Softball so that I can meet them again. I would also like to thank everyone in the USA Softball organization for being positive role models for many people across the world and ASA Softball for allowing me to be interviewed. It really means a lot.
Three-time Olympic Gold Medalist Lisa Fernandez and the 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team are among the final nominees for the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame’s Class of 2012, the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) announced Feb. 27. Fernandez is vying for one of six spots in the individual category while the 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team is vying for the sole team spot.

The public can help select the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame inductees at TeamUSA.org/halloffame. Voters will be allowed to vote once per day, per category, through April 9, 2012. Recognizing the ongoing support that fans give U.S. Olympians, Paralympians and hopefuls in their training and competition, the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame presented by Allstate was one of the first major sports halls of fame to incorporate fan voting into the selection process.

“Being considered for the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame is really the pinnacle of my career as a softball player,” Fernandez said. “When you think about being an Olympic athlete, you think about winning the Olympic Gold Medal, but to be recognized with a nomination for the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame is special and a reflection of everything that I have been blessed to accomplish in the sport. Never in a million years did I think I would be considered for this honor. I am so fortunate to share a nomination with my 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Teammates as well. What we were able to accomplish in Athens was truly unforgettable.”

Members of the 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team are Laura Berg (Santa Fe Springs, Calif./Fresno State), Crystl Bustos (Canyon Country, Calif./Palm Beach Community College), Fernandez (Long Beach, Calif./UCLA), Jennie Finch (La Mirada, Calif./Arizona), Amanda Freed (Cypress, Calif./UCLA), Lori Harrigan (Las Vegas, Nev./UNLV), Lovieanne Jung (Fountain Valley, Calif./Arizona), Kelly Kretschman (Indian Harbour Beach, Fla./Alabama), Jessica Mendoza (Camarillo, Calif./Stanford), Tairia Mims Flowers (Tucson, Ariz./UCLA), Stacey Nuveman (La Verne, Calif./UCLA), Leah O’Brien-Amico (Chino Hills, Calif./Arizona), Cat Osterman (Houston, Texas/Texas), Jenny Topping (Whittier, Calif./Cal State Fullerton) and Natasha Watley (Irvine, Calif./UCLA). The team was coached by Mike Candrea (Tucson, Ariz./Arizona Head Coach) with assistant coaches Ken Eriksen (Tampa, Fla./South Florida Head Coach) and John Rittman (Palo Alto, Calif./Stanford Head Coach).

Dubbed the “Real Dream Team” on the cover of Sports Illustrated magazine, the 2004 U.S. Olympic Team went 9-0 in Athens, a record that included eight consecutive shutouts and four run-rule wins. In total, the Americans outscored opponents 51-1, not allowing an opponent to score until 55 2/3 innings into the tournament when Australia scored in the sixth inning of the Gold Medal Game.

“What an honor for Lisa Fernandez and this great group of athletes and their unforgettable performance during the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens,” said
Candrea, two-time U.S. Olympic Softball Team Head Coach. “The 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team is a group of young ladies who raised the bar in their preparation, dedication, team work and ultimately produced a performance on the field that will go down as one of the best in Olympic history. I am grateful and humbled to have been a part of this great team, staff and USA Softball and appreciate the 2004 U.S. Olympic Team’s nomination for the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame.”

Members of the 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team set 18 Olympic records in Athens. No U.S. Olympic Team has ever given a more dominant performance with as many team and individual Olympic records broken en route to the Gold Medal. Among the teams records set were the most hits (73), highest team batting average (.343) and highest slugging percentage (.559). Fernandez set the individual record for batting average with .545 while Crystal Bustos’ 10 RBI and five home runs were also records.

The U.S. pitching staff, led by Fernandez, had the lowest combined earned run average (.12) in Olympic history. One run is also the fewest runs allowed by a team in Olympic history. And dominant pitching was no fluke in Athens as the team also had a .22 ERA during the “Aiming for Athens” Olympic preparation tour, in which they went 53-0 in 30 cities.

While the team relished in on-the-field triumphs, the 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team battled off-the-field tragedy. The team wore “SC” on their helmets to honor Sue Candrea, coach Candrea’s wife, who passed away from a brain aneurysm 10 days before the team left for Greece. Sue was traveling with the team in central
Wisconsin on the “Aiming for Athens” tour.

Candrea was named the 2004 USOC Coach of the Year. Other honors garnered by the 2004 U.S. Olympic Softball Team were the 2004 USOC Team of the Year award and the 2004 ESPY for Best Female Olympic Performance. For her individual performance in Athens, Fernandez was a finalist for the 2004 USOC SportsWoman of the Year award.

“Softball is not an individual sport. Throughout my career, I have had amazing teammates, not just at the 2004 Olympic Games but at every event that I have been a part of. They’ve helped me achieve everything that I have done,” Fernandez said. “As a pitcher, I was blessed to have a great defense behind me. I was blessed to have a great offense that could score so many runs. I know that without great teammates, what I did in the circle would not have mattered. I could have thrown no hitters and still lost if I didn’t have such a strong team.”

Fernandez is part of a rare class of U.S. Olympians who hold three Olympic Gold Medals from three Olympic Games. In 1996, 2000 and 2004, Fernandez led the Americans to the Gold Medal, the only pitcher to appear in three Olympic finales. Most notably, she entered the final game of the 1996 Olympic Games in the sixth inning and earned the save as Team USA defeated China 3-1 for the inaugural softball Olympic Gold Medal. Overall, she achieved 7-2 record in the circle throughout her Olympic career, allowing only 20 hits, seven walks and six runs (four earned) while striking out 93 over 74.2 innings of Olympic play.

While Fernandez is most renowned for her work in the circle, she also recorded 76 at-bats over three Games. Fernandez hit .333 (23-for-76) overall in Atlanta, Sydney and Athens with three doubles, three home runs and 15 runs batted in (RBI) and 13 runs scored.

A rare pitcher/hitter, Fernandez has the distinction of holding four individual Olympic records in addition to those she helped set as a team. In 2000, she struck out 25 Australian batters, a record. She holds the Olympic record for fewest runs allowed. In 2004, she achieved the highest batting average (.545) in Olympic play and hit three doubles, another record.

“It is bittersweet that softball has two nominees for the 2012 U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame when our sport is excluded from the 2012 Olympic Games in London,” Fernandez said. “It’s unfortunate that today’s players will not have the same chance to compete that I did. The U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame is our opportunity to leave a legacy in the Olympic arena until we get softball back in the Games. It was so special to play in the Olympics. My teammates and I appreciated the opportunity to represent our country on that stage. To have a place in the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame, that would be incredible. That’s where you leave your mark. There is nothing more special than being an Olympian and being in the Hall of Fame would truly be an honor.”

No softball athletes are currently inducted into the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame.
At the International Olympic Committee’s 5th World Conference on Women and Sport, retired USA Softball player Jennie Finch (La Mirada, Calif.) joined gymnast Nadia Comaneci and figure skater Michelle Kwan in receiving the “Power of I” award. During her remarks, the two-time Olympic medalist and 2009 USA Softball Player of the Year called for the reinstatement of softball to the Olympic Programme. Her complete speech follows:

“Thank you. This is truly such a special award. I want to thank Intelius for sponsoring this incredible event, and the IOC for this conference. I would also like to thank the International Softball Federation for providing the platform to reach so many young female athletes all over the world.

This award is one of the greatest awards that I’ve received because it goes beyond the playing field, which I like to call ‘This special, magical gift of sport.’ The magical gift inspires others and makes a difference with the platforms we’ve been given.

When I was an eight-year old girl, pigtails and a glove in the backyard, like you saw, with my two older brothers, I had a dream of competing in the greatest sporting event in the world, the Olympic Games. I was blessed with the opportunity to be a part of two Olympic Games, two Olympic teams, and to see the sport of softball grow and to be now played in over 130 countries. I have seen the growth and witnessed firsthand the development of the sport of fast pitch softball on all seven continents. There are millions of softball players in all of the world with the same dream that I had. I hope this one day can be a reality for them as it was myself.

I would like to thank and accept this award tonight on behalf of the women that have paved the way, along with the millions of softball players who deserve the very same opportunity, who are right now eight years old and looking for a dream – a dream to hang onto, a dream to play in the Olympic Games. Softball has taught me so much about life, teamwork, discipline, sacrifice, leadership, and more. But most importantly, that magical gift that goes beyond any playing field, and that’s inspiring others.

I know this is about the “Power of I” and I’m fully aware of the “Power of I.” We can all make a difference. We all have it within us to make this world a better place and to leave our mark. However, I am part of a team, and there is no “I” in “team.” There are so many softball players, teammates, trainers, and coaches making a difference. This award is for the sport of softball and the millions of players all across the world (applause) that have the Olympic dream.

This ball was one of the ‘first pitch’ balls that was thrown in the 2008 Olympic Beijing Games in China. I wanted to bring this ball up here as a symbol of hope, that it’ll one day be back in the Olympic Games, where it belongs.

During last night’s Opening Ceremonies, several leaders of the Olympic Movement spoke of the 45 percent participation female status statistic. As an Olympian I stand here today and I challenge all of you to make those numbers increase for the future. That 45 percent that we were all so very proud of, which we should be, but there’s no reason we can’t get that 45 percent up to 50 percent.

As a female athlete, we’re supposed to leave the game with greater opportunity for the next generation, and unfortunately this wasn’t the case for me and my sport of softball. Instead the platform, foundation, and dreams that were established through appearances in four Olympic Games were taken away.

As we at softball continue to forge ahead for reinstatement, I ask you to please help softball get back in the Olympic Games and allow others to experience the magic, the true magic of sport, the magic of the Olympic Games.

Thank you all.”

Transcript courtesy of the International Softball Federation.
PUT POWER INTO PLAY

BE YOURSELF. ONLY BETTER.™ Hit it high and deep with the NEW Mizuno Frenzy 4.0 fastpitch bat, made with Black Onyx Carbon™ and featuring an unsurpassed sweet area for extreme pop and Anti-Shock Construction™ for ultimate feel. Bring out the better hitter inside you at mizunofastpitch.com.

Like us on:
facebook.com/MizunoFastpitchNorthAmerica

Follow us on:
twitter.com/MizunoFastpitch

- Black Onyx Carbon maximizes performance and durability
- Unsurpassed sweet spot
- Cylinder Seaming eliminates inconsistencies
- Anti-Shock Construction™ for less vibration and improved feel
THE SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE (SEC) now has bragging rights over the Pac-12 as the Alabama softball team (25-0, 6-0 SEC) is the best softball team in the nation, according to the ESPN.com/USA Softball Collegiate Top 25 Poll released March 20 by the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America. Following a perfect week of both conference and non-conference play, the Crimson Tide ousted the California Golden Bears, the top ranked team for five weeks.

The Crimson Tide received 15 first-place votes while Cal (25-1) received five of 20 votes. The top-ranked Alabama softball team completed an undefeated campaign this past week in which the Crimson Tide defeated then-No. 14 Oregon (18-4) 5-1 and swept Mississippi 12-2 (5), 10-7 and 12-1 (5). This week, Alabama continues SEC play as they host No. 11 Tennessee (19-6, 3-3 SEC) at home.

After suffering their first loss of the season at the Chevron Spring Fling to host Hawaii (24-2), Cal dropped to No. 2. The now-No. 17 Rainbow Wahine’s Jessica Iwata, who is on the Top 50 Watch List for the USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year award, hit a two-run walk off home run in the bottom of the 10th inning, marring Cal’s perfect record with a 3-1 loss. The Golden Bears went 4-1 on the weekend, defeating then-No. 21 Texas A&M (20-8) 3-0, then-No. 6 Texas (23-2, 2-0 Big 12) 6-3, Marist 1-0 and Winthrop 7-1.

In their last pre-conference play weekend, No. 3 Washington captured four wins at the Judi Garman Classic in Fullerton, Calif. The Huskies bested UC Davis 14-1 (5), Iowa 4-3, Notre Dame 7-2 and then-No. 25 DePaul 9-1 (5). Washington will face Cal State Bakersfield before beginning Pac-12 play on Friday when they host Utah. The No. 4 Florida Gators collected three SEC wins after sweeping South Carolina 9-1 (5), 1-0 and 7-3. The 19-inning series against the Gamecocks marks the 11th game this season in which the Gators collected at least 10 hits.

Despite losing to the then-No. 1 team, Texas moved up one spot to No. 5 following a 4-1 performance in Hawaii. The Longhorns switched places with No. 6 Arizona State (28-3) after then-No. 11 Louisiana-Lafayette dealt a 9-2 loss to the Sun Devils. The Oklahoma Sooners (24-3) hold down the No. 7 slot, while No. 8 Louisiana-Lafayette (26-0, 3-0 Sun Belt) cracked the Top 10 for the first time this season. The Ragin’ Cajuns went 3-0 at the Judi Garman classic, upsetting Arizona State 9-2, beating Penn State 5-1 and topping Fresno State 9-1 before inclement weather forced a cancellation of the remaining matches. Rounding out the Top 10 are No. 9 Stanford (25-3) and No. 10 Missouri (20-3, 3-0 Big 12).
In addition to awarding the prestigious USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year award, the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America also selects a USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Week each week during the NCAA Division I Softball season.

**Week 1 (Feb. 9-12)**

**VALERIE ARIOTO**  
*California | Redshirt senior utility*

After breaking her leg on the second day of practice in January 2011, what was meant to be her senior season, Valerie Arioto (Pleasanton, Calif.) returned to the field with a vengeance for the Golden Bears in Week 1 of the 2012 season. Not only did Arioto hit a home run in her very first at-bat of the year but she went on to hit three homers, drive in a team-high nine RBI, slug 1.444, hit .444 (4-for-9) and put up a 0.00 ERA in seven innings of work at the Kajikawa Classic in Tempe, Ariz. She was also walked five times.

**Week 2 (Feb. 13-19)**

**CHRISTI ORGERON**  
*Louisiana-Lafayette | Senior utility*

Christi Orgeron (New Orleans, La.) was named Co-Most Valuable Player of the Mardi Gras Invitational after finishing the weekend with a .615 (8-for-13) batting average, which included four home runs—two of which were grand slams, and a triple. Orgeron’s 15 RBI were more than any other team combined in the tournament. In total, she had 22 total bases, a 1.692 slugging percentage and an on-base percentage of .625 in Week 2.

**Week 3 (Feb. 20-26)**

**TEAGAN GERHART**  
*Stanford | Junior pitcher*

Teagan Gerhart (Norco, Calif.) pitched the Cardinal to a 5-0 record at the Cathedral City Classic in Palm Springs, Calif. She finished the weekend with 30 strikeouts, allowing only one run (earned) in 31.2 innings of work. She issued just four walks and 12 hits, with only one hit being for extra bases, to hold Stanford’s five opponents to a .109 batting average.

**Week 4 (Feb. 27-March 4)**

**JESSICA COOLEY**  
*Mississippi State | Junior outfielder*

Jessica Cooley (Birmingham, Ala.) had one of the best single week performances by any player in Mississippi State history, going 10-for-19 (.526) with 17 RBI, including two games with five RBI each, and eight runs scored over the team’s six victories in Week 4. Cooley finished the stint at the Bulldog Classic with a .571 on base percentage and a 1.316 slugging percentage.

**Week 5 (March 5-11)**

**SARA NEVINS**  
*South Florida | Sophomore pitcher*

Sara Nevins, the South Florida sophomore southpaw, followed her no-hitter against Central Connecticut, the first no-hitter for the Bulls since 2004, with a perfect game against Toledo. Nevins (Pinellas Park, Fla.) appeared in all six games played by the Bulls in Week 5, going 3-0 with two saves. In her 27.1 innings of work, she allowed no runs, just seven hits and two walks while striking out 37 batters. She finished the week with a 0.00 ERA and her opponents were held to a .078 batting average.

**Week 6 (March 12-18)**

**KAITLIN INGLESBY**  
*Washington | Sophomore pitcher*

Kaitlin Inglesby (Portland, Ore.) led Washington to a perfect 4-0 record at the Judi Garman Classic in Fullerton, Calif. At the plate, Inglesby hit .692 with four runs, nine hits, three doubles, one home run and nine RBI. She finished the weekend with a 1.154 slugging percentage, a .692 on-base percentage and no strikeouts. In the circle, she went 2-0 on the weekend with a save in 10.1 innings of work.
In addition to having the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America Hall of Fame Stadium, the ASA Hall of Fame Complex in Oklahoma City is also home to the National Softball Hall of Fame and Museum, which preserves the history of softball in the United States.

With the National Softball Hall of Fame and Museum temporarily closed until the start of the 2012 NCAA Women’s College World Series, take a look at some of the artifacts and photos housed in the archives.

Hall of Fame member Margie Law rode a fake “horse” on the PBSW Ramblers parade float.

Before Jennie Finch won an Olympic Gold Medal and Silver Medal with USA Softball, she played Junior Olympic (JO) softball for SoCal ASA.

Hall of Fame member Alberta Kohls Sims and Dot Bailey pose with tournament trophies in 1962.

In 1970, U.S. President Richard Nixon sent the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America a telegram congratulating the organization on groundbreaking for the National Softball Hall of Fame and Museum.

During the construction of the ASA Hall of Fame Stadium in 1987, a time capsule was buried just steps from where the opening gates now stand.
Increase Your Field’s Performance

Arizona State University
2008 National Champions
Farrington Stadium, Tempe, AZ

Advancing the Evolution of Soil
26 Years  Over 100,000 Projects  36 Countries  www.StabilizerSolutions.com  800.336.2468
©2010 Stabilizer Solutions, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
Members of the USA Softball Junior Women’s National Team celebrate their 4-1 win over Japan at the 2011 International Softball Federation (ISF) Junior Women’s World Championship in Cape Town, South Africa, just seconds after pitcher Lauren Haeger (Phoenix, Ariz.) struck out the final two batters. While Haeger steadied the defense, Cheyanne Tarango (Anaheim Hills, Calif.) provided the offense with a grand slam.
Hilton HHonors™ Snapshot
3600 hotels. 10 distinct brands. 81 countries. 1 world-class program

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

In addition to redeeming HHonors points for complimentary nights, Hilton HHonors members can also redeem points for merchandise, vacation packages, unique experience rewards and more. Membership in HHonors is free. Travelers may enroll online by visiting JoinHHonors.com.

INSTANT PRIVILEGES
Make your check-in experience as fast and smooth as possible by telling us your payment and room preferences in your online HHonors profile.

UNPARALLELED CHOICE
Earn free nights quickly and easily just for staying at one of our 3,600 hotels worldwide across ten industry-leading brands like Hampton, Waldorf Astoria and of course, Hilton.

EARN REWARDS FAST
HHonors offers more ways to become an elite member, through nights, stays or points. Reach Silver status in just 4 stays to get privileges like a 15% point bonus & free health-club access.

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

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

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

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

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

† Hilton HHonors points required for a free reward night range between 3,500 points for a Category 1 hotel and up to 80,000 points for Waldorf Astoria Hotel & Resorts
* Must be requested and is subject to availability  ** Please see program Terms and Conditions at HHonors.com for more details † Not applicable to extraordinary demand dates as determined by the hotel
Being a family member of Team USA has its benefits. 
Take advantage of partnership travel discounts.

United has flown Team USA for over 30 years, and we strive to be the airline of choice for Olympic family members as well. That’s why we offer discounted fares for USOC/NGB associated events. Visit united.com/USOC to book your flight, or to learn more.