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SEPTEMBER 2016

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2. Contact RPS Bollinger Sports—ASA Department, Ph: 800-446-5311 • ASA@RPSins.com
3. Visit the RPSBollinger.com website and click Amateur Softball Association
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Hello everyone!

What an exciting time to be a softball athlete, coach, umpire and fan! What better way to cap off another great season of softball than with the International Olympic Committee’s (IOC) vote of approval for softball/baseball to return to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Program? This announcement is a dream come true for so many athletes across the world who dream of one day representing their country and the sport of softball on the Olympic stage. It was a long road, and there are several organizations and individuals who have worked to get our great sport back where it belongs. To the IOC, USA Softball thanks you and we will continue to work diligently to promote our sport on the world stage.

It was another busy season of softball for many athletes, coaches and umpires across the U.S. Our Junior Olympic division was completed and featured high-caliber softball across all divisions and classifications of play while our Adult Championship season has just begun! Congratulations to all the teams and umpires who earned the right to compete for an ASA/USA Softball National Championship! We hope you all enjoyed your experiences and that the memories you created will last you a lifetime.

Our USA Softball National Team Program was also busy this summer as we had five teams to represent the United States at their respective international events. For our USA Softball Women’s National Team Program, our Women’s National Team reclaimed their No. 1 status in the world after defeating Japan 7-3 in the Gold Medal Game of the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Women’s World Championship in Surrey, B.C., Canada. It was an honor to watch this team and their Championship run and see all of their hard work and dedication come to fruition. We also fielded a Women’s Elite Team, which competed alongside the Women’s National Team at the World Cup of Softball XI in Oklahoma City. The Elite Team
had a great performance at the World Cup, showing that the future of USA Softball is very bright. For the Men’s National Team Program, our Slow Pitch National Team and Future’s National Team took part in Border Battle VIII and the Slow Pitch Showdown, which returned to the ASA Hall of Fame Complex for the first time since 2013. Congratulations to both teams, who represented our great organization so well while our Slow Pitch National Team kept the Border Battle title after defeating Canada 27-8 (five innings). Our Junior Men’s National Team also took to the field this summer, competing at the WBSC Junior Men’s World Championship in Midland, Mich. The Junior Men finished the tournament with a 4-3 record while finishing fifth in the World Championship, and while the team did not earn a medal they had a very strong showing. This group of young men showed a promising future for our Junior and Men’s National Teams.

As the 2016 ASA/USA Softball Championship Season comes to a close at the end of this month, our focus now shifts towards the Annual Meeting, which will be held from November 12-19 in Shreveport, La. Council members, please visit our national website at www.asausasoftball.com or contact the National Office for important Council Meeting information. I look forward to seeing each of you at this Annual Council Meeting.

As we begin to prepare for the 2017 season, we also look to our official rebrand and rename to USA Softball. The best is yet to come and the 2017 season will be one for the books as there will be plenty of excitement and positive changes for us as we continue to foster the love of the game for people of all ages and all levels of play.

Warren Jones, President
ASA/USA Softball
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THE LEAD OFF: WELCOME BACK SOFTBALL

August 3, 2016 is a day that millions of softball athletes across the globe will remember as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) voted unanimously to approve the addition of five new sports to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games! Read more about this historic announcement on page 25.
The Lead Off: We Are the Champions

Over 1,200 teams embarked on a journey to claim a 2016 ASA/USA Softball National Championship. After earning their right to compete for the title, over 40 ASA/USA Softball Junior Olympic (JO) National Champions were crowned across the U.S. Read more about the 2016 JO Championship Season on page 29.
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JUST DO IT.
Every year, the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America has 924,000 Junior Olympic (JO) athletes playing on more than 77,000 teams while over 1 million adults play on 88,000 teams across the United States. Meet Brandie and Megan, two athletes who play ASA/USA Softball!

BRANDIE, 17
Superior, Wisc. • Twin Ports Rampage • Girls’ 16-Under Fast Pitch • Pitcher

HER START
I signed up when I was seven years old because all of my friends were playing and then suggested my dad coach and he signed up as well.

TOUGhest OBSTACLE
The toughest obstacle I’ve overcome in softball would definitely be the mental part of the game. As a pitcher, mentality is everything and keeping my composure on the mound has been one of the most difficult tasks but maturity has helped me a lot with that.

BEST EXPERIENCE PLAYING
The best experience I’ve had in softball so far is the recruiting process. I learned a lot about myself and where I really want to be in life.

GOAL
My goal is to improve myself and my pitching in the off season and compete all four years at the collegiate level.

ROLE MODELS
My role models in the game are my dad, who has coached me since I started playing and gave up so many things to get me where I am today. Also my pitching coach Don, he has taught me both the mental and physical aspects of pitching. Don has also taught me a lot about attitude and effort. Lastly, my family friend Dale. He’s helped me through the recruiting process as he was once a coach for many years. He’s been my go- to with everything off the field.

WHAT SHE LOVES ABOUT SOFTBALL
When I step on the field, every distraction, problem, and worry goes away for me and I feel like I’m in another world.
MEGAN, 16
South Bend, Ind.
Indiana Magic Gold – 16U
Girls’ 16-Under Fast Pitch
First Base, Third Base, Outfield and Catcher

HER START
I have been playing softball in my backyard with my mom, dad, and older sister Kelly ever since I can remember. I think I was born with a bat in my hand and a glove on the other!

FAVORITE THING ABOUT SOFTBALL
Whenever I'm having a bad day, I can always rely on the game of softball and my teammates to cheer me up!

ROLE MODELS
My role models in the game include Sierra Romero, Lauren Chamberlain, and most importantly, my sister Kelly. By watching her play for the University of Wisconsin, I have seen how passionate she is about the game, and that is something I strive to model.

ROLE MODELS
My goal is to continue my academic and athletic career by playing softball at the Division I level like my big sister Kelly!

TOUGHEST OBSTACLE
The toughest obstacle I have had to overcome was when I broke my nose after getting hit in the face with a line drive. I had to have it re-broken back into place and surgery to fix its alignment. I was back playing softball at a combine in Chicago, Ill. only three days after the surgery! There was no way anyone was going to keep me away from playing the game I love for any longer! I still have to have another surgery to fix the deviated septum so I can breathe better, but I'll worry about that when it isn't softball season!
Our athletes work hard for all that they’ve earned. And so do you. That’s why we insure every medal you’ve earned in life.
2016 OFFICIAL RULES OF SOFTBALL APP

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USA SOFTBALL TO HOLD SLOW PITCH INVITATIONAL IN MYRTLE BEACH IN 2017

Slated to be held at Grand Park Athletic Complex, the Slow Pitch NIT will feature four different men’s divisions, while women’s and coed divisions will also be eligible for play. Featuring 52/300 softballs for the event, which will be supplied, the blind draw for the Slow Pitch NIT will be streamed live on January 8 for teams and fans. An opening ceremony will also kick off the event on January 13 at 6 p.m. ET. Teams also have the opportunity to participate in a golf tournament on January 12 prior to the start of the tournament. Read more about this unique event on page 57.

USA SOFTBALL TEAMS UP WITH THORNE RESEARCH

USA Softball recently announced a partnership with Thorne Research as the exclusive nutritional supplement partner of USA Softball. Providing members of the USA Softball National Teams with safe and effective nutritional supplements to support their health, Thorne also offers discounted products to ASA/USA Softball members.

NATIONAL COACHING SCHOOL SITES ANNOUNCED FOR 2016-17 SEASON

Receive instructions and classes from current and former USA Softball Women’s National Team coaches and athletes. Attend a USA Softball National Coaching School near you.
CHECK OUT THE NEW USA SOFTBALL ONLINE STORE

A redesign of the previous online shop, SoftballOutlet.com, the newly designed user and mobile friendly gift shop is the softball fan’s one-stop shop for official USA Softball apparel, souvenirs and more. With a multitude of items to choose from, USASoftballStore.com gives fans a one-stop shop to order their favorite softball gear, whether through their computer, smartphone or tablet 24 hours a day, seven days a week!

USA SOFTBALL NATIONAL TEAMS TAKE ON THE WORLD

Two USA Softball National Teams took to the fields last July to compete for their respective WBSC World Championships. While the Junior Men’s National Team finished fifth at the WBSC Junior Men’s World Championship in Midland, Mich., the Women’s National Team reclaimed the gold at the WBSC Women’s World Championship after defeating two-time defending champions Japan. Learn more about these two teams run at the WBSC World Championships on pages 47-48.
NEW

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Introducing the NIGHTHAWK & SILHOUETTE Fastpitch Bats

Nighthawk 2-PIECE LINK CONSTRUCTION
significantly reduces vibrations to hands

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Sweet Spot Along Whole Barrel
SOCIAL MEDIA - LET’S HEAR FROM YOU

If there’s one thing we love at ASA/USA Softball, it’s interacting with softball fans from around the world! Are you following along on social media? Share your photos and be sure to tag @USASoftball with the hashtag #USASoftball for a chance to be featured in an upcoming issue of Balls & Strikes Magazine!

Wishing you the best of luck in Surrey. I am ditching summer school to come and see you guys! Wish I could be there for the whole tournament but I can only be there for the weekend…

— ryan.stanford17

On winning the 2016 WBSC Women’s World Championship: Congratulations to the USA Softball program!!!!

— @bsidel

On Team USA’s culture of success: It was an honor to watch this awesome team win the 2016 World Championship!!

— Cindy Yount

We end the season with a 78-11 record and tie for 21st @USASoftball nationals. Thank you to the players, parents and seniors. #SilverHawkSwag

— @SilverHawks18U

Congrats to all who participated in the 14u @USASoftball Nat’s this week! Great to watch awesome competition in our backyard!

— @USFCougars_FB

Congrats to the 14A ASA/USA National Champions! Ohio Lady Lasers Green! #14uNationals #SFSD @USASoftball

— @SFFastpitch

Fall season is underway! #usasoftball #elcajon

— @eastcountyyasa

Be sure to “Like” our pages or tweet at us for a chance to see your posts in the next issue!
ASA/USA SOFTBALL NATIONAL CHAMPS!

2016 JO NATIONAL CHAMPIONS ARE CROWNED

GIRLS’ CLASS A 10-UNDER NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP
Stockton, California – September 1-6
Championship: Universal Fastpitch – 10, CA Breeze – 0
Click here for the complete bracket

GIRLS’ CLASS A 12-UNDER NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP
Salem, Virginia – July 31-August 7
Championship: EC Bullet 03 - Heath – 8, Pines Thunder – 1
Click here for the complete bracket

GIRLS’ CLASS A 14-UNDER NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP
Sioux Falls, South Dakota – July 30-August 7
Championship: Lady Lasers Green – 13, Panthers Fastpitch 2019/20 – 3
Click here for the complete bracket
GIRLS’ CLASS A 16-UNDER NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP
College Station, Texas – August 1-7
Championship: Ohio Lasers Purple – 11, Crossfire – 1
Click here for the complete bracket

GIRLS’ 16-UNDER GOLD NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP
Broken Arrow, Oklahoma – July 17-24
Championship: Texas Bombers Gold 16U – 12, Originals - CK – 3
Click here for the complete bracket

GIRLS’ CLASS A 18-UNDER NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP
Bloomington, Indiana – August 1-7
Championship: Carolina Cardinals Chandler – 2, Ohio Laser Blue 18U – 1
Click here for the complete bracket

GIRLS’ 18-UNDER GOLD NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma – July 17-23
Championship: Beverly Bandits - DeMarini – 6, Oklahoma Athletics Gold – 1
Click here for the complete bracket
Take advantage of partner travel discounts.

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After a season of slugging softballs, the top six ASA Long Haul Bombers traveled to Miami, Fla. to compete in the ASA Stadium Power Tour Finals at Marlins Park, home of Major League Baseball’s Miami Marlins, while the top two teams, Team DeMarini and Team Easton battled it out for the Manufacture’s Cup. Following a postgame show filled with back-to-back home runs, it was Kevin Filby with Team Miken who took home the ASA Stadium Power Tour title after an impressive 10-point performance, while Team DeMarini composed of Chris Larsen and Dale Brungardt won the Manufactures Cup.

“I love Marlins Park,” Filby said. “I won it all as a rookie a few years back right here and today, my Miken bat gave me all the power I needed.”
**WHAT IS THE WOUNDED WARRIOR AMPUTEE SOFTBALL TEAM?**

**OUR MISSION**
To inspire and educate others while enhancing the health and welfare of Wounded Warrior Amputees.

**OUR PRIORITIES**
- WWAST Softball inspires and educates everyone who watches our games, including other amputees and anyone who has challenges to overcome. It also enhances the health and welfare of the Wounded Warrior amputees who play on our team.
- Our Kids Camp provides the opportunity to inspire and educate the kids who attend the camp as well as anyone who has the opportunity to attend the event. It also enhances the health and welfare of our Wounded Warrior amputees as it provides them the power of making a difference in the life of a child.
- Our partnership with the Johnny Mac Soldiers Fund assists with the college education of fallen veterans’ children.
- Our support of heterotopic ossification (HO) research fundraising enhances the health of all wounded warrior amputees, as well as other amputees.
- Our donation of rehabilitation equipment to military health facilities enhances the health of all Wounded Warrior amputees, as well as others, who rehab at those locations.
- Our guest speaker appearances provide our Wounded Warrior amputees the opportunity to inspire and educate others.

**OTHER INFO**
The WWAST is not affiliated with other charities having the words “Wounded Warrior” in their name (e.g. Wounded Warrior Project, etc.). Since our inception over 85% of our donations have supported programs helping Wounded Warrior Amputees, amputee children, and medical research. Connect with us on our website (www.thewwast.org) and be sure to “Like” us on Facebook and “Follow” us on Twitter @WWAmpSoftball.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**
- Sept. 30-Oct. 2: Souderton, PA
- October 21-23: Huntsville, AL
- December 1-4: U.S. Virgin Islands
Lance Corporal (Retired) Josh Wege was born in 1989 and is from Campbellsport, Wisconsin. He enlisted in the U.S. Marines in 2008 and had a combat tour to Afghanistan in 2009 serving as a military policeman. Six months into the deployment his light armored vehicle was struck by an I.E.D. rendering him a bilateral below the knee amputee. Lance Corporal (Retired) Wege has been awarded a Purple Heart and the Navy Achievement Medal. He currently resides in Estero, Florida, where he is pursuing his college degree.

Corporal (Retired) Saul Bosquez was born in 1985, and is from Adrian, Michigan. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 2006, deployed to Baghdad in 2007 as a 13F, forward observer. About six months into his first deployment, his vehicle was hit by an I.E.D. The injuries he sustained resulted in his left leg below the knee and right big toe and second toe being amputated. Corporal (Retired) Saul Bosquez has been awarded a Purple Heart, two Army Commendation Medals, and a Combat Action Badge, among other medals and commendations. He currently resides in Brownsville, Wisconsin, where he lives with his wife and recently graduated with his MS in sports management and athletic administration.

Airmen (Retired) Manny Del Rio was born in 1986 and is from Van Nuys, California. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 2004 and supported the Global War on Terrorism as an Aviation Boatswain Mate Handler. While working on the flight deck of the USS Kitty Hawk aircraft carrier, a jet that was being towed rolled over both of his legs rendering him a below the knee amputee. His awards and decorations include the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon. Airman (Retired) Del Rio currently resides in Los Angeles, California, where after graduating Grantham University with a BA in criminal justice, he is now employed by the Department of Justice.
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SOFTBALL IS BACK FOR TOKYO 2020 OLYMPIC GAMES

The hopes and dreams of millions of softball athletes across the globe have been answered as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) voted on August 3 to approve the addition of five new sports to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. The decision, which comes after the IOC met in Rio de Janeiro, was made possible after the groundbreaking Olympic Agenda 2020, which provides flexibility for the future of the Olympic Movement to encourage innovation in the Olympic program.

In addition to softball/baseball, other sports that will be added to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games are karate, skateboard, sports climbing and surfing.

“What a truly great day for the sports of softball and baseball,” said ASA/USA Softball Executive Director Craig Cress. “For softball and baseball to be added to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games program is a dream come true for many athletes across the world. USA Softball is proud to be the National Governing Body for the sport of softball and will continue to work diligently every day to promote our great sport of softball on the world stage.”

Softball and baseball’s global reach, loyal fan-base and positioning across many of the biggest sports markets, including Japan, offers a unique opportunity to further spread and elevate the Olympic brand. The decision further highlights the growing global appeal of the two sports, particularly among young people and women. In Japan, softball/baseball have remained atop the landscape and a central part of the culture for more than 70 years. Other factors considered in the sports package include the impact on gender equality, the youth appeal of the sports and the legacy value of adding them to the Tokyo 2020 Games.

Softball spent four “quads” as an Olympic sport debuting in the 1996 Atlanta Games with the final Olympic softball competitions taking place in Beijing in 2008. Softball and baseball were ousted from the 2012 Olympics following a vote from the IOC in 2005 in which softball, needing a simple majority of votes (53), received just 52. Despite its exclusion from the Olympics for the past eight years, international softball has become increasingly competitive as a record 30 nations competed in last month’s 2016 World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Women’s World Championship in Surrey, B.C., Canada and a record-breaking 12 nations competed at the World Cup of Softball XI in Oklahoma City, Okla. This was also highly showcased during the USA vs Japan All-Star Series in Tokyo and Sendai, Japan, where members of the USA Softball Women’s National Team squared off against Japan in a three-game series. A record-breaking 31,448 fans attended Stage One of the series at the Tokyo Dome, while an additional 3,000 fans attended the final two stages at Shellcom Sendai.

“Thank you to the IOC and the WBSC for this tremendous honor for not only our sport, but our athletes and the millions of young girls who dream of one day being an Olympian. This means so much to not only our USA Softball Women’s National Team program, but to millions of girls across the world. Even if I’m not there, knowing that softball athletes will get to compete on the highest stage against the best competition in the world is amazing.”

Janie Takeda (Placentia, Calif.) USA Softball Women’s National Team
With the recent decision to add baseball and softball to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, we loved reading the immense amount of support on social media! Keep the momentum going and tag us @USASoftball and use the hashtags #USASoftball and #Tokyo2020 to show your love for the game!

---

**TOKYO 2020 OLYMPIC CHATTER**

*Ally Carda @acarda3 - Aug 3*

Don’t be satisfied & never stop working. W/ @USASoftball being back in the Olympics...the journey has just begun 🇺🇸

*Jennie Finch @JennieFinch*

SOFTBALL IS officially BACK in the OLYMPICS!!! #Tokyo2020 @WBSC @MizunoFastpitch @TeamUSA @USASoftball #DreamBelieve

*Sue Enquist @SueEnquist - Aug 3*

Boom!! Grand Slam!! I can't wait!!!

*Laura Berg @lauraberg44 - Aug 3*

Softball is back in. Yeah baby #Tokyo2020 @BeaverSoftball @USASoftball
Literally on the verge of tears cause FINALLY softball is back in the Olympics, and my dreams can become reality #Tokyo2020 #USASoftball
—@SavannahJayy

Awesome news! Getting pumped for 2020 already. #USA #USASoftball #USABaseball
—@GCsports

I’m not sure I have the words to describe how happy I am softball is back in the Olympics. #USASoftball #Tokyo2020
—@mblaney09

My heart is so full it’s back in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics #USASoftball
—@mackenziegiff5

Hearing that softball is back in the Olympics makes me want to cry #USASoftball
—@TorresKatie

Watching these Olympics just gets me even more hype for all the softball that will be played in 2020 :) #Tokyo2020 #USASoftball #TeamUSA
—@jacklyngrizzlie5

It just sunk in that softball will be in the 2020 Olympics?? Literally in tears rn, pinch me am I dreaming?!! #Tokyo2020 #USASoftball
—@caitlinjibrennan

Y’all know I’m super excited for softball to be back in the 2020 Olympics!!! #USASoftball
—@s_howe
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The ladies of Firecracker KY celebrate after clinching the Girls’ 14U Class A Northern National Championship in Mt. Pleasant, Mich.

An athlete on the Minnesota A’s – Vortex receives praise from her coach after reaching base at the Girl’s 18U Class A Northern National Championships in Rochester, Minn.

All smiles for Gainesville Gold Crawford as they claim the Girls’ 16U Class A Southern National Championship in Columbus, Ga.

MEET THE STARS OF THE SUMMER OF SOFTBALL

An athlete on the McDonough C.A.T.S preparing to make contact with the ball at the Girls’ 10U Class B Northern National Championship in Rochester, Minn.

Umpires at the Slow Pitch Coed Class D National Championship in St. Joseph, Mo. pose for a group photo prior to heading out to the fields.

An outfielder from the Kaukauna Ghosts catches a ball at the Girls’ 12U Class A Northern National Championship in Rochester, Minn.

A pitcher from Maccabi USA dishes out a strike during the Fast Pitch Men’s Senior 50-Over National Championship in Prescott, Ariz.
The action kicked off the week of July 17 with the ASA/USA Softball 16U and 18U GOLD National Championships in Oklahoma. Thirty-four teams competed in the 16U GOLD National Championship in Broken Arrow, Okla. as the Texas Bombers Gold captured the title with a 12-3 victory over Originals CK. The Beverly Bandits repeated as 18U GOLD National Champions in Oklahoma City, Okla. after back-to-back wins over the Oklahoma Athletics.

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Proven Results: Our players participate on college teams in the best conferences in the country, including the ACC, Big Ten, Big 12, Pac 12 and SEC. Put our experience to work for you.

The Under Armour Softball Factory National Tryout is coming to a town near you.

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OR 1 855 822 5115 TO FIND AN EVENT NEAR YOU
November is just around the corner as over 300 voting members of the National Council for ASA/USA Softball head to Shreveport, La. for the 85th ASA/USA Softball Annual Meeting. Held from November 12–18, this year’s host will be the Shreveport Hilton Downtown, which sits in the heart of downtown.

**TRADESHOW**
This year’s tradeshow will take place on Wednesday, November 16, and interested vendors should submit a request to Nick Dorety at ndorety@softball.org. The deadline to register is October 1.

**HALL OF FAME INDUCTION CEREMONY**
The 36th Annual National Softball Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony will be held on Saturday, November 12. Inductees include Ken Eriksen (Tampa, Fla. – Meritorious Service), Jennie Finch (La Mirada, Calif. – Fast Pitch Player), Harry Haroian (Melvindale, Mich. – Fast Pitch Player), Peter Meredith (Salt Lake City, Utah – Fast Pitch Player), John Nelson (Dalton, Ga. – Umpire), Tom Penders (Narragansett, R.I. – Fast Pitch Player), Terry Petersen (Omaha, Neb. – Sponsor) and Mick Renneisen (Bloomington, Ind. – Meritorious Service).

**“SWING FOR A CAUSE” GOLF TOURNAMENT**
The “Swing for a Cause” golf tournament is also back this year as the annual event benefits the ASA/USA Special Programs and Special Olympics NIT. Registration is due to Andy Dooley by October 17, 2016. This year’s tournament will take place at the Querbes Park Golf Course on November 12. Click here for more info.

**TASTE OF SHREVEPORT**
Attendees will get a chance to experience Southern hospitality during the Taste of Shreveport welcome party! Slated for Tuesday, November 15 evening, get a taste of traditional Cajun and Creole cuisine, soul food and country cooking!

For additional information (member forms, training session information, etc.) on the Annual Meeting, visit the event page.
USA SOFTBALL MOBILE APP

- All the latest in breaking news, results, announcements and stories
- Watch live-streaming from ASA/USA softball events across the U.S.
- Find photo galleries and athlete profiles for members of USA softball national teams
- Discover the membership benefits of playing ASA/USA softball and learn how to register
- Locate an ASA/USA softball event near you
- Expansive photo galleries
- Links to social media accounts
- Visit our online store, softballoutlet.com
- Donation opportunities
- Free and available for both Android and Apple products

For more information and to download the app, please visit ASAUSAsoftball.com
Over the course of four days, 19 teams battled it out at the 2016 ASA/USA Softball Men’s Major Fast Pitch National Championship with the goal of earning a spot in the championship game. Accomplishing that feat were the A1 Bombers and New York Gremlins, who went head-to-head in the final game at Sunset Park in front of softball fans from around the country. In the end, it was the New York Gremlins who claimed the championship trophy following a 14-1 (five inning) victory after taking an early 9-0 lead in the first two innings.

In addition to the final two contenders, the 2016 ASA/USA Softball Men’s Major Fast Pitch National Championship saw teams from across the country compete, including the Bar Buz, BC A’s, Bloomington Stix, Circle Tap, Dolan & Murphy, Hill United Chiefs, Hitters, J&B Printing, NorthEast Drillers, Optimum Crush, Ostrander, Peligro Gremlins, Pueblo Bandits, Scarborough Force, Stoneyard, Tin Cup and Topeka Toros.

The New York Gremlins ended the tournament with a perfect 5-0 record after outscoring their opponents 46-7, while the A1 Bombers showed resiliency battling back from their early-on loss to the New York Gremlins, 4-1 to force a rematch in the championship game.
WC MONSTA BATTLES THROUGH LOSERS BRACKET TO CLAIM MEN’S B SLOW PITCH CHAMPIONSHIP

Kicking off the Adult Slow Pitch Championship season at the ASA Hall of Fame Complex in Oklahoma City, Okla., the Men’s Class B Slow Pitch National Championship, presented by Dudley, saw 12 teams from all across the country in an exciting weekend. After a tough loss in bracket play, WC Monsta broke through the losers bracket to earn a spot in the title game against All American Restoration/UNRL/MONSTA. WC Monsta won easily 21-4 (five innings) to force an if-necessary game. WC Monsta’s bats remained hot as they won 30-15 in the championship game. Ryan Dacko scored five times in the big win. WC Monsta outscored opponents 153 to 84 while going 6-1 en route to being crowned a national champion.

MVP
David Johnson
WC Monsta

Batting Champion
Brett Rettenmeier
BBS/Monsta

Home Run Champion
Timothy Martinez
WC Monsta

IF Brett Rettenmeier BBS/Monsta
IF Ryan O’Connell All American Restoration
IF Eric O’Connell All American Restoration
IF Andrew Lehman All American Restoration
IF Pilar Amaya WC Monsta
OF David Johnson WC Monsta
OF Ben Smith All American Restoration
OF Jordan Nuss WC Monsta
OF Noah Wethington Swiing Kiingz
UT Clay Smitherman Swiing Kiingz
UT Kyle Decker All American Restoration
UT Ryan Dacko WC Monsta
UT Steven Lopez WC Monsta
UT Timothy Martinez WC Monsta
P Ryan McClanahan WC Monsta
Held at The Softball Capital of the World™, the ASA/USA Softball Men’s C Slow Pitch National Championship welcomed 45 teams from across the country. Following two consecutive wins to open up the tournament, a 20-4 loss to Comatose/THEMshirts would send TNT Softball to the losers bracket. TNT Softball proved they weren’t done playing and battled back to defeat the next five teams they faced to earn a spot in the title game. The two teams would meet again as Comatose/THEMshirts remained undefeated, outscoring their opponents 87-45 through five games. In the championship game, TNT Softball scored 20 runs in the first two innings en route to a 23-13 (five innings) win over Comatose/THEMshirts to force an if-necessary game. TNT Softball stayed hot, outlasting Comatose/THEMshirts to pull off the 18-17 win and be crowned champions.

**MVP**

**John Slootmaker**

*TNT*

**Batting Champion**

**Dale Nissley**

*D&R Miller Concrete*

**Home Run Champion**

**Chance Tiedtke**

*Mr. B’s*

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**ASA MEN’S CLASS C ALL-AMERICANS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>IF</td>
<td>Kenny Donelson</td>
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<td>Bobby Juan</td>
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<td>IF</td>
<td>Tony Raffel</td>
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<td>IF</td>
<td>Adam Guilbault</td>
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<td>IF</td>
<td>Michael Wilson</td>
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<td>OF</td>
<td>John Slootmaker</td>
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<td>OF</td>
<td>Michael Axton</td>
<td>Comatose</td>
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<td>OF</td>
<td>Jerrad Messersmith</td>
<td>Ponytail Express</td>
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<td>OF</td>
<td>Woody Darling</td>
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<td>P</td>
<td>Bobby McMinn</td>
<td>TNT</td>
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Six teams, 12 games and one team emerged as the Champions at the 2016 ASA/USA Softball Men’s D Southern Slow Pitch National Championship at ASA Hall of Fame Complex. Going a perfect 4-0 in their run to the title, DBO (Enid, Okla.) started out the tournament with a 19-11 win over Born 2 Win and would pick up wins over Fidelity/BOB (22-18) and Dominators (12-11) to earn their spot in the gold medal finale. DBO would earn the right to hold up the national championship trophy after defeating Dominators 11-5 in the championship game. Led by tournament MVP Kyle Black, who hit three home runs with 13 RBI and nine runs scored, DBO hit .522 as a team.
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8 ASA Players advanced to the 2016 National Finals in the Softball Division

- **Rylee Kalocay**
  - 7/8 Division
  - Upper St. Clair, PA

- **Kate Verhoef**
  - 9/10 Division
  - Aliso Viejo, CA

- **Mylia Perez**
  - 9/10 Division
  - San Ramon, CA

- **Sophia Gregory**
  - 9/10 Division
  - Alliance, OH

- **Kaiea Higa**
  - 11/12 Division
  - Maple Valley, WA

- **Lauren Mirtoni**
  - 11/12 Division
  - Roseville, CA

- **Abby Larson**
  - 13/14 Division
  - Marlborough, MA

- **Ciara Herbert**
  - 13/14 Division
  - Riverside, IL

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ASA/USA SOFTBALL CONTINUES TO IMPLEMENT PLAY BALL INITIATIVE

After partnering with Major League Baseball (MLB) and joining with USA Baseball this past summer to support the “PLAY BALL” initiative, ASA/USA Softball is proud to be a part of encouraging widespread participation in all forms of softball and baseball activities among all age grounds, especially youth. Following the opening of the inaugural PLAY BALL Park surrounding the All-Star Game (ASG), ASA/USA Softball has continued its efforts in supporting the initiative with plans for future events in Oklahoma City and additional cities nationwide with help from local associations. From community events with local Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA youth clubs and more, PLAY BALL is coming to a field near YOU!

USA Softball Women’s National Team pitcher Jessica Moore joined in on the action at Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark.

For some, it was their first time being introduced to the bat and ball sport and they watched in amazement.

The Boys and Girls Club of Oklahoma City, YMCA and USA Softball met at Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark to play ball and most importantly – HAVE FUN!

After getting the opportunity to play in the outfield of Chickasaw Bricktown Ballpark, each and every kid left with a bat and ball of their own.
Kids of all ages were invited to come out and PLAY BALL with USA Softball and USA Baseball among the various ASG festivities.

Former USA Softball Women’s National Team athlete Natasha Watley visited PLAY BALL Park and shared some batting tips.

Former USA Softball Women’s National Team athlete Destinee Martinez was there to share and inspire others by talking about her playing experience.

Former USA Softball Women’s National Team athlete Natasha Watley visited PLAY BALL Park and shared some batting tips.

Talking one-on-one about batting stance with former USA Softball Women’s National Team athlete Destinee Martinez.
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After earning their right to play in the gold medal game of the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Women’s World Championship, the USA Softball Women’s National Team (WNT) hoisted the championship trophy in the air after defeating the two-time defending champions Japan 7-3. It marked the first time since 2010 that the U.S. has won the WBSC Women’s World Championship and marks the program’s 10th overall title.

Utilizing a four-run first inning, the U.S. offense stepped up big after Michelle Moultrie (Jacksonville, Fla.) connected for a three-run blast and Ali Aguilar (Orangevale, Calif.) picked up an RBI single. Adding to their lead in the fourth inning, Haylie McCleney (Morris, Ala.) also hit a three-run shot to give Team USA a six run lead over Japan.

It was a team effort by Team USA’s pitching staff as Jessica Moore (Sutter, Calif.) earned the win in the circle for the U.S., pitching two and two-third innings with one run, two strikeouts and four hits allowed. Ally Carda (Elk Grove, Calif.), who got the start for the U.S., finished the game with one strikeout, two runs and two hits in her two innings of work. Jaclyn Traina (Naples, Fla.) issued one hit and one run in one inning of relief work while Delanie Gourley (Lakeside, Calif.) closed out the game with one strikeout and one hit in one and a third innings in relief.

“I’m so proud of this team,” said Team USA veteran Valerie Arioto (Pleasanton, Calif.). “It was so exciting getting to that championship game, and everyone contributed in some way. Throughout the week, we all played for each other. This team is a family. We sacrifice for each other and get things done. It was great to get the result we wanted, and all our hard work has paid off.”

With the win, the U.S. claimed its 10th world championship and its first since 2010. As a team, the U.S. finished the 2016 WBSC Women’s World Championship with a .436 team batting average, 19 home runs, 80 RBI and outscored opponents 83-10. The pitching staff was lights out, allowing just eight earned runs for a 1.19 ERA.

The Eagles claim the 2016 WBSC World Championship in style!
Despite taking an early 2-0 lead with an opportunity to medal on the line, the USA Softball Junior Men’s National Team (JMNT) was routed 6-2 by Canada to claim fifth at the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Junior Men’s World Championship.

Team USA opened up the game in the first inning after Derek Martin (Stevens, Pa.) came around to score on a single from Isaac Hormann (Young America, Minn.). Adding another run in the bottom of the second inning after an error by Canada’s defense, the U.S. held an early 2-0 lead. The lead would be cut in half in the top of the third inning before Canada took the lead for good in the top of the fourth.

The USA Softball JMNT ended their season at the WBSC Junior Men’s World Championship in fifth place for the third straight year. As a team, the U.S. finished the JMWC with a .284 team batting average, 55 hits and 27 RBI. The pitching staff issued a total of 57 strikeouts over the course of seven games.
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USA Blue, the best getting better! That’s the theme for the 2017 USA Softball Umpire-in-Chief (UIC) Clinic, which will be held February 2-5 in Oklahoma City, Okla. With over 400 attendees expected, sessions will begin on February 2 and last through the awards banquet on February 5.

Friday’s morning agenda will include a new session for the entire group dealing with importance of training for umpires. There will be a town hall question and answer session hosted by Sandy Searcy (Director of Sports - Softball, National Federation of High School), Donna Vavrinec (NCAA Softball National Coordinator and head of the SUP) and Kevin Ryan (Director of Umpires - ASA/USA Softball). This will be an exciting session with the three leaders of their respective umpire programs talking about the need for umpire training. Everyone will have the ability to ask questions of all panel members. It stands to be a great opportunity for umpires from all over the country to understand why the three organizations feel so strongly about umpire training.

Friday afternoon and Saturday will consist of breakout sessions with topics that will be of great interest to all those in attendance. The sessions will be “Preparing your umpires for success … the entire process”, “Game Management”, “Obstruction and Interference … teaching to understand”, “Blueprint for the future … recruiting and training youth umpires with a purpose”, “The state of umpiring in our game”, and “Philosophies and Clarifications of USA Softball mechanics”. Concluding the Biennial UIC Clinic is the Saturday evening awards banquet.

The 2017 UIC Clinic promises to be a great event packed with a tremendous amount of subject matter, providing the ability to learn and at the same time renew relationships with fellow umpires from around the country.

Register today for the 2017 UIC Clinic!
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USA Softball partners with Thorne Research

USA Softball recently announced its first ever nutritional supplements partnership with Thorne Research. As its exclusive nutritional supplement partner, Thorne Research will provide members of the USA Softball National Teams with safe and effective nutritional supplements to support their health, while offering discounted products to ASA/USA Softball members.

As part of the partnership, Thorne Research will provide USA Softball athletes with products that have the highest level of certification, baseline nutritional level testing through WellnessFX, educational materials, and risk protection. In addition, athletes will have access to reliable health information from Mayo Clinic, which has been compiled for easy access on the Thorne Research website. This content will help athletes evaluate supplement usage and understanding of supplement labels, manufacturing, and regulations, all provided by an objective resource.

Members of the USA Softball Women’s National Team (WNT) have already begun utilizing Thorne’s nutritional supplements, such as amino acid and electrolyte dietary supplements and whey protein isolates. Members of the USA Softball WNT also received one-on-one instruction from Thorne’s Director of Sports Performance, Tom Pazdernik, on utilizing Thorne’s products for maximum efficiency.

Thorne Research is very familiar with the NGB world, having recently inked partnerships with USA Gymnastics, USA Rugby, USA Triathlon, USRowing, USA Pentathlon, USA Fencing, and USA Taekwondo. Spurred by athletes’ desire to use nutritional supplements, coupled with the fear that those supplements might cause them to test positive for banned substances, the U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC) three years ago began a vetting process in search of a product line that it could recommend to competitors. It landed on Thorne, then worked with the company on a program that it could offer to the NGBs. USOC dieticians worked with Thorne to determine which of the company’s more than 400 products would be submitted to the NSF Certified for Sport® program and then be made available to athletes. A product that is NSF Certified for Sport® is guaranteed to be free of all substances that are banned in the United States and internationally. Six such products will be available initially – including an amino acid complex, a fish oil product, and a vitamin D supplement – with the product line expanding to 25 by January.

“We are very excited to have Thorne Research as our partner for our athlete’s wellness program,” said USA Softball Women’s National Team Head Coach Ken Eriksen. “With a high performance program being developed following the announcement of softball’s inclusion in the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, Thorne’s product line gives USA Softball some great options for our nutritional needs.”
Janie Takeda, a two-year member of Team USA, fires the ball in from left field.

Women’s Elite Team member Ali Aguilar in the batter’s box against Japan. The Elite Team would go on to claim fourth at the World Cup of Softball XI.

Women’s National Team member Haylie McCleney dives into third against Puerto Rico.

The Women’s National Team claimed silver at the World Cup of Softball XI after falling 2-1 to Japan.

Team USA’s Amanda Chidester in action during a 10-0 win over Venezuela.

Check out photos from the World Cup of Softball XI and Border Battle VIII in Oklahoma City!
Team USA pitcher Travis Clark tosses the ball to a Canadian batter during Team USA’s win at Border Battle VIII.

Above, Future’s member Brian McBryde throws the ball to first base during the Slow Pitch Showdown.

Team USA’s Bryson Baker makes the out during Border Battle VIII.

Right, Slow Pitch National Team veteran Brett Helmer makes a connection during Border Battle VIII.

Kevin Kennington slaps hands with Slow Pitch National Team Head Coach Steve Shortland after a home run.

Team USA claimed Border Battle VIII with a 27-8 (five inning) win over Canada.

Below, Future’s slugger Ryan Harvey watches the ball sail over the outfield fence during the Slow Pitch Showdown.
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ASA/USA Softball announced the creation of the USA Softball Men’s Slow Pitch Invitational Tournament (NIT) which will take place January 13-15, 2017 in Myrtle Beach, S.C. Slated to be held at Grand Park Athletic Complex, the Slow Pitch NIT will feature four different men’s divisions, while a women’s and coed divisions will also be eligible for play.

“This tournament was created following discussions from the ASA/USA Softball Slow Pitch Task Force Committee,” said ASA/USA Softball President and Ohio ASA/USA Softball Commissioner Warren Jones. “The committee wanted to create an event that could be held in the winter with a nice destination while allowing for rule modifications that would otherwise not be eligible for championship play. Similar to the USA Softball JO Cup, this Slow Pitch NIT will give tournament directors the flexibility to adjust the rules based on feedback from the players and coaches.”

Unique to the Slow Pitch NIT are four open men’s divisions, which teams can choose to register under: Division I will allow for six home runs a game per team, Division II is allowed four home runs, Division III is allowed two home runs while no home runs will be allowed in Division IV. Additional Slow Pitch NIT tournament details include a three-game guarantee, no player classifications and prize packages, including sponsor awards and championship rings.

Featuring 52/300 softballs for the event, which will be supplied, the blind draw for the Slow Pitch NIT will be streamed live on January 8 for teams and fans. An opening ceremony will also kick off the event on January 13 at 6 p.m. ET. Teams also have the opportunity to participate in a golf tournament on January 12 prior to the start of the tournament.

The deadline to enter the Slow Pitch NIT is January 5, 2017, and an entry form can be found online at the tournament website.
We're making it easier for ASA teams in your area to find your tournaments. Launched in 2010, TournamentASA.com is an ASA exclusive, tournament management system designed to promote your ASA tournament, register teams and manage your online bracket from the first pitch to the last out. Coaches and managers can’t get enough of the special features that are included on the site! Tools such as our Power Rankings, opponent overview and tournament history, all based off teams past games, give coaches a better understanding of the competition they are scheduled to face.
Fresh off a gold medal performance at the 2016 World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Women’s World Championship in July, the USA Softball Women’s National Team (WNT) landed in Takasaki City, Japan for the 2016 Japan Cup. Participating in an exhibition game against Team Honda, a Japan Softball League professional team, the U.S. took on Australia, Chinese Taipei and Japan in the three-day tournament.

After posting a 5-2 exhibition win over Team Honda, the U.S. began competition at the 2016 Japan Cup with a 3-1 win over Australia. In their win over the Aussies, the U.S. capitalized on timely hitting by veteran Valerie Arioto (Pleasanton, Calif.) and a strong effort in the circle from Jessica Moore (Sutter, Calif.). Moore got the “W” for the U.S., allowing just three hits, one walk and one run while issuing two strikeouts in five innings of work. Arioto led the offense, going 2-for-3 with one run scored.

Team USA then faced Chinese Taipei and Japan in a doubleheader. Blasting three home runs in a 9-0 (six innings) win over Chinese Taipei, the U.S. then earned a 4-3 win over host country Japan. With the wins, Team USA went undefeated through preliminary rounds at the Japan Cup to earn the No. 1 seed, setting up a rematch with Japan in the gold medal finale. The U.S. was off to a slow start offensively in their win over Chinese Taipei, holding just a 1-0 lead until the fourth inning when the offense started rolling. Ally

Continued on next page
Carda (Elk Grove, Calif.) got the win for the U.S., pitching a gem of a game through five innings of work after issuing nine strikeouts, one walk and no hits. For the offense, Arioto, Delaney Spaulding (Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.) and Janie Takeda (Placentia, Calif.) had 2-for-3 performances at the plate. In the 4-3 win over Japan, a strong performance from the U.S. pitching staff and timely hitting, including a three-run home run by Arioto, helped the U.S. edge out tournament hosts. Jaclyn Traina (Naples, Fla.) earned the win for the U.S., striking out three batters while issuing just four hits and one walk in five innings of work in the circle. Gourley earned the save, collecting one strikeout in her two batters faced. At the plate, Arioto picked up three RBI for the U.S. while Cooper had a 2-for-3 performance.

In the gold medal finale at the Japan Cup, the U.S. offense was halted in a rare 9-1 (five inning) loss to Japan. The U.S. could not overcome a four-run first inning by Japan, as the offense managed just two hits off a strong Japanese pitching staff.

The Japan Cup marked the end of the 2016 season for the WNT, who finished the summer with a 19-4 record while reclaiming the gold at the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Women’s World Championship last July. As a team, the U.S. finished the summer with a .366 batting average while outscoring opponents 161-35. Arioto led the offense for the U.S., amassing a .480 (24-for-50) batting average while picking up eight home runs, 23 RBI and scoring 21 times. For the pitching staff, Delanie Gourley (Lakeside, Calif.) issued 21 strikeouts while finishing the season with a 0.65 ERA through 21 and two-third innings in the circle. Moore led the staff with an 8-2 record and 43 strikeouts in 36 and two-third innings.
ASA/USA SOFTBALL LAUNCHES NEW ONLINE STORE
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Get ready to shop until you drop on the new online store, USASofterballStore.com! A redesign of the previous online shop, SoftballOutlet.com, the newly designed, user and mobile friendly gift shop is the softball fan’s one-stop shop for official USA Softball apparel, souvenirs and more.

“We’re excited to launch the newly designed USASofterballStore.com,” said ASA/USA Softball Managing Director of Communications Codi Warren. “With the excitement surrounding softball’s return to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, it was important for us to offer fans a better shopping experience for official USA Softball merchandise. We’ve made our site mobile friendly, so customers can now have 24-hour access to a variety of softball-related merchandise, all available in the palm of their hands. Along with our gift shop located at the National Office headquarters in Oklahoma City, the new USASofterballStore.com is the perfect place for athletes, coaches and fans to show their support for the Red, White and Blue and display their love for our great game!”

With a multitude of items to choose from, USASofterballStore.com gives fans a one-stop shop to order their favorite softball gear, whether through their computer, smartphone or tablet 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Featuring an updated homepage, USASofterballStore.com offers a variety of options ranging from official USA Softball apparel, officially-licensed NCAA collegiate merchandise, training material and other sports collectibles. The official shop for USA Softball is the only place to get officially-licensed Nike USA Softball apparel, so fans can wear the gear of their favorite USA Softball National Team athletes.

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- A new “Sale” section, where customers can enjoy discounts on apparel, training materials and more!

Show off your #USASofterball pride today by visiting USASofterballStore.com!
An early ASA/USA Softball fast pitch club, the Num Nums, gather for a group picture.

Catcher Wayne Baldwin gets ready to throw the ball during a game.

Members of the Decatur ADM fast pitch team hi-five each other after a great play against Faultless Rubber.

Laura Malesh with the Raybestos Brakettes poses for a photo for the team’s annual media guide.
How well did you pay attention to this edition of Balls and Strikes? Submit your answers to these five questions to promotions@softball.org with the subject “Balls and Strikes Trivia” and you could win a Softball Prize Pack from ASA/USA Softball.

1. Who won the 2016 ASA/USA Softball Girls’ 14-Under National Championship?

2. How many total points did Team DeMarini hit at the ASA Stadium Power Tour Finals?

3. Who won the Men’s Major Fast Pitch National Championship?

4. Name one of the MLB Pitch, Hit and Run finalists for 2016.

5. What are the dates of the 2017 UIC Clinic?
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