



EUROPEAN
SOFTBALL
FEDERATION

NEWSFLASH

May 2011



UMPIRES CORNER

Dear Sportfriends,

Over the past few weeks the ISF has asked federations to nominate umpires for the 2011 IX Junior Women's World Championship (19 and under) to be held December 6th – December 17th, 2011 in Cape Town, South Africa.

In total more than 36 umpires are nominated. So it can be written that federations all over the world are

working on developing their umpires for the highest level possible.

In Europe 7 federations nominated in total 10 umpires. That is a record compared to previous years. Chapeau.

Last year in Venezuela at the Women's World Championship Europe was represented by 5 umpires. And they delivered an excellent job!

It will be my goal to have again a good European umpire group at the 2011 IX Junior Women's World Championship.

Vriendelijke Groeten
Marlies Struyvé, ESF Director of Umpires

PLAY SLOWPITCH IN PRAGUE FOR A GOOD CAUSE

by Bob Fromer

Slowpitch teams from all over Europe are invited to play in the 26th Heavy Hitters Charity Softball Tournament in Prague on June 11-12 to help raise money for educational projects supported by the Prague Post Endowment Fund.

The tournament will take place at Prague's best venue, the Krc Baseball and Softball Centre, where numerous European Championships and Cups have been played, and will be divided into competitive and recreational sections.

„Co-ed“ in this case means that teams are required to have a minimum of two women players on the field -- but can have more if they wish.

Money for charities

The main purpose of this year's tournament is to raise money to support a hospital school at Thomayer University Hospital in Prague, so that children can have the opportunity to attend lessons while they are hospitalised and to take part in extra-curricular activities such as art and music lessons, quizzes, games etc.

Another part of the money raised will go towards a prize for the Fund's annual „Best Teacher of English“ award, and some will go to the Czech non-profit organisation BoNGO, which supports local schools and educates teachers in Malawi.

The Heavy Hitters Charity Tournament is the Prague Post Endowment Fund's main fundraising event and has become a Prague tradition. The tournament is usually attended by 200-300 people.

Participating teams can select different levels of entry fee depending on the contribution they want to make to the Fund's good causes, and team will receive T-shirts for team players and invitations to the Players' Party and Awards Ceremony at the field in the end of the tournament.

Sponsoring businesses help cover the costs of hosting the event and

More information

For more information about the tournament and entry fees, or to register your team, contact Simona Mullerova on education@praguepost.com or phone (+420) 296 334 464.



NEW ONLINE PROMOTION STRATEGY FOR THE DANISH SOFTBALL FEDERATION

The Danish Softball Federation has recently launched a new online promotion strategy.

The strategy seeks to promote the sport of fastpitch softball in Denmark through social media and web tv productions.

Softball has about 1000 players in Denmark, making the potential very big. Both the men and the U19 junior boys are defending European Champions, however, exposure and branding of the teams and players have been on a minimum up until now.

At the beginning of the year, the Danish Softball Federation was one of five federations who won an award given out by the National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of Denmark.

The prize was financial support to carry out a web tv project. The Danish Softball Federation's project is called 'Fastpitch Softball Stars'.

The project's goal is to showcase the stars of Danish softball, in



particular the U19 junior boys who will be defending their European Championship title in the summer of 2011.

The 'Fastpitch Softball Stars' web tv productions will follow the U19 junior boys in their preparations for the Championship and during the tournament week in the Czech Republic.

By going behind the scenes and giving personal views and unique insights into the world of the U19 junior boys' national team, we hope to elevate the players to star status and thereby strengthening the image of the sport.

A separate social media strategy has been developed and a facebook fan page has been set up. The web tv productions will be launched via facebook during May, June, July and August 2011.

As a part of the project, the federation has bought two video cameras for the clubs to borrow. Web tv courses will be offered and the goal is that all Danish softball clubs have made at least one web tv production by 2012.

An interactive website gathers all social media in a new web design which enables players to submit player profiles, game results and statistics. With all these actions, The Danish Softball Federation hopes to increase the knowledge and the brand of fastpitch softball in Denmark.

The project is led by development consultant Trine Lindberg and carried out by a team of volunteers.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/Dansk-Softball-Forbund/
Website: www.softball.dk

Christina Laub Frank
Chairman of the Media Commission
Danish Softball Federation

THIRD NOVI ZAGREB LADY PIRATES OPEN DAY GREAT SUCCESS

On a beautiful sunny day of May 7th 2011, Croatian softball team Novi Zagreb Lady Pirates held its third annual fundraising event called 'Softball team Novi Zagreb Lady Pirates Open Day'.

The event was held right next to Zagreb's wellknown lake Budek and many visitors of the event seized the opportunity to try and hit softballs and catch them with softball gloves, while the more brave ones among them played a softball game for the first time in their lives.

The most exciting part of the day were the two games organized for local kids in which over 40 kids shared the thrill of being part of the great game of softball.

The enthusiasm of the little ones passed onto their parents which gladly played in a game for adult beginners (many of them holding a softball bat in their hands for the first time ever).

Besides the games played, there was plenty of additional activities held on and off field, such as home run derby, bingo, hitting against a pitching machine, all accompanied by a delicious barbecue.

The funds raised during this event will be used to promote further

team activities on promoting and developing softball on a local level.

The event was covered by the Croatian Olympic Committee television channel called the Sports Television, the Croatian Radio Television's Radio Sljeme as well as many other national and local newspapers and media such as Vecernji list and Tportal.

We would like to use this opportunity to thank all those who helped organising this event, those participating, and last, but not the least, the friendly companies supporting us – aeroclub Ecos, Museum of Contemporary Art, Agrokor vines, Perinic systems, Accountancy and Finance Magazine, Jamnica, Dobra vina, Il Secondo restaurant, Don Don, Ala-via pizzeria, Croatian Automobile Club, Orbico, Stil bakery, Iskon, Baracuda restaurant, Stil tailorshop, Aqua Natura, Maybelline, Foto studio A1 and many other.

Bruna Devald,
President Novi Zagreb Lady Pirates Softball

www.lady-pirates.hr
www.facebook.com/ladypirates.hr

COMBAT SLOWPITCH COACHES ARE A HIT IN IRELAND AND ENGLAND

by Bob Fromer

Three high-level slowpitch player/coaches from the United States -- Don Cooper, Johnny McCraw and Christan Dowling -- were in Ireland from May 6-8 and then in England from May 9-16 to give a series of clinics to players and coaches.

The coaches were sponsored by the Seattle-based equipment manufacturer Combat Sports, and the tour, which was part of a development agreement between the European Softball Federation (ESF) and the American Amateur Softball Association (ASA), was supported by Combat, the ESF, the ASA, the British Softball Federation and the UK development agency BaseballSoftballUK.

In Ireland on the weekend of May 7-8, the Combat coaches worked with Irish National Slowpitch Team players and coaches.

In England, the coaches gave weeknight clinics at slowpitch leagues around the country, worked with beginning players in a school in Coventry and with GB Under-19 fastpitch players, and then gave a series of mini-clinics to teams at a major co-ed slowpitch tournament near London on the weekend of May 14-15.

Weeknight league clinics

The tour kicked off in England with a clinic for the Manchester Softball League on Monday evening, May 9.

The Combat coaches then worked with East Midlands Softball League players on Tuesday evening in Nottingham (despite a heavy rainstorm) and visited a secondary school in Coventry on the afternoon of Wednesday, May 11 to work with youngsters just



starting to play the sport.

That evening, the coaches had a session young GB fastpitch players in London and on Thursday, May 12, ran a clinic for players from the Greater London Softball Mixed League, London's largest open league.

The midweek part of the tour concluded with a clinic for the Windsor & Maidenhead Softball League on Friday evening.

Then, on the weekend of May 14-15, the Combat coaches were at the 50-team Diamond Co-ed Slowpitch Tournament at Farnham



Park, near Slough, to give sessions to teams who signed up during game breaks.

Feedback from the North

Players who turned out in Manchester on the evening of May 9 and in Nottingham on May 10 had a great time and clearly found the sessions useful.

Peter Jones from the Manchester Softball League Committee said: „Around 75 Manchester softballers enjoyed the intensive training session delivered by the three American coaches. Numbers were much higher than expected, despite a thunderstorm and heavy rain earlier in the day, which meant that not everyone could get quite as much attention as had been hoped. But many players picked up tips just listening to the coaches instructing other players. The sessions focused on batting, though there were also throwing and catching sessions, and special sessions for female infielders.“

Bob Fromer, who organised the tour on behalf of the British Softball Federation, said: „We've all learned to play slowpitch softball in the UK without a whole lot of coaching, and players here can often be effective because of their athleticism, but technique is sometimes lacking. That's what these coaches can teach, and a lot of eyes have been opened, because that's really what is lacking in our softball culture on this side of the Atlantic.“

Ellen Fenton, Beth Arrowsmith and Jackie Choudhury from the Manchester league team Outlaws II certainly appreciated the sessions: „It's really really brilliant, we're loving it. It's given us loads of inspiration. Really useful. They're very clear and friendly. When are they coming back?“

The women were especially impressed by the coaches' thoroughness. „I don't know how much time we're going to get,“ said Ellen Fenton, „but I would love just a whole session on batting. If everyone in a team got that opportunity they would just learn so much.“

Combat slowpitch coaches are a hit in Ireland and England, part II

Harvey Pryor from the East Midlands Softball League Committee said, „We’ve had some tremendous feedback from the session about all the little tips that were passed on, especially with regards to Johnny’s batting training. People really felt that the coaching had an immediate impact on their performance.

„The women who attended Christan’s women’s training session also gave glowing reports and examples of improvements they’d



been able to make, and judging by the autograph-hunting and photos that were being taken in the pub afterwards they were clearly very impressed with her methods.“

Feedback from London and Windsor

On Wednesday evening, the Combat coaches worked on infield drills and hitting with players from the GB Women and Under-19 Fastpitch Teams at Old Deer Park in London.

GB Fastpitch Performance Director Hayley Scott said, „Thanks to the Combat staff, the GB Under-19s had a fun training in Richmond. They were put through some skills and drills that were fun, extremely positive and taught the players that they need more ‚swagger‘.“



After another well-received clinic with players from the Greater London Softball Mixed League at Finsbury Park on Thursday evening, the Combat coaches delivered their final weeknight session for the Windsor and Maidenhead League at Farnham Park on Friday evening, with Christan Dowling doing some extra work on batting and fielding with a small group of A-grade women players.

GB Development Squad player Stewart Butcher said, „I’ve been playing softball for 15 years, and in three minutes they fixed the issue with my swing!“

Diamond I

Over the weekend of May 14-15, the Combat coaches delivered a series of mini-sessions, mainly on hitting, to teams and individual players who were on game breaks at Diamond I, the first major co-ed slowpitch tournament in the UK this season.

Every single hour on Saturday and on Sunday morning (before the playoff rounds began) was booked by teams who had obviously heard on the grapevine that the clinics were worth attending.

Two teams even got up early for clinic sessions at 9.00 when they weren’t scheduled to play until 10.00, which showed real enthusiasm!

Bob Fromer said, „Reactions from players who attended the sessions were almost universally enthusiastic. Even in one short session, people felt that they had been given some coaching with real substance, especially with regard to fault correction on hitting, and they were keen to have more.

„Although it’s hard to say that suggestions made by the Combat coaches in a brief session will be lasting, their real achievement, I think, is to have awakened a desire for quality coaching that has always been dormant in the British slowpitch community. Suddenly, people understood what has largely been missing from our softball!“

„Now we have to find a way,“ Bob added, „to make this kind of coaching a permanent part of our softball culture in the UK and extend it to other countries in Europe.“

CZECH REPUBLIC TO HOST ISF MEN'S WORLD CUP

by CSA

It should be the most important softball tournament in the Czech Republic this season: the 2nd ISF Men's World Cup, to be played from June 13-18 in Prague and Havlickuv Brod.

The first Men's World Cup, also hosted in the Czech Republic in 2007, was a big success and this year's event should be even better.

Where can I see it? The majority of matches will be played at the Eagles Praha fields in Krc at Green Roller Park. Five matches will be played at Joudrs Svoboda Park in Bohnice and two games will take place at the Hippos Stadium in Havlickuv Brod. Entrance is free for all games at all fields.

Who will play in the World Cup? The teams will come from all over the World. Non-European teams will be Japan and Indonesia. The teams from Europe will be Denmark and two Czech teams, the National Team and the Prague Stars.

These five teams will compete in a double round-robin and four of them will go forward to the playoff round. All the national teams in the tournament played in the last Men's World Championship in Saskatoon in 2009. Japan won the first edition of the Men's World Cup in Prague in 2007 and will be defending their title.

Who are these teams? The Czech Republic and Denmark are the top-ranked men's fastpitch teams in Europe. The Czech team has won numerous European Championships, but Denmark won the last Championship in 2010 and the Czechs will be out for revenge.

The last time these teams met was in May this year at the DK-Czech Fastpitch Challenge in Denmark, where the Czech team took the series by four games to one. But both teams will face a strong challenge from Japan, the team that won the first World Cup in 2007 and came sixth in the last World Championship in 2009. And Indonesia may cause a few surprises with a young and improving team.

What are the goals of the teams? The Japanese coach has said: „We will excite the whole audience by doing our best! The team will be trying to overcome the tragedy of the East Japan earthquake and we will compete all out in this Cup. We would like to express our gratitude to all the support people who made it possible for us to participate in this event.“

Czech National Team Coach Tomas Kusy said: „We would like to get to the Grand Final and to try to beat Japan if possible. We hope that our games with this experienced team from the Far East will be the highlight of the tournament.“

Can I see the tournament on TV? The whole tournament will be covered on a daily basis by local media and Czech Television's sport channel CT4 will cover three games live. The Final will be taped and broadcast during the week following the tournament.

Will the tournament be on the internet? The tournament website is: www.2011wcm.softball.cz, and there is important information on the website now about the schedule and team rosters.

The Official Schedule:

Monday 13.6.2011

Field: Green Roller Park A

1	17:30	Denmark	Indonesia
2	20:00	Czech Republic	Japan

Tuesday 14.6.2011

Field: Green Roller Park A

3	10:30	Japan	Indonesia
4	13:30	Prague Stars	Denmark
5	17:00	Prague Stars	Czech Republic
6	20:00	Indonesia	Czech Republic

Field: Hippos stadium

7	19:30	Denmark	Japan
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Wednesday 15.6.2011

Field: Green Roller Park A

8	10:30	Indonesia	Prague Stars
9	13:30	Denmark	Czech Republic
10	18:00	Japan	Prague Stars
11	20:00	Japan	Denmark

Field: Hippos stadium

12	19:30	Czech Republic	Indonesia
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Thursday 16.6.2011

Field: Svoboda park A

13	11:00	Denmark	Prague Stars
14	13:00	Indonesia	Japan
15	15:30	Czech Republic	Denmark
16	18:00	Prague Stars	Indonesia
17	21:00	Japan	Czech Republic

Friday 17.6.2011

Field: Green Roller Park A

18	10:30	Czech Republic	Prague Stars
20	13:30	Prague Stars	Japan
21	17:00	Semifinal: 3. - 4. (or 1. - 2.)	
	19:15	Homerun Derby	
22	20:00	Semifinal: 1. - 2.	

Field: Green Roller Park B

19	10:30	Indonesia	Denmark
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Saturday 18.6.2011

Field: Green Roller Park A

23	11:00	Final: Loser 22 - Winner 21	
24	19:00	Grand Final: Winner 22 - Winner 23	
	21:00	END + 10 min Medal Ceremony	



SERBIA UNDER 19 GIRLS OPEN 2011

by Dejan Jesic

The first Serbian U19 Girls Open were played during the Easter Holiday at the end of April.

The tournament was hosted in Zajecar at a little Spa - about 220 KM out of Belgrade.

The tournament was organized by the Serbian Softball Federation in cooperation with the Ministry of Sport and Education and the Municipality of Zajecar.

At the four days tournament two Serbian national selections as well as two teams from Turkey, the Bulgarian national team and a Hungarian team participated.

The first ever Champion became Team Serbia I after beating Bulgaria 11:4 in the finals. Serbia I beat Turkey I in the Semifinals while the Bulgarian national team beat Serbia II to reach the championship game.

At the opening ceremony the Major of Zajecar, Bosko Nacic, promised to support the local Club and the Serbian Federation to build the first official softball field in Serbia.

Officials of the Serbian Sport Ministry were present at the opening ceremony as well as ESF First Vice President Tottoni Sanna, who



also met with representatives of all participating federations to talk about further development activities in the different areas.

TEAM ITALY IS GETTING READY FOR THE ECHW

by FIBS

Team Italy started an intensive preparation to get ready for the 2011 European Championship.

Italy will be also the host of the European Championship Women, which will be played in the Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia with 20 participating teams.

Italian National Team Manager Marina Centrone started the program by the middle of March, bringing the squad to Caserta: „Unfortunately“ says Centrone „The weather was not on our side but still we could compete in a 12 inning game against Caserta, the defending champions in the Italian Softball League and a contended at the continental level“.

The Italian League started in April and Centrone, together with

her Assistant Coach Calixto Soca Mijar, started traveling to different locations to see all players and work with them individually.

„We will have a team meeting early June in Bollate, where we'll play also a tournament. Beside the Tournament in Bollate the squad will also have some preparation games before the European Championship later on. Our goal is to get to the Euros having played about 20 games as a team“.

Friuli Venezia Giulia, the host of the ECHWA 2011, is also the region where Italy lost the Olympic Qualifier against the Netherlands in 2007.

Centrone: „Well, I have been seeing that line drive by Eva Trevisan ends up in the dutch player's glove so many times. Fortunately enough, myself and the Federation have moved forward. I hope the next European Championship is going to be a new start for us“

