



July 2010

The Inside Pitch

Official Newsletter of the Amateur Softball Association of America

GOLDEN GIRLS

USA wins seventh consecutive Women's World Championship



Members of the 2010 USA Softball Women's National Team stand on the podium July 2 at the Women's World Championship in Caracas, Venezuela, following a 7-0 victory over 2008 Olympic Champion Japan.

The United States took back its title as the No.1 team in the World with a 7-0 win over Japan in the Championship Game of the XII ISF Women's Softball World Championships in Caracas, Venezuela, on July 2. The nine-time World Champions claimed their seventh-straight title, going undefeated, 10-0, and outscoring opponents 95-6.

Cat Osterman (Houston,

Texas) made her second World Championship Gold Medal game start with the leadoff batter Rei Nishiyama earning a hit. With Osterman's only strikeout of the game and with the help of the defense, Nishiyama was left stranded.

"It was a great tournament overall. The team excelled in every aspect throughout the tournament and we put that into play in the

'WORLDS' CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

A note from Amateur Softball Association President Andy Dooley

First of all, I would like to address that we should be moving along our championship season toward National championship play. Good luck to those who have qualified and to those who haven't, I hope you succeed in the future to reach the highest level of play possible.



Packets should be coming to you soon regarding the Council Meeting. Inside you will find the committee assignments. If I made a mistake, please notify me and I will get with Craig Cress to make sure you get in the correct committee.

For the assigned ASA Tournament Representatives, please make sure that you have contacted Journey House for your transportation. As always please refer to the Tournament Directors manual to ensure that the tournament is operated at the highest level possible.

Once again, I would like to thank those who have been so patient with the Register ASA program. I know Steve Walker recently sent out some information trying to keep us all informed. Steve and Craig's staff work daily to provide the best possible service. We do realize we have issues on the tournament side and that is one of our current focuses. A big thank you to the ASA staff for putting the time and dedication into improving the program

To each of our council members, I want to remind you that we are a service organization and should strive everyday to make want to make new contacts as well as explain our program and benefits to potential leagues and organizations. We offer the best insurance, umpire training, marketing opportunities, levels of play and just overall great softball. We need to make sure we are reaching out every day because there are organizations out there who are trying to get our teams.

Congratulations to all our National team players and coaches on yet other World Championship. Thanks to National Team Director Ronnie Isham, coaching staff and Ron Radigonda for their interest and work at this level. As we lost a lot of funding, we need to look at ways of getting help to get additional revenue for all of our National and Junior National Teams. The athletes are great ambassadors for our sport and we need them on the fore front.

IN THIS ISSUE

Page 2

New Illinois ASA Hall of Fame in Casey, Ill.

Page 5

Win a trip to Walt Disney World® Resort from Liberty Mutual Responsible Sports

Page 9

Seventeen athletes are now members of the 2010-11 Junior Women's National Team

Page 14

World Cup of Softball to air live July 22-26 on ESPN, ESPN2 and ESPN3.com

A note from The Inside Pitch editor Jamie Blanchard

Welcome to the July 2010 edition of The Inside Pitch, the official newsletter of the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America.

Can you imagine a more exciting time to be a part of the ASA? With the dominating performance of the Women's National Team at the recent ISF Women's World Championship, National Championship play starting, the slow pitch National Team exhibitions July 15 and the KFC World Cup of Softball presented by Six Flags around the corner, there is so much to be a part of and look forward to. This is time that everyone, from our athletes to the National Office staff, puts in all the hard work and hours for—and I hope you are all as pumped for the action as I am.

In Oklahoma City, the buzz for the fifth World Cup (July 22-26) and the second Border Battle (July 24) is all around. Next week, we welcome not only three USA teams (the Women's National Team, the Women's Futures National Team and the Men's Slow Pitch National Team) but the 2010 World Silver Medalists Japan and the Bronze Medalists Canada as well as the Men's Slow Pitch team from Canada. We also hope that we will be welcoming many of you.

For those of you who will not be able to join us here, we hope that you will support the World Cup by watching the action live on ESPN and ESPN2. Seven games, including three on Saturday, will be aired. The complete TV schedule is on the World Cup page of USASoftball.com and on page 14 of the IP.

Also, we plan to cover the event not only as we have in the past, with recaps on both of our websites, ASASoftball.com and USASoftball.com, but also throughout the day on our [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/USASoftball) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/USASoftball) pages. Make sure that you are a fan or follower if you want the inside scoop on the event including photo updates.

And keep those links handy for August when the 17 newest members of USA Softball — the 2010-11 Junior Women's National — head to Colombia for the Junior Worlds Qualifier.

Although we are embarking on a very busy time here in the National Office, with several members traveling for various championships and training camps, we are still here to help your association be the best it can be. Please feel free to reach out to us at anytime.

Talk to you next month!

Illinois ASA opens Hall of Fame in Casey



Illinois ASA Assistant State Commissioner Jerry Stewart, Museum Board President Leoy Staley, Commissioner Don Brewer and Casey, Ill. Mayor Scott Elkins at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Illinois ASA Hall of Fame.

In 1976 after many years of softball success in the Casey Community it was decided that a museum was necessary to preserve the history that was created by many men, women and children in our area.

The original building was built with approximately \$3,000 in donations. In 2010 the Illinois Amateur Softball Association (ASA) selected Casey as their permanent home for the Hall of Fame. They (ASA) donated \$7,000 to start the building addition.

The program opened with the singing of our national anthem by Donna Hammond. Master of Ceremonies John McDaniel welcomed all the dignitaries from the city of Casey and the Illinois ASA officials along with twenty-nine Illinois ASA Hall of Fame inductee's individually that were in attendance.

Don Brewer said, "Before we do the actual ribbon cutting. On behalf of the Illinois ASA I would like to say how pleased that we are to enter into this

agreement and establish the Illinois ASA Hall of Fame in the great softball city of Casey." Brewer went on to make a presentation to LeRoy Staley of Casey for all his effort put forth to bring the Illinois ASA Hall of Fame to Casey, Ill.

Jim Nichols said, "I was really surprised with what you have done to the Hall of Fame here. Joe Snedeker gave me a private tour yesterday evening and I was really impress and I told him so."

McDaniel's than recognized the donors and sponsors of the Hall of Fame addition along with the contractors and other works who did the physical work on the building before the actual ribbon cutting took place to official open the Illinois AS Hall of Fame building to the public in Casey, Ill.

After a picnic lunch was served and those in attendance were allowed to view the new Illinois ASA Hall of Fame exhibits before a softball game between the Elkhaville Softball Club and the Rockford Valley College Clubbers, which was won by Rockford squad 12-8.

The Inside Pitch

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Championship game," said two-time World Champion Osterman. "We had great pitching, great defense and great offense. It was a true team win all the way through. We are glad to walk away with the win and get our No. 1 ranking back."

Kaitlin Cochran (Yorba Linda, Calif.) was the first U.S. runner to reach when she earned a walk in the second inning. Makiko Fujiwara issued another walk to Andrea Duran (Selma, Calif.) to put two runners on board but responded with two strikeouts swinging, leaving the score at 0-0.

The U.S. put up their first hit of the game in the top of the fourth and the momentum clearly shifted in the favor of the Red, White and Blue as the U.S. strung together six hits in the fourth to take a 5-0 lead. Jessica Mendoza (Camarillo, Calif.) got it started with a double to right field. The first run of the game would come next when Alissa Haber (Newark, Calif.) hit a single down the middle to plate a U.S. run in Mendoza.

With two runners on, Haber and Cochran, who singled, Japan brought in new pitcher Sayuri Yamane. Duran drew a walk as the first batter Yamane faced. Jennie Finch (La Mirada, Calif.) gave the team a 2-0 cushion with a single to left field. Lauren Lappin (Anaheim, Calif.) doubled the score with a triple to right center field to plate Finch and Ashley Charters (Beaverton, Ore.) who reached on a fielder's choice. Lappin went on to score the final run of the inning,



Team USA celebrates on the field after winning the 2010 Women's World Championship in Caracas, Venezuela, with a 7-0 victory over Japan, the 2008 Olympic Champions. USA, now the nine-time World Champions claimed their seventh-straight title, going undefeated, 10-0, and outscoring opponents 95-6.

scoring on a passed ball.

Osterman threw four pitches in the bottom of the fourth before Monica Abbott (Salinas, Calif.) came in to finish the game for the United States. With a 2-2 count, Abbott issued two more balls to Ayumi Karino who spent no time on first as she was sacrificed to second. Two Abbott strikeouts ended the inning for Japan, shutting down their scoring threat.

Duran put the game out of reach for Japan with a two-run homerun in the fifth inning, giving the U.S. enough runs to have the game called in the fifth inning due to a run-ahead rule.

Abbott kept the lead safe with the help of her defense, giving the United States the claim to the best softball team in the world. With only one strikeout, Osterman earned the win allowing only two hits. Fujiwara took the loss for Japan, allowing two earned runs.

The USA Softball Women's National Team will next compete in the KFC World Cup of Softball in Oklahoma City, Okla., July 22-26. Tickets are on sale for this event which will feature the top three finishers from the Worlds; the United States, Japan and Canada. Get your tickets, including single session General Admission, at SoftballOutlet.com.

World Champion Shirt

A T-shirt celebrating the 2010 Women's World Champions is now on sale at SoftballOutlet.com for \$15. The shirt has the names and hometowns of the World Champions on the back.



Athletes named to Junior Women's National Team

Seventeen athletes have been selected for the 2010-11 USA Softball Junior Women's National Team, the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America announced today. The athletes selected hail from seven states: Arizona, California, Florida, Ohio, Oregon, Maryland and New Mexico.

The team will compete later this year at the III Pan American Softball Championship (18-and-under), August 6-15, in Bogota, Colombia, which serves as a qualifier for the International Softball Federation (ISF) IX Jr. Women's World Championship (19-and-under), December 6-17, 2011, in Cape Town, South Africa.

"I am really proud of the 41 athletes who tried out for the Junior Women's National Team and excited for the 17 who were selected to wear the USA uniform," said Head Coach Karen Johns (Starkville, Miss./asst. coach Mississippi State). "I am looking forward to watching these young women play their best softball on the world stage and win Gold Medals for their country. I hope their first experiences with the USA Softball program are positive."

Suzy Brazney (Huntington Beach, Calif./head coach Golden West College), Stacy Iveson (Prescott, Ariz./head coach Yavapai College) and Pat Murphy (Northport, Ala./head coach Alabama) will join Johns in Colombia as assistant coaches. Joe Salvatore (Monroe Township, N.J./coach New Jersey Breakers) is the volunteer assistant coach for the Junior Women's National Team.

2010-11 USA Softball Junior Women's National Team Roster: Lauren Chamberlain (Trabuco Canyon, Calif./California Worth Firecrackers 18-Under Gold); Cheyenne Cordes (Fairfield, Calif./California Lady Magic); Ally



COURTESY OF DENNIS ANDERSEN/ACTIONSPORTSPHOTO.ORG

Participants in the 2010-11 Junior Women's National Team Selection Camp in Chula Vista, Calif.

Carda (Elk Grove, Calif./California Lady Magic); Dallas Escobedo (Glendale, Ariz./Arizona Hotshots Gold); Amber Freeman (Lakewood, Calif./Corona Angels 18-Under Gold-Tyson); Erin Gabriel (Poland, Ohio/Valley Extreme Blue); Chelsea Goodacre (Temecula, Calif./California Fury); Lauren Haeger (Peoria, Ariz./Arizona Hotshots Gold); Kylee Lahners (Laguna Hills, Calif./California Worth Firecrackers 18-Under Gold); Destinee Martinez (Corona, Calif./Corona Angels 18-Under Gold-Tyson); Shelby Pendley (Albuquerque, N.M./New Mexico Sundancers); Kourtney Salvarola (Arnold, Md./Wagners); Madison Shipman (Valencia, Calif./So Cal Choppers); Cheyanne Tarango (Anaheim Hills, Calif./California Worth Firecrackers 18-Under Gold); Nyree White (Eugene, Ore./California Worth Firecrackers 18-Under Gold); Hallie Wilson (North Tustin, Calif./California Worth Firecrackers 18-Under Gold); and Chelsea Zgrabik (Nokomis, Fla./Florida Tropic Wave-Morgan).

"On behalf of everyone at the Amateur Softball Association, I am excited to welcome the next generation of USA Softball players," said ASA Executive Director Ron Radigonda. "Our program has a rich history not only on the senior level, having won

three Olympic Gold Medals, but on the junior level as well, having won three Junior Women's World Championships including the Gold Medal in 2007. I know the 17 young women selected for the 2010-11 Junior Women's National Team will continue the tradition of excellence in USA Softball. I congratulate them for their performances in Chula Vista and wish them well in Colombia and beyond."

The athletes were selected for the team by the five-member USA Softball Women's National Team Selection Committee (WNTSC) based on performances at the 2010-11 USA Softball Junior Women's National Team Selection Camp, June 10-12, at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista, Calif.

Forty-one athletes from the USA Softball Junior Women's National Team player pool attended the Selection Camp. The player pool is made up of athletes that have been identified by WNTSC as an elite softball player in the appropriate age group. Athletes that are identified come from observations at the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) Junior National Tournaments, recommendations from college coaches, high school coaches and ASA Junior Olympic (JO) Coaches.

Camp, clinic for prospective Junior Men's FP National Team athletes in August

The USA Softball Junior Men's Fast Pitch National Team program will host an open two-day mini-camp and clinic in August before the start of the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America's Boys Fast Pitch National Tournament in Rolla, Mo., the ASA announced today. The camp and clinic are scheduled for August 4-5 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Athletes interested in participating are asked to fill out an **informational questionnaire** as soon as possible. To be participate in the camp, athletes must have been born between January 1, 1993, and December 31, 1996. Pitchers of any age,

however, are welcome to participate the morning pitching sessions but are asked to contact Head Coach Timothy Lyon at timlyon@earthlink.net prior to the clinics.

The camp and clinic will be the start of the evaluation process for the 2012 USA Softball Junior Men's Fast Pitch National Team, which will compete in the 2012 International Softball Federation World Championship in Parana, Argentina. The USA Softball program has never won a World Championship in junior men's fast pitch but has finished as high as second place.



Umpires wear red to honor military

During the recent Fast Pitch Camp in Cincinnati, Ohio, ASA members went to a memorial honoring U.S. military veterans. The members all wore red shirts that had the ASA Umpire logo and the phrase "We honor veterans for their service," which were provided at the camp.

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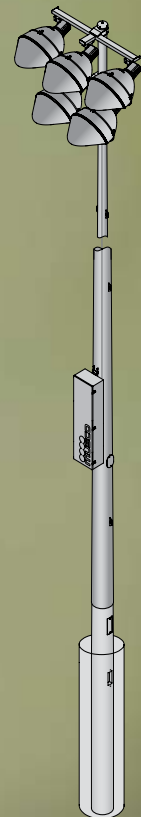
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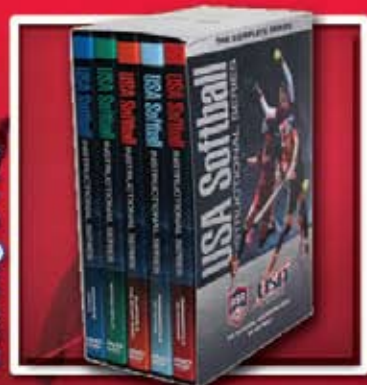
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Gromacki replaces Jordan as WNT assistant

Former USA Softball athlete Michelle Gromacki (Fullerton, Calif.) has accepted a coaching position with the 2010 USA Softball Women's National Team, the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America announced earlier this month. Gromacki replaces Barb Jordan (Northridge, Calif.), who relinquished her position as National Team Assistant Coach for medical reasons, and will coach in place of Jordan July 22-26 at the KFC World Cup of Softball in Oklahoma City, Okla.

Sydney Olympic Champion Jennifer McFalls (Grand Prairie, Texas), a former Texas A&M infielder, replaces Jordan at the Canadian Open Fast Pitch International Championship, July 7-11, in Surrey, B.C., and exhibition games, July 13-14, in Whitehorse, Yukon. Among McFalls' other accolades with USA Softball: 1996 Olympic Team alternate, 1998 World Champion, 1999 Canada Cup Champion and 1999 Pan American Games Champion. She also previously served as an Athlete Representative on the USA Softball Women's Selection Committee.

Gromacki, who is in her 11th season as Cal State Fullerton Head Coach, recently served on the coaching staff at the ISF

Women's World Championship in Caracas, Venezuela, where Team USA won a seventh consecutive and ninth overall World Gold Medal. Gromacki previously served as the assistant coach for the USA Blue Team in 2001 and the U.S. "Elite" National Team in 2002-04. In 2003, she helped lead the "Elite" Team to a Gold Medal at the Canada Cup with an 11-1 record.

Once regarded as one of the best catchers in the nation, Gromacki helped Fullerton to a combined 170-19-1 overall record as a player from 1985-87 while also leading the team to the 1986 NCAA National Championship. She was a member of several U.S. National Teams, claiming Gold Medals at the South Pacific Classic Tournament, the Women's World Championship and the Pan American Qualifier.

Gromacki's appointment as National Team Assistant Coach and the addition of McFalls to the Canadian event rosters highlight recent changes made in the USA Softball program.

- USA Softball Women's Futures National Team member Meagan May (Spring, Texas) did not make the trip to the Canadian Open Fast Pitch International

Championship and exhibitions, July 7-14, due to injuries sustained in a June 27 car accident. The Texas A&M catcher, who was released from the hospital Sunday, remains on the Futures roster but will not see any USA Softball action in 2010.

- Brigham Young University senior catcher Jessica Purcell-Fitu (Walnut, Calif.), who made the Top 50 Watch List for the 2010 USA Softball Collegiate Player of the Year Award, is now a member of the Futures National Team. The 2010 Mountain West All-Conference First Team member will make her international debut at the World Cup.

- Catcher Stacie Chambers (Glendale, Ariz.) has joined the USA Softball program. The University of Arizona redshirt senior, one of the Top 10 Finalists for the 2009 Softball Collegiate Player of the Year Award, will compete for Team USA at the Japan Cup, Aug. 3-9, in Sendai City, Japan. It will be her first international event.

- Futures outfielder Jamia Reid (Buena Park, Calif.), a Cal sophomore, has been tapped to replace Arizona senior Brittany Lastrapes (Laguna Niguel, Calif.) on the Japan Cup roster. Lastrapes has withdrawn from the Japan Cup but will play at the World Cup with Futures.

Haber, WNT nominated for USOC honors

The USA Softball Women's National Team and Alissa Haber (Newark, Calif.) are nominees for June 2010 awards from the U.S. Olympic Committee. The team is being considered for the Team of the Month Award for their Gold Medal performance at the recent ISF Women's World Championship while Haber is being considered for the Female Athlete of the Month.

In her first appearance at the Worlds, Haber made her presence known, setting several records while helping Team USA to a seventh consecutive World Championship on July 2. Haber's most impressive performance at Worlds came on June 17 against 2008 Olympic Bronze Medalist Australia. She went 3-for-3, hitting two doubles, with one run and four RBI.

In June, Haber played seven games, starting all in the outfield. She went 14-for-20 at the plate with one walk for a .700 average (.615 for the event overall). Even excluding the two World Championship games that fell in July, Haber set the record for most RBI in a World Championship, scoring 19 (20 overall) to push her past Jessica Mendoza's (Camarillo, Calif.) 16. She ranks fourth for most career RBI at Worlds, trailing three-time World team member Mendoza by only 10 RBI. Haber is now tied for first for the most doubles in a single Worlds, hitting all seven in June, and is second for most hits with 14 of 16 also coming in June.

The USA Softball Women's National Team went 8-0 in June, en route to winning a seventh-consecutive and ninth-overall Women's World Championship on July 2 by shutting out 2008 Olympic Champion Japan

in Caracas, Venezuela. The USA outscored opponents 84-6 in June (95-6 overall), highlighted by a 7-0, five inning win over host country Venezuela and a 20-0, three inning victory over Botswana. Four June victories were shutouts.

In June, the Americans went 79-for-186 at the plate, averaging .683 as a team. The team hit 18 doubles, including Haber's seven, nine triples, three by Kaitlin Cochran (Yorba Linda, Calif.) and four home runs, three from Jennie Finch (La Mirada, Calif.). USA batters were walked 30 times and even more impressive, struck out only 21 times in 186 at-bats.

In June 2010, pitchers Finch, Abbott (Salinas, Calif.), Cat Osterman (Houston, Texas) and Women's National Team rookie Eileen Canney (Paradise, Calif.) all went 2-0 for a combined .80 ERA. Three struck out 13 batters each while Osterman struck out 21, giving the pitching staff a combined 60 strikeouts. The pitchers only allowed only 16 hits in eight games, including two extra base hits. USA fielders had two errors, compared to the opponents combined 17.

Overall for the Worlds, the 2010 team and team members rank highly. They now rank No. 1 in the history of the World Championships in batting average (.402), runs scored (95), RBI (78), walks (37) and triples (10). They are third in hits (92), second in doubles (20) and fifth in home runs (5).

The 229 at-bats ranks the 2010 team fourth. Jessica Mendoza (Camarillo, Calif.), Haber and Natasha Watley (Irvine, Calif.) rank 1-2-3 in event batting average with .625, .615 and .542 respectively. Haber is tied for first with the most doubles (7). Cochran is tied for second in triples with three. Finch is tied for third in home runs with three.

USA men to prep for slow pitch Border Battle on July 15 against Team Cincinnati in Ohio

The USA Softball 2010 Men's Slow Pitch National Team will tune-up for the second Border Battle with a doubleheader exhibition against Team Cincinnati on July 15 in Cincinnati, Ohio, the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America and Cincinnati ASA announced in June. Admission is \$3 at the gate of the Mid-America Ballyard, 6960 Blue Rock Road.

"We feel very fortunate to have a venue to participate in before the actual Border Battle event," said Team USA Head Coach Steve Shortland (San Antonio, Texas). "Not only is it a superb opportunity for my staff and I to assess the 2010 team on the field, it's also a great way to build chemistry and continuity prior to our Border Battle game against Canada in Oklahoma City. The folks at Mid-America Ballyard have been very supportive and we look forward to some keen competition during these exhibition games.

Led by the Cincinnati area's own Brian Wegman (Hamilton, Ohio), Team USA will take on Team Cincinnati at 8 p.m. and 9:30. From 6:30-7:30, fans have the opportunity to meet the National Team players, all of which will compete for the United States against Canada at the Border Battle, July 24, during the 2010 KFC World Cup of Softball presented by Six Flags at ASA Hall of Fame



Stadium in Oklahoma City, Okla.

"It is an awesome opportunity for the City of Cincinnati have the most talented slow pitch softball players coming together at Mid-America Ballyard for these exhibitions," Wegman said. "Cincinnati is a strong softball city but I don't think there has ever been this much talent together in one place. It's an excellent chance for not only the fans to see the best in slow pitch but for Team USA to play together against some tough competitors before we take on Canada in the Border Battle."

Joining Wegman on Team USA: Rick Baker (West Harrison, Ind.); Scott Brown (Andover, Minn.); Rusty Bumgardner (Gastonia, N.C.); Chaun Demars (Becker, Minn.); Hank Garris

(Naples, Fla.); JD Genter (Chickamauga, Ga.); Brett Helmer (Circero, N.Y.); Jeremy Isenhower (Olathe, Kan.); Jason Kendrick (Naples, Fla.); Scott Kirby (Miramar Beach, Fla.); Chris Larson (Vancouver, Wash.); Johnny McCraw (Lake Wylie, S.C.); Jeff McGavin (Macomb, Mich.); and Ryan Robbins (Columbus, Ind.).

"Cincinnati has for many years led the nation in men's competitive softball and this visit shows our teams and players that the entire country acknowledges their past achievements," said ASA Cincinnati Commissioner Dan Saylor said. "And with one of our own representing the USA, we recommended that the team visit us all in Cincinnati and play in one of their own's park. Brian Wegman is happy to host Team USA at his 'house,' Mid-America Ballyard. This is

a great honor for Cincinnati ASA, our softball program, Mr. Wegman and most of all, the great players in Cincinnati."

Following the action in Cincinnati, Team USA leaves for Oklahoma City, where they will compete in two-days of exhibitions against local men's slow pitch teams before taking on the Canadian Men's Slow Pitch Team July 24. The game will be aired live at 3 p.m. Central on ESPN.

Tickets for the Border Battle are on sale now as a part of the 2010 World Cup of Softball Ultimate Fan Zone ticket package, the All Session Reserved ticket package and the All Session General Admission ticket page. Individual GA tickets are also on sale. To purchase tickets, call 800-654-8337 or visit SoftballOutlet.com.

Finch, Watley attend national PHR Finals during All-Star Week

The 2010 Aquafina Major League Baseball Pitch, Hit & Run, the "Official Youth Skills Competition of Major League Baseball," welcomed Olympic and World Champion USA Softball players Jennie Finch and Natasha Watley at the program's National Finals, July 12 at Angel Stadium in Anaheim, Calif. as part of 2010 All-Star Week events. After conducting over 4,000 nationwide competitions - including the first-ever nationwide Girls Softball Division - the youth skills program reached more than 600,000 boys and girls between the ages of seven and 14, providing an integrated competition that recognizes individual excellence in core baseball and softball skills. Aquafina, the "Official Bottled Water of Major League Baseball," is in its third year sponsoring the grassroots program following its sister brand, Pepsi, the "Official Soft Drink of Major League Baseball," which was the title sponsor between 2002 and 2007.

Finch (La Mirada, Calif.) and Watley (Irvine, Calif.) will attend the Pitch, Hit & Run (PHR) National Finals and will later recognize the champions during an on-field ceremony during the 2010 State Farm Home Run Derby on July 12. The top nationwide competitors (names listed below) from each age group (7-8, 9-10, 11-12 and 13-14) have advanced to the PHR National Finals. The PHR program invited youth to demonstrate their pitching, hitting and running abilities and all 30 MLB Clubs hosted competitions at their ballparks earlier this season. The addition of the Girls Softball Division gave young girls the opportunity to



After becoming the first woman to hit a home run in the All-Star Legends & Celebrity softball game on Sunday in Anaheim, Calif., Olympic and World Champion Jennie Finch met with the finalists of the 2010 Aquafina Major League Baseball Pitch, Hit & Run, the "Official Youth Skills Competition of Major League Baseball" during MLB All-Star Week.

be awarded and advance separately through all four levels of competition.

"Major League Baseball is committed to providing a positive environment for our youth, giving kids the chance to learn and grow both on the field and off," said John Brody, Senior Vice President, Corporate Sales and Marketing, Major League Baseball. "Through the generous support of Aquafina, the Pitch, Hit & Run program reached over half a million young people across America. We are proud to have these boys and girls participate in a unique event that gives them the chance to travel to the All-Star Game, put their skills on display and meet other players from different parts of the country."

"Aquafina is proud to join with Major League Baseball to support a program that encourages kids to strive for excellence through sports," said Jeff Dubiel, vice president of



sports marketing for Pepsi-Cola North America Beverages. "Having Jennie Finch and Natasha Watley involved in recognizing the kids who excelled in the program is a home run. I can think of no better way to inspire and reward the 600,000 kids who participated in Pitch, Hit & Run this year than with personal recognition during All Star week by two of the sport's most accomplished athletes."

This is the 14th year MLB has run a youth skills program. Information regarding dates, times and locations of local competitions as well as entry forms and other materials for the 2010 Aquafina Major League Baseball Pitch, Hit & Run initiative are available online at www.MLB.com/PHR.

A list of PHR finalists is published on www.asasoftball.com.

GOLD headed to Irvine in 2011

The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America announced on July 7 that Irvine, Calif., will be the host city for the 2011 ASA Girls' 18-Under GOLD National Championships July 31- August 6.

"After the changes that occurred in Reno at the ASA Annual Meeting, we are thrilled to be hosting the GOLD in Irvine, Calif. In 2011 with our new rotation," said ASA Executive Director Ron Radigonda. "Irvine is a hot bed for softball and has proven to be a successful host for ASA National Championships. This tournament continues to bring the best in softball and with our rotation we feel this is the best solution to meet the needs of the teams and everyone else involved in the success of the GOLD."

With the Southern California ASA local association serving as host, the 64-team

and most prominent ASA Junior Olympic tournament will be held at Bill Barber Park and Harvard Park.

"Southern California ASA is honored and excited to be selected as the host association for the 2011 18-Under GOLD National Championship," said So Cal Commissioner Phil Gutierrez. "We have a great host venue in the City of Irvine with excellent playing facilities, outstanding hotel accommodations, wonderful weather and world renown attractions such as Disneyland and of course our beautiful beaches. We very much look forward to hosting this prestigious ASA event."

The 2010 18-U GOLD will take place August 1-8 at the Lost Mountain Softball Complex in Marietta, Ga. And return to the ASA Hall of Fame Complex in Oklahoma City

in 2012.

Below is the code reference to the site rotation referenced above:

Article 602 H 09 The Junior Olympic Girls 18 and Under Gold Fast Pitch will be rotated to Oklahoma City every third year and in the off years will be placed in other parts of the country by the Executive Director.

Below is the code reference to the new date formula for the 18-Under GOLD National Championship:

Article 509 B 04 f Girls' ASA Gold 18-Under Fast Pitch. This National Championship Final shall be scheduled to conclude on the first Saturday in August and not be scheduled more than seven (7) days. This event will not have an opening ceremonies event and the managers meeting cannot be scheduled prior to 6:00 p.m. on the prior Sunday.

World Cup to air live on ESPN, ESPN2 and ESPN3.com

Seven 2010 KFC World Cup of Softball presented by Six Flags games including the women's fast pitch Championship Game and the men's slow pitch Border Battle will air live across the United States on ESPN, ESPN2 and **ESPN3.com**, the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America announced today. The World Cup is July 22-26 at the ASA Hall of Fame Stadium

The World Cup, the only international event hosted by ASA/USA Softball, is the only international softball event aired in the United States. In addition every game will be offered in high definition on ESPN HD and ESPN2 HD. For the first time, all seven of ESPN and ESPN2's USA Softball Women's National Team ESPN and ESPN2 telecasts will be simulcast on ESPN3.com. In addition, each of the seven games will be offered in high definition on ESPN HD and ESPN2 HD. Selected games from ESPN's coverage will also be televised globally to more than 150 countries across ESPN's international networks including ESPN America, ESPN Pacific Rim, ESPN Australia HD, ESPN Brazil HD, ESPN Israel, ESPN Middle East, ESPN Africa, ESPN Caribbean and ESPN2 Caribbean.

"Our coverage of the World Cup of Softball and the NCAA Women's College World Series in recent years demonstrates ESPN's commitment to women's sports and the importance of softball in our lineup," said Carol Stiff, vice president, ESPN programming and acquisitions. "We are proud to work with ASA/USA Softball again this year to put Team USA and the best athletes in international softball back in front of our viewers."

ESPN is the exclusive home of the KFC World Cup of Softball presented by Six Flags and features over 14 hours of live coverage on ESPN, ESPN2, and **ESPN3.com** highlighted by multiple prime time windows including the Championship Game on July 26 at 8 p.m. CST. Games may be re-aired throughout the year.

The complete domestic ESPN, ESPN2 and ESPN3.com live air schedule: USA vs. Canada July 22 at 7 p.m. on ESPN; USA vs. Japan on July 23 at 7 p.m. on ESPN; USA vs. USA Futures on July 24 at 1 p.m. (tape delay) on ESPN; USA vs. Canada Border Battle on July 24 at 3 p.m. on ESPN; USA vs. Japan on July 24 at 7 p.m. on ESPN2; USA vs. Canada n July 25 at 4 p.m. on ESPN2; and Gold Medal Game on July 26 at 8 p.m. on ESPN2. All will also be streamed on **ESPN3.com**.

All times are local to Oklahoma City (CST) and subject to change.

"To put on the USA uniform and play in front of our home fans in Oklahoma City is really special," Olympic Gold and Silver Medalist Cat Osterman (Houston, Texas) said. "But knowing our family and friends

across the country are watching us at home adds another element of excitement to the World Cup of Softball. Thank you to ESPN for allowing us to share our sport with an even larger audience. Their support of the World Cup throughout the years has really helped softball thrive."

The women's action will be called by two-time Olympic Champion Michele Smith and Los Angeles Dodgers play-by-play announcer Eric Collins. For the Border Battle, Collins will be joined by former ASA Super and Major Slow Pitch player and Major League Baseball infielder Doug Flynn, who played for the Cincinnati Reds, New York Mets and Montreal Expos among other teams. He also participated in the 1988 Summer Olympic Festival slow pitch exhibition games where his 'West' team took home the Gold. Flynn, a two-time World Series Champion with the 1975-76 Reds and the National League Gold Glove Second Baseman in 1980, provides color commentary for the University of Kentucky baseball team.

"Every kid's dream is to wind up in a SportsCenter highlight," said two-time USA Softball Men's Slow Pitch National Team member Brian Wegman (Hamilton, Ohio). "ESPN gave us that chance last year and we're thankful to have the opportunity again this summer. Playing for your country in a game aired on ESPN is awesome. Having the Border Battle is a great opportunity for everyone who plays slow pitch and wants to bring the game to a higher level."