

## **The Search For A Safer - And Better! – Game by Scott Kuhnen**

Prior to the 2008 season, in my rounds to pre-season managers' meetings and umpire meetings, I spent the largest percentage of my time telling attendees about a game that most of them are too young to remember. That game was called "Softball."

Most players don't remember games that were won by scores like 11-9, 8-6, or 7-5. By the same token, most of today's players likely don't remember when bats cost \$30, fielder's gloves cost \$30, and shoes cost \$30. Old timers, even those who played the game after aluminum bats were introduced, recall these games fondly.

When the teams were properly classified and fairly evenly matched, these were games noted for a certain "balance" between offense vs. defense. Games were certainly not determined by the equipment in those days.

Because it was slow-pitch, all players could put the ball in play, and games were usually won by teams who had players hit the ball a little bit better than the other team, and possibly more important, championship teams could definitely field the ball better than their opponents.

In the old days, pitching was less of a factor before USSSA's unique style of pitching was permitted. However, pitching has always been something of a factor, whether directly by very effective pitching strategies, or by pitchers who could effectively field their position.

Things began to change, of course, with the introduction first of aluminum bats and solid core softballs in the late 1960's and early 1970's. Prior to that, the standard softball had a leather cover over a core made of cork and wound by yarn, and bats were like baseball bats of that day...made of wood. This was a game known as softball.

Back "in the day," players who played with true softballs knew that if you didn't hit that ball early...within the first few innings...you certainly weren't going to hit it for any distance late in the game. Back then, the ball really did "go square."

Back in the day, when we said we were playing with a "mush ball," we really meant it. Today's players like to whine and complain about the balls, but the truth is, they likely have never really experienced a true mush ball in their entire lives.

The time between the introduction in the late 1960's of aluminum bats and the early 1970's of solid core balls and the equipment of today is fairly well documented. It includes a transition to livelier balls, even some higher than .50 COR, and a transition not just into high-tech aluminum, and then titanium bats, to today's composite bats.

During that time, the game of softball has, in my opinion, morphed into a game which is out of balance with respect to offense vs. defense. The scoring has increased; the cost has increased; and, unfortunately, the risks have also increased.

To make the game safer and/or to bring the game back into balance, many people like to argue that the associations should merely outlaw certain bats. While that might be one approach, I think most people will admit that unless the associations all take a standardized approach and adopt a fully coordinated standard of performance for equipment, the manufacturers will continue to make equipment which enhances performance and can be used by at least one of the sanctioning bodies. One can hardly blame them for this.

The bat companies also should not be faulted for making and promoting equipment which both meets the standards established by the associations and at least appears to give high performance to the consumers. When it comes to bat evolution and technologies, I believe most reasonable people agree that it is simply too late to put the genie back in the bottle.

However, in my opinion, USSSA has taken a bold step forward in an attempt to make not only a safer game, but also a better game. The adoption and transition by USSSA of a .40 COR ball with a reasonable compression (325) is, in my opinion, a great stride forward in all respects.

Unlike the softball of that bygone era, the new solid core softballs of today and the future will not 'go square' and will not 'go mushy.' The ball of the future will retain all the best features of the modern era, which include your option to use leather or synthetic covers, optic yellow covers for increased visibility, long-lasting quality performance and feel, and a reasonable cost. All of these represent serious advances over the softballs of the past.

And, because the ball carries less distance than the balls of the recent past (.50 or .47 or even .44 COR), every player isn't a home run hitter and every pitched ball doesn't stand as much of a chance of becoming a dangerous batted ball.

In this just-concluded 2008 season, the Ohio Men's C State, held in Dayton, produced an exciting, safer, and lower scoring event when we used the .40 COR ball.

Analysis of scoring at World Tournament over the last few years, and especially after the introduction and use of the .40 COR ball at many of these events, has seen an overall decline when measured against the runs scored back in 2004, 2005, and 2006. In my opinion, this is a good thing.

As we continue down this path toward the use of a safer softball, I would encourage the teams to realize that this is being done very much with their interests at heart. USSSA has seen the recent past and it is hasn't been particularly pretty or safe. One could argue, in fact, that unsafe equipment has driven many players from the game.

I contend that the "fun" in a team sport tends be more noticeable on the "team" side of the game...which is defense. The game we have played for the last twenty years or so was skewed very much toward the offense. And, while I admit that offense is fun, it

tends to be more centered on the individual than on the entire team...as defense tends to be.

When fun leaves a sport, and when costs increase as they have, and when the game actually starts to scare the participants, that's when they will find other things to do.

It is true that many of the baby boomers have left the game for safer sports like fishing and golf. I believe one could also argue that many left the game when it became less fun and less safe. When batted balls were through the infield before a player could react or if a batted ball was coming at such a rate of speed that a defensive player could not react adequately to a bad hop, the result was players leaving the game. One could hardly blame them.

However, in my opinion, by USSSA taking a stand on game safety and better balance by adopting the .40 COR ball, I believe the players will find not only a safer but also a better game. I encourage directors, park managers, umpires, and even the players themselves to welcome this change as it is intended...to make for a better game for everyone.

### **In My Opinion by Ron Jeffers**

Every year I am totally amazed when I read the rule changes that come out of the annual meetings of the ASA and USSSA organizations. One would think that they could go at least one year without making adjustments to the playing rules. When do you think they will finally get the rules to the point where they do not need to be changed or altered on an annual basis?

They have been playing the game of softball for at least 60 years now, and as far as I know, they have made some rule changes every one of those 60 years. Would you not think they could finally get the rules of the game the way they want them, and leave them alone?

Professional baseball is well over 100 years old, and they seldom ever make a change to their rules. Who knows? Maybe they think their game doesn't need an annual adjustment.

The USSSA organization had a choice to use COR 47, 44 or 40 balls this year in their program, and they made the decision to go with the 40 COR ball in every one of their classifications. I think this is a great decision, and one that should be made by the ASA organization as well, but the rule is only good if there is a punishment for those who do not honor it.

I have written in this paper before that Merle Butler, the late umpire-in-chief of ASA, told me, "I have tested thousands of softballs used in every classification of national tournament play, and yet I have never had one ball pass the COR drop test." My question of him was, "why have a rule if there is no penalty for not following it?" When you write a rule there must be a penalty for disobeying that rule. Otherwise why waste your time

writing the rule? All laws and rules must have a penalty to those who chose to ignore or disobey the laws and rules. That is the only way they make sense and are enforceable.

If the respective organizations go out and randomly purchase four dozen of each manufactures balls from around the country and perform the COR drop test on each of those balls they should pass the test. If they do not pass this simple but important test, then that manufacturers' balls should be banned from use in any games for one year. Do that and I guarantee you the ball manufacturers will produce their balls at COR 40. The problem is not with the rule. The problem is with the enforcement, or lack thereof, of this rule.

I sincerely ask: "Why do we strictly enforce all the other rules of the game, and yet this rule, governing the COR of the ball, is and has been ignored for decades. This while hundreds of players are seriously injured by these hot illegal balls coming off bats we all know to be little more than dangerous weapons.

We all talk about how corrupt Washington is, and they are. But the ASA and USSSA organizations are no better. These bat manufacturers have the ASA and USSSA leaders in their back pocket, and these legislators get enough perks and freebees that they will not do anything that will take away their gifts and hush money.

Some years ago I was in Honolulu at the ASA convention where a ball manufacturer rented two huge catamarans and took hundreds of the voting delegation and their families on an evening boat ride with all the food and drinks you could consume. Another ball manufacturer provided a wonderful breakfast in the hotel for all these same people. Another ball manufacturer provided food and drinks for an entire evening in a hospitality suite for the same group of people. All of this designed to keep the ASA voting delegation in the back pocket of these ball manufacturers, and it works.

Does there have to be corruption in every phase of our life? Can no one be honest or trusted any more? Can we not depend on people in responsible positions, as they are in both the ASA and USSSA organizations, to be honest, forthright, ethical, moral and law-abiding? Don't pass rules you knowingly have not or will not enforce. That is dishonest at best.

The rules committee has now passed a COR 40 rule for all USSSA play in 2009, and whatever the COR is in ASA for all levels of play for 2009, the rule is absolutely useless unless these two organizations finally have the guts to enforce their own rules. I don't mean to be cynical, but if this year is the same as all the past years, the COR 40 rule is useless at best. Am I crazy or what? Why go to the trouble of drafting a rule change, and getting it passed, if the governing bodies of softball will not enforce the rule? Sometimes I believe the back room politics of the Amateur Softball Association make the Illinois and Chicago political scene look like child's play.

Next month I will cover some of the other new rules that I believe the rule makers passed, that I believe make a mockery of the game, we all love.

I underwent some very serious brain surgery in early August, but I still have enough mental capacity to know why the ASA organization chooses not to enforce their own rule regarding the COR limit of their softballs. The voting members of this once proud and powerful organization continue to be bought out by a few perks from the ball manufacturers. And, if this is not true, let them tell me why they chose to not enforce this one rule of the game?

Well, as always, that is my opinion. What is yours?

### **January 2009: What's Your Gripe? by Ron Jeffers**

**Q. Ron, this mess happened in our fall league and I was wondering if you could straighten it out for me. We had one out and a runner on 2nd base, and our batter doubled him home safely. Unfortunately, the runner on 2nd missed 3rd base en route to the plate. The 3rd baseman then made a proper appeal, and the umpire called the baserunner out. Then, before the next pitch, the team in the field discovered that the runner on 2nd had batted out of order. The umpire called the batter out and put the baserunner who had been called out for missing 3rd back on 2nd base. Was this right?**

A. I have been bombarded with weird questions about baseball and softball for most of my life, and I have studied the rules for decades, but this is a new one for me. I have not been stumped in forever, but this play is one for the books. I have not had anyone confront me with this play, but we can break it down and figure it out.

Lets break this play down by the playing rules and see what we come up with. A legal appeal play for missing a base or leaving a base before a batted ball is first touched must be made before the next pitch. The team in the field made a good and proper appeal on the runner missing third base, and the umpire called the base runner out. This was all correct.

Where the play gets complicated is determining if you are referring to the batter batting out of order, or the runner who started the play at second base. If you are saying the batter who hit the double batted out of order, then the runner who scored would go back to second base, and the batter who should have batted would be called out.

If you are saying the runner who scored batted out of order, you can no longer appeal this rule violation, because a pitch had already been delivered to the succeeding batter. The result of this would be the runner who scored would be called out, the batter would be at second base, and the umpire gets a grade of A+.

Only one out is made either way. If you are appealing the batter who hit the double batted out of order, then the batter who should have batted is called out, and the runner who scored is returned to second base. If you are appealing the runner who scored batted out

of order, you are too late. The appeal must be made before the next pitch, and you delivered at least one pitch, because the next batter hit a double.

No one has ever asked me this question in my life, but when you dissect the play it is quite easy by rule.

**Q. I read that Jerry Fick is being inducted into the Cincinnati Softball Hall of Fame this January, and I understand he started his career working for you. Do you have any thoughts on whether he's qualified to be in the Hall of Fame?**

A. I could talk about Jerry and his life for hours, and in so doing it would all be positive.

Jerry was not an athlete, but he had a phenomenal knowledge about every aspect of sports. I taught Jerry to umpire youth baseball in the basement of my home, and he was exceptional on the playing rules from the very beginning. His only problem as a young umpire was teaching him what to call and when to call it. He knew the rules as they were written, but he had to learn the intent of the rules. He was an outstanding student at Greenhills High School and the University of Cincinnati, and he worked in the office of the Queen City Umpires for me, and umpired seven days a week as well.

Jerry officiated football and basketball as well as baseball and softball, and I only wish his father could have lived to see him succeed in every one of these sports while climbing to the top in the business management field.

The two umpires I had the privilege to work with and who got more out of their God-given ability, and succeeded far beyond anyone's expectations were the late Les Treitel and Jerry Fick.

I think every teacher or coach loves to tell the story about the kid who was an over-achiever, and the kid who succeeded when no one thought they could or would. This was Jerry Fick, but he would have made it to the top in any field of endeavor he chose to follow.

I remember when I was asked to provide umpires to work in the National League of Professional Baseball on two separate occasions, and one of the umpires I selected was Jerry Fick. I caught Holy Hell from several of my 300 other umpires, and those were the ones who had the guts to tell me to my face. They thought Jerry was either not experienced enough, not good enough, too young or too close a friend to me. In other words they, should have been selected to work these games and not Jerry. They never questioned who I selected to work the class D games at Salway Fields, just the games on National television in Riverfront Stadium. Well, I selected Jerry, and he did a magnificent job, as I knew he would, and yes, he worked the plate too.

When I was conducting clinics all around the country, I would take Jerry with me, and I would give him a rule or two to teach that weekend, and this was great experience for him. Now he is conducting clinics around the United States and in Europe.

Wasn't there a childhood book about a little train that could? Jerry has always been a person who has been an over-achiever, and now he is going in the Hall of Fame, and I couldn't be prouder.

I hope I am well enough to be in the audience the Sunday they give him the well deserved Plaque.

## **CRC News**

The 2009 Cincinnati Recreation Commission Adult Softball Program will begin priority registration for teams who played in the spring of 2008 on Monday, February 2nd and run through Friday, February 13th. New team registration will begin Tuesday, February 17th, and continue until all leagues are filled.

Lighted Leagues and Sunday Afternoon Leagues will begin play the week of April 5th. These leagues will play at various fields around Cincinnati and will use an eight game season format. The fee for all lighted leagues is \$350 (8 games). The fee for Sunday afternoon (unlighted) leagues is \$285 (8 games).

Twilight Leagues (unlighted) will begin the week of April 19th. These leagues will play at various fields around Cincinnati and will use a ten game season format. The fee for twilight leagues is \$345 (10 games).

## **APPLICATIONS AND PAYMENTS**

Applications and payment will be accepted at the CRC Athletic Office Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM. Payment may be made with cash (in person only), check, money order or Visa/MasterCard. Credit card payments for applications that are faxed in (352-1605) require that you phone the Athletics Division with your credit card number and expiration date to complete the registration process.

Teams withdrawing prior to completion of league schedules will be assessed a \$25 service charge for clerical and material fees. Teams withdrawing after completion of schedules will be assessed \$50 plus a prorated game fee. Teams withdrawing after the second game will not receive a refund. Registration is not complete until you have made the full payment.

## **ROSTERS**

Rosters are due in the Athletic Office before the first game is played. Rosters and CRC rule book are available on the web site. The manager's signature is required for the roster to be acceptable.

## **THREE SEASONS**

Our three season (spring, summer, and fall) format at Schmidt continues to meet the needs of the teams that participate in those leagues so we will continue that program in 2009. Also, all CRC Softball field locations will again offer the one fee covers everything (USSSA registration fee, umpire fees, balls, bases, scorebook, rule book and Cincinnati Softball News subscription for each manager).

## **FIELD UPDATES**

The Athletic Division will continue to offer field and weather condition updates at all field locations for the 2009 season. Please listen to the entire message when calling the rainout line (684-4908 or 684-4915) for detailed information on each field's status. This will provide better game day communication and help to prevent unnecessary trips to the fields when necessary.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

An organizational meeting for team managers will be held in March. Look in future publications of the Cincinnati Softball News or on the Cincinnati Recreation Commission's Athletics Division website at [www.cincyrec.org](http://www.cincyrec.org) for meeting date & times. We highly recommend that all team managers attend.

## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Anyone interested in serving on the email Advisory Committee please contact Bill Bailey at 352-1627. This is your chance to help CRC improve the softball program.

## **UMPIRES**

Umpires will be assigned by the Cincinnati Recreation Commission. The CRC Athletic Division will be holding an umpire training clinic in January. CRC is looking for ex-players and current umpires who are professional, on time, know the rules, hustle, and believe in GREAT customer service. Contact Bill Bailey at 352-1627 for further information.

## **Norwood Sorrento's Softball Hall Of Fame Banquet Set For January 25th At Radisson Hotel; WCPO-TV Sports Anchor Dennis Janson To MC**

The Norwood Sorrento's Softball Hall of Fame Committee has set Sunday, January 25th, as the date for this year's induction banquet for six new Hall of Famers.

This year's banquet will once again be held at the Radisson Hotel Cincinnati Riverfront in Covington. Inductees will be Dan DeClaire in the Sponsor Category, Dick Ernst in the Senior Player Category, Jerry Fick in the Umpire Category, Marsha Friedhoff in the Female Player Category, and Randy Lewis and Dale Overmann in the Male Player Category.



The six new inductees will bring the local Hall of Fame membership to 139.

The ceremony this winter will mark the fifth year that the induction ceremony has been held at the Radisson.

Norwood Sorrento's Softball Hall of Fame Committee member Jim Chastang calls the Radisson Hotel in Covington a "Northern Kentucky landmark of luxury."

Just across the Ohio River from downtown Cincinnati, the Radisson is "a famous feature of the Greater Cincinnati landscape," says Chastang.

"This hotel is a fixture with its striking exterior, which is visible for miles around," notes Chastang. "The inside is stunning and boasts exquisite event facilities and an attentive staff. The Radisson has all the standards and amenities that our committee requires plus a convenient location."

The banquet will again feature a buffet dinner, displays of softball memorabilia and a slide show honoring the great players and teams of yesterday. And many of the greatest names in the history of the game, including 21 members of national softball halls of fame, are regular attendees at the function.

"The Norwood Sorrento's Softball Hall of Fame induction banquet has grown increasingly popular and enjoys top billing as softball's premier social event of the year," says Chastang.

"Guests will have an opportunity to meet and greet softball's greats of past and present in a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere at a cocktail party preceding the ceremonies."

The committee will once again conduct the banquet as an afternoon affair, with a cocktail hour getting underway at 1 PM, and dinner at 2 PM.

Dennis Janson, who has been the sports anchor at WCPO-TV for the last 21 years, will return as MC for the function for the sixth consecutive year. "D. J.'s" broadcasting career, which has spanned 38 years, began during his sophomore year at Elder High School with WSAI-AM in 1965. An internship at the then dominant rock 'n roll radio station led to the newsroom, which spawned other opportunities during high school and upon entering the University of Cincinnati. Later, while an employee of WKRC-AM/WKRQ-FM, he made the move down the hall to their television affiliate, where he launched the career that brought him to WCPO-TV in 1984. Janson's stock in trade is breaking stories, but "getting it right" is first and foremost for the Indian Hill resident. Janson never loses sight of his roots, his association with UC, or the many organizations and charities he's helped by hosting or presiding over their event as master of ceremonies.

Tickets are available from Kattus Pro-Team Sports and Hal Manufacturing Company, and from Hall of Fame Committee Members. Kattus is located at 1200 Glendale-Milford

Road (821-7575). Store hours are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9:30 AM to 6:00 PM; Thursday 9:30 AM to 8:00 PM; and Saturday 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM.

Hal Manufacturing is located at 3116 Spring Grove avenue at Avon (541-2505). Hours are Monday through Friday from 9 AM to 5:30 PM, and Saturday from 9 AM to noon.

Norwood Sorrento's Softball Hall of Fame Committee members include Mike Burns, Myra Burwell, Jim Chastang, Ralph DeLuca, Jan Deters, Bob Fennell, Ron Jeffers, Jim Kolker, Mark Linnemann, Dave Maury, Bob Owens, Danney Saylor, Tom Taylor, Roland Vories and Merle Williams.

Originally known as the "Hudepohl Softball Hall of Fame," the Norwood Sorrento's Softball Hall of Fame was inaugurated in 1985 as part of Cincinnati's Hudepohl Brewing Company's 100th anniversary. It is under the direction of a committee of longtime softball players, managers, fans, sponsors, umpires and administrators.

ASA News...

### **32nd Annual ASA Metro Rules Clinic February 28-March 1 At St. Rita's School For The Deaf**

The 32nd Annual ASA Metro Rules Clinic has been scheduled for February 28-March 1 at St. Rita School for the Deaf in Evendale.

Amateur Softball Association Deputy Supervisor of Umpires Julie Johnson of Alexandria, In., will be the guest clinician at the 32nd Annual ASA Metro Rules Clinic February 28-March 1 at St. Rita School for the Deaf in Evendale.

Now entering its 32nd year, the two-day clinic "is one of the two longest running clinics in the country with a member of the National Umpire Staff helping to conduct the clinic," points out Fick. "Only one other clinic (Dallas, Tx.) has been operating longer than the Cincinnati clinic."

Fick says that topics will include "new rules, interpretations, and tournament procedures, with an emphasis on umpire mechanics.

"We're also going to feature special breakout sessions on both fast pitch and slow pitch rules and mechanics," says Fick. "These will be vital programs for those working these games."

The clinic will open on Saturday, February 28 with a session from 9 AM until 4 PM and concludes on Sunday with a session from 9 AM to 1 PM. St. Rita School is located at I-75 and Glendale-Milford Road (State Route 126 - Exit 14).

"We will again have our social to conclude our first day," notes Fick. "This will give our umpires a chance to meet our local staff and ask questions about the ASA and umpiring."

Fick says that the clinic is mandatory for all Cincinnati umpires interested in working in any ASA sponsored tournaments or special events.

The cost of the clinic is included with each umpire's ASA registration fee, which is \$43, and must be paid prior to the clinic to each umpire's respective association or park. Fees paid after the clinic are subject to a late charge of \$10. Umpires are urged to contact their local association or park now to make their dues payment, or payments can be sent to ASA Metro Cincinnati Umpire-In-Chief Jerry Fick at 3016 Ambler Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45241.

Local ASA umpires do not need to pre-register for this clinic. However, for out of town umpires the cost will be \$20 for one or both days (ASA registration is not included).

In addition to the clinic, the registration fee includes an ASA Rule Book and Umpire Manual, ASA Comprehensive General Liability insurance coverage, Excess Medical insurance coverage, weekly rules meetings, tests and study materials, ASA tournament assignments, and all the other benefits that go along with being part of the world's largest organization of sports officials.

For further information visit the ASA website - [www.metrocincinnatiasa.com/Umpire](http://www.metrocincinnatiasa.com/Umpire) or call Jerry Fick at the Cincinnati ASA Umpire Office – 563-2755.

### **Weekly ASA Umpire Meetings To Run From February 12th – March 19th**

All ASA umpires are encouraged to attend weekly meetings to be held on Thursdays at 7 PM.

Meeting dates are as follows: February 12, 19 and 26, and March 5, 12 and 19 at On Deck Sports Bar at Eggleston Park.

Any ASA umpire is welcome to attend these meetings.

For further information visit the ASA website - [www.metrocincinnatiasa.com/Umpire](http://www.metrocincinnatiasa.com/Umpire) or call Jerry Fick at the Cincinnati ASA Umpire Office – 563-2755.

### **ASA National Slow Pitch Umpire Camp June 17-22 At Eggleston, Rumpke Parks**

The Cincinnati Metro Amateur Softball Association is pleased to announce that it will host the ASA National Umpire Camp for the second consecutive year.

The Camp will be June 17-22 at Eggleston and Rumpke Parks. The Howard Johnson's in Springdale will be the host hotel.

Metro Cincinnati ASA Umpire-In-Chief Jerry Fick promises a great experience for area umpires.

“We expect attendees from Alaska to Germany,” says Fick. “Local umpires should consider taking advantage of this program right in their hometown.”

Details of the clinic will be available at area meetings and clinics, and are also available at the Metro website: [www.metrocincinnati.iaasa.com/umpire](http://www.metrocincinnati.iaasa.com/umpire).

## **USSSA News...**

### **Eight Greater Cincinnati Teams Reclassified By USSSA State, National Rules**

Eight Greater Cincinnati teams will be required to move up in classification for the 2009 season by USSSA National and State Rules and By-Laws.

USSSA National By-Laws require the winner of all Men's and Women's National and World Tournaments with 25 or more teams, the top ten percent of the finishing teams in the Men's Class “C,” “D” and “E,” and Women's “D” World Tournaments, and the top six finishers in the Mixed “D” World Tournament to compete the following year in a higher classification.

Three Greater Cincinnati men's teams will be required to move up in class for 2009 according to USSSA National By-Laws.

PRI/Easton of Cincinnati finished 2nd in the USSSA Men's “C” World September 18-21 in Sterling Heights, Mi., and will be required to play “B” or higher in 2009. Hill & Griffith and Crosley's Sports Bar, both of Cincinnati, finished 4th and 9th, respectively, in the USSSA Women's “D” World September 18-21 in Kissimmee, Fl. and will be required to play “C” or higher in 2009.

Ohio USSSA State By-Laws requiring teams to move up in class are as follows: the winner of the Men's Class “D” and Mixed Couples Class “D” State Tournaments; and winner and runner-up of the Men's Class “E” and Mixed “E” State Tournaments.

Teams affected by Ohio USSSA State Rules will include: Cousin Construction, the winner of the Men's “D” State; OC Softball and D & D/Dirty Dozen of Cincinnati, the 2nd and 3rd place finishers in the “E” State; and Steel Softball of Blanchester, which finished 2nd in the Mixed “E” State.

Kentucky USSSA State By-Laws also require the winner (and runner-up based on 25 or more teams) of the Men's “D” and “E” State Tournaments to play at a higher class the following year. The only local team affected by this by-law will be Kentucky USSSA “D” State Champion Renegades of Taylor Mill, Ky.

USSSA State and National By-Laws are in effect if a team retains any four players from its roster from the previous season. Teams affected by National By-Laws may appeal after competing in four tournaments in their new classification (two tournaments in the

Mixed program). Appeals must be made between June 1st and July 1st (October 1st in the Mixed program). Appeals must be made to a committee including the respective State Director, National Program Director, Vice-President and Assistant Executive Director.

USSSA National Appeal forms can be downloaded at [ussa.com](http://ussa.com).

Teams affected by Ohio USSSA By-Laws must appeal to both the State Director and District Director. Teams wishing to file an appeal must first compete in at least four tournaments in their new classification (two in the Mixed program). No appeals will be accepted after July 1st.

The National Appeal form can also be used by teams moved up by Ohio State By-Laws.

### **Expressway Park League Meeting March 11th At Holiday Inn Eastgate**

The 2009 Expressway Park team managers' meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 11th, from 7:00 PM until 9:00 PM at the Holiday Inn Eastgate.

Team managers will receive their managers' packets at the meeting, and 2009 league and USSSA rule changes will be reviewed.

Also at the meeting, bats, gloves, batting gloves, and equipment bags will be sold at thirty to forty percent off regular Expressway Park pro shop prices. And representatives from various bat manufacturers will be in attendance to show their new bats and answer any questions about bat standards.

A manager and player raffle will also be conducted at the meeting. Prizes will include a portable TV, DVD player, boom box, Holiday Inn Eastgate Weekend getaway, softball bats and equipment and restaurant certificates.

Managers are required to attend, and players are welcome to attend. Refreshments and snacks will be served at the meeting.

For any additional information contact Expressway Park at 831-2273.

### **Expressway Park Announces 2009 Sponsorship Program**

Milford, Oh.--Having a difficult time finding a sponsor?

Team sponsors paying league fees at Expressway Park during the current season can easily double or triple the value of the sponsorship at no additional charge.

In the past, the only value to a sponsor was weekly name exposure. Now sponsors - in exchange for paying league fees - will receive a substantial advertising package for free.

Again this year, team sponsors will be given the opportunity to advertise or expose their business to over 100,000 players and spectators at Expressway Park during the entire season, a program which costs other advertisers up to \$2,500.00.

The following program is offered to all the sponsors during the current season, and again - at no additional charge - free!

1. Provide 4 x 8 outfield fence banner which will remain on fence for entire season;
2. Provide advertising information or ad slick to be included in 12 tournament programs throughout the season;
3. Select a weekend to set up a booth at the park to promote your business (perfect for banks, mortgage companies, insurance companies);
4. Provide flyer to be given out at gate to all players and spectators entering the park for a period of one week during the season.

Interested teams can be provided with flyers explaining this program to potential sponsors. Sponsors must provide banners and advertising material.

Expressway Park continues to lead the way on developing programs to help teams secure the fees necessary to continue to participate in the great game of softball. If any manager wishes to discuss a new program or any other promotional idea unique to their business which could help them raise money for their league fees, they are encouraged to call Bob at 831-2273. Or email [expressway@expresswaypark.com](mailto:expressway@expresswaypark.com) for assistance. For additional information call Myra Monday thru Friday at 831-2273. Or visit Expressway Park's website at [www.expresswaypark.com](http://www.expresswaypark.com).

### **USSSA Umpire Groups Announce Training Schools For 2009**

Greater Cincinnati's United States Specialty Sports Association umpire groups are now accepting registrations for their 2009 training schools. Additional information can be obtained by contacting one of the groups listed below:

**ARMCO PARK UMPIRES** - For information on umpiring at Armco Park call the park office at 513-727-3989. Dates and times of classes will be listed in the February CINCINNATI SOFTBALL NEWS.

**BUCKEYE/METROPOLITAN UMPIRE ASSOCIATION** - Now re-cruiting both new and experienced umpires. Classes will begin in February. An onfield clinic will be held in March. A State Clinic and District IX Umpire Clinic are also planned for February. Competitive rates, bonus program, awards program, extensive training - leagues and tournaments. Call Expressway Park at 831-2273 for additional information.

**CINCINNATI RECREATION COMMISSION** - Contact Bill Bailey at 352-4020 if you are interested in umpiring CRC softball games. All umpires will be certified USSSA.

**EGGLESTON AND KOLPING PARK UMPIRES** - Classes will be held on Monday nights, February 9, 16 and 23 at the Kolping Center Klubhouse from 7:00 PM until 8:30 PM. For additional information contact David Maury at Eggleston Park at 385-5304 or email dmaury14@aol.com; or contact Bill Chard at Kolping Park at 851-5657, or email bill-@kolpingpark.com.

**NORTHERN CINCINNATI UMPIRES** - For information call Jerry Meyer at 741-7505, or email Jerry at jerrymeyer@fuse.net.

**PASTIME PARK UMPIRES** - For information on 2009 umpire classes contact Steve Bruck at 515-4227, or email the park at manager@pastimepark.com. New umpires are welcome.

**RIVERSTAR SPORTSPLEX** - Classes will be held on Monday evenings from 7 to 8:30 PM at Starlite Ballroom. Call Riverstar Park at 232-4263 to register.

**TRIPLE CREEK PARK UMPIRES** - For information on umpiring at Triple Creek, call Jamie Kist at 513-742-1091, or email jkist@greatparks.org.

### **2008 Membership Approaches 200,000 Mark...**

#### **USSSA Announces International Partnerships, Inducts Ten More Hall Of Famers At 41st National Meeting**

ChampionsGate, FL.--The United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA) celebrated nearing the 200,000 member milestone at its 41st Annual National Meeting November 16-23 at the Omni Orlando Resort at ChampionsGate, FL., with the announcement of several groundbreaking new partnerships and programs, and the induction of ten new members into its Hall of Fame.

The Association also passed twenty-four rule changes and twelve by-law changes and approved an updated constitution.

At its convention, the nation's largest multi-sports organization continued to bask in its exclusive partnerships with Walt Disney's Wide World of Sports and Major League baseball, its popular website and leading-edge Conference USSSA program, along with its phenomenal growth. USSSA announced that it had experienced growth in ten sports, with membership reaching 190,747 through mid-November. That figure marked an increase of 17,000 registrations over the same period the previous year.

USSSA CEO/Executive Director Don DeDonatis also noted in his keynote address that 185,000 teams had participated in 34,000 events in 2008.

Sustaining this growth is USSSA's biggest challenge, DeDonatis told the convention delegates. But it can be done, "as long as we provide a positive, pleasurable experience and environment for our members.

"We also need to continue to be an innovative and forward-thinking organization with each sport and director working in tandem together as one team. Our goals and long-term success will rely on such co-operation, remembering that our objectives as an association are one and the same," said DeDonatis.

DeDonatis encouraged the Association's State Directors to "go out and make a difference, to improve your programs, and to promote and expand participation.

"We can and must do it better than we have in the past," said DeDonatis.

In closing, DeDonatis stated that the USSSA's "progressive and innovative approach has proven time and again to be our strength.

"USSSA has continued to raise the bar and set our standards high. Much is expected of us and I have no doubt that we will continue to meet these expectations. Let us move forward today, with the realization that there is much more work to do and new challenges that need to be met," said DeDonatis.

Highlighting the new partnerships and programs for USSSA in 2009 will be "USSSA Today," a new publication designed to showcase all of the association's sports; [ussalive.com](http://ussalive.com), which will provide live video of USSSA events; Slugfest, a bat comparison program; and Slo-Pitch Ontario, a Canadian-based group which will exchange teams with USSSA to bring an international flavor to both organizations' events.

USSSA's baseball also announced an international program, which will conduct "All-American Games" to serve as a selection process to send an All-American team to Japan in 2010. A new division of USSSA baseball called Global Sports, which is designed to provide more teams with post-season play options, was also launched at the convention.

Among the rule and by-law changes passed at its convention, the USSSA will require all balls to have an optic yellow cover beginning in 2010. Also, beginning in 2009, teams will be permitted to replace up to four players released from their rosters with an add on, and State Directors have been given the authority to make roster additions within 72 hours in case of an emergency.

The USSSA inducted ten new members into its Hall of Fame. They included Todd Martin (NC), Jason Kendrick (FL) and Rick Weiterman (WI) in the male player category, Marie Pesch (TX) in the female player category, Gene Williams (NY) and Louis Calvisi (MI) in the manager category, Travis Resmondo (FL) in the sponsor category, Kevin Naegele (NM) and Bill Hensley (IN) in the executive category, and Dick Calvo (WA) in the special service category.



The ten will be inducted during a Hall of Fame banquet at the USSSA National Meeting on November 15-22 at the Pechanga Resort & Casino, Temecula, CA.

Ten new candidates were selected for induction in 2009. They were Don Clatterbough (VA), Dennis Rulli (CA) and Andy Purcell (CA) in the male player category; Meme Vencil Peterson (OH) in the female player category; Jeff Miller (GA), John Rechter (MI) in the manager category; Joey Odom (LA) in the Executive category; Dale McGregor (WA) in the umpire category; Special Service Longevity Category; and Jay Cressione (SC), Gerry Turnberg (MN) in the Special Service Longevity Category.

USSSA's 2008 National Meeting was the largest in the Association's history, and boasted a record 130 exhibitors, including the Orlando Magic and Houston Astros.

### **USSSA NATIONAL MEETING AWARDS (2008)**

#### **Rookie Director of the Year Awards:**

1. Baseball – Victor Falvey, NM
2. Basketball – Wes Grandstaff, TX
3. Fast Pitch – Luis Mejia, CA
4. Slow Pitch – Ron Ray, KY

**National Headquarters Award of Excellence Award:** George Gonzalez, FL

**USSSA-deBeer –Richard Pollak Memorial Award – Player Category:** Jackie Fischer, IN; **Non-Player Category:** Tony Moore, GA

#### **Dwight Hall Spark Plug of the Year Awards**

1. Slow Pitch (East): John DeMagistris, NY
2. Slow Pitch (West): Steve Graham, CA
3. Baseball: Rick Brockwell, VA
4. Fast Pitch: Sam Ellis, MI

#### **William Bradley Hensley Basketball Spark Plug of the Year Award**

Mike Foss, FL

#### **Complex of the Year Awards**

1. Snowden Park, Southhaven, MS
2. Softball World, Eules, TX

#### **USSSA Official of the Year Award:**

1. John Dye, MD
2. Larry Lofton, IN

Special Recognition Award – Clyde Aldridge, NC

#### **Director of the Year Awards**

1. Fast Pitch: Eddie Small, VA
2. Soccer: John Perry, KS
3. Baseball: Scott Baker, MS
4. Basketball: Todd Miller, IA
5. Slow Pitch: Jon Brandt, CT

#### **USSSA Award of Merit:**

1. City Of Hobbs, NM
2. Don Cooper, Combat Sports

**USSSA Distinguished Service Awards: Columbus, IN**  
**Presentation of Assistant Executive Director's Award - Non-Slow Pitch Category:**  
 Conrad Foss, FL  
**Presentation of Assistant Executive Director's Award - Slow Pitch Category:** John  
 Pond, MA  
**E. A. Ramsey/CEO Award:**  
 1. Tom Turley, KS  
 2. Kevin Naegele, NM

**2009 USSSA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENTS**

August 8-9	Men's Senior 50-55-60-65	No. Branford, CT
August 13-16	Men's & Women's Military	Panama City, FL
August 14-16	Men's A World	Kissimmee, FL
August 21-23	Men's & Women's Church	Cary, NC
September 12-13	Men's A & B Corporate	Indianapolis, IN
September 18-20	Men's B	Lake Buena Vista, FL
September 18-20	Men's Black American	Lake Buena Vista, FL
September 18-20	Women's Black Amer.	L. Buena Vista, FL
September 11-13	Hispanic	League City, TX
September 23-27	Men's Major	Lake Buena Vista, FL
September 24-27	Women's A World	Lake Buena Vista, FL
September 24-27	Women's Class B	Lake Buena Vista, FL
September 24-27	Women's Class C	Lake Buena Vista, FL
September 24-27	Women's Class D	Lake Buena Vista, FL
September 24-27	Men's C	Lake Buena Vista, FL
September 24-27	Men's D	Sterling Heights, MI
September 24-27	Men's E	Lake Buena Vista, FL
October 10-11	Women's Masters 35-Over	W. Columbia, SC
October 10-11	Men's Masters 45-Over	West Columbia, SC
October 3-4	Men's Masters 35-Over	North Branford, CT
October 10-11	Men's Masters 40-Over	West Columbia, SC
October 16-18	Mixed Major	Lake Buena Vista, FL
October 16-18	Mixed C	West Columbia, SC
October 16-18	Mixed D	Lake Buena Vista, FL
October 16-18	Mixed E	Lake Buena Vista, FL
October 16-18	Law Enforcement	Sterling Heights, MI

PLEASE NOTE: Tournament dates and sites listed above are subject to change. Check the USSSA website at [www.ussa.com](http://www.ussa.com) regularly for possible changes to tournament dates and sites.

**Ten Elected To USSSA National Hall Of Fame; Induction Ceremonies Slated For November 15-22, 2009 In Temecula, C.**

ChampionsGate, FL.-A veteran of twelve World Series, a seven time member of the USSSA Women's World Series All-Tournament team, a manager of four Mixed World champions, an official who has umpired over 60,000 games, and an Executive Vice President, are among ten individuals who have been selected for induction into the USSSA Hall of Fame in 2009.

Elected at the USSSA National Meeting November 16-23 in ChampionsGate, FL. were Dennis Rulli (CA), Andy Purcell (CA), Don Clatterbaugh (VA), Meme Vencil Peterson (OH), John Rechter (MI), Jeff Miller (GA), Dale McGregor (WA), Jay Cressione (SC), Gerry Turnberg (MN) and Joey Odom (LA).

The ten will be inducted during the Hall of Fame induction banquet at the USSSA National Meeting on November 15-22 in Temecula, Ca.

Known for his trademark "fu manchu" mustache, high leg kick and blistering line drives, Don Clatterbaugh has racked up 13 MVP awards in USSSA tournament play over the years, and has played in a dozen World Series with teams like Dave Carroll Sports, Steele's Sports, Howard's, Blanton's and Dan Smith. His approximate lifetime batting average is .720 and he had hit over 1,500 home runs.

Michelle "Meme" Vencil Peterson captured USSSA World Championships with Lady Blue (1991, 1992 and 1993) and UPI (1995 and 1998). She was selected to the All-World teams in 1992, 1993, 1995 1996 1997, 1998 and 2001. During her 18-year playing career from 1983 through 2001, she was named to 81 all-tournament teams. She was also the Most Valuable Player at the 1993 World Series.

Jeff Miller managed his Action Awards/TPS teams to USSSA Mixed World titles in 1990, 1991, 1994 and 1996. In 37 U-Trip NIT's, Miller's teams won 22 and finish second nine times. He has a 176-43 record in World Tournaments and NIT's. Miller has directed twenty World Tournaments, including the USSSA Mixed World six times.

Dale McGregor has umpired over 60,000 games during his 30-year career, including five World Tournaments and the 1993 Women's World Series. McGregor became the Washington State Umpire-In-Chief in 1991 and is credited with the development and growth of the USSSA umpire program throughout the Northwest, where he has conducted numerous clinics. He has been a member of the National Playing Rules Committee, and currently serves as one of three National Assistant Umpires-In-Chief. He received the USSSA Official of the Year Award in 2004 and the Dwight Hall Spark Plug of the Year Award in 2006.

Joey Odom progressed from umpiring at the age of sixteen to becoming a director in the Monroe, La. area in 1984. Nine years after being appointed an area director, he was named the 1995 Louisiana Director of the Year. In 2000 he was named the Baseball Director of the Year for USSSA, and received the President's Award in 2003 and E. A. Ramsey/CEO Commitment to Excellence Award in 2007. He is currently an Executive

Vice-President with USSSA and serves on the Board of Directors. He has played an integral part in the growth and development of the USSSA Baseball Program nationwide.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Bios for Dennis Rulli, Andy Purcell, John Rechter, Jay Cressione and Gerry Turnburg were not available.

### **Ten Inducted Into USSSA National Hall Of Fame In Championsgate, Fl.**

ChampionsGate, Fl.-A member of five USSSA Men's Major World Series champions, a nine time member of the USSSA Women's World Series All-Tournament team, a manager in the USSSA program for 25 years, and a USSSA State Director, Vice President and Executive Vice President, were among ten individuals who were formally inducted into the USSSA Hall of Fame last fall at a ceremony concluding the organization's National Meeting in ChampionsGate, Fl.

Inducted were Todd Martin (NC), Jason Kendrick (FL), an Rick Weiterman (WI) in the Male Player Category; Marie Pesch (TX) in the Female Player Category; Travis Resmondo (FL) in the Sponsor Category; Gene Williams (NY) and Louis Calvisi (MI) in the Manager Category; Dick Calvo (WA) and Bill Hensley (IN) in the Special Service/Longevity Category; and Kevin Naegele (NM) in the Executive Category.

The ten were honored during a banquet ceremony November 21st at the Omni Orlando ChampionsGate in ChampionsGate, Fl., where they were formally inducted into the USSSA National Hall of Fame, located in Kissimmee, Fl.

Rick Weiterman captured USSSA World Series championships with Elite Coatings, Steele's Silver Bullets, Ritch's Superior and Team TPS. Known as one of the premier pitchers of his era, Weiterman also boasted a .719 batting average.

Marie Pesch has won seven USSSA Women's World Series championships while competing with teams like Cannon's Illusions, UPI and Kinder Sharks. She was a sevendime All-World Series pick and named the Outstanding Offensive Player in the Series in 1993, 1995 and 2004.

Lou Calvisa managed teams in the USSSA program from 1972 through 1997, including nationally renowned Coors Light and Bunca Worth. His teams qualified for the USSSA World Series for eight consecutive years from 1988 through 1995, finishing fourth on two occasions.

After taking being appointed the New Mexico State Director in 1987, Kevin Naegele took the state from just under 200 teams to over 1,500 teams. In 1992 he received the National President's Award. Ten years later he was appointed Midwest Division Vice President. In 2004 Naegele received the USSSA Distinguished Service Award for his work in supervising the operations of the USSSA World Tournaments at the Walt Disney's Wide World of Sports Complex in Lake Buena Vista, Fl. In 2006 he was promoted to Executive VP and to the USSSA Board of Directors.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Bios for Todd Martin, Jason Kendrick, Rick Weiterman, Travis Resmondo, Gene Williams and Bill Hensley were not available.

### **USSSA Awards Twenty Eight National Invitationals To Greater Cincinnati Parks For 2009; Over 400 Teams Competed In 2008 Events**

ChampionsGate, FL.--The United States Specialty Sports Association has awarded twenty eight National Invitational Tournaments to Greater Cincinnati area softball complexes for 2009, including a Men's Major NIT, seven Men's "B-C's," six "C-D's" or "C," six "D's," five Women's NIT's, five Mixed, and a One-Pitch.

Last year over 400 teams competed in area USSSA National Invitationals.

The U-Trip Major NIT, which will be held July 17-19, will once again thrust the Cincinnati area into the national limelight. Last year's monster 62-team event was won by Resmondo/Specialty Tank/Worth, which outlasted Jean Shoppe/Easton 36-35 in a double finals to complete a six game sweep.

The 62-team field was believed to be the largest U-Trip Major NIT ever held, as "C" and "D" teams vied for \$500 travel expense and a paid berth to their respective World Tournaments.

Ranking next on the classification ladder will be the 30th Annual Louisville Slugger-Bud Light-USSSA Men's "B-C" Early Bird Round Robin NIT on March 28-29. Last year's title was captured by Blitz/Watanabe/Bull/Minges/Wessel/Easton, which fended off House Rules/Holy Grail/Crosley's 17-14 in the championship game to complete a four game sweep of the sixteen team event.

Again this year, the Early Bird NIT will feature paid berths to USSSA "B" and "C" World Tournaments plus travel expense.

Six other USSSA "B-C" NIT's, all sponsored by Worth and Bud Light and featuring direct berths to the USSSA "B" World, have been slated for three area complexes in 2009. These events will also carry a berth to the USSSA "C" World September 24-27 in Lake Buena Vista, FL.

A week after the Louisville Slugger on April 4-5, action moves to Mid-America Ballyard, where last season Blitz/Watanabe notched their second straight NIT title of the young 2008 campaign, albeit the hard way. After being ambushed by EAP/Wessel/Real Estate Title/Easton 11-10 in the second round, Blitz marched past seven opponents in the losers' bracket of the 21-team tournament, and double-dipped Mike Foulks Auto Body/Team Insanity 15-14 and 12-10.

Expressway Park in Milford is the next stop on the "B-C" circuit with an April 11th offering. Last year Mike Foulks avenged their setbacks to Blitz the previous weekend,

stunning the city's number one team 24-7 and 14-4 to complete a four game sweep of the twelve team affair.

Action returns to Harrison three weeks later for the 9th Annual Bud Light-Worth "B-C" NIT on May 2-3. Mojo/Creative Stucco/Worth outlasted EAP/Wessel/Real Estate Title/Easton 23-12 in the second championship game after being ambushed 12-9 in the first finals.

Two weeks later on May 16th, Expressway Park will host their third of three "B-C" NIT's for 2009. House Rules/Holy Grail/Crosley's routed K . G. Sports/Game On/Easton 18-6 in last year's championship game to wrap up a 4-0 day and best a twelve-team field.

Two weekends after that, on May 29-31, the competition returns to Mid-america for the 8th Annual "City Slam" NIT, where last season a red-hot Mike Foulks squad outdueled a 17-team field en route to racking up their third NIT championship in a six-week span with a flawless 5-0 performance. Mike Foulks overcame a 24-5 deficit to outlast Spitz Seeds/Mizuno 26-25 in the championship game.

The curtain will fall on the 2009 "B-C" NIT season five weeks later on June 20 at Expressway Park, where last summer Blitz/Watanabe rolled to their third NIT title of the year, polishing off Mojo/Creative Stucco/Worth 19-11 in the finals to go 5-0.

The Greater Cincinnati area will host six U-Trip "C" or "C-D" NIT's in 2009. Among the returning events will be the 8th Annual "Bash for Cash" at Kolping Park on March 21-22, followed by the 7th Annual Easton "Westside Rumble" NIT June 6th in Harrison, a third year event on June 27-28 at Riverstar, followed by a July 11-12 offering at Expressway.

Each tournament will again feature a paid USSSA to the "C" World Tournament berth plus \$600 in travel money based on 13 teams. And all but the June 7th date will be "C-D" events and offer a paid berth to the "D" World, September 24-27 in Sterling Heights, Mi.

Last year in March, JLC/Legends outlasted EAP/Easton 20-13 in the second championship game of the 15-team "Bash for Cash" USSSA C NIT.

In the 11-team Westside Rumble at Pastime, EAP double-dipped eventual U-Trip "C" World runner-up PRI/Easton 11-16 and 11-10, rallying all the way back from a first round loss to JLC. EAP made it two in a row three weekends later at Riverstar in the area's largest "C-D" NIT of the year, once again tripping up PRI/Easton in a double finals, 14-12 and 22-7.

Then in Milford, House Rules/Holy Grail/Crosley's rolled to their third NIT title of the year, polishing off Design Concepts 21-10 in the championship game to complete a five game sweep of the 23-team field.

Launching the area's returning "D" NIT's will be the 8th Annual "Bash for Cash" on March 13-15 at Rivershore in Hebron, Ky., followed two weekends later by a March 28-29 affair at Riverstar. Another Rivershore event is slated for April 11th, then an eighth year NIT - the "Bud Light-Worth" - will follow on April 25-26 at Expressway Park. The Easton "Westside Rumble" at Mid-America Ballyard will cap off the area "D" NIT's on June 6-7.

The "Bash for Cash" "D" NIT, the largest in the tri-state with forty teams, was captured by Miller Builders/Mast Home Center, who romped past Sunrise Dental 19-6 in the championship game to compile a 7-0 record. Two weeks later, Airtight Construction of West Virginia brushed aside the Renegades 19-8 to complete a four game sweep of an eleven team field.

In late April in Milford, Extreme/Turner Property Services Group shut out Cousin Construction 10-0 in the championship game to successfully defend their title in the twenty team Louisville Slugger/TPS "D" NIT.

Then in June, eventual Great Lakes Division National Champion BCP Associates/ASC/Big Sonny's held off Clark County Merchants 11-10 in the second championship game to capture first place in the Easton-Westside Rumble..

Each "D" NIT offers a paid berth to the USSSA "D" World September 24-27 in Sterling Heights, Mi., plus \$600 travel expense based on thirteen teams.

Switching to the U-Trip women's program, there will be five events in 2009, Those include a new "Bash for Cash" Women's division on March 14-15 and the 11th Annual "Commie Currens Memorial" on May 2<sup>nd</sup> - both at Kolping Park. The 4th Annual Bernie Dickman Memorial Round Robin on April 18th and Bud Light-Blue Chip Classic on June 6-7 will be held at Expressway. Sandwiched in between those two events will be the 33rd Annual Queen City Classic on June 20-21 at Pastime Park. The Queen City Classic is Cincinnati's longest running women's event.

Last year's Worth-Bud Light Commie Currens Memorial USSSA Women's NIT divisions were won by the Shooters (class C) and U-Trip Women's D World Champion Dented Bats.

Three weekends later Dented Bats returned to Cincinnati to win the "C" division of the Bernie Dickman Memorial, while Hill & Griffith captured the "D."

Then in June Fraley's/Low Bob's polished off the Shooters 6-4 in the championship game of the Blue Chip "C" division to wrap up a 4-1 weekend, while ITAM30/K & G held off Hill & Griffith 12-11 in the "D" finals.

Finally in the Queen City Classic, Dented Bats bested Fraley's 12-7 in the championship game of the "C" division to rack up their fifth title of the year, while in the "D" division,

SOS Softball successfully defended their title, drilling Hill & Griffith 10-3 in the finals to wrap up a 5-0 outing.

Four USSSA Mixed NIT's are on tap for Greater Cincinnati, including the Mike Adler Memorial April 25th at Riverstar Park, the Bud Light-Worth on May 9th at Kolping Park, then another May 17th (Sunday) at Pastime Park, then finally the Mid-Summer Shootout August 1st at Expressway.

High Octane successfully defended their title in the "C" division of the Mike Adler, while Dented Bats captured the "D" title.

At Pastime, Crosley's stunned Thornton's 13-12 in the "C-D" division finals last year on the strength of a five-run rally in the bottom of the 7th. D's Restoration swept past three opponents for the "E" title.

Then in Milford, Steel Softball went 5-0, winning their last three games in their final at bat.

Greater Cincinnati's remaining U-Trip NIT will be the 25th Annual Bud Light-One-Pitch National Invitational October 1-2 at Expressway Park. Youth Guns/American Made/Evil Empire knocked off the River City Hitmen 13-8 in the finals of the Gold Division. While in the Silver Division, Chris's Band Box claimed the title, stunning Liberty Mechanical 15-14 in the finals with a dramatic four run rally in the bottom of the 7th.

For more information regarding any USSSA NIT's in Greater Cincinnati, visit the USSSA web site at [www.ussa.com](http://www.ussa.com).

## **2009 GREAT LAKES DIVISION USSSA NATIONAL INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENTS**

Men's Major	May 15-17	Columbus, IN
Men's Major	July 17-19	Cincinnati, OH
Men's Major	August 7-9	Sterling Heights, MI
Men's B-C	March 28-29	Harrison, OH
Men's B-C	April 4-5	Cincinnati, OH
Men's B-C	April 11	Milford, OH
Men's B-C	April 25-26	Columbus, OH
Men's B-C	May 2-3	Harrison, OH
Men's B-C	May 9-10	Louisville, KY
Men's B-C	May 9-10	Sterling Heights, MI
Men's B-C	May 16	Milford, OH
Men's B-C	May 23-24	Dayton, OH
Men's B-C	May 29-31	Cincinnati, OH
Men's B-C	June 6-7	Sterling Heights, MI
Men's B-C	June 13-14	Louisville, KY
Men's B-C	June 20-21	Milford, OH



Men's B-C	June 27-28	Flat Rock, MI
Men's B-C	July 11-12	Sterling Heights, MI
Men's B-C	July 18-19	Louisville, KY
Men's B-C	August 1-2	Sterling Heights, MI
Men's C-D	March 21-22	Cincinnati, OH
Men's C-D	March 28-29	Columbus, OH
Men's C-D	April 4-5	New Albany, IN
Men's C-D	April 18-19	Indianapolis, IN
Men's C-D	April 25-26	Louisville, KY
Men's C	May 2-3	Grove City, OH
Men's C-D	May 9-10	Cincinnati, OH
Men's C-D	May 16-17	Louisville, KY
Men's C-D	May 16-17	Canton, MI
Men's C-D	May 30-31	Akron, OH
Men's C	June 6-7	Harrison, OH
Men's C-D	June 13-14	Sterling Heights, MI
Men's C-D	June 13-14	Cincinnati, OH
Men's C-D	June 19-21	Sylvania, OH
Men's C-D	June 27-28	Cincinnati, OH
Men's C-D	June 27-28	Louisville, KY
Men's C-D	July 3-5	Sylvania, OH
Men's C-D	July 11-12	Milford, OH
Men's C-D	July 11-12	Indianapolis, IN
Men's C-D	July 18-19	Sterling Heights, MI
Men's D	March 13-15	Cincinnati, OH
Men's D	March 28-29	Cincinnati, OH
Men's D	April 4-5	Milford, OH
Men's D	April 11	Hebron, KY
Men's D	April 18-19	Louisville, KY
Men's D	April 18-19	Fairborn, OH
Men's D	April 25-26	Milford, OH
Men's D	May 2-3	Canton, MI
Men's D	May 9-10	Cincinnati, OH
Men's D	May 9-10	Sylvania, OH
Men's D	May 16-17	Dayton, OH
Men's D	May 23-24	Indianapolis, IN
Men's D	May 30-31	Louisville, KY
Men's D	June 6-7	Cincinnati, OH
Men's D	June 6-7	Sterling Heights, MI
Men's D	June 6-7	Louisville, KY
Men's D	June 13-14	Akron, OH
Men's D	June 20-21	Lebanon, OH
Men's D	June 27-28	Columbus, IN
Men's D	June 27-28	Sterling Heights, MI
Men's D	July 4-5	Louisville, KY
Men's D	July 11-12	Sterling Heights, MI

Men's D	July 18-19	Cuyahoga Falls, OH
Men's D	July 25-26	Springfield, OH
Men's D	August 1-2	Sterling Heights, MI
Women's C-D	March 13-14	Cincinnati, OH
Women's B-C-D	April 18	Milford, OH
Women's B-C-D	May 2	Cincinnati, OH
Women's D	May 30-31	Columbus, OH
Women's B-C-D	June 6-7	Milford, OH
Women's B-C-D	June 20-21	Harrison, OH
Mixed Couples	April 25	Cincinnati, OH
Mixed Couples	May 9	Cincinnati, OH
Mixed Couples	May 17	Harrison, OH
Mixed Couples	July 4-5	Dayton, OH
Mixed Couples	July 11-12	Lebanon, OH
Mixed Couples	August 1	Milford, OH
Mixed Couples	September 19-20	Columbus, OH
Men's One-Pitch	October 3-4	Milford, OH

**PLEASE NOTE:** Tournament dates and sites listed above are subject to change. Check the USSSA website at [www.ussa.com](http://www.ussa.com) regularly for possible changes to tournament dates and sites.

### **USSSA Awards 2009 Great Lakes Men's "D" Nationals To Expressway Park**

ChampionsGate, Fl.--The United States Specialty Sports Association has (USSSA) awarded the Great Lakes Division Men's Class "D" National Championship Tournaments to Expressway Park for 2009.

Last year's tournament was won by BCP/ASC/Big Sonny's Pawn Shop of Columbus, Oh., over a 60-team field in Ft. Knox, Ky.

In all, ten Great Lakes Division National Championship Tournaments were awarded at the USSSA National Meeting, held November 16-23 in ChampionsGate, Fl.

Men's Great Lakes Division National Championships awarded included the Class "B," Class "C" North and Class "E" North to Sterling Heights, Mi.; the "C" South to Columbus, In, Oh., the "D" North to Sylvania, Oh., the "D" South to Milford, Oh., and the "E" South to Ft. Knox, Ky.

The Great Lakes Division Women's National Championship Tournaments - the "B-C" and the "D" - were awarded to Columbus, In.

The Mixed Couples "C" and "D" National Tournaments will be held in Dayton, Oh.

The Sterling Heights events will be held August 29-30, while the other Men's divisions and Women's Nationals will be held over Labor Day Weekend.

The Mixed "C" and "D" will be September 26-27.

Last year's Great Lakes Division National Championships ranged in size from 4 teams (Mixed "C" in Dayton, Oh.) to 80 (Men's Class "E" South in Columbus, In.).

The Men's Class "C" (N), which was played in Sterling Height, Mi., last year, had 17 teams, while the Men's "C" South in Milford, Oh. had 24. The Men's Class "D" (N) in Sterling Heights had 28 teams. The Men's "E" (N) in Sylvania, Oh. had 34 teams, while the Mixed "D" South had 15 teams.

The Women's "B-C" and "D" in Milford had 6 and 15 teams, respectively.

### **2009 USSSA GREAT LAKES DIVISION NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENTS**

August 29-30	Men's Class B	Sterling Heights, MI
August 29-30	Men's Class C (N)	Sterling Heights, MI
September 5-7	Men's Class C (S)	Columbus, IN
September 5-7	Men's Class D (N)	Sylvania, OH
September 5-7	Men's Class D (S)	Milford, OH
August 29-30	Men's Class E (N)	Sterling Heights, MI
September 5-7	Men's Class E (S)	Ft. Knox, KY
September 5-7	Women's Class B	Columbus, IN
September 5-7	Women's Class C	Columbus, IN
September 5-7	Women's Class D	Columbus, IN
September 26-27	Mixed C & D	Dayton, OH

### **Florence Couple Purchase Lease, Promise Major Improvements... Jeff And Denise Conley To Operate Northern Kentucky Sports Complex In 2009**

Taylor Mill, Ky. --The winds of change are blowing at Northern Kentucky Sports Park.

And fanning those winds are a Florence, Ky. couple who have purchased the lease to operate the Taylor Mill softball complex in 2009.

Jeff and Denise Conley, a pair of systems analysts employed at Convergys in Cincinnati, took over the park's lease in December. Since then they have worked feverishly towards their goal of restoring the once proud facility to like-new condition. The new lessees promise extensive improvements in park operations as well.

"Since we purchased the lease, the two outer buildings have been completely cleaned out to make room for storage and vehicles," Jeff Conley told the Softball News in late November. "Currently we're starting to revamp the concession area and clean it out and

paint it and install new floors. We're also putting a new roof on. The shingles will be delivered this week. The play area will also be redone, and the outfields have been aerated, double-seeded and fertilized for the first time in years. We hope to get the scoreboards working by the beginning of the season, and the lips between the outfield and infield are being removed. Also home plate is being pushed out approximately ten feet to increase the foul area and give players more room and to improve viewing."

Conley says that a concession area will be built on field three and that concession prices will undergo a "major overhauling.

"We're also going back to Coca-Cola," says Conley. "The park went to RC last year and a lot of people complained about it.

"Overall we're just repainting and cleaning up as best as we can right now," says Conley. "Eventually we're looking at new fencing, but we're not going to be able to do that this year."

Conley says he and his wife first got involved with the park last spring.

"My oldest son plays for the Northern Kentucky Knights, which was sponsored by the park," explains Conley. "The park needed some help last year, so we came in and tried to help them get their books squared away. Eventually Mr. Dixon (park owner Robbie Dixon) asked us if we wanted to take over the lease the end of December."

Conley's wife's interest in owning a business, along with an attraction to the park's atmosphere held by two of the couple's three sons, played a big role in the family's decision to take the park over.

"Denise likes the idea of owning her own business and being her own boss," says Conley. "And even though she's not quitting her day job, there's the potential for that. And if we can get the park cleaned up and purchase it, we would like to see that happen eventually. She was the manager of a Long John Silver's restaurant so she has a concession-restaurant background.

"Also," adds Conley, "my kids enjoy being around the park. My 16-year old is obsessed with baseball, and my 5-year old would live up here if you let him."

The Conley's have three boys: Jeremy (16), Justin (14) and Josh (5).

Conley says that Denise will be the park manager. Dan Nunn, the groundskeeper and assistant park manager last season, will be in charge of slow pitch and fast pitch softball, and Rodney Sexton will return as the park's baseball director.

"I'll be overseeing all the financials and the concession stand and doing all the ordering," says Denise. "Dan will take care of the grounds and scheduling the teams, and I'll be overseeing the entire park."

Jeff Conley promises that the park will be “friendlier” beginning next season.

“Our patrons will find that we're willing to work with them, and that we won't be showing any favoritism towards any teams. Also we'll be increasing umpire pay to match what other parks pay, and we'll be outsourcing our umpire scheduling to Pam Hardy. The buck will stop with her on controversial calls - not the park.”

Working scoreboards, a beer garden, additional seating, batting cages, cornhole and wi-fi are also in the works for 2009.

“We think that will be a really nice feature for businessmen who come up here after work,” says Conley regarding the wi-fi. “Our goal is to put as many things up here as possible to keep people here, plus to provide a clean and friendly environment.”

Long-term goals include new fencing, blacktopping the parking lot and increasing the length of the building so the park can operate indoor “winter rag ball leagues.

“That would enable us to generate money all year long,” says Conley.

Rumors began spreading shortly after the Conley's took over the park that it would become almost exclusively a baseball facility. But Conley says that simply not true.

“We had about 65 softball teams last year, and we hope to increase that to 100 in 2009,” he says. “Baseball will be more of a weekend tournament type thing through the early summer months. We want softball nightly and men's round robins and qualifiers and state tournaments. And if someone tells us they want to put on a tournament, we'll throw it in here. We do have weekends available.”

The facility, which will now be known as “Northern Kentucky Sports Complex,” doesn't plan on offering fast pitch tournaments. But it will be the home field for Holy Cross High School and run a high school league on Thursday afternoons for six weeks in the summer.

“Those games will be over before softball starts,” notes Conley.

League fees and formats will be the same as last season, when an eight game spring and summer season were offered followed by fall double-header leagues.

“Teams can sign up now on our website ([www.nkscx.com](http://www.nkscx.com)) or they can call the park at 581-PARK (7275),” says Conley.

Baseball tournaments for 2009 are already posted on the park's website. A slow pitch calendar should be up by mid-December. The season will kick off with the 8th Annual “Bash for Cash” on March 13-15.

Denise Conley says she and her husband are both “excited and nervous about our new venture.

“We will make mistakes, and we ask that people don't hesitate to let us know. We want to be fair so people will enjoy themselves and come back. Last year there were a lot of issues with customer service, which is very important to us.”

### **Ten NIT's, Four State Tourneys, Great Lakes Nationals Highlight 2009 Expressway Calendar**

Milford, OH.--Ten USSSA National Invitational Tournaments, four state tournaments, and the USSSA Men's Class “D” Great Lakes Division National Championships will be among the featured events on an expansive Expressway Park tournament calendar for 2009.

Expressway Park's National Invitationals are among the largest and most prestigious in the nation. They include three Men's B-C, a Men's C-D, two Men's D, and a Men's One-Pitch NIT; plus a Mixed Couples and two Women's NIT's. Each NIT is co-sponsored by Worth Sports Company and Bud Light.

Expressway Park's B-C NIT's will be held this year on April 11th, May 16th and June 20th. Each will feature a paid World berth and travel expense money to the USSSA B World Tournament September 18-20 in Lake Buena Vista, Fl. The highest finishing C team will earn a paid berth to the U-Trip C World September 24-27 in Lake Buena Vista (or \$250 travel if the team already has a paid World berth).

Expressway's C-D NIT will also advance the highest finishing C team to Florida. The 11th Annual Bud Light-Worth-USSSA C-D NIT will take place on July 11th. The event will again offer a D World berth to Sterling Heights, Mi. September 24-27.

Expressway Park's D NIT's are scheduled for April 4th and April 25th. The late April tournament, also an E World qualifier, drew a solid 20 teams in 2008. The early April event is a new offering. A berth to the USSSA D World and \$600 travel expense is at stake (based on 13 teams).

Expressway's other NIT's include the Bud Light-Worth-Bernie Dickman Memorial Women's Round Robin Classic NIT on April 18th, the Bud Light-Worth Blue Chip Classic Women's NIT on June 6-7, the Bud Light-Worth Mixed Couples Mid-Summer Shootout NIT August 1st, and the Bud Light-Worth One-Pitch NIT October 3-4. The two Women's NIT's will feature World Tournament berths to the U-Trip Women's Worlds September 24-27 in Lake Buena Vista, Fl. The 27th Annual Bud Light-Worth One-Pitch NIT offers an A-B division, plus a “Gold” division for C-D teams and a “Silver” division for D-E.

Expressway Park's most prominent slow pitch events in 2009 will be the USSSA Great Lakes Division Men's Class D National Championships. Play gets underway over Labor

Day Weekend, September 5-7. The D Nationals will award two paid berths to the U-Trip World in Lake Buena Vista.

Other major events slated for the park include the USSSA Men's B State Tournament August 15th, the USSSA Men's Class C on August 22-23, the "E Rec" and Mixed Couples State Tournament on August 29th, and the USSSA Men's Class D Fall State on October 10th.

Six E World qualifiers offering paid World berths to the U-Trip E World September 24-27 in Lake Buena Vista, Fl. will be held on April 4th, April 18th, April 25th (as part of the D NIT), June 20th, and July 18th. July 18th is the Ohio USSSA District IX Championship, and will award \$1,500.

Men's C, D and E National/State qualifiers will be held most Sunday mornings at Expressway, and feature a three game round robin format. USSSA travel expense money will be awarded along with double points for D teams playing in a C-D division, and for E teams playing in a D-E division.

Then again this year on Tuesday through Sunday, August 3-9, Expressway will offer its 8th Annual Mid-Summer League Championship Series. All Expressway Park Men's D, E, E Rec and Mixed league teams not participating in the ASA Metro, which is being run during the same time frame, are eligible to compete. The tournament format will be round robin with all teams playing at least three games during the week, followed by a double elimination tournament over the weekend. Teams playing in both the first and second season at the park will receive a free entry fee into the tournament. The entry fee for teams playing only one season will be \$99. The winner of each division will receive their choice of a 2009 league fee valued at \$900 or \$500 in cash.

USSSA qualifying tournaments, many featuring special prizes and awards, and Expressway Park three game "mini" and four game "maxi" round robins for Men's and Mixed Couples C, D and E teams, will be held throughout the summer, including Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day weekend. One-Pitch National Qualifiers will also be held each Holiday weekend.

Expressway Park is located on Rt. 50 at I-275 in Milford. For a 2009 tournament brochure call Expressway Park at 513-831-2273. Tournament information packages for all of Expressway Park's USSSA NIT's can be downloaded at the park's website, [www.expresswaypark.com](http://www.expresswaypark.com).

**NOTE:** Expressway Park's tournament calendar is subject to change. A final 2008 calendar will be posted by January 31st, 2009.

## **2009 EXPRESSWAY PARK SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT CALENDAR**

### **MEN'S CLASS A-B TOURNAMENTS**

April 11 USSSA B-C NIT  
May 16 USSSA B-C NIT  
June 20 USSSA B-C NIT  
August 15 USSSA Men's B Ohio State Championship  
October 3-4 USSSA Men's One-Pitch NIT

### **MEN'S CLASS C TOURNAMENTS**

March 28-29 Pre-Season Mini Round Robins  
April 5 - Sunday USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
April 11 USSSA B-C NIT  
April 11 - Evening USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
April 19 - Sunday USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
April 26 - Sunday USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
May 16 USSSA B-C NIT  
May 17 - Sunday USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
May 25 - Monday USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
May 25 - Monday USSSA One-Pitch National Qualifier RR  
June 7 - Sunday USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
June 14 - Sunday USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
June 20 USSSA B-C NIT  
June 21 - Sunday USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
June 28 - Sunday USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
July 5 - Sunday USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
July 5 - Sunday USSSA One-Pitch National Qualifier RR  
July 11 USSSA C-D NIT  
July 12 - Sunday USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
July 19 - Sunday USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
July 26 - Sunday USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
August 16 - Sunday USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
August 22-23 USSSA Men's C State Tournament  
August 30 - Sunday USSSA C National/State Qualifier  
Sept. 7 - Mon USSSA Men's One-Pitch National Qualifier  
September 19 USSSA C Fall State CASH Qualifier RR  
October 3-4 USSSA Men's One-Pitch NIT  
October 24-25 Player Appreciation Blow-Out

### **MEN'S CLASS D TOURNAMENTS**

March 28-29 Pre-Season Mini Round Robins  
April 4 USSSA D NIT  
April 5 - Sunday USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
April 11 USSSA D National/State Qualifier RR  
April 11 - Evening USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
April 19 - Sunday USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
April 25 USSSA D-E NIT



April 26 - Sunday USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
 May 17 - Sunday USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
 May 25 - Monday USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
 May 25 - Monday USSSA One-Pitch National Qualifier RR  
 June 7 - Sunday USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
 June 14 - Sunday USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
 June 20 USSSA D National/E World Super Cash Qualifier  
 June 21 - Sunday USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
 June 28 - Sunday USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
 July 5 - Sunday USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
 July 5 - Sunday USSSA One-Pitch National Qualifier RR  
 July 11 USSSA C-D NIT  
 July 12 - Sunday USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
 July 19 - Sunday USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
 July 26 - Sunday USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
 August 3-9 Mid-Summer League Championship Series  
 August 16 - Sunday USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
 August 30 - Sunday USSSA D National/State Qualifier  
 September 5-7 USSSA Men's D Great Lakes National  
 September 7 USSSA Men's One-Pitch National Qualifier  
 September 19 USSSA D Fall State CASH Qualifier RR  
 October 3-4 USSSA Men's One-Pitch NIT  
 October 10 USSSA Men's D Fall State Championship  
 October 24-25 Player Appreciation Blow-Out

## **MEN'S CLASS E TOURNAMENTS**

March 28-29 Pre-Season Mini Round Robins  
 April 4 - Evening USSSA E World Super Cash Qualifier  
 April 5 - Sunday USSSA E National/State Qualifier  
 April 11 USSSA E National/State Qualifier RR  
 April 11 - Evening USSSA E National/State Qualifier  
 April 18 USSSA E World/National/State Qualifier  
 April 19 - Sunday USSSA E National/State Qualifier  
 April 25 USSSA D-E NIT  
 April 26 - Sunday USSSA E National/State Qualifier  
 April 16 USSSA E World/National/State Qualifier  
 May 17 - Sunday USSSA E National/State Qualifier  
 May 25 - Mon. USSSA One-Pitch National Qualifier  
 May 25 - Monday USSSA One-Pitch National Qualifier RR  
 June 7 - Sunday USSSA E National/State Qualifier  
 June 14 - Sunday USSSA E National/State Qualifier  
 June 20 USSSA E World/National/State Qualifier  
 June 21 - Sunday USSSA E National/State Qualifier  
 June 28 - Sunday USSSA E National/State Qualifier  
 July 5 - Sunday USSSA E National/State Qualifier

July 5 - Sunday USSSA One-Pitch National Qualifier RR  
July 12 - Sunday USSSA E National/State Qualifier  
July 18 USSSA E World Super Duper \$1500 Dist. IX Champ.  
July 19 - Sunday USSSA E National/State Qualifier  
July 26 - Sunday USSSA E National/State Qualifier  
August 3-9 Mid-Summer League Championship Series  
August 16 - Sunday USSSA E National/State Qualifier  
August 30 - Sunday USSSA E National/State Qualifier  
Sept. 7 - Mon. USSSA Men's One-Pitch National Qualifier  
September 19 USSSA E Fall State CASH Qualifier RR  
October 3-4 USSSA Men's One-Pitch NIT  
October 17 Great Lakes Men's E Fall National  
October 24-25 Player Appreciation Blow-Out

### **MEN'S CLASS E REC TOURNAMENTS**

May 17 - Sunday USSSA E Rec State Qualifier  
August 10 - Sunday USSSA E Rec State Qualifier  
August 29 USSSA E Rec State Tournament  
September 23 - Sunday USSSA Fall E Rec State

### **MIXED COUPLES TOURNAMENTS**

March 28-29 Mixed Pre-Season Mini Round Robins  
April 5 - Sunday USSSA Mixed World/Natl./State Qualifier  
April 11 - Evening USSSA Mixed World/Natl./State Qualifier  
April 19 - Sunday USSSA Mixed World/Natl./State Qualifier  
May 17 - Sunday USSSA Mixed World/Natl./State Qualifier  
May 25 - Monday USSSA Mixed World/Natl./State Qualifier  
June 14 - Sunday USSSA Mixed World/Natl./State Qualifier  
June 21 - Sunday USSSA Mixed World/Natl./State Qualifier  
June 28 - Sunday USSSA Mixed World/Natl./State Qualifier  
July 5 - Sunday USSSA Mixed World/Natl./State Qualifier  
July 11 - Sunday USSSA Mixed World/Natl./State Qualifier  
July 19 - Sunday USSSA Mixed World/Natl./State Qualifier  
July 26 - Sunday USSSA Mixed World/Natl./State Qualifier  
August 1 USSSA Mid-Summer Shootout Mixed NIT  
August 3-9 Mid-Summer League Championship Series  
August 16 - Sun. USSSA Mixed World/Natl./State Qualifier  
August 29 USSSA Mixed Couples State Tournament  
September 7 - Monday Mixed World/Natl./State Qualifier  
October 24-25 Player Appreciation Blow-Out

### **GIRLS' YOUTH TOURNAMENTS**

May 23-24 USSSA Girls' Youth Fast Pitch World Qualifier

June 13-14 USSSA Girls' Youth Fast Pitch Grand Slam NIT  
July 3-4 USSSA Girls' Youth FP All-American NIT  
September 12-13 USSSA Girls' Youth Fast Pitch Fall State

### **WOMEN'S TOURNAMENTS**

March 28-29 Women's Pre-Season Mini Round Robins  
April 18 USSSA Bernie Dickman Memorial RR Classic NIT  
June 6-7 USSSA Blue Chip Classic NIT  
August 15-16 USSSA Women's B-C, D Ohio State Tourn.  
October 24-25 Player Appreciation Blow-Out

### **SPECIALTY TOURNAMENTS**

Sept. 26-27 Buckeye Battle Of The Badges Law Enforcement

### **MEN'S & Mixed C-D-E ROUND ROBINS**

Selected Saturdays, Sundays & Holidays March 28-Oct. 25

### **New Manager Bill Chard Making Improvements, Changing Image Of Kolping Park**

After spending the last five years at Riverstar Sportsplex, park manager Bill Chard will be hanging out his shingle at a new facility in 2009: Kolping Park.

Chard, part of the Wessel Sports team that once operated five tri-state softball complexes, couldn't resist the offer of more money, less responsibility, and greater job security and stability at Kolping.

“Kolping has had the same ownership since the park was opened. It's not been in limbo every year like Riverstar,” says Chard.

Chard also got a hefty raise and will only be overseeing a three-diamond facility at Kolping compared to five fields at Riverstar. “This was best for me and my family,” he says.

Chard says he loved working at Riverstar, which was close to his home in Ft. Thomas, Ky., and where he had made many friends with players and umpires. But after the death of owner Jim Wessel last September, his future at the park became uncertain.

“When I first saw the Kolping post on cincysoftball.com that they were looking for a manager, I wasn't interested,” recalls Chard. “But when things became unstable at Riverstar, I emailed my resume.”

Ten days later, Chard got a call to come in for an interview. After a subsequent interview two days later, he was offered the position.

Kolping's previous manager had resigned in mid-season.

Since accepting the Kolping job in mid-November, Chard has set about "to change the entire image of the park.

"Kolping has become known as a park that never plays when it rains, that doesn't answer the phone, and doesn't offer a tournament program," says Chard.

That image is going to be different, he promises.

"We've made numerous improvements already," says Chard. "Rainouts will be reduced as we've installed new infields. And for the first time ever, the park will have a full-time field crew. Kolping also has its own website now - [www.kolpingpark.com](http://www.kolpingpark.com) - where teams can obtain league and tournament information. And we're upgrading the umpiring because of our improved training system.

"We're also adding a full-line pro shop offering softball apparel and merchandise and custom ordering," adds Chard. "And we're enclosing the pavilion and re-opening the bar and expanding the menu. Those are just a few of the things we're doing."

Two things that won't change, says Chard, will be Kolping's successful league program and atmosphere.

"We're still offering the same men's and mixed leagues Sunday through Friday. Teams shouldn't notice any change there. And we'll still have the same safe, clean park with a fun, family atmosphere and free gate admission."

Probably Chard's biggest challenge will be resurrecting Kolping's tournament program, which crash-burned following the 2006 season. Prior to that, Kolping's tournament program was the envy of the west side of town. Saturday USSSA qualifiers, and Saturday night and Sunday morning round robins were as dependable as death and taxes.

"The previous management didn't want to run tournaments," says Chard. "I'm committed to working seven days a week and to getting the tournament program back to where it was and even beyond."

Indeed. Kicking off Kolping's 2009 season on March 13-15 will be the 8th annual "Bash For Cash" which will include showcasing some of the best players in the country in a home run derby on Friday night.

"That usually draws a nice crowd of well over 1,000 people," says Chard, who had headquartered the event at Riverstar the last five years.

In an effort to rebuild Kolping's once popular Saturday night round robins, Kolping will introduce the "Budweiser Round Robin Series" this year. "We'll have our own points

system on the internet, and the top sixteen teams will compete in September to win a Kolping Park sponsorship valued at over \$3,500,” says Chard.

Chard says that these events and the park's Sunday morning round robins will be held as USSSA qualifiers instead of unsanctioned round robins for the first time this year for two reasons. “First, this will help teams that want to get USSSA points to qualify for the world and get better seeds in tournaments. And secondly, in this sue-happy world we live in, it will help protect our umpires and the park with insurance.”

What can Kolping patrons expect from Bill Chard this year?

“They'll get a fair, hard-working park director who will be there to answer any questions and concerns the teams might have, and somebody who has over twenty years experience in softball and customer service.”

## **2009 KOLPING PARK TOURNAMENT CALENDAR**

### **USSSA QUALIFYING ROUND ROBINS**

#### **SATURDAY MORNING USSSA MEN'S "D-E" ROUND ROBIN QUALIFYING TOURNAMENTS**

April 25            State-National Qualifier  
May 16            State-National Qualifier  
12 Custom Dri-Fit Shirts - Three Game Minimum  
July 18 State-National Qualifier  
July 25 State-National Qualifier  
August 8-9 - Last Chance      State-National Qualifier

#### **USSSA MEN'S "E" STATE-NATIONAL-WORLD QUALIFIERS -PAID WORLD BERTH**

May 9 State-National-World  
June 27            State-National-World  
July 19 - Sunday      State-National-World  
August 1            State-National-World

#### **SATURDAY MORNING USSSA MEN'S "E" STATE NATIONAL QUALIFYING TOURNAMENTS**

March 28 - 12 Elite Turfs      Men's Class E State-National  
April 11 - 12 Bat Bags          Men's E State-National

#### **SATURDAY NIGHT BUDWEISER ROUND ROBINS**

USSSA C-D-E Round Robin State-National Qualifiers - Top 16 Teams Qualify For Series Championship Sept. 12th Featuring \$2,000 Kolping Sponsorship

March 28, April 11, April 18, April 25, May 2, May 9, June 27, July 18, July 25, August 1

### **USSSA FALL STATE QUALIFYING RR'S**

#### **SATURDAY MORNING ROUND ROBINS**

USSSA D-E Round Robins - August 22, August 29

#### **SUNDAY MORNING ROUND ROBINS**

USSSA C-D-E Round Robin State-National Qualifiers

March 29, April 26, May 3, May 10, May 17, May 31, June 21, June 28, July 26, August 2, August 9

#### **SUNDAY MORNING ROUND ROBINS**

USSSA D-E Round Robins - August 23, August 30

USSSA C-D-E Round Robins - September 12, September 19, September 26, October 3

### **NON-QUALIFYING FRIDAY ROUND ROBINS**

March 13 Bash For Cash Round Robins

March 20, March 27, April 10 Sweatshirt Round Robins

### **KOLPING PARK SPECIAL EVENTS**

March 14-15 8th Annual Bash For Cash  
WSL A-B, D-E; USSSA Men's D NIT, Women's NIT

March 21-22 8th Annual Bash For Cash  
USSSA C NIT, USSSA E World Qualifier

April 18-19 USSSA D National-E World  
Super Qualifier - \$1,500 Cash - Paid E World Berth

May 9 USSSA Mixed C-D-E NIT

May 23-24 USSSA City Slam C And D Divisions

May 23-24 USSSA "Memorial" D-E - 4 Game Min.

May 25 One-Pitch Tournament - USSSA C-D-E

\$600 Travel Based On 16 Teams - Three Game Min.

June 6-7 Black Softball Circuit - TBI Midwest Extrav.

June 13-14 USSSA C-D NIT

June 20 USSSA D District Championship

\$500 Cash - Three Game Guarantee

July 4-5 USSSA "Firecracker" D-E  
Paid D And E Natl. Berths Plus \$500 Cash To Winners  
July 11-12 Schuetzenfest USSSA D-E - 5 Game Min.  
August 15-16 Black Softball Circuit - Ready For Worlds  
September 12 Budweiser RR Series Championship  
Top 16 Teams From Round Robin Series Qualify  
\$2,000 Kolping Sponsorship  
October 11-12 Men's And Coed Customer Appreciation  
2010 Kolping Park Sponsorship

**USSSA Major NIT, City Slam Are Marquis Mid-America Ballyard Events For 2009; Tournaments To Award Over \$20,000 In Team Travel**

Colerain Township, Oh.--With combined purses in excess of \$20,000, the 7th Annual USSSA "City Slam" and a Men's Major National Invitational Tournament will again be the marquee events on a 30-weekend Mid-America Ballyard softball calendar in 2009.

Located on Blue Rock Road at East Miami River Road, Mid-America Ballyard – formerly Eggleston Park - features four lighted, irrigated diamonds with electronic scoreboards, a family atmosphere, an abundance of shade trees, and Mid-America's exclusive, two story clubhouse featuring the "On Deck Sports Bar."

The Billy Backman IV Memorial "City Slam," which will be held on May 22-24 (Men's "C" and "D" and Women's divisions) and May 29-31 (Men's "B-C NIT," "E" and "E Rec" divisions). Last year's tournament boasted a \$17,400 cash purse, including a \$2,850 purse in the "B-C" division, \$4,900 in the "C," \$2,200 in the "D," \$3,750 in the "E," and \$1,050 in the "E Rec," Mixed "C" and Mixed "D/E" divisions. Last year Mike Foulks Auto Body/Team Insanity EAP/Wessel/Real Estate Title (C), Cincinnati Impact (D), D & D/Dirty Dozen (E) and We Don't Have One (E Rec) won their respective divisions in this sixth annual event.

The U-Trip Major NIT, which will be held July 17-19, looms once again as a national leviathan in terms of regular season events drawing both large numbers of teams and nationally prominent ones. Last year's monster 62-team event was won by Resmondo/Specialty Tank/Worth, which outlasted Jean Shoppe/Easton 36-35 in a double finals to complete a six game sweep.

The 62-team field is considered to be the largest U-Trip Major NIT ever held, as "C" and "D" teams vied for \$500 travel expense and a paid berth to their respective World Tournaments.

"We're extremely pleased to have been selected as one of the sites for a USSSA Major NIT again," says the Ballyard's David Maury. "It's an honor to have the best softball teams in the nation playing at our facility. And the lure of \$500 travel expense and a paid World berth should attract plenty of class "C" and "D" teams" again.

The Major NIT will be one of four USSSA NIT's at the park in 2009. Mid-America Ballyard will host a U-Trip "B-C" NIT on April 4 and May 29-31, and a "D" NIT on June 6-7. Both "B-C" NIT's will be offering a paid "C" World berth. The winner of the "B" berth will advance to Lake Buena Vista, Fl. September 18-20 with \$600 in travel expense (based on 13 teams). The winners of the "C" World berths qualify for the U-Trip "C" World September 24-27 - also in Lake Buena Vista. The June 6-7 "D" NIT will also feature \$600 in travel expense and a paid World berth to Sterling Heights, Mi. September 24-27.

"These events propel Mid-America Ballyard into the local and national limelight on those weekends, and provide our park teams with an excellent opportunity to compete against regional and national competition and to qualify for a USSSA World Tournament," observes Maury.

Several ASA tournaments are also slated for Mid-America Ballyard in 2009. Most notable will be the ASA Cincinnati Men's Metro on August 1-2, the Metro Consolation on August 8-9, and the Church Metro on August 21.

Many "Special Events" are also scheduled for 2009, beginning with the "Bash for Cash" on March 13-15. The "St. Patty's Week of Suds" will follow on March 20-22. Then the Cincysoftball.com USSSA "C," "D" and "E" qualifiers will be April 10. The Cash Cow will be June 13-14, and the Budweiser WEBN Frog Classic July 4-5. The Easton Bring Your Real Skills wraps up the month of July on the 25th and 26th, followed by the Nazarene National Tournament September 4-5 and a "Pre-World Cash Bash." The Cincysoftball.com "Super Draft IV" on October 3-4, an "Appreciation Tournament" October 17-18, the "Halloween-Wooden Bat-Cash Cow" on Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, and then the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Toys for Tots on November 7<sup>th</sup> will bring down the curtain on the 2009 season.

The June Cash Cow, which had previously been run earlier in the Spring at the park, will "give teams a chance to earn some money to help them with league and tournament entry fees," says David Maury.

"The payout will be based on participation," he adds.

The Easton "Bring Your Real Skills" Tournament gives players an opportunity to showcase their hitting skills "while all swinging the exact same bats," says Maury.

"The winners will get a set of Easton bats, and second and third place will probably get shirts, hats or batting gloves.

The "Pre-World Cash Bash" will help teams earn monies to use to advance to their respective USSSA World Tournaments, says Maury.



In addition to their NIT's and special events, Mid-America Ballyard will offer two series this year, including a second year program - the "Pepsi Metro Series," and an all new program, the "USSSA World Travel Series."

"The Pepsi Series gives teams a chance to earn points, and after the series, the top point recipient will get their entry fee paid into the Metro Tournament," explains Maury.

The "USSSA World Travel Series" also utilizes a point system.

"Teams earn points for participation, and when the series is over, we'll be awarding cash to help teams travel to the USSSA World," says Maury.

Park Manager David Maury says tournament participants will appreciate the park's heated clubhouse during the late spring and early fall tournaments.

"Our patrons can escape the cold weather in the early spring and late fall by taking advantage of our clubhouse between their games," points out Maury. "And on hot summer days they'll enjoy the air conditioning."

For information on Mid-America Ballyard tournaments for 2009, call the park at 245-1212, or visit the park's website at [midamericaballyard.com](http://midamericaballyard.com).

## **2009 MID-AMERICA BALLYARD SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT CALENDAR**

### **2009 ASA TOURNAMENTS**

ASA Frog Classic Men's C-D      July 4-5  
ASA Cincinnati Metro Tournament    August 1-2  
ASA Metro Consolation      August 7-9

### **2009 USSSA CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS**

USSSA Men's Major NIT      July 17-19  
"Men's Major World Series Berth, Plus Paid World Berth & \$500 Travel Expense To USSSA C and D World!"  
USSSA Men's Class B-C NIT      April 4-5  
"Highest Finishing C Team Wins Paid Berth To C World!"  
USSSA Greater Cincinnati City Slam B-C NIT      May 29-31  
USSSA Greater Cincinnati City Slam C      May 22-24  
USSSA Greater Cincinnati City Slam D      May 22-24  
USSSA Greater Cincinnati City Slam Women's      May 22-24  
USSSA Greater Cincinnati City Slam E      May 29-31  
USSSA Greater Cincinnati City Slam E Rec      May 29-31  
USSSA Men's Class D NIT      June 6-7  
"Easton 'Westside Rumble' - Direct World Berth!"

## **2009 USSSA QUALIFYING TOURNAMENTS**

Men's Class B-C NIT April 4-5  
"Men's Class B & Class C World Tournament Qualifiers!"  
Men's Class B-C NIT May 31-June 1  
"Men's Class B & Class C World Tournament Qualifiers!"  
Men's Class C April 11  
Men's Class C May 22-24  
Men's Class D April 11  
Men's Class D May 22-24  
Men's Class D NIT June 6-7  
"Easton 'Westside Rumble' - Direct World Berth!"  
Men's Class E April 11  
Men's Class E - World Qualifier May 29-31  
"Direct Paid Berth To Disney's Wide World of Sports!"  
Men's Class E - World Qualifier June 6  
Women's Class B-C-D May 22-24

## **2009 EGGLESTON PARK SPECIAL EVENTS**

Bash For Cash March 14-15  
Bash For Cash March 21-22  
St. Patty's Day of Suds March 21-22  
Cincysoftball.com USSSA C, USSSA D, USSSA E April 11  
City Slam Entry Fee Round Robin May 9  
Pepsi Metro Series May 9  
City Slam Entry Fee Round Robin May 10  
City Slam Entry Fee Round Robin May 16  
City Slam Entry Fee Round Robin May 17  
Cash Cow June 13-14  
Pepsi Metro Series June 27  
USSSA World Travel Series I June 28  
Budweiser Frog Classic" ASA C-D July 4-5  
Tournament Of Champions I July 11-12  
Pepsi Metro Series July 11-12  
Easton Bring Your Skills July 25-26  
ASA Metro Tune-Up July 25-26  
ASA Metro Tournament August 1-2  
ASA Metro Consolation August 7-9  
Duck Soup August 15  
USSSA World Travel Series II August 15-16  
ASA Church Metro August 22  
USSSA World Travel Series III August 22-23  
USSSA World Travel Series IV August 29-30  
Nazarene National Tournament September 4-5  
Pre-World Cash Bash September 12-13

Super Draft    October 3  
Tournament Of Champions II        October 10-11  
Appreciation Tournament    October 17-18  
Clean Out The Closet Round Robin    October 24-25  
Wooden Bat Halloween Cash Cow    October 31  
Toys For Tots November 6

## **MEN'S CLASS C-D-E ROUND ROBINS**

Every Saturday, Sunday & Holiday    March 7-October 25

### **Monster Qualifiers Are Traditional "Kickoff" Events For Greater Cincinnati Tournament Season... Five USSSA NIT's, Big "D" And "E," Two State Tournaments Highlight 2009 Pastime Park Calendar**

Harrison, OH.--Five United States Specialty Sports Association National Invitational Tournaments and two USSSA State Championships will be among the major events highlighting a 35-weekend 2009 tournament calendar at Pastime Park in Harrison.

Pastime's National Invitational Tournaments are among the oldest and most prestigious in the nation. They include two Men's "B-C" NIT's, a Men's "C" NIT, a Women's NIT and a Mixed Couples NIT.

Kicking off the park's NIT program will be the 31st Annual Louisville Slugger-Bud Light-USSSA Men's "B-C" Early Bird Round Robin NIT on March 28-29. Last year's title was captured by Blitz/Watanabe/Bull/Minges/Wessel/Easton, which fended off House Rules/Holy Grail/Crosley's 17-14 in the championship game to complete a four game sweep of the sixteen team event.

Again this year, the Early Bird NIT will feature paid berths to USSSA "B" and "C" World Tournaments plus travel expense.

Pastime Park's next NIT will be the 9th Annual Bud Light-Worth "B-C" NIT on May 2-3. Like the "Early Bird" NIT, the event will also feature a direct paid berth to the USSSA Men's "B" and "C" Worlds, plus \$600 in sponsor travel expense money (based on 13 teams.

Mojo/Creative Stucco/Worth outlasted EAP/Wessel/Real Estate Title/Easton 23-12 in the second championship game after being ambushed 12-9 in the first finals.

Also in May will be the 27th Annual Worth-Bud Light Mixed Couples NIT on Sunday, May 17th. A U-Trip World qualifier, this long-standing classic offers World Tournament berths to the Mixed "C" World Tournament in West Columbia, SC, and the Mixed "D" and "E" Worlds in Lake Buena Vista, Fl. All three events will be held on October 16-18.

Crosley's stunned Thornton's 13-12 in the "C-D" division finals last year on the strength of a five-run rally in the bottom of the 7th. D's Restoration swept past three opponents for the "E" title.

The following month on June 6-7, Pastime will host two divisions of the Easton Westside Rumble, a U-Trip "C" NIT and "E" World qualifier that will boast a lavish awards package compliments of Easton Sports. In 2008, EAP/Wessel/Real Estate Title/QCN/Tigerfitness/Longshots/Easton double-dipped eventual USSSA "C" World runner-up PRI/Easton 11-6 and 11-10 for the title. The winners battled all the way through the losers' bracket after suffering an opening round loss.

Also in June, Pastime will host the 31st Annual Worth-Bud Light-Queen City Classic, which features divisions for Women's Class "B," "C" and "D" teams and is Greater Cincinnati's longest running women's tournament. Last year, Dented Bats polished off Fraley's 12-7 in the championship game of the "C" division to rack up their fifth title of the year, while in the "D" division, SOS Softball successfully defended their title, drilling Hill & Griffith 10-3 in the finals to wrap up a 5-0 outing.

Tournament packets or fliers for all five of Pastime Park's NIT's can be downloaded from the park's website beginning January 31st.

At the state level Pastime Park will host the USSSA Men's Southern One-Pitch State Tournament on Sunday, August 9th (for Men's "C," "D" and "E" teams), and the Ohio Class "E" State August 22-23.

Last year's Ohio USSSA Men's "E" State was also held at the Park, where it facilitated 50 teams.

"We're proud to be hosting this important event for the tenth time," says Pastime manager Steve Bruck. "We anticipate having a lot of local teams participate, especially from our own park."

Pastime Park also conducts an extensive schedule of USSSA qualifying tournaments that attract some 100 tri-state teams to the facility annually.

"We provide good umpiring and nice awards, and most of our tournaments are held on one day," points out Bruck.

Most prominent of Pastime's qualifiers are its two monster "C-D-E" season "kickoff" tournaments - the 11th Annual Pastime Park "Spring Open" on February 28-March 1, and the 11th Annual "Round Robin Spring Tune-Up" on March 7-8. These events have traditionally marked the opening of the tournament season in Greater Cincinnati.

While both events were rained out in 2008, the Spring Open drew a combined 26 teams in two divisions in 2007, while the Round Robin Spring Tune-Up attracted 22 teams.

Other “Special Events” slated for Pastime Park include the 8th Annual “Bash For Cash” on March 14-15, and two one-pitch jacket tournaments held on the Memorial Day and Labor Day holidays. The “Cincysoftball.com Big ‘E’ and the Big ‘D’ World Qualifiers” will be held on back-to-back Saturdays - April 25th and May 2nd. Both events, which are sponsored by Cincysoftball.com, feature unique formats along with a generous package of paid World berths and travel expense. Pastime’s other noteworthy returning slow pitch events will be two “Iron Man” round robins, the 4th Annual “King of the Park,” a free event for Pastime league teams, and the 6th Annual “Cincinnati World Series of Softball.”

“Iron Man II,” slated for April 11, and “Iron Man III,” to be held August 15, are “grueling tests of stamina,” says Pastime’s Steve Bruck.

“We guarantee teams seven games, and the winner more often than not isn’t the best team in the tournament, but the team with the most endurance,” he says.

Bruck calls “The King of the Park” Tournament, scheduled for Sunday, August 16th, “a fun day of softball, cornhole and prize drawings given to our park teams in appreciation of their choosing Pastime to play their leagues.

“This is a neat tournament and day because it gives us at the park a chance to be with our teams, meet and talk with players and fans, and just really enjoy a day at the park of ‘easy going’ softball.”

Bruck says that in addition to the fact that there is no tournament entry fee, there is also no gate fee charged during the “King of the Park.”

Bruck says that the park’s World Series, to be held August 8th, “has become one of our most exciting events” due to an enticing package of USSSA post-season berths and travel expense.

“We are trying to give teams something different in tournament play,” says Bruck of his park’s special events. “And these are all one day tournaments at a cost that teams can feel they are getting more games and more fun for their money.”

Round robins are also held at the park for Men's C, D and E teams every Saturday, Saturday night, Sunday and holiday from February 28th through October 25th. The tournaments climax with the top sixteen teams (based on points awarded for participation) competing in the “Round Robin Championship Series” on Sunday, September 20.

For any information regarding Pastime Park’s 2009 tournament program, call 367-0266 or 515-4227, or visit their website, [www.pastimepark.com](http://www.pastimepark.com).

## **2008 Pastime Park Tournament Calendar**

### **MEN’S CLASS B TOURNAMENTS**

March 28-29 Louisville Slugger Early Bird R.R. USSSA B/C NIT  
May 2-3 USSSA B-C NIT

### **MEN'S CLASS C TOURNAMENTS**

Feb 28-March 1 Pastime Park Spring Open (C-D-E)  
\* USSSA C-D-E State/National Qualifier  
March 7-8 PP Round Robin Spring Tune-up (C-D-E)  
\* USSSA C-D-E State/National Qualifier  
March 14-15 8th Annual BASH FOR CASH  
March 28-29 Louisville Slugger Early Bird R.R. USSSA B/C NIT  
April 18 USSSA C State/National Qualifier  
May 2-3 USSSA B-C NIT  
May 17 USSSA C State/National Qualifier  
May 25 PP Memorial Day One Pitch Jacket Tourney (C-D-E)  
June 6-7 Easton Westside Rumble USSSA C NIT  
August 9 USSSA One Pitch State  
Sept. 7 PP Labor Day One Pitch Jacket Tourney (C-D-E)  
October 24 7th Annual Jim Del Monaco Memorial Tournament

### **MEN'S CLASS D TOURNAMENTS**

Feb 28-March 1 Pastime Park Spring Open (C-D-E)  
\* USSSA C-D-E State/National Qualifier  
March 7-8 PP Round Robin Spring Tune-up (C-D-E)  
\* USSSA C-D-E State/National Qualifier  
March 14-15 8th Annual BASH FOR CASH  
April 11 IRON MAN II – 7 Game Round Robin  
April 18 USSSA D State/National Qualifier  
May 2 CincySoftball.com BIG “D” World  
\* USSSA D State / National / World Qualifier  
May 25 PP Memorial Day One Pitch Jacket Tourney (C-D-E)  
August 8 6th Annual Cincinnati World Series of Softball (D-E)  
\* USSSA State/National Qualifier  
August 9 USSSA One Pitch State  
August 15 Iron Man III - 7 Game Round Robin (C-D-E)  
August 16 King of the Park (Free Tournament - league teams only)  
Sept. 7 PP Labor Day One Pitch Jacket Tourney (C-D-E)  
October 24 7th Annual Jim Del Monaco Memorial Tournament

### **MEN'S CLASS E TOURNAMENTS**

Feb 28-March 1 Pastime Park Spring Open (C-D-E)  
\* USSSA C-D-E State/National Qualifier  
March 7-8 PP Round Robin Spring Tune-up (C-D-E)

\* USSSA C-D-E State/National Qualifier  
March 14-15 8th Annual BASH FOR CASH  
April 11 IRON MAN II – 7 Game Round Robin  
April 19 USSSA E World Qualifier  
April 25 CincySoftball.com BIG “E” World  
\* USSSA E World Qualifier  
May 10 USSSA E World Qualifier  
May 16 USSSA E State/National Qualifier  
May 25 PP Memorial Day One Pitch Jacket Tourney (C-D-E)  
June 6-7 Easton Westside Rumble  
\* USSSA E World Series Qualifier  
August 8 6th Annual Cincinnati World Series of Softball (D-E)  
\* USSSA State/National Qualifier  
August 9 USSSA One Pitch State  
August 15 Iron Man III - 7 Game Round Robin (C-D-E)  
August 16 King of the Park (Free Tournament - league teams only)  
August 22-23 USSSA MEN’S E STATE  
Sept. 7 PP Labor Day One Pitch Jacket Tourney (C-D-E)  
October 18 6th Annual Jim Del Monaco Memorial Tournament

### **PASTIME PARK WOMEN’S TOURNAMENTS**

June 7 USSSA Women’s D-E State/National Qualifier  
June 20-21 Bud Light – USSSA Women’s C-D-E  
\* 31st Annual Queen City Classic NIT

### **MIXED COUPLES TOURNAMENTS**

May 17 Bud Light – USSSA Mixed Couple’s NIT  
2nd Sunday of every month: USSSA Mixed Qualifiers

### **PASTIME PARK SPECIAL EVENTS**

Feb 28-March 1 Pastime Park Open (C-D-E)  
March 7-8 PP Round Robin Spring Tune-up (C-D-E)  
March 14-15 8th Annual BASH FOR CASH  
March 28-29 Louisville Slugger Early Bird R.R. USSSA B/C NIT  
April 11 Iron Man II – 7 Game Round Robin  
April 19 USSSA E World Qualifier  
April 25 CincySoftball.com BIG “E” World Qualifier  
May 2 CincySoftball.com BIG “D” State/National/World Qualifier  
May 2-3 USSSA B-C NIT  
May 17 Bud Light - USSSA Mixed Couple’s NIT  
May 17 USSSA E World Qualifier  
June 6-7 Easton-Westside Rumble USSSA E W.S. Qualifier  
Jun 6-7 Easton-Westside Rumble USSSA C NIT

June 20-21 31st Annual Women's Queen City Classic NIT  
August 8 6th Annual Cincinnati World Series of Softball (D-E)  
August 9 USSSA One Pitch State C-D-E Tournaments  
August 15 Iron Man III – 7 Game Round Robin  
August 16 King of the Park (Free Tournament - league teams only)  
August 22-23 USSSA MEN'S E STATE  
September 20 Pastime Park Round Robin Championship Series  
October 24 7th Annual Jim Del Monaco Memorial Tournament

### **USSSA Men's And Mixed NIT's, Mixed State, UA Nationals Highlight 2009 Schedule...**

#### **Riverstar Calendar Boasts Four NIT's, Round Robin Series, Private Events**

Four USSSA National Invitational Tournaments, an enterprising new Round Robin Championship Series and the U. A. National Tournament will be among the marquis events on Riverstar Sportsplex's tournament calendar for 2009.

Riverstar's National Invitational Tournaments for 2009 will include two returning events: the 10th Annual Worth-Bud Light-Mike Adler Memorial Mixed Couples "C-D-E" April 26, and the 4th Annual Worth-Bud Light-USSSA Men's Class "C-D" National Invitational Tournament June 27-28.

Two new NIT's are also on tap this year. They are the Worth-Bud Light "D" NIT on March 27-28, and the Worth-Bud Light "C-D" NIT on May 9-10.

State Tournaments slated for Riverstar include the Ohio USSSA Mixed Couples "C," "D" and "E" Championships August 29-30, and the Ohio USSSA Mixed Couples Fall State September 12.

Riverstar's lone national tournament is its hallmark event, the 32nd U. A. National Tournament June 19-21.

Last year in the "C" division of the Mike Adler, High Octane successfully defended their 2007 title by outlasting eventual USSSA Great Lakes National champion Crosley's. While in the "D" division, 2006 U-Trip World Champion Dented Bats bested Speed Kills.

EAP/Wessel/Real Estate Title/QCN/Tigerfitness/Longshots/Easton toppled eventual USSSA "C" World runner-up PRI/Easton 14-12 and 22-7 in a double finals to win Riverstar's "C-D" NIT in June last year. With 26 teams, it was the largest Men's NIT in the area. EAP/Easton had just double-dipped PRI/Easton three weeks earlier in an NIT in Harrison.

In addition to its Mixed NIT, Riverstar offers two other mixed events. The most prominent of these is the Worth-Bud Light-Cincinnati Recreation Commission-USSSA Mixed Couples State Tournament, which has been held at the park for the past nineteen



years. Scheduled for August 29-30, the event attracted 38 teams in three divisions in 2008. High Octane captured the “C” division, eventual World Champion Ohio Onslaught took the “D,” and J & M Outcasts/Clayton Homes claimed the “E” title.

Riverstar's other mixed tournament will be September 12, when the Worth-Bud Light-Ohio USSSA Mixed Fall State is slated. Team Drama knocked off In House/Solar Systems in the finals of last year’s fall state.

New Riverstar Sportsplex manager Walley Estes has high expectations for his park’s mixed tournaments due to a solid base of league teams at Riverstar.

“We sanction almost 100 mixed teams at the park each season, and they’ve supported our tournaments well through the years,” says Estes.

The 31st Annual U. A. National Tournament had 54 entries from a dozen states and Canada last season. Louisville #502/TPS stunned 14-time champion Lansing #333 Black on a three-run, walk-off home run in the bottom of the 7th in the championship game of the “A” division. Chicago Pipefitters Local #597 rallied for seven runs in their final at bat in both the winners’ bracket finals and finals to daze Muscle Shoals 13-11 and 12-11 and complete a six-game sweep of the “B” division. “C” division champion Pittsburgh Steamfitters. #449 also swept past six opponents, shutting out Yonkers #21 8-0 in the finals.

“The U. A. Nationals is our signature event,” says Walley Estes. “Local #392 does an inimitable job organizing and conducting this tournament. And the competition, sportsmanship, and camaraderie are unmatched by any softball tournament in the region.”

Other noteworthy special events being held at Riverstar in 2009 will include the 8th Annual “Bash For Cash” on March 13-15, Men’s and Mixed Couples “Pre-Season Round Robins” April 4th and 5th, the “Queen City Classic” BASA NIT May 16-17, and the Riverstar Sportsplex “Spring Season Men’s and Mixed Couples League Appreciation Tournament” featuring a free league fee to the summer session.

USSSA qualifiers are held for men’s class C, D and E teams, including “Super” qualifiers on April 18 (C-D), April 25 (E), May 31 (E), June 14 (E) and August 2 (D-E). The “C-D” and “D-E” Super qualifiers boast a \$1,100 payout, while the April 26 Super “E” features a whopping \$1,500 cash prize. The May 31 and June 14 events will award \$1,300 each. Three “E” World qualifiers - scheduled for May 10, June 28, and July 19 - will provide the winners with a paid berth to the USSSA “E” World Tournament September 24-27 in Lake Buena Vista, Fl.

Most USSSA Men's and Mixed tournaments at Riverstar are co-sponsored by Worth Sports Company and Bud Light. And most are one day affairs.

New this year at Riverstar is the Round Robin Championship Series, which will be run in two sessions. The first session will climax in a championship on Memorial Day

Weekend called the “Memorial Day Blast,” and the second session on Labor Day Weekend in the “Labor Day Hoopla.”

“Teams will qualify by earning points in Friday, Saturday and Sunday round robins,” says Walley Estes. “There will be a large cash purse at stake both Memorial Day Weekend and Labor Day Weekend. It will be a great way for teams to earn money to help finance their teams.”

Riverstar features five lighted, fenced diamonds with concrete dugouts and an infield and outfield irrigation system, scoreboards, heated and air-conditioned concession area, a children's play area, restrooms and showers, and paved parking lot.

“We’re putting \$50,000 into field renovations,” says park manager Walley Estes. “Also this year we’ve lowered our gate fee to \$2, and we’ll be providing all the softballs.”

Estes also points out that Riverstar offers year-round indoor sports at its Entertainment facility adjacent to the park.

“We are currently organizing volleyball, dodge ball and wiffle ball leagues,” says Estes. “And special pricing is available for teams playing multiple sports.”

For additional information call Riverstar Sportsplex at 232-4283, or visit the park’s new website at [www.riverstarcincy.com](http://www.riverstarcincy.com).

## **2009 RIVERSTAR PARK SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT CALENDAR**

### **2009 USSSA MEN’S QUALIFYING & NATIONAL INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENTS**

March 28-29   Worth-Bud Light “D” NIT  
April 18    “C-D” Super National Qualifier - \$1,100 Payout  
April 19    “D-E” State-National Qualifier  
April 25    “E” Super World Qualifier - \$1,500 Payout  
May 9-10   Worth-Bud Light “C-D” NIT  
May 10    “E” World Qualifier  
May 31    “E” Super World Qualifier - \$1,300 Payout  
June 13    “D-E” State-National Qualifier  
June 14    “E” Super World Qualifier - \$1,300 Payout  
June 28    “E” World Qualifier  
July 19    “E” World Qualifier  
August 2   Last Chance “D-E” Super Qualifier - \$1,100 Payout

### **2009 USSSA MIXED COUPLES QUALIFYING & NATIONAL INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENTS**

April 25   Mike Adler “C-D-E” NIT

August 29-30 "C-D-E-E Rec" Ohio State Tournament  
September 12 "C-D-E-E Rec" Ohio Fall State Tournament

### **2009 RIVERSTAR PARK SPECIAL EVENTS**

March 14-15 8th "Bash for Cash"  
April 4-5 Men's And Mixed Pre-Season Round Robins  
May 16-17 BASA NIT - Queen City Classic  
May 30 Spring Season Men's & Mixed League  
Appreciation Tournament  
June 19-21 32nd Annual U. A. National Tournament

### **2009 RIVERSTAR SPORTSPLEX ROUND ROBIN CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES - FIRST SESSION**

Top Point Leaders Advance To Memorial Day Blast First Session Championship May 23-25

March 20, March 27, April 3, April 26

### **2009 RIVERSTAR SPORTSPLEX ROUND ROBIN CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES - SECOND SESSION**

Top Point Leaders Advance To Labor Day Hoopla Second Session Championship  
September 5-6

August 1, August 15, August 16, August 22, August 23

### **2009 RIVERSTAR SPORTSPLEX FALL ROUND ROBIN SERIES**

September 13, September 19, September 20, September 26,  
September 27, October 3, October 4, October 10, October 11, October 17, October 18

### **2009 ASA METRO QUALIFIERS**

July 11, July 12, July 18, July 25, July 26

### **2009 BASEBALL TOURNAMENTS**

April 10-11 Pre-Season Challenge  
May 2-3 USSSA Mid-May Classic  
June 6-7 Slugfest  
July 3-5 Extravaganza  
August 8-9 Fall State

