



european
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newsletter

ISSUE 005
JANUARY 2014

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See You in Prague



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

DEAR SOFTBALL FRIENDS,

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the European Softball Federation we wish you all a Happy New Year! May all your dreams, expectations and hopes become a reality in 2014 – and may the bridges that are being built bring us closer to our goals.

The past year saw many highlights for our sport. For the first time, baseball and softball went hand in hand during the attempt to return to the Olympic program. We lost -- but we are not losers! The ESF Executive will continue to do all we can to make our dreams come true – and this year will be the very first example of that, when the Women's World Championship are held in Europe for the very first time.

I wish all the Federations, clubs, officials, volunteers and players a very sportive and successful year and hope to meet many of you at the ESF Congress in February in Prague.

*My best regards to you all,
André van Overbeek, ESF President*

All correspondence to: info@europeansoftball.org



FROM THE EDITOR

The ESF Newsletters will be published regularly and will contain a wide range of information about softball in Europe. If you want to publish an article, message or announcement on a softball topic in the Newsletter (on events, rules, equipment or anything else), please send your copy (in Word), preferably accompanied by pictures, to: info@europeansoftball.org.

COLOFON

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EAGLES AND CHOMUTOV WIN CZECH LEAGUE TITLES

by Gabriel Waage

Interesting final series to determine the 2013 champions were played in both the women's and men's leagues in the Czech Republic.

The questions leading up to the finals were: could the Eagles finish a dream season by adding to Champions League and Cup gold, and could Chomutov come back to win its first men's title after three barren years?

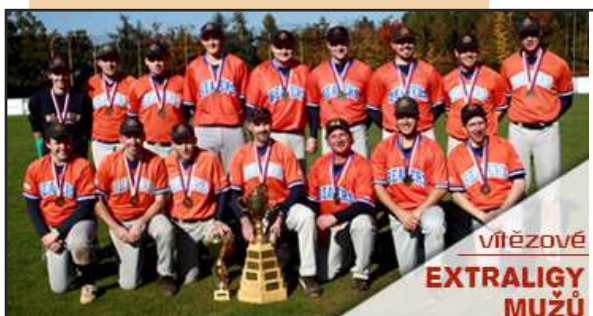


Women's League

The finalists in the Women's Extra League were no surprise, with two Prague teams, Eagles Prague and Joudrs Prague, making it through to the final series. Those clubs have been finalists in eight of the past nine seasons.

The result of the final series was 3-2 to the Eagles, but they had to mount a strong comeback to take the title. Joudrs started extremely well, winning both games on the first weekend by 6-0 and 9-7 to take a 2-0 series lead. The Eagles turned the series around the following weekend with three straight wins (5-3, 5-1 and 6-5) behind the pitching of Martina Lackner, but the deciding game was tight at the end. The Eagles found their confidence at bat and built up a 6-0 lead, but Joudrs scored five runs in the last two innings to put on the pressure.

So the Eagles concluded their dream season – gold medals from the Champions League, the Czech Cup and the Czech Extra League.



Men's League

Semi-finalists in the Men's Extra League were Radotinsky SK, Spectrum Prague, Sportclub 80 Chomutov and Hroši Havlíčkův Brod. Chomutov and Spectrum made it through to the final series, played as the best of five, and it turned out to be very competitive.

Spectrum Prague started well, with a 6-3 win in the opening game.

But the second game went to Chomutov by a score of 2-1 when Vaclav Svoboda hit a home run in the tiebreak. After that, Lubos Vrbensky held down the Spectrum hitters, many of whom are national team players, as Chomutov won the next two games by 4-3 and 4-0.

Bronze Medal Games

The bronze medal series were played as the best of three.

In the women's series, SK Kotlarka took two straight games from Storms Repy by scores of 3-1 and 5-1.

The men's series went to three games, with Radotinsky SK losing the first game to Hroši Havlíčkův Brod by a score of 11-7 before taking the next two games 4-3 and 10-5.



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WORLD BASEBALLSOFTBALL
CONFEDERATION

Lausanne, 17 December 2013

To: WBSC National Federations
Subj: Olympic Games Sports Programme

Dear Presidents, Secretaries General and Colleagues:

Following the WBSC's latest discussions sent to various stakeholders of the 2020 Olympic Games these past days in Lausanne, we consider it our duty to share an update with the National Federations in this regard.

The WBSC has officially communicated, both in writing and verbally, to the International Olympic Committee President that the Baseball-Softball Family remains 100% committed to connecting our sport, our National Federations, our millions of young athletes and fans to the Olympic Games, in order to work toward enhancing and sustaining the value, uniqueness, experience and visibility of the Olympic Games, while accelerating growth opportunities for our sport.

We confirm to all our Members that we have been advised and are confident that a revision of the 2020 program is being taken under serious consideration by the IOC Executive Board. And as has been widely reported in the media, baseball and softball are still being considered to be included in the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo.

The IOC Executive Board will bring 2020 ideas to the IOC Session (Congress) in Sochi, Russia in February for discussion among all the IOC members. An extraordinary IOC Congress has just been confirmed for December 6-7, 2014, where a formal vote to amend the 2020 sports programme would take place.

At the present time, the review of the 2020 program is entirely in the hands of the IOC, as the IOC President hears and evaluates the opinions of his IOC colleagues. While we understand the hope and excitement being inspired by the fresh, creative and practical vision of the new IOC President, it is hereby advised that every declaration/act from the Baseball-Softball Family must first be carefully coordinated through the WBSC.

The Baseball-Softball family has a powerful global network, and we absolutely must prevent any premature actions or statements in the public domain that may become amplified, be counterproductive, misinterpreted or cause any unjustified pressure on the IOC. And we certainly want to respect the decision-making process that the IOC President has envisioned.

Certainly, it is not difficult to understand how our baseball and softball disciplines could significantly enhance the 2020 Games' experience, culture, relevance and profile throughout Japan and beyond, and could help leave a lasting legacy for Tokyo 2020 that would benefit the overall Olympic Movement, WBSC Members and forever change the history of baseball/softball and the Olympic Games themselves. The WBSC communications- and International Relations-strategy will continue to underscore this at opportune times, and the NFs will be instrumental in reinforcing our united message.

We will also continue to highlight the message that under the solidarity of the WBSC, the Baseball-Softball Family is ready and prepared to accept the duties, commitment and responsibilities that would come with our sport being entrusted to be included in the Olympic Games.

In deeply thanking each National Federation for your continued trust, confidence and your service to our sport, we would like to take this opportunity to wish everybody a joyous Holiday Season and a safe and happy entry into a year that has great possibilities for baseball and softball.

Yours Sincerely,

Riccardo Fraccari
Co-President

Don E. Porter
Co-President

Important Notice from the WBSC

Please read the important information received from the WBSC
Co Presidents on:

<http://www.europeansoftball.org/news/important-notice-wbsc>

Russian Junior National Team visited Florida



Just wanted to let you know that the Russian Junior National Team's visit was a huge success here. They had a great time and were treated to some extras, one of our youth organizations invited the whole group to their organizations Christmas Party. One of our team coaches runs a hitting and fitness academy and they worked out there a couple of times, plus received many goodies from our teams. They were truly a pleasure (although at time a little trying) and I really had a good time with them. If you click on the link below Follow us on Facebook you can look at some of the photos taken while they were here in Florida. Plus we had Olympian Michelle Smith come out put she did a clinic with them the past Friday. So it was a huge success. I just wanted to pass along the info and we look forward to a visit from the Swedish Team.



Irena and Tanya enjoy their time with Olympian Michelle Smith who stopped by to welcome the Russian Junior National Team. Irena and Tanya are both left handed pitchers too. Thanks Michelle for making this special.

Carlton Benton - Florida ASA Commissioner



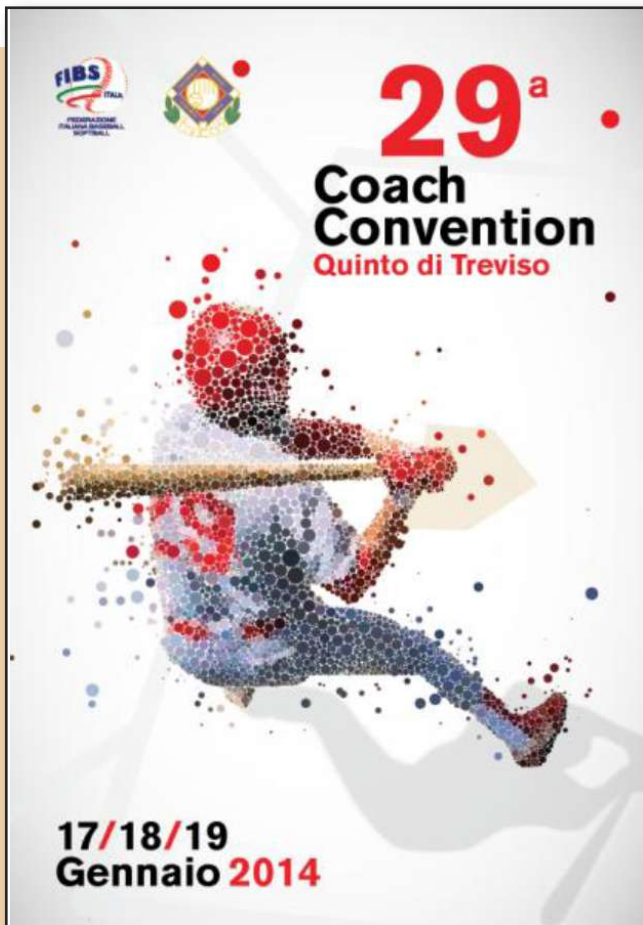
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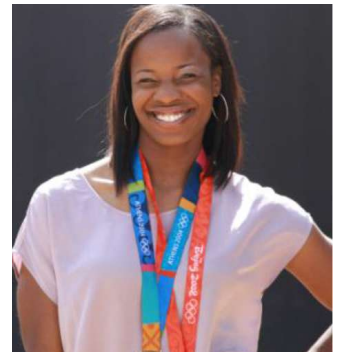
The 2014 Italian Coaches Convention to take place in Treviso, Italy from the 17th to the 19th of January at the BHR Best Western Hotel



The convention is an official event put on by the Italian Baseball and Softball Federation (FIBS) along with the local support of FIBS Veneto. On tap at the Coaches Convention is a highly intensive program that is sure to not disappoint, and will feature a number of seminars dedicated to managers and coaches across the board, along with valuable information on the global direction of the two sports (Baseball and Softball), an important overly increasing topic. The convention will be tailored to coaches who wish to explore and compare their knowledge and experience with some of the most prestigious experts in Italy and abroad: the mix of speakers, foreign guests and top-level coaches, will be put under the lens of different themes, including critical issues such as strategy, group management, promotion, physical education in young athletes, the anti-doping regulations, as well as psychological and motivational techniques

SPECIAL GUESTS

Special guests include: both National Team Coaches (Marco Mazzieri – baseball and Marina Centrone – Softball),Darrell Miller (5 season in Major League and the current director of the MLB Urban Youth Academy in Compton, California), Tim Leiper (12 years in MLB and the current senior advisor of minor league operations for the Toronto Blue Jays), Monica Abbott (member of the USA National Softball Team –gold medal winner), and Natasha Watley (member of the USA National Softball Team - gold and silver medal winner). On the schedule, but not yet announced, will be a couple of big surprises for those in attendance.



BREAKING NEWS

HOW NOT TO USE A BASEBALL CAP



Statue of the First Baseball Player in front of the Presidential Palace in Prague.

Photo: Marco Stoovelaar



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Slowpitch softball to be rolled out in Holland



It started earlier this century but will finally be rolled out fully in 2014.

We're talking about slowpitch softball in the Netherlands, where fastpitch has been the only ball game in town. Now, however, the Dutch Federation Congress has decided to prioritize the development of slowpitch in Holland over the next few years.

After a successful slowpitch pilot year in 2013, with several enjoyable tournaments and a rapidly growing number of interested clubs, 2014 seems the right time to develop slowpitch further with players, coaches, trainers, umpires and others.

In close co-operation with the Development Commission of the European Softball Federation (ESF), the KNBSB will hold a two-day Slowpitch Clinic on 29-30 March 2014 at the grounds of BSC Almere'90 for anyone who wants to further their skills in this great family sport.



The clinic programme will include a short theory section (rules etc) and an extensive practical section consisting of hitting, pitching and fielding, ending with a game against an experienced slowpitch team. There will also be a separate afternoon session for interested umpires, who will officiate the game to be played at the end of the clinic.

The ESF will provide experienced slowpitch trainers and clinic participants will enjoy the hospitality provided by members of Almere'90, who will supply coffee, tea, soft drinks, lunch and a closing snack and drink.

This clinic is an ideal way to get acquainted with the ins and outs of slowpitch softball!



You can also view a promotional video on slowpitch produced for Dutch viewers by clicking on this link:

[https://
www.youtube.com/
watch?v=03qlxZ-
RuE3Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=03qlxZ-RuE3Q).

Photos by
Rob Jelsma



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REMARKABLE SPEECH OF YOUNG BRITISH SOFTBALL GIRL

The young British girl, **Betsy Holden**, tells a remarkable story of the fleeting nature of opportunity. Joining a club at school was the start of an amazing adventure in the world of Fastpitch Softball

In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx is a program of local, self-organ-

ized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience. At a TEDx event, TEDTalks video and live speakers combine to spark deep discussion and connection in a small group. These local, self-organized events are branded TEDx, where x = independently organized TED event. The TED Conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program, but individual TEDx events are self-organized.

The young British girl, Betsy Holden, tells a remarkable story of the fleeting nature of opportunity. Joining a club at school was the start of an amazing adventure in the world of Fastpitch Softball.

TEDx, is an international non-profit organisation dedicated to 'Ideas worth sharing'. Its a huge organisation that hosts live events with talks from people around the world from all types of industry. They post them on their website and any one can access them for inspiration. Gordon Brown and Bill Gates have both done TED talks. There is also a spin-off to this called TEDx, where organisations can apply for the franchise to host their own TED-style events with an identical format to the main organisation. Betsy's school hosts TEDx talks every year, and this year Betsy was a speaker. They have a mix of students and adults and she was the youngest from her school to ever take part and spoke before the Vice President of Google Europe. There were about 200 people in the audience.

Her subject was how she found Softball, and what it means to her. Her talk is called '**Searching for my Sport**'. In a way, her entire talk is a huge love letter to softball and the coaches who have inspired her so much. Though not everyone does TED talks, we are sure that most of the girls feel this way.



Betsy Holden

You can see and hear the 9 minutes speech of Betsy on Youtube here:

<http://youtu.be/1GLSuXujZaw>



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