

Publisher's Comments by Mark Linnemann

Some recent incidents have brought to light some popular myths that many individuals hold about classifications that need to be "busted." Below are just a couple of examples of false beliefs perpetuated by area players.

Myth Number One: Directors In Other Areas Are Clueless - Recently a team from a bordering state signed up for a local tournament. Word spread like wildfire that this was a team that was supposed to be reclassified to a higher level in 2007, but had disbanded following the 2006 season, and was now reforming for 2008 at their original level of play. This would make them illegal in USSSA because the organization's by-laws require "bump up" teams to play in their new classification for one year. What stirred up the concern was that the sponsor from 2006 did not appear on the USSSA website in 2007, but then surfaced again in 2008. And several of the same players were back with the new team's roster from 2006.

Automatically, several self-appointed softball "whistle blowers" jumped to the conclusion that the State Director was derelict in his duties and that the team was cheating. The message boards lit up, the emails started flying, and the phones of local tournament and area directors starting ringing.

A little more thorough investigation would have revealed that the players involved simply moved to a team under a different name in 2007, played in the higher classification, and having fulfilled their obligation, were simply returning to the level of play where the State Director felt they were best suited to compete for 2008.

The fact that these internet detectives didn't do all the appropriate research isn't what really brands them as numbskulls. It's that they assumed that in this day and age of message boards, emails and websites like www.ussa.com, that they actually found an impropriety someone had committed some 250 miles away, and thought nobody else knew about it, or that there was some sort of conspiracy between the director and the team.

Just imagine if a prominent tournament team from Greater Cincinnati that was required to move up in 2007 split up, then attempted to reform and play at their old class in 2006. Do people really believe that this would go unnoticed around here by the local directors, or that they would ignore it? Or that teams wouldn't demand enforcement of the rules all the way to the top level of the organization? The proverbial poop would hit the fan so fast it would make your head spin.

And yet all the local busybodies and meddlers who have nothing constructive to do with their time began to cry foul rather than have any faith in the neighboring state program. Now all these "arm chair" directors have egg in their face and have embarrassed themselves and our softball community.

Myth Number Two: A Player Is Permanently Classified On The Highest Level Team He Or She Has Ever Played - I wish I had a nickel for every time someone looks at the USSSA website player history section and sees that a player once played for an upper level team, then whines that this “A” or “B” player, for example, is now playing for some “C,” “D” or “E” team.

First of all, there are countless “A” or “B” level players in softball who have either chosen never to try to play on a higher level team, or perhaps have never had the opportunity. Or maybe their team has never been forced up by a “bump up” rule. Think about the countless gifted softball players in rural areas of the country who might be hundreds of miles away from the closest “A” or “B” team, so they never get looked at or picked up by these clubs. Hence, their online player history shows them as “D” and “E” players.

Conversely, how many “D” and “E” players wind up on the roster of some “A” or “B” team and they’re simply bench warmers? Or how many players try out at the upper level, but wind up not having the skills to play there? And how many players from an area like Cincinnati, which last year had eight “B” teams, might wind up on a roster as a pick-up for a world tournament, or maybe even played at the “B” level for a season or two, but for most of their careers competed at the “C,” “D” or “E” level? Should these individuals be locked out of lower programs?

What a shame that lower level players, many of whom spend their entire softball careers trying to be the best of the worst, will cry foul over playing against somebody who once had the gonads or pride to at least try to play at the highest level possible.

One area player, who is 36 years old and who spent most of his career playing “B” or lower, is being vilified for playing “C” ball this year because he was picked up by a “Major” team last summer. No one complained about him the ten or twelve years he played at the “C” or “B” level. But since he left his “B” team last year to try to pitch for a “Major” team who was desperate to replace their injured pitcher, local teams are now bellyaching that he’s a “Major Player.” A quick visit to ussa.com shows that this individual’s OBA last year was .522, which means he probably hit well under .500. He only batted 69 times for his team, and hit a paltry seven home runs. Rumor has it that he was so ineffective on the mound that his team wound up converting a couple of position players into pitchers to fill the void. The last year this individual played “A” ball in the area was in 2006 with Watanabe/TPS, when he made second team all-city behind two “B” pitchers. The year before that he only received an honorable mention in voting for the all-city team. Now he’s being maligned for wanting to come back and play with his friends?

Shame on people who don’t have anything better to do with their time than to try and stir everyone up with baseless rumors. And shame on individuals who not only spend their careers seeking to play at the lowest level possible, but who also want to impose sanctions on others who have had enough pride in themselves to at least try to play at a higher level.

In My Opinion by Ron Jeffers

As you travel on I-71 just south of Kings Island, you will see a big water tower on the east side of the highway with a message painted on it that proclaims Warren County as "The playground of Ohio."

The sign caused me to think why is it that Hamilton County can't make this claim? I have been to tiny cities all over the south like Auburn, Alabama, Gadsden, Alabama, Tifton, Georgia and hundreds of other towns, villages and small cities who have recreation programs and facilities that exceed anything Cincinnati ever dreamed of having. Why is this? The land is certainly there and the need is there. Why does the city of Cincinnati not have one state-of-the-art four or five field complex that could be used for softball and youth baseball?

My father operated the Mt. Adams incline, and drove street cars 60 years ago, and now the city fathers want to spend millions of dollars to tear up all the downtown streets so they can lay out a downtown route of steel tracks so we can have the old style street cars back. This idea is quaint and in some ways unique, but this is money that could very easily have been used to build a beautiful five field baseball and softball complex for hundreds and thousands of the citizens of Cincinnati to regularly use and enjoy. But no, these council members and the city manager do not think that way.

Between the little towns of Mason and Lebanon in Warren County, there now is a beautiful new five or six field complex that will be used for youth baseball and softball in 2008, and there are plans on the board to build more complexes throughout this growing community.

Why are people leaving Cincinnati and Hamilton County faster than any other city and County in America? What does the Cincinnati Recreation department have to offer their young families and children? They have to fight every year for enough money to keep the swimming pools open. Should that even be a concern every year? Then you wonder why people are fleeing the city and county. Check and see what percent of Cincinnati's police and firemen live in the city limits. They want better for their children, so they buy and live outside the city they serve.

Warren County has one of the Men's Professional golf tournaments on tour each year. They have the Men's and Women's Professional tennis tournament there. They have the popular Men's and Women's sand volleyball tournament. They are building a facility near Kings Island to handle national tournaments for amateur baseball, softball, volleyball, basketball and other sports. There are several world class water parks in Warren County including the new unique Wolf Lodge, and I can't help but think where was Cincinnati and Hamilton County when all these projects were dreamed, planned and built for the hundreds of thousands of people who reside in the Tri-State area? Just look across the river at the magnificent new buildings being built on the south side of the river, and while these massive structures were going up, Cincinnati's city fathers could not even

agree on what and how to use the vacant land between the stadiums. They probably should have built the stadiums in Warren County or Northern Kentucky too.

It is not a hard-kept secret why so many people have moved out of Hamilton County to Northern Kentucky and Warren County. The people in charge of the city and the recreation of it's citizens can't see past the end of their nose. When some of the gang members shoot out the windows of the new street cars as they pass by in their run-down neighborhoods, maybe then these so called leaders will question if this was the best place to spend the millions of dollars this bring back the 40's project will cost. They can find money for these projects, but no new recreation and athletic facilities for the citizens. Will the last person out please close the door?

I have watched the Cincinnati Reds play in three stadiums in my life, and I have watched new schools be built and then some years later torn down, but yet the elected officials continue to be light years behind providing decent recreation facilities that other towns and small cities provide their citizens, and these other cities do this with a fraction of the money and resources Cincinnati has had.

Cincinnati can find millions of dollars to move the Tyler Davidson fountain a few feet on fountain square, but where is the money for a baseball and softball complex for everyone to use and enjoy? Is Tifton, Georgia or Auburn, Alabama more concerned about the development and care of their children than Cincinnati? Thousands of other communities throughout America have spent their money on athletic and recreation complexes and facilities where their youth could play softball and baseball in a safe, structured environment, but not Cincinnati.

People would think I was joking and laugh when I told them the softball teams in Cincinnati had to bring their own bases to their games, and the umpires would toss them out where they thought they belonged. The fields had no fences and they were dragged and lined once a week. That is, provided it didn't rain on that field's scheduled maintenance day. "You mean the bases were not tied down or on a peg in the ground?" they would ask. "Why are the fields not dragged and marked before each day's games?" "Are you joking, do you not have fenced-in complexes with restrooms and food service?" No, this is Cincinnati-style softball. Why do you think Rumpke and all the other privately owned complexes sprouted up all around, but not in Cincinnati and Hamilton County? These privately owned and well-run parks gave the youth and adult players and fans what they wanted from their city, but couldn't get it, and thus the start of the mass exit from the city that has never stopped.

These poor, ill-advised people managing Cincinnati and its dying programs and rusting athletic facilities still do not get it. But once again I believe they waited until the horse has long since left the barn. Maybe we can bring the Mt. Adams Incline back too. Those of us who have moved out of Hamilton County might come back to the city on the river for a visit sometime to reminisce about what could have been.

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

What's Your Gripe? by Ron Jeffers

Q. Ron, I saw in 1st month's paper where Mark Linnemann was inducted into the USSSA Hall of Fame. I was surprised that he wasn't in there already. Don't you think this was long over due?

A. I have met some of the biggest jerks in the world in softball, and I have meet some of the finest people I have ever known in the game as well. Mark Linneman truly is a man of the highest morals, integrity, honesty and sincerity, and he should have been in the Hall many years ago.

I can tell you he has more insight in the game of softball than anyone I have ever met or known, and I have been in this game at the highest level for a big part of my life.

If Mark ever tells you it is Easter you can go hunt for the eggs. He is honest to a fault, always does what he sincerely believes is best for the game and not himself, he makes difficult decisions that most others run from, and he has done more to promote and advance the game of softball than any one I have ever known.

Mark not only belongs in the USSSA Hall of Fame, he belongs in the Cincinnati and ASA Hall of Fame as well. He has done more to help, develop and promote the game of softball than almost everyone that was ever inducted in the ASA Hall of Fame.

I am personally thrilled to read of Marks induction, it was long overdue, and he is so modest he never even mentioned it to me. But then again that is Mark. He is a giant among men and a leader we can trust and admire. This would be a better place for us all to live if we had more friends and leaders like this man. Mark I am so proud of you and am blessed to call you my friend.

Q. In reading the Softball News I saw an ad for the Central Turners Park, and I couldn't help but remember an umpire who was working there had his face torn open by a batter swinging at a pitch. The odd part of the story was, he wasn't umpiring. He was catching for the one team after he forfeited the game, because they didn't have the required number of players to play the game. I was an umpire at the time, and if I remember right he wanted to sue you and the Turners for his medical expenses.

Do I remember the story right, and did he sue you and the Turners?

A. You have a good memory. The umpire did forfeit the game, and he had another game scheduled to umpire one hour later. The two teams wanted to play, and he had to stay anyway, so they asked him if he would play in a practice game with them.

The batter accidentally stepped back and swung at the pitch and hit the umpire-catcher in the face with the bat, and did injure him considerably. If my memory is correct I believe

he could not umpire for the remainder of that year, and he did have a substantial amount of out of pocket medical expenses as well as a lot of pain and suffering. I was not responsible for his injuries, nor was the Central Turners. The umpire was hired to umpire for the Turners not play in the game or catch. The umpire was an independent contractor and not an employee of Ron Jeffers and/or the Queen City Umpires, and I had his signature on a signed contract where he agreed to be employed in this manner.

All of our umpires were registered with the Amateur Softball Association and fully insured by that organization and the Ohio High School Athletic Association, but they were insured to umpire baseball and softball games - not to play in them.

He did tell me he was going to sue me, the Turners and our umpire organization, but some one must have advised him he couldn't win. I did feel sorry for him, but I did not believe I was in any way responsible for any injuries he would ever incur as a player.

I also believe umpires leave themselves vulnerable when they forfeit a game, and then stay and umpire a so called practice game. Forfeit the game and then leave the immediate area until it is time to umpire again. If you stay all you are going to hear is a bunch of trash talk directed at you, and you can't even throw them out. The game you were hired to work is over. Just leave and come back. Stop trying to get the players to like you, Just earn their respect by being consistent and professional.

Q.Ron, there is so much talk about profanity in softball. How did you handle it when you were umpiring baseball and then softball?

A. The biggest problem I had to overcome as a baseball or softball umpire was my rabbit ears. I never heard a word of profanity in my home when growing up nor was there any substitute words allowed in my house. Words like heck and darn were profanity to my mother, and my introduction to these words came in boot camp in the navy.

I have never been one to use profanity nor do I like for it to be used around me. When I started umpiring I had a real problem with it. It was a fight within myself as to what to accept or allow in my games. I didn't like it or agree with using it, but could I force my lifestyle on someone else?

I could hear every word said about me from the field, dugout or stands, when I was umpiring, but I couldn't challenge and throw everyone out. I had to learn what to hear and what not to hear, and this was very difficult for me as an umpire. I believe umpires who grow up in homes where profanity is used daily in their lives have a much easier time with this than I did.

Strangely, the higher I worked in both baseball and softball the more profanity I heard, and the more I was told to overlook it. In professional baseball the words F _ _ _ and Mother F _ _ _ are used every other word, and my friends who work the NFL and NBA tell me the same mentality exists there as well. I despise the words, but I learned to only

throw players out when they used the word YOU in front of them or when they really got angry with me and they felt compelled to call me a fat _ _ _ _!

I stopped bringing my wife and children to the games when I umpired, because what man wants his family to hear people calling their father and husband that filth and garbage?

I love the games of baseball and softball, and they really have been good to me in my life, but there is an element of the games I truly hate, and the profanity that is so prevalent in the games is one area I have always hated and always will. When players use profanity or any other degrading words or actions directed at you, you must eject that player, coach or manager from the game and the park. To do otherwise will cause the participants to lose all respect for you, and without respect in life you have nothing.

Q. Ron, I read where umpiring took you all over the world. What were the places you would like to return to?

A. The memories of all the countries I have been blessed to visit I will cherish forever, but my very favorites were the country of Israel, Holland and Venice and the Vatican City in Rome.

CRC News by Bill Bailey

Last Call For Spring Season; Openings Still Available At Some Sites...

Register Now! CRC Leagues Are Best Deal In Town With Three Seasons, No Gate Fees, Central Location

With a three season format, early registration, no gate fee, centrally located fields and optional sites, a cancellation number for each field, and all balls, bases and umpires included in league entry fees, the Cincinnati Recreation Commission Softball Program is the best deal in town for 2008!

Lighted Leagues and Sunday afternoon leagues will begin play the week of April 6th. These leagues will play at Oskamp, Oakley and Schmidt fields, and will use an eight game season format. The fee for all lighted leagues is \$350 (8 games). The fee for Sunday afternoon (unlighted) games is \$285 (8 games).

Twilight leagues (unlighted) will begin the week of April 22nd. These leagues will play at Airport, Oskamp, Oakley and Salway fields 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 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 the credit card number and expiration date to complete the registration process.

Entry fees will not be refunded after league schedules have been completed. Teams withdrawing prior to completion of league schedules will be assessed a \$25 service charge for clerical and material fees. Again, registration is not completed until you have phoned the Athletic Office and made 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) leagues at Schmidt worked out so well again in 2007 that the CRC Athletic Division will continue that program in 2008. Also, all CRC Softball field locations will again offer the one fee covers everything (ASA and USSSA registration fee, umpire fee, balls, bases, scorebook, rule book and Cincinnati Softball News subscription for each manager).

WEATHER CONDITION UPDATES

The Athletic Division will also be offering field and weather condition updates at all field locations for the 2008 season. Call either 513-684-4908 or 513-684-4915. Please listen to the entire message when calling the rainout line for detailed information on each field's status. This will provide better game day communication and help to prevent unnecessary trips to the fields by the teams.

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 is looking for ex-players and current umpires who are on time, know the rules, hustle, are professional, and believe in great customer service. Contact CRC Umpire Assigner Candice Peters at 513-324-8571 if you are interested in becoming a softball umpire for CRC.

CRC Leagues To Offer USSSA World, National, State Tournament Berths

All Cincinnati Recreation Commission men's, women's, mixed couples and black american leagues will again offer berths into USSSA championship tournaments in 2008.

Men's, women's and mixed leagues will offer berths into both State Championship and Great Lakes Division National Championship Tournaments. Black American teams will be awarded World Tournament berths from selected leagues.

In men's, women's and mixed leagues, a berth into the Ohio USSSA State Championship will be awarded to the first, second and third place teams in each league. A berth to the USSSA Great Lakes Division National Championship Tournament will be awarded to the first place team in each league.

A berth to the USSSA Black American World Tournament will be awarded to the first place finishers in the Salway (Sunday) league.

Teams accepting berths are responsible for paying their own entry fee. The CRC League Supervisor and USSSA officials will determine the proper team classification. Tournament packages for Great Lakes Division National Tournaments and Ohio State Tournaments will be mailed to eligible teams by the USSSA. Teams must meet USSSA eligibility requirements to advance.

Over 300 Attend Expressway Park League Meeting

Batavia, Oh.--Over 300 managers, coaches and team representatives attended the 2008 Expressway Park League Meeting March 12th at the Holiday Inn Eastgate.

The meeting started with an observance of the passing of longtime softball player Chuck Farfsing, and umpire Wayne Rust, the Expressway Park umpire-in-chief for the last ten years and an umpire for over 25 years.

The meeting continued with Park Manager Bob Owens reviewing rule changes, league managers' responsibilities and park policies for 2008. Mark Linnemann, an Executive Vice-President of the USSSA and Editor & Publisher of the CINCINNATI SOFTBALL NEWS, reviewed information about the USSSA program and the CINCINNATI SOFTBALL NEWS.

The 2007 umpire awards for the Buckeye-Metropolitan Umpire Association that services Expressway Park were also announced. The awards had been presented at the organization's end-of-season banquet held at Putter's Tavern on November 7th. Among the umpires honored were: Randy Daniel, who was selected the Association's "Rookie of the Year;" Dennis Carver, John Owens, George Preston and Scott Pyles, who each received the "Umpire-in-Chief's Service Award;" Steve Billingsly, who was presented the "Hustle Award;" Rick Vanover, who was picked the Association's "Umpire of the Year;" Lonnie Grizzell, who was presented with the "Umpire-in-Chief's Award;" Joe Bucalo, who received the "Outstanding Professionalism Award;" and Shawn Nielsen,

who was picked the group's "Rookie of the Year" for an experienced umpire working his first year with the organization. Retiring umpire Steve Bilby was honored with the "Outstanding Career Award" for twenty-two years of umpiring excellence.

The top door prize winners Fred Hartman of the Greater Cincinnati Worship Center softball team (\$500), Nick Helbling (Miken NRG softball bat), Kevin Rack (Miken Freak softball bat), John Breig (DVD Player), Jessica Hall (TV), John Swing of the Ought Three softball team (Holiday Inn Eastgate Get-A-Way Weekend), and Tracy Wharff of the Hill & Griffith softball team (\$100 gift certificate to the Sports Zone).

Over 35 additional door prizes were awarded, including the Cincinnati Reds tickets, Worth and DeMarini fielder's gloves, Worth and Neumann batting gloves, Bud Light seat cushions, Worth and Miken equipment bag, Quaker Steak and Lube gift certificates, Deer Track Golf Course greens fees and cart fees, Expressway Park golf shirts and t-shirts, and numerous other softball related merchandise.

Expressway Park league play begins on Tuesday, April 1st. Monday leagues begin on April 7th. Limited league openings are still available for both mixed rec and men's C, D and E leagues. Interested teams should call the park as soon as possible to secure a spot for the 2008 season.

For information on Expressway Park softball leagues, or to receive a 2007 tournament calendar, contact Expressway Park at 831-BASE.

Expressway Park Announces Return Of "Grand Salami" Mini Round Robin Program For 2008

Batavia, Oh.--Expressway Park has announced the return of its exciting "mini" (three game) round robin program enhancements for the 2008 season.

The fifth year program boasts a bold pricing structure for round robins and a cutting edge awards program.

"We are trying to encourage more teams to play in more round robins, so we're offering discounts to our repeat customers," explains Owens. "It has proven to be very popular."

Owens says that teams participating in their first round robin pay the regular price for a three game mini round robin of \$99.00. The second round robin will only be \$89.00, the third only \$79.00, and thereafter, teams can play in mini round robins for the rest of the season for only \$69.00.

"We looked at our round robin participation a few years ago, and only a handful of teams were playing in more than one or two events," says Owens. "But with this program, we've made it attractive enough for teams to come back to the park several times during the season."

The park's awards program for round robins will again feature "Expressway Bucks," which can be cashed in for "t-shirts, trophies, jackets, team t-shirts, caps or pro shop merchandise including bats," says Owens.

"The winner of each round robin will receive \$75.00 in Expressway Bucks, and the runner-up \$25.00," he says. "This will give our round robin teams more choices and also enable them to accumulate 'Bucks' to use towards a variety of awards that were not available to them before. It will also encourage teams to come back to Expressway to try to accumulate Expressway Bucks to use towards more expensive awards like jackets and bats."

Owens adds that the top sixteen teams accumulating points in Expressway Park's round robins will be invited back for the park's annual "Round Robin Jacket Appreciation Tournament" on Sunday, September 21st.

"We feel like these enhancements have made Expressway Park's round robins more enjoyable and more rewarding than ever," says Owens. "And, like last year, we hope this will not only attract more teams to the park, but also encourage them to play more often."

Last Men Standing" In Local "B" Program...

Are Blitz/Watanabe/Easton, K. W. Sports/Easton David And Goliath?

Greater Cincinnati's men's "B" program was once the toast of the nation.

Now the program is in shambles. There are two teams left, and at first glance, the two teams look as evenly matched as David and Goliath.

And just like it was some 3,000 years ago, most of the smart money is on Goliath.

With all but one of one of Greater Cincinnati's eight "B" teams from 2007 throwing in the towel, only Blitz/Watanabe/Bull/Minges Drywall/Wessel/Easton and newcomer A. K. Sports/Game On/Easton remain to sustain any semblance of upper level ball locally for 2008.

And on paper, the two teams look about as closely matched as a number one seed and a number sixteen seed in the NCAA basketball tournament.

Consider first the credentials of Blitz/Watanabe/Easton.

The defending "Open" Metro champions were ranked 19th in the nation in USSSA last year, won the U-Trip "B" state, were 3rd in the nationals and 17th in the world. Their roster includes no fewer than ten members of the 2007 all-city team, plus Jimmy Carter, a member of the USSSA "Watch List."

By comparison, K. W. Sports/Easton is the nucleus of a the Community Cab team whose best finish in a USSSA tournament last year was 9th, and who didn't even advance to post-season play. And the team has one player - Ben Moerlein - who made the all-city team in 2007, and he was a second team selection.

Heck, even Community's best player from last year, Mike Rogers, has left the team to join Blitz, in spite of the fact that Rogers' dad - veteran Steve Rogers - is going to manage K. W. this year.

Are you starting to get the picture? Is this Custer marching against Sitting Bull again?

Hold those sympathy cards, insists Moerlein, who also helps coach K. W.

"I think a lot of people are going to think that (it's David against Goliath), but we've put together a team this year that will be better than last year," promises Moerlein. "We've replaced some of our older players with young guys with a lot of speed who are really good athletes, and our defense is going to be stronger than last year. Last year errors killed us."

Moerlein says the team got its feet wet in a fall league last year "and everybody jelled.

"Everybody is feeding off our new players, and it's like a breath of fresh air," says Moerlein.

Plus, predicts Moerlein, new manager Steve Rogers will turn their team around.

"He's been around the game a long time and he demands a hundred percent every game, and guys know that going into the season, and he'll push guys to do much better. In the past, guys hit solo home runs or did whatever they wanted."

Moerlein acknowledges that Blitz/Watanabe/Easton is a veritable "who's who" of area softball talent.

"They picked the best players from every 'B' team and combined them," says Moerlein. "But I think we can compete with them. We won't beat them every game, but we can probably split with them if we all jell.

"But we have a lot of learning to do," he adds. "They have some of the best pitchers in the city, and it will take some time for us to get used to USSSA pitching."

Blitz/Watanabe/Easton manager Terry Walton admits that the two teams are like David and Goliath "in the sense of experience," but believes the team will play well with their combination of "young talent and veteran" players.

"When I look at them, I see a team that will only get better, and Steve Rogers has a lot of years experience if the guys listen to him.

“They have a lot of power - a lot of guys who can hit the ball,” says Walton. “They should be solid defensively this year as well, especially in their outfield.

“The only difference is with our experience, our players may have an easier time generating runs when we are out of or low on home runs. A lot of times veterans have learned how to use their home runs wisely,” points out Walton.

Moerlein says K. W.’s speed may actually give his team an edge on defense.

“We’re pretty close, but they have some players who are a little older, so their range may not be as good,” says Moerlein.

“They have more power hitting-wise, but it will be a good match-up,” he forecasts. “You’re going to see some good defensive play and it will come down to who makes the mistakes.”

So what will it take for K. W. to stop Blitz from winning another “Open” Metro crown and dominating local softball in 2008?

“It will just take consistency at the plate more so than defense, because we know our defense is going to be strong,” says Moerlein. “We just need to get our new guys to hit like the guys on Blitz.

“We’re an unproven team. We have to get our guys at their level hitting-wise. It’s going to come down to whose being consistent at the plate.”

Don’t hand us the Metro championship trophy yet, cautions Walton.

“Anything is possible with that tournament,” he says. “Two years ago no one would have said Storm would have beaten Watanabe in the finals, but that team played really well together, and by the end of the season, they were playing better than anybody in the city.

“It’s hard to tell right now because there are so many roster shake-ups because of all the ‘B’ teams breaking up, including ourselves. We brought in seven new players. A lot of that will be determined by how teams jell and how their chemistry is by the end of the season.”

In addition to offense and experience, two other differences between the two teams are their goals and depth.

“One of our goals is to win a world,” says Terry Walton. “We have a lot of good ball players who have not experienced that.

“We’re also carrying a 17-man roster, so some people say we have too much talent. But as manager, I feel a little more challenged to keep everybody happy,” points out Walton. “I have to throw that onto the players for everybody to be about the team first. We have to do what’s best for the team, and sometimes we have to put ourselves and our players on the back burner.

“Quite often you see teams play and they’re missing players,” adds Walton. “Hopefully on our team we can avoid that and field a strong team every time we step on the field.”

At this point in time, Moerlein says his team is obviously less concerned about winning a world, and more about qualifying for one. And he sees no shame in playing second fiddle to Blitz this year.

“We’re looking forward to qualifying for the world and going down there to see what we can do,” he says. “Just because we’re second best in the city, doesn’t mean we’ll be last at the world. We can go there and finish well.

“We know the players on Blitz, and that’s half the battle,” he adds. “And we believe we can compete with them.”

2008 USSSA Men’s “B” Team Previews

BLITZ/WATANABE/BULL/MINGES/WESSEL/EASTON (58-26)

λ 2007 Team Name: Blitz/Watanabe/TTP/Wessel/A&K/Easton.

λ Manager: Terry Walton.

λ Key Personnel: Jason Roesch (.700, 55 HR’s, 205 rbi’s, Open Metro Most Valuable Player, All-City 1st Team, Runner-Up Player of the Year), Brian Alexander (.673, 28 HR’s, 92 rbi’s, All-City 1st Team, 2 All-Tournaments), Kevin Birkofer (.631, 71 rbi’s, All-City 2nd Team, 1 All-Tournament), Steve Bosch (.625, 44 HR’s, 158 rbi’s, All-City 1st Team, 2 All-Tournaments), Frank Gruber (.607, 84 rbi’s, All-City 1st Team, Men’s B State Most Valuable Player, 2 All-Tourns.), Larry Wert (.603, 21 HR’s, 103 rbi’s, All-City 2nd Team, 1 All-Tournament), Brad Tabler (40 HR’s, 134 rbi’s, All-City 1st Team, 2 All-Tournaments), Chris Ashley.

λ Additions: Kevin Green, Jason Brown - Dawg Pack/Wessel/A1; Justin Minges, Ryan Minges - Loveless Hardwood/Conveyor Solutions; Jeff Click, Trevor Barth - Freeze/Arnold/JAC/Putters; Jimmy Carter - KME/Chaney’s/Easton; Mike Rogers - Community Cab/Cooper Sports.

λ Losses: Jeff Edington.

λ Final Ranking: USSSA Ohio 2nd, Great Lakes 6th, National 19th.

λ League Highlights: 4-4 Thursday Eggleston.

λ Tourney Highlights: 1st ASA Open Metro, Crosby Township, Oh.; USSSA B State, Milford, Oh.; 2nd USSSA B/C NIT, Fairborn, Oh.; 3rd USSSA B/C NIT, Harrison, Oh. (2); USSSA B Great Lakes National, Sterling Heights, Mi.; 4th USSSA B/C NIT, Colerain Township, Oh.; 7th USSSA Major NIT, Columbus, In.

λ Outlook: The primary dividends of the merger with Watanabe/TPS for Blitz/Watanabe/TTP/Wessel/A&K/Easton were an ASA "Open" Metro title and a U-Trip "B" State Championship. Blitz/Watanabe/Easton also improved their 49th place finish in the 2006 "B" world to 17th. This year simply through attrition the Blitz finds themselves in a position where every local USSSA "B" NIT and the ASA "Open" Metro are theirs to lose. And with the additions of 1st team All-City selections Kevin Green and Jason Brown of the Dawg Pack and Mike Rogers of Community Cab, plus veteran pitcher Trevor Barth of Freeze and Jimmy Carter of KME, little has been left to chance. Blitz has improved every aspect of their game: speed, defense, pitching and power. And they're incredibly deep, which will protect them from any kind of major injury to a key player derailing their season. The only thing left for manager Terry Walton to do is to build chemistry and camaraderie and try to find away to keep seventeen players happy. And since few things build camaraderie and keep players happy like winning, half his job would appear to be done before he takes the field.

λ Manager's Comments: "One of our goals and ambitions is to win the world tournament. We have a lot of good ball players who have not experienced that. The other goal is that week in and week out, we just want to put it on the line with all our ability and represent ourselves and our sponsors and what we feel Cincinnati softball is all about. That should be with a winning attitude, sportsmanship and a lot of drive to succeed. It's not always about winning and losing, but having fun and making friends and experiencing competition."

K. W. SPORTS/GAME ON/EASTON (NA)

λ 2007 Team Name: Community Cab/Cooper Sports.

λ Manager: Steve Rogers.

λ Key Personnel: Ben Moerlein (All-City), Mike Reichert (HM All-City), Mike Stoecklin, Chris Hunt, Mike Albers.

λ Additions: Jason Wood, Micah Gray - Loveless Hardwood; Kelly Haiber, Jeff Haiber - Blitz/Watanabe; Lee Pierson - Blitz 2006; Jeff Warnock, Zach Branigan, Brad Bachman - did not play.

λ Losses: Mike Rogers - Blitz/Watanabe; Dave Beall - unknown; Tom Nicholas, Tony Huber - retired.

λ Final Ranking: USSSA State 5th, Great Lakes 13th, National 48th.

λ League Highlights: 5-3 Second Season, Eggleston Thursday American.

λ Tourney Highlights: Three 9th place finishes USSSA B-C NIT's; 4th ASA Open Metro.

λ Outlook: Framed around the nucleus of the 2007 Community Cab/Cooper Sports team, K. W. Sports/Game On/Easton will stand as the principle challenger to Blitz/Watanabe/Bull/Mingus/Easton at the USSSA B level in 2008. After four unpretentious showings in 2007 USSSA NIT's that included three 9th place finishes in B-C affairs and a 25th place finish in the Cincinnati Major, Community/Cooper found redemption in the Metro with a surprising 5th place showing in the Open division. Any hope of capitalizing on that lone bright spot from their 2007 season took a downturn when first team all-city selections Mike Rogers and Dave Beall departed along with Community veterans Tom Nicolaus and Tony Huber. But the team refused to throw in

the towel, recruiting Micah Gray and Jason Wood of Loveless Hardwood and Kelly and Jeff Haiber of Blitz/Watanabe to fill the void. They'll join Community veterans Ben Moerlein, Mike Reichert, Mike Stoecklin, Chris Hunt and Mike Albers, and newcomers Lee Pierson, Jeff Warnock, Zach Branigan and Brad Bachman. Team speed, chemistry and the leadership of manager Steve Rogers will be the keys to success for K. W. Sports as they head into 2008 optimistic that they can make amends for a disappointing 2007.

λ Manager's Comments: "Team speed is going to be a big part of our success this year. We have added a lot of speed with the addition of the young guys. We lost great outfielders this year in Michael Rogers and Tony Huber, but we will be replacing them with faster guys that really play the spots, so hopefully we will not miss a beat in the outfield. As the infield goes, we have replaced all but two of the position players and the new guys are faster than last year and all have excellent gloves. The beauty about this year's team is we are two or three players deep at all positions. As for power in our lineup, losing Michael Rogers, Dave Beall and Tony Huber we lost a lot of pop we had last year. Hopefully this year a combination of Lee Pierson, Kelly Haiber, Mike Stoecklin, Mike Albers and Mike Reichert can pickup what these guys brought to our lineup last year. If they can offensively, we'll be tough. We have so much more team speed this year that most games we could potentially leave home runs on the table but still score 20-plus runs. Offensively, we are going to have a lot of tough outs through our lineup. It is going to be hard for teams to consistently turn double plays on us because of this, and this was a huge problem last year. I think the most overlooked thing about this year's team will be the leadership our coach, Steve Rogers, will bring to the table. Steve has been around the game of softball for many years and been on some of the best teams in the city. At one point, he was considered one of the premier power hitters in the game in the area. He is going to force guys to play with extra emotion this year, because if they don't, he will find someone that will. Steve will let you know things that you need to work on to make you better. I think another important key this year will be chemistry. I think we have put together a team that everyone gets along with each other. As far as weaknesses go, I think our only one is we are a very young team trying to compete at the B level. The young guys will have to learn quickly and adjust to the level of pitching that we will see at the USSSA B level. They are all ex-baseball players, so the transition will be pretty quick. Our team goals this year are to qualify for the ASA, NSA and USSSA B Nationals and Worlds. We would like to finish in the top couple of spots in the Thursday Upper League at Eggleston. Winning every tournament we enter is our goal each week. We are going to try to get into some of the Major USSSA tournaments. Finishing the season strong and getting on a roll through State and National Tournaments so we are ready for the Worlds is another. The core of the players played in a fall league together and did very good, so if we can hold that chemistry we can do well. I expect the players to come ready to play every game. Softball is a great game and a lot of fun. If we approach it this way, we will have a rewarding summer."

Northern Kentucky "C" Teams To Mike Foulks: "Bring 'Em On!"

A month ago, Northern Kentucky softball was wide open.

But now, four out of the five USSSA "C" teams might just be playing for second place.

Late in February Mike Foulks Auto Body/Team Insanity, a U-Trip "B" team in 2007, was reclassified to "C" after the team's roster was reduced to two "B" players.

Ironically, while the decision evoked outrage from many self-appointed classification pundits from central and southern Ohio, the attitude among other northern Kentucky teams seems to be "bring 'em on!"

Terris Allen, whose Good Guys/GBI Cincinnati team that finished fourth in the USSSA "D" World in 2007 and is considered the next best team in Northern Kentucky, says the fact that Mike Foulks is playing "C" "really doesn't bother me.

"Even if they were a 'B' team, we'd have to play them in 'B/C' NIT's," points out Allen. "It just makes it that much more competitive in this area. Besides, I think we can hold our own with anybody."

Allen admits that Foulks "has a target on their backs.

"Everybody is going to look at them as a 'B' team that's playing 'C,'" says Allen.

Allen rates his team and JLC/Legends right behind Foulks.

"We're about even right now in overall talent," says Allen. "JLC has added some Dawg Pack guys and they'll be tough outs in tournaments with the size of their roster. They're about seventeen players deep.

"But our team speed and our defense is as good as anybody's, no matter what class. If our hitting stays consistent, we'll be right there with anybody."

Next Allen gives Sentry Fire/Red Eye Sports/LBYC the nod over Hart Restoration/Saints.

"Sentry has been around longer and the nucleus of their team has been together longer so their chemistry should make them a little better," says Allen.

"But it will be one of those four teams (Mike Foulks, Good Guys, JLC or Sentry) on any given weekend. It looks to be an exciting year."

JLC/Legends manager Chris Fogt says he's not losing any sleep over Mike Foulks playing "C" either.

"I feel very confident in my team's ability to compete with anybody in this area and this region," says Fogt. "They're going to be one of the top teams, no doubt. With what Mike (sponsor-manager Mike Foulks) has put on the field the last couple of years has been one of the best 'C' or 'B' teams around. And that hasn't changed for this year. He has some quality players.

“But I think we’re right there with him or right behind him,” maintains Fogt. “The Good Guys are moving up from ‘D,’ but they’re definitely capable of handling the move up. And Sentry always puts a good squad together every year. The four of us will make for an interesting summer. We’re all pretty close with our talent level.”

Fogt says that Hart Restoration/Saints “is on the verge of being in that group as well.

“John (Saints manager John Tomlinson) always has a very good squad. I don’t know how they’ll respond to moving up, but they’ve always fielded decent teams, so I see no reason why they wouldn’t be able to compete in ‘C.’”

Sentry’s Kevin Henn thinks his team “might be able to beat Mike Foulks two or three times out of ten,” but believes it will be “very rare that we’ll actually play against them in a tournament.”

Henn forecasts that Foulks will be hard to beat “because of their experience in the ‘B’ division last year.

“They took away a lot of valuable lessons and brought back a lot of moxy from that,” says Henn. “They know how to compete and how to win, and they’re a good all around team.”

Henn ranks the Good Guys second. “They have a great mix of young talent and some veterans, and have more passion and desire than I’ve seen out of any team in several years.”

Next Henn likes JLC. “They’ve added some former Dawg Pack and Storm players who will help them mature,” he says.

He believes his own team will be better than Hart Restoration “because we’ve played in ‘C’ for a couple of years.

“We know what to expect and how to go about it, and our team chemistry is down pat.

“But I applaud them for moving up and taking on the challenge,” says Henn. “They’ll win some games they shouldn’t, and if they persevere and continue playing it will only help them.”

Saints manager John Tomlinson says his team “looks forward” to playing Mike Foulks.

“I hope we see them in the championship game in every tournament,” says Tomlinson. “We try to play the best teams every year whether we have to move up and play in tournaments of a higher class or not. But this year in Northern Kentucky, we won’t have to do that. All the best teams are in ‘C.’”

Tomlinson believes Mike Foulks “will win their fair share, but I don’t think they’ll run away with everything,” says Tomlinson. “Across the board this year the teams that are playing ‘C’ this year have picked up better players, and the talent is pretty spread out.”

Tomlinson says that after Foulks, “the Good Guys, us and JLC are evently matched at second.

“In any given tournament, one of us will be in second place,” he says.

Mike Foulks says it only makes sense that his team should start the season off as number one.

“Everybody is saying we’re the team to beat because we played at the ‘C’ and ‘B’ level the last few years,” remarks Foulks. “So our experience and and how we’ve benefited mentally will help make us consistent.

“And along with that, we haven’t made a lot of player moves. So when we step on the field at the beginning of the year, the fact that we haven’t made a whole lot of changes should allow us to be more consistent. We’ve learned how to win the close games since we played at a higher level compared to teams who haven’t been in that position.”

Foulks believes that the Good Guys pose the biggest challenge to his team in Northern Kentucky.

“They have a lot of young talent who are learning to win and veterans, and they give a hundred and ten percent. They play with a lot of hustle and heart, and they never give up,” observes Foulks.

Foulks rates JLC just behind the Good Guys.

“They have great talent and great leadership and guys with experience who have played at the ‘C’ level,” he says.

Next comes Sentry, predicts Foulks.

“They’ve always done really well and played ‘C’ for several years. They have a lot of heart and are a bunch of guys who want to have fun. They have good chemistry, because they don’t change a lot of guys, and they’re pretty close-knit,” comments Foulks.

2008 Northern Kentucky USSSA “C” Team Previews

GBI CINCINNATI (75-24)

λ 2007 Team Name: Good Guys/GBI Cincinnati.

λ Manager: Terris Allen.

λ Key Personnel: Chaz Goetz (.684, All-No. Ky. 1st Team; 3 All-Tourns.), Brian Sandlin (.630, All-No. Ky. 1st Team, 4 All-Tourns.), Doug Murphy (.502, All-No. Ky. 1st Team; 4 All-Tourns., 2 Tourn. MVP's, 1 HR Leader), Bryan Stephenson (.603, All-No. Ky. 1st Team, 2 All-Tourns.), Brent Hopkins (.602, All-No. Ky. 1st Team, 2 All-Tourns., 1 HR Leader), Scott Goetz (All-No. Ky. 1st Team).

λ Additions: Scott Young - Storm (2006), Greg Laws - Comegets'em (2006).

λ Losses: Brian Goebel - JLC/Legends.

λ Final Ranking: USSSA Kentucky 3rd, Great Lakes 4th, National 31st.

λ Tourney Highlights: 1st USSSA D NIT, Colerain Township, Oh.; USSSA D State, Taylor Mill, Ky.; 2nd USSSA D NIT, Milford, Oh.; USSSA C/D NIT, Cincinnati, Oh.; 9th USSSA Great Lakes D National, Indianapolis, In.; 4th USSSA D World, Sterling Heights, Mi.

λ Outlook: 2007 was a dream season for Good Guys/GBI Cincinnati. After failing to win a single tournament in 2006, they won three last year, including an NIT and a Kentucky state championship. And after a 65th place finish in the 2006 D World, they skyrocketed all the way to 4th last September in Sterling Heights, Mi. The Good Guys rankings also shot up, catapulting from 9th (state), 44th (division) and 296th (national) all the way to 3rd, 4th and 31st, respectively. Adding veterans Brian Sandlin and Doug Murphy into a mix of budding young talent could not have been a more effective move by manager Terris Allen. Allen has added two more veterans to strengthen his club as they make the move from D to C this season in Scott Young and Greg Laws. It will be interesting to see if changing classifications can slow this team's momentum down any in 2009, as they were clearly the hottest and fastest-rising team in the tri-state. Local self-appointed classification pundits who whine about Mike Foulks/Team Insanity, EAP/Wessel, and PRI/Easton might be surprised to find GBI at the head of their class when the dust settles on the 2008 season.

λ Manager's Comments: "Our team strengths are speed and great defense. There aren't too many outfields faster than ours. We pride ourselves in holding teams under 10 runs a game. Our weakness is that we need to be more consistent on scoring runs. We can't always rely on great defense. League play is just a night to hang out and get swings. In tournament play we plan on winning our fair share and being as tough an out in every tourney. We didn't finish out of the top 10 in any tourney last year. We expect to be a top 5 team in C and compete nationally for a world tourney."

HART RESTORATION/SAINTS (69-32)

λ 2007 Team Name: M & M Connection/Saints.

λ Manager: John Tomlinson.

λ Key Personnel: Tim Duffey, Brian McDonald, Mike Barone, John Erdman.

λ Additions: Kevin Blanton - Community Cab; Jay Rhoden - Northern Kentucky Bandits; Gary Schoultheis, Nick Rouse - Nu Way Drywall; Jeremy Wilson - Dawg Pack; Jeff Bateman - Groundtexas; Kurt Davis, Mike Grubbs, Matthew Barone, Wayne Wright - Airway.

λ Losses: Mike Ditmer, Ron Williams - Team Chaos; Scott Barber.

λ Final Ranking: USSSA: Kentucky 1st, Great Lakes 2nd, National 27th.

λ League Highlights: Not available.

λ Tourney Highlights: 1st USSSA National Qualifiers (11); 3rd USSSA D NIT, Lebanon, Oh.; 5th USSSA D NIT, Indianapolis, In.; 9th Kentucky USSSA D State, Taylor Mill, Ky.; 49th USSSA Great Lakes D National, Indianapolis, In.; 97th USSSA World, Sterling Heights, Mi.

λ Outlook: Saints teams have been among Greater Cincinnati's winningest and highest ranked every years since 2002, and 2007 was no exception. They won eleven qualifiers last season, boasted seven top ten finishes in NIT's, and finished the season ranked 1st in Kentucky, 2nd in the Great Lakes Division and 27th in the nation. But apparently they've grown tired of the D program, and have stepped up to C in an effort to find a new challenge. Team veterans Tim Duffey, Brian McDonald, Mike Barone and John Erdman will form the nucleus of manager John Tomlinson's team, which is bringing on board ten newcomers. Perhaps most notable will be Kevin Blanton and Gary Schoultheis, who will bring experience and leadership. Jeremy Wilson from the Dawg Pack and former Airway standouts Kurt Davis, Mike Grubbs, Matthew Barone and Wayne Wright will also bring experience from the B or C level. The biggest obstacle for the Saints will be the ability of their players to jell from so many different teams and backgrounds. The fact they are not playing leagues together exacerbates the challenge. But if they play in as many tournaments as they have in the past, they should become comfortable playing together as a unit by midseason. It may take this team a year or two to become the perennial C power that they were in D, but persistence and patience have been manager John Tomlinson's trademarks for seven years. Sooner or later they'll arrive, and likely sooner than later.

λ Manager's Comments: "I purposely left out th personal stats because we don't want the focus to be on how good we should be individually. We play as a team, we have fun on and off the field. It's a game, and someone will win and someone will lose. Of course, we would like to win all our games, but if we don't, we are still grown men playing a game we love to play and hopefully at the end of the year we have made more friends than enemies and we have our share of the hardware. We are very strong on paper with our players being named to 15 all-city teams, one all-decade team, 28 all-tournament teams, 7 MVP's or outstanding defensive or offensive player awards, and a couple all-state teams. But ultimately, it will come down to if we jell and who makes the least mistakes. As a team, we are definitely not short on talent. I just hope as a coach I can put it all together and utilize it in a way that benefits my team. Our strengths are that we have picked up some speed and some great arms. But I would say our biggest strength is experience and the desire to play as much as possible. We will have ten players on the field every game that want to be there and wants to win and are willing to give 100 percent to do so. Our weakness is definitely that we haven't played together in the past. We have five new immediate starters and five new people coming in and playing when we need them. We are not playing leagues with each other, but we are all playing leagues with prior commitments and other friends. Of course, we will be playing just about every weekend, and we are playing the bigger Major and B tournaments around the city.

JLC/LEGENDS/COUNTRYWIDE (45-30)

λ 2007 Team Name: JLC/Legends/Countrywide.

λ Manager: Chris Fogt.

λ Key Personnel: Paul DeMoss (.671, 47 HR's, All-City "B," 3 All-Tourns.), Chris Malay (.684, 26 HR's, 1 All-Tourn.), Paul Laible (.643, 12 HR's, 1 All-Tourn.), Scott Moree (.627, 15 HR's, 1 All-Tourn.), Steve Hunt (.612, 22 HR's).

λ Additions: Scott Eibel, Jason Kraemer, Paul DeMoss, Danny Sharp - Dawg Pack; Brian Goebel - Good Guys; Chad Johnson, Shawn Sproles, Mike Sellet - Two-N-Out.com.

λ Losses: Dave Kessler - J-Taps; Adam Maley, Will Keller, Tony Markus, Tony Wahl - Semi-Retired.

λ Final Ranking: USSSA Kentucky 2nd, Great Lakes 24th, National 109th.

λ Tourney Highlights: 4th Kentucky USSSA C State, Taylor Mill, Ky.; 2nd USSSA C NIT, Harrison, Oh.; 3rd USSSA C NIT, Hebron, Ky.; 9th ASA B Metro, Crosby Township, Oh.; 13th USSSA Great Lakes C Nationals, Ft. Knox, Ky.; 33rd USSSA C World, Kissimmee, Fl.

λ Outlook: After a year hiatus in 2006, JLC reunited last year and stepped up to the C level, where they enjoyed modest success both in their rankings and tournament finishes. At usssa.com, they were the number two ranked team in Kentucky and 24th in the Great Lakes Division. Their best tournament finishes in regular season were a second and third place finish in NIT's. But what really has the team pumped about 2008 was a surprising 33rd place finish at the World. They've also added a bevy of blue chip recruits, including Scott Eibel, Jason Kraemer, Paul DeMoss and Danny Sharp of the Dawg Pack, Brian Goebel of the Good Guys, and Chad Johnson, Shawn Sproles and Mike Sellet of Two-N-Out.com. This should be the perfect Rx for JLC's struggles with run production in 2007. The defense, anchored by Billy Scott and Paul Laible in the outfield and Jay Eibel and Chris Malay in the infield, should be plenty solid again as well. While last year's JLC/Legends/Countrywide team was content with just trying to be competitive, this year's club naturally has higher expectations. A couple of NIT crowns, improved finishes in post-season play, and a top fifty national ranking are all within reach.

λ Manager's Comments: "In 2008 our biggest strength should be our offense. Last year we had very little power and run production. With our pickups for the season, scoring runs shouldn't be a problem. Our defense will be pretty decent again behind outfielders Billy Scott and Paul Laible and infielders Jay Eibel and Chris Malay. Our team goals are winning every tournament we enter, with our ultimate goal being the USSSA C World in Michigan in September. Another big goal of ours is to lead by example when it comes to being good sportsmen. We expect to be highly competitive in the Greater Cincinnati area as well as the Great Lakes region. We definitely expect to better our finish of 3-2 and 33rd place last year at the USSSA C World."

MIKE FOULKS AUTO BODY/TEAM INSANITY/EASTON

λ 2007 Team Name: Mike Foulks Auto Body/Team Insanity.

λ Manager: Mike Foulks.

λ Key Personnel: T. J. Thompson (.492, 2nd Team All-No. Ky., 2nd Team All-City), Brandon Johnson (.561, 27 HR's, 125 rbi's, 1st Team All-No. Ky, 2nd Team All-City), Eddie Weinberg (.551, 14 HR's, 85 rbi's, 1st Team All-No. Ky.), Seth Tracy (.530, 18 HR's, 88 rbi's, 1st Team All-No. Ky.).

λ Additions: Jason Ferguson, Extreme; Corry Hogle - Big Sonny's/HLS; Brandon Isles; Donnie Merriman, Jeremy Ross - East End.

λ Losses: Mike Barnes, Andrew McGowan, Jason Murphy, Chuck Wagner.

λ Final Ranking: USSSA: Kentucky 1st, Great Lakes 7th, National 21st.

λ League Highlights: 5-4 Riverstar B Spring, 4-5 Riverstar C Spring; 5-4 Riverstar B Summer, 4-5 Riverstar C Summer.

λ Tourney Highlights: 1st USSSA B-C NIT, Harrison, Oh.; 2nd USSSA B-C NIT, Harrison, Oh.; 3rd USSSA B-C NIT, Colerain Township, Oh.; Ohio USSSA B State, Milford, Oh.; 4th USSSA B-C NIT, Milford, Oh.; 4th USSSA Great Lakes B National, Sterling Heights, Mi.; 9th USSSA Major NIT, Colerain Township; 17th USSSA B World, Kissimmee, Fl.

λ Outlook: After being bumped up to the "B" division in 2007, Mike Foulks/Team Insanity/Easton didn't miss a beat. They maintained their number one ranking in their class in their state, a top ten Great Lakes Division ranking and a top twenty national ranking. Their 3rd place state tournament finish, 4th place national tournament finish and 17th place world tournament finish didn't quite match up to the 1st place, 2nd place and 9th place finishes that they achieved at the "C" level in 2006, but keep in mind it was their first year at the "B" level. Their success in NIT's was outstanding, with a 1st place, 2nd place, 3rd place and 4th place finish in B/C events, and an incredible 9th place finish in the Cincinnati Major NIT. The loss of key players has resulted in the team's return to the "C" level for 2008, but with a skeptical eye from area teams and directors. That puts the team in the perilous position of knowing that if they play well, they could wind up back at the "B" level. And the alternative isn't exactly enticing either. This will likely hinge on the performance of newcomers Jason Ferguson and Corry Hogle, who will try to fill the shoes of the 2007 team MVP, Jason Murphy. If they can latch on to the intensity and chemistry that have characterized Mike Foulks' teams in the past, they'll be in the hunt for a world title again - regardless of the level of play.

λ Manager's Comments: "We are expecting the new additions to have the same team chemistry and unselfish play that has helped the MFAB team be successful in the past. We have a good group of younger players coming in with the wanting to win mentality. Losing several players that have been apart of MFAB from the beginning will be a new test for the team. Playing together and the ability of getting to know what each players unique talents maybe could pose a rocky start for us. We hope to have added the right mix of guys to help keep us in the position to be playing on Sunday. We look forward to traveling, playing together and most importantly having fun."

SENTRY FIRE/RED EYE SPORTS/LBYC (44-18)

λ 2007 Team Name: Sentry Fire/APEX/LBYC.

λ Manager: Kevin Henn.

λ Key Personnel: Adam Visnic (.710, 26 HR's, 121 rbi's, All-Northern Kentucky, All-State, 1 All-Tournament), Mike Scuglik (.693, 34 HR's, 139 rbi's, All-Northern Kentucky), Tim Barker (.683, 57 rbi's, All-Northern Kentucky, All-State, 1 All-Tournament, 1 Tourn. MVP), Kraig Piper (.630, 41 HR's, 162 rbi's), Brian Walker (.602, 9 HR's, 68 rbi's).

λ Additions: Tom Spille - Ante Up; Chaz Weber - Two-N-Out; Jake Page - Ranch Inc.

λ Losses: Jason Bach, Roger Dunn - retired; Tony Bauereis - Big O Softball.

λ Final Ranking: USSSA Kentucky 1st, USSSA Great Lakes Division 14th, USSSA National 68th.

λ League Highlights: 5-3 Men's B, Riverstar Park; 6-2 Men's C, Riverstar Park.

λ Tourney Highlights: 1st Kentucky USSSA C State, Taylor Mill, Kentucky; 5th USSSA City Slam B/C NIT, Colerain Township, Ohio; 9th ASA A Metro, Crosby Township, Ohio; USSSA Great Lakes C Nationals, Ft. Knox, Kentucky; 49th USSSA C World, Kissimmee, Florida.

λ Outlook: Sentry Fire/Red Eye Sports/LBYC has found attrition to be one of its best friends. Unlike many teams, who bust up and reform every year if they don't win the World Tournament, Sentry will be entering its fourth year with basically the same manager, line-up and sponsors. Staying together has brought an improved finish in the rankings each year, and while there was no improvement at the nationals or world over the previous season, manager Kevin Henn's charges did capture a USSSA Kentucky State Championship. After two years of being mired between 3rd and 5th place in NIT play, Sentry hopes the addition of Tom Spille (Ante Up), Chaz Weber (Two-N-Out) and Jake Page (Ranch One) can help them to finally reach that elusive championship game. Interestingly, the old adage that offense wins games and defense wins tournaments just hasn't rung true for Sentry, which prides itself on its defense. The offensive leaders in 2008 will again be All-Northern Kentucky selections Adam Visnic (.710, 26 HR's, 121 rbi's), the 2007 "Rookie of the Year," Mike Scuglic (.693, 34 HR's, 139 rbi's), ageless veteran Timmy Barker (.683) and Kraig Piper (.630, 41 HR's, 162 rbi's). Mound duties are capably handled by Brian Walker (.602). Behind Walker's pitching, the leadership of Mike Scuglik and Tim Barker, a solid defense, and enviable team chemistry, Sentry should finally challenge for an NIT title or two, and crack the top 25 at this year's C world in Sterling Heights, Michigan.

λ Manager's Comments: "The strength of our team will be our defense. We pride ourselves and work very hard on the defensive side. As for power, I would say we have ample amount, but not excessive. We have good team speed and will again show great team chemistry. Our glaring weakness will be scoring runs and hitting together. This has been a problem for us in the past and we are hoping we have solved the problem. I think our goal is the same as many teams in that we would like to go to the World and do well. We are out to prove that we belong on the C level. I anticipate that we will have one or two top five finishes, but I can also promise that we will give you everything we've got, all the time. We will win some and lose some, but we will always have fun doing it."

2008 USSSA Women's Team Previews

D & S ENGINEERING

λ 2007 Team Name: D & S Engineering.

λ Manager: Kim Wilson.

λ Key Personnel: Emily Cannady (1st Team All-City), Christa Brinker (1st Team All-City), Sharon Singleton (2nd Team All-City), Christy Craig (2nd Team All-City, All-

World), Theresa Hickey (All-Great Lakes Division), Amy Schweinefus (All-Great Lakes Division, All-World, Player of the Year).

λ Additions: Tonya Thompson - Intimidators; Laurie Brannon - James Arnold; Donna Wainscott.

λ Losses: Liz Ulland - Crosley's; Amy Green, Rose Chatman, Tammy Faust.

λ Final Ranking: USSSA Ohio 1st, Great Lakes 1st, National 19th.

λ League Highlights: 5-4 Expressway Spring Season; 3-6 Expressway, Summer Season.

λ Tourney Highlights: 1st USSSA Bash For Cash, Cincinnati, Oh. USSSA Memorial, White Oak, Oh.; USSSA NIT, Cincinnati, Oh.; USSSA NIT, Milford; USSSA State, West Chester, Oh.; 2nd USSSA Nationals, Ft. Knox, Ky.; 4th USSSA World, Kissimmee, Fl.

λ Outlook: With the exception of a pair of 7th place finishes, D & S Engineering brought their "A" game to all their other tournaments in 2007. In eight outings, they won a pair of qualifiers, an NIT, and the Ohio State championship. They were second in the Great Lakes Nationals, and 4th in the U-Trip World. They finished the year with 1160 ranking points - good for 19th in the nation. Not bad for a first year team. Their World Tournament performance earned the team a "promotion" to class "C," which, quite honestly, should make any successes more rewarding in view of how they outshined their competition last year. They may get tired of playing Ty-1-On and Shooters all season long, but playing at that level will do nothing but help them prepare for a big finish in the World. The loss of Liz Ulland and Rose Chatman is a setback, but newcomers Tonya Thompson, Laurie Brannon and Donna Wainscott should be capable replacements.

SOS SOFTBALL/BW3'S (50-34)

λ 2007 Team Name: Pelle's/BW3's.

λ Manager: Steve Hunt, Butch Holloway, Rodney Wolfe.

λ Key Personnel: Heather Dickerson (All-City, All-State), Laura Mitchell (All-State, All-Great Lakes), Beth Fields (All-City, All-State, All-Great Lakes).

λ Additions: Jessica Hardy, Amber Greene, Jessica Smith, Kelly Throckmorton, Lou Strong - James Arnold.

λ Losses: Stacy Moree, Tonya Coffey.

λ Final Ranking: USSSA: Ohio 3rd, Great Lakes 4th, National 25th.

λ League Highlights: 6-3 Riverstar, 9-10 Expressway.

λ Tourney Highlights: 1st USSSA D NIT, Milford; 2nd ASA Women's Upper Metro, Crosby Township; Ohio USSSA D State, West Chester; May Classic; 3rd USSSA D NIT, Cincinnati; Springdale Classic, Springdale; Great Lakes National, Ft. Knox, Ky.

λ Outlook: Last year Pelle's/BW3's maintained their stature as one of the top USSSA D teams locally, regionally and nationally. They earned a number two ranking in the state of Ohio, number four in the Great Lakes Division, and number 34 nationally. They improved their finish in both national and world tourney play, placing 3rd and 25th, respectively, compared to 13th and 33rd in 2006. They also continued to be one of the elite tournament teams in the area, with seven top three finishes. If there was one knock on Pelle's, it was that the team couldn't finish on Sunday, as they recorded only one tournament title, while placing second three times and third three times. But this season

under the SOS Softball/BW3's banner, managers Steve Hunt, Butch Holloway and Rodney Wolfe's team may just be unstoppable in view of a merger with James Arnold. Couple that with the move up to class C by D & S Engineering, the top-ranked team in the state and Great Lakes Division, and SOS may not even find any serious competition until they arrive in Kissimmee for the World Tournament in September.

λ Manager's Comments: "I think our strengths will be hitting, improved team speed and defense. Our main weakness will be getting used to playing together early in the season with a lot of new faces. Returning are all-city and all-state infielder Heather Dickerson (.652), shortstop Beth Fields (.550), left-centerfielder Kassie Brock (.538) and outfielders Mindy Sawyer, Laura Mitchell, and Tonya Coffey. Catcher-pitcher Liz Werrmann, 1st baseman Chrissy Young, 3rd baseman Davana Gulley, and utility player Freedom Fogt will be counted on heavily. Adding new players from James Arnold, including All-City selections Jessica Smith (OF), Jessica Hardy (2B-SS), Kelly Throckmorton (OF-P), Lou Strong (P), and speedy outfielder Amber Greene will make a nice mix of players who can play multiple positions. Our main loss will be Stacy Moree, who will sit out the entire year entering motherhood. Our goal as it is every year is to play to win each game and get stronger as the state, nationals and world gets closer. We really think we are vastly improved. If we stay focused and keep improving this could be a great year."

TY-1-ON (41-8)

λ 2007 Team Name: Ty-1-On.

λ Manager: Colleen Needham.

λ Key Personnel: Karen Kron (Player of the Year, All-State, World Tournament MVP), Rhonda Klette (All-World), Theresa Hirschauer (All-City, All-State, All-World), Lori Wilp (All-State, All-World), Brenda Ryan (All-World), M. J. Ranz (All-City), Andrea Costa (All-City, All-World), Lisa Richter (All-City, Outstanding Offensive Player USSSA B World), Lisa Tyler (All-City, All-State, All-World), Sharon Graham (State Tournament MVP).

λ Additions: NA.

λ Losses: Shirley Cummins.

λ Final Ranking: USSSA Ohio 1st, Great Lakes 1st, National 3rd.

λ League Highlights: Expressway Park Spring Season 8-1; Expressway Park Summer Season 9-0.

λ Tourney Highlights: 1st USSSA NIT, Milford (2); USSSA Qualifier, White Oak; USSSA USSSA B-C State, West Chester; 1st USSSA B World, Kissimmee, Fl.; 3rd USSSA Qualifier, Springdale; 4th USSSA Great Lakes B National, Canton, Mi.

λ Outlook: Ty-1-On wasn't invincible last season, but they came close. In seven tournaments they won five, including a pair of USSSA NIT's, the Ohio State and the U-Trip B World for a 24-7 tournament record. And in league play they went 17-1 for an overall 41-8 mark. They were the number one ranked team in Ohio and the Great Lakes Division, and third ranked team in the nation. After likely being denied a World title in 2006 due to illnesses and conflicts, Ty-1-On brought home the gold last year. This year they'll try to repeat, returning to the site of last year's championship, Walt Disney Wide World of Sports Complex in Lake Buena Vista, Fl. And with virtually the same team

with its solid mix of young stars, experienced veterans, and incredible depth, they'll be tough to stop.

λ Manager's Comments: "Our strengths are experience, defense and timely hitting. We are a very smart team in terms of how the game should be played. We have a number of players that are interchangeable, which helps us not to miss a beat if someone is hurt or just having an off weekend. Our weakness is that we are older on average than most teams we play against. Our goals are to repeat as B World Champions. Because the B World did not have a large number of teams, we will have the rare chance to go for a repeat. One of our biggest goals for this year is to find a sponsor, even if it's a partial one. I said it when we won and I will repeat it again: we could not have accomplished what we did without our strong bench. There was not a single player on our team that was a 'bench' player. They all could have started. We had a great bench who supported whoever was in the line-up, and that is why we were so successful. It is easy to get good players who know they are going to start, but the key to a championship is the bench. Our key returning young players are Karen Kron, the MVP of the World Tournament, Lisa Richter, the Outstanding Defensive Player at the World, Lori Wilp, who was also selected to the All-World team, and Erin Saunders, who missed the World last year due to her honeymoon. They do a great job offensively and defensively. Add our experienced players - Brenda Ryan, M. J. Ranz, Theresa Hirschauer, Shelly Cummins, Lisa Tyler, Celia Fritz, Rhonda Klette and Andrea Costa - and we will give just about any team a good game. We were lucky to have an excellent bench last year of Hall of Famer Sharon Graham, Jane Eltzroth, Shirley Cummins, and Sue Garnier. We will lose Shirley and Sue to the Masters Program."

Locals Outslug Nine Team Field...

Carter, Rogers Power Blitz/Watanabe/Easton To Bash For Cash-ASA "Open" Title At Riverstar

Jimmy Carter hit .641, cracked a dozen home runs and collected 39 rbi's, and Mike Rogers batted .690 with ten home runs and 31 rbi's, to power Blitz/Watanabe/Bull/Minges Drywall/Wessel/Easton to a first place finish in the ASA "Open" division of the Bash For Cash March 15-16 at Riverstar Park.

Blitz/Watanabe/Easton outscored four opponents 149-117 en route to the title, slugging their way past TCP/Easton in the finals 47-32.

Jason Brown, who led his club in hitting with a .796 average, was named tournament MVP.

Other hitting leaders included Justin Minges (.794), Chris Ashley (.750), and Kevin Greene (.718). Larry Wert batted .867 on Saturday.

Blitz/Watanabe/Easton manager Terry Walton said that the nod for MVP honors went to Brown because "he did a great job at the top of the line-up leading off for us.

“Jason and Kevin Green were in the one-two hole and were always getting to the heart of our line-up with men on base,” said Walton. “Also, considering the field conditions, he played a really good shortstop. He teamed up with Chris Ashley and Justin Minges to turn six or seven double plays for us.”

While Brown, Jimmy Carter and Mike Rogers carried the offense, the real tournament MVP might have been pitcher Trevor Barth, who was faced with the daunting task of trying to stop the opposition with a one-pitch format and a free foul.

“Our pitching with Trevor Barth and Frank Gruber deserve some credit,” acknowledged Walton. “Especially Trevor. He pitched most of the day on Sunday, and with one-pitch and a free foul, he was at the mercy of the batters. He did a great job under the circumstances.”

But in the end, said Walton, it was “consistent hitting and timely home runs” that netted his club the title.

“Eight home runs is a lot of home runs,” said Walton of the tournament limit. “But we had a lot of three run home runs and grand slams. Also our outfield did a great job. Brian Alexander and Mike Rogers made some really nice catches.

“With the way conditions were with the one-pitch and free foul, it was very conducive to the offense,” continued Walton. “But as well as hitting home runs, we hit the ball down when we needed to. We only hit one home run for an out the entire tournament.”

Another key, said Walton, was that his team was unflinching when they fell behind early in several games.

“We were down by ten or more runs on a number of occasions and that didn’t seem to phase the guys. They were pretty confident in our ability to score runs, and I think it showed.”

Blitz/Watanabe/Easton played in one pool play contest before weather conditions forced tournament operators to go directly into a single elimination format, and the locals used the occasion to trim Team Toolbox from Elizabethtown, Ky. 24-23. Kevin Green homered twice and shared sixteen hits with Brian Alexander, Frank Gruber and Larry Wert.

In the first round of elimination play, Blitz/Watanabe/Easton used a nine run 5th to overcome a 30-24 deficit to Balls Deep/Easton, and the Waynesville, Oh., team never recovered in a 37-24 decision. A three-run bomb by Jimmy Carter put Blitz/Watanabe/Easton ahead for good at 26-24, and another by Justin Minges closed out the inning at 30-24. An inning later Mike Rogers connected for a three-run blast to invoke the mercy-rule.

Minges pounded out six hits, and Rogers clubbed three home runs and went 5-for-6 along with Kevin Green and Jason Brown.

Blitz/Watanabe/Easton also needed five innings to overtake K. W. Sports/Game On/Easton in the semi-finals. A Jimmy Carter slammer produced all of his club's runs in the inning as Blitz went on top for good at 39-37. Blitz added two more in the bottom of the 6th, while Trevor Barth was able to hold K. W. Sports with a lone run in their last two at bats to make the final 41-38.

Justin Minges again went 6-for-6, and Mike Rogers and Brian Alexander homered twice and combined with Kevin Green and Chris Ashley for twenty hits.

The 5th inning again proved to be the turning point in the finals against TCP. After trailing early on 21-11, Blitz/Watanabe/Easton battled back to knot the score at 25-25 in the 4th, then exploded for thirteen runs in the top of the 5th to take a commanding 38-25 lead. Chris Ashley's two-run shot broke the tie, and Jimmy Carter added a three-run swat in the inning. TCP answered with four in the bottom of the inning, but Blitz/Watanabe/Easton staggered the Iowa team with nine more runs in the 6th to go ahead 47-29 with the help of Jimmy Carter's third slammer of the weekend. TCP mustered three more runs, but it wasn't enough to avoid the mercy rule.

Jason Brown banged out seven hits to seal MVP honors, Mike Rogers homered two more times and went 6-for-7 along with Kevin Green and Brian Alexander, and Jimmy Carter nailed down the home run title with four round trippers.

Blitz/Watanabe/Easton manager Terry Walton said his team was grateful to get the tournament played in view of the weather conditions.

"We want to thank Bill Chard and his crew at Riverstar," said Walton. "As bad as the weather was, they did what they could with the fields, and it was quite amazing we were able to play.

"We also want to congratulate the TCP team on a good tournament," said Walton. "They have a good team and a lot of good hitters, and their manager is a class act."

7TH ANNUAL BASH FOR CASH ASA "A/B" DIVISION FINAL TOURNAMENT STANDINGS

1. Blitz/Watanabe/Bull/Minges/Easton, Cinti., OH 3 0
2. TCP/Easton, New London, IA 2 1
3. K. W. Sports/Game On/Easton, Cincinnati, OH 1 1
Mel's Boys #2, Valencia, CA 1 1
5. B & C/Miken/Thornton's, Edmondton, KY 0 1
Balls Deep/Easton, Waynesville, OH 0 1
Mel's Boys #1, Valencia, CA 0 1
Team Toolbox, Elizabethtown, KY 0 1

**7TH ANNUAL BASH FOR CASH CLASS “A/B”
DIVISION ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM**

Scott Roen TCP/Easton
Chris Burns TCP/Easton
Brian Barnett TCP/Easton
Mike Rogers Blitz/Watanabe/Bull/Minges/Easton
Chris Ashley Blitz/Watanabe/Bull/Minges/Easton
Justin Minges Blitz/Watanabe/Bull/Minges/Easton
Kevin Greene Blitz/Watanabe/Bull/Minges/Easton
Scott Roen - ODP TCP/Easton
Jimmy Carter - HR Leader (12) Blitz/Watanabe/Easton
Jason Brown - MVP Blitz/Watanabe/Easton

**Columbus Club Rocks Mike Foulks/Insanity In Finals, 26-6...
GTL/Creative/Mojo/Worth Romps In Bash For Cash-ASA “A/B” At Riverstar**

So much for the old expression “practice makes perfect.”

Without so much as a trip to the batting cages, GTL/Creative Stucco/Mojo/Worth roared into River-star Park from Columbus March 15-16 and ran roughshod over a ten team field to capture first place in the Bash For Cash-ASA 2K “A/B” division.

The champions averaged 25-runs per game en route to the title, swatting aside Mike Foulks Auto Body/Team Insanity 26-6 in the championship game.

Brian Blount led the onslaught with a hefty .882 average. J. C. Phelps followed at .867, Kevin Filby chipped in with .750, Chris Moon batted .733 and Roger Bias .727.

Phelps and Filby led GTL/Worth with six home runs and 17 and 16 rbi’s, respectively. Mark Witte slugged four homers and collected eleven rbi’s.

“Everybody came out hitting,” summed up GTL/Worth coach James Turner. “Our being mostly northern boys, some of our guys hadn’t had a swing outside yet. But everybody got on track hitting right away. That was the big key.”

Turner said that hitting leader Brian Blount “actually pulled his bat right out of the wrapper right before our first game. It was unbelievable that he was able to hit that way coming right out of the gate. He took no batting practice inside or outside.

“Phelps lives down in Kentucky and the weather has allowed him to hit a little bit, so we expect that from him,” acknowledged Turner.

Defensively, Turner cited the contributions of pitcher Kevin Filby and infielders Brian Blount (ss) and Robin Roberts (middle infield).

“Kevin kept a lot of teams to low scoring, and Brian and Robin always tend to make the routine plays and the extraordinary plays,” noted Turner.

After benefiting from a 7-0 forfeit victory over B&C/Miken/Boombah/-Thornton's from Edmonton, Ky., GTL routed K & W Sports/Game On/Easton 24-4 to finish pool play at 2-0. Rick Sedlacek banged out four hits, and Blount, Phelps and Filby combined for nine.

That set the stage for a pre-season showdown between the top two ranked teams in Ohio, as GTL locked horns with Cincinnati's Blitz/Watanabe/Bull/Minges Drywall/Wessel/Easton. After falling behind 7-3 in the 2nd, GTL outscored Blitz 15-3 over the next two and a half innings to forge an 18-10 advantage. Blitz cut it to two at 18-16 with a six run 5th, but GTL answered with six in the 6th, then held Blitz to a three spot in the 7th to preserve the win. GTL grabbed the lead for good with eight runs in the top of the 3rd. Kevin Filby's three-run blast knotted the score at 7-7, then Chris Moon's two-run shot broke the tie. Witte and Luna followed with solo shots to cap off the inning.

In the 4th Filby added another three-run homer that off the tip of the glove of the Blitz right fielder to improve the GTL lead to 14-9. Then a two-run swat by Roger Bias capped off a four 5th and gave GTL an 18-10 cushion. After Blitz charged back with six in the bottom of the inning, GBL responded with six runs of their own, with Mark Witte's three-run belt highlighting the inning.

Blount and Filby each went 4-for-5, and Chris Moon 3-4 to pace the offense.

Mike Foulks/Team Insanity drew first blood with three runs in the top of the 1st in the finals, but GTL answered with four in the bottom of the inning, then added two in the 2nd and nine in the 3rd on their way to mercy-ruling the Kentucky club 26-6 in four. Two-run shots by Phelps and Robin Roberts put their club on top to stay in the 1st at 4-3. Roger Bias and Phelps each contributed three-run homers in the nine run 3rd. Another three-run blast by Phelps and one by Witte were the big blows in an eleven run 4th as GTL invoked the mercy-rule.

Phelps, Roberts, Bias and Brian Blount were all perfect in four trips to the plate.

The title netted GTL a berth to the ASA "A" Nationals and \$2,000 in travel money.

“For the first tournament of the year, we came out and surprised even ourselves as well as we played,” remarked GTL's James Turner. “We were also able to break in a couple of guys we picked up with the veteran's from last year's team.”

7TH ANNUAL BASH FOR CASH ASA "A/B" DIVISION FINAL TOURNAMENT STANDINGS

1. GTL/Creative Stucco/Mojo/Worth, Cols., OH 2 0

2. Mike Foulks A. B./Tm. Insanity, Covington, KY 1 1
3. Blitz/Watanabe/Easton, Cincinnati, OH 1 1

7th Inning Rally Carries Wisconsin Team To Bash For Cash-ASA "C" Title At Riverstar...

Wiscinski Walk-Off Slammer Lifts Shirtsandlogos.com/DLB Past EAP/Wessel/Easton 19-17

Justin Wiscinski's walk-off grand slam in the bottom of the 7th lifted Shirtsandlogos.com/DLB to a 19-17 victory over EAP/Wessel/Easton in the championship game of the Bash For Cash-ASA "C" Division March 15-16 at Riverstar Park.

Wiscinski's slammer capped off a five run rally for the champions, who entered the bottom of the 7th trailing 17-14. The victory completed a four game sweep of the tournament's elimination bracket and gave Shirtsandlogos.com/DLB a 6-1 record for the weekend.

DLB manager Travis Clark credited his team's title to "clutch hitting" and "being luckier than everybody else.

"We just had some opportune hitting," said Clark. "Every time we'd get two or three guys on base, we had one of our big hitters come up to the plate and hit the ball out of the park. We had guys who would get a single, then we'd get another single, then another, then we had guys come up and hit it out."

Josh Hearn hit .730 to pace the offense. He was followed by Mark Holstein at .700, Larry Tostrude at .682, Justin Wiscinski at .647, Matt Rear at .637 and Todd Ankney at .632.

Holstein, Hearn and Rear were named to the All-Tournament team.

"Mark was picked for his situational hitting," said Clark. "And he led us in home runs. He hit a lot of them when we really needed them."

Clark said that Hearn was selected "because of his clutch hitting and he came up in some big spots late in the game and had some big pinch hits."

Rear "hit the ball all over the park and played a great left field," added Clark.

Wiscinski was the obvious choice for Tournament MVP, said Clark.

"He hit the tournament winning home run and pitched really well. He caught a lot of balls hit back at him."

Clark said his outfield of Danny Jordan (cf), Rear (lf) and Gary Lofton (rf) also “played really well.

“ Running around for seven games in that slop the first weekend out can be hard on your legs,” noted Clark. “The conditions were rough.”

Clark said his team “barely snuck in” to the championship bracket by virtue of a 2-1 record. They lost their first pool play contest to eventual finalist EAP 16-12, then outslugged Mike Foulks Auto Body/Team Insanity 28-27 before knocking off APEX.

DLP jumped on top of their first two elimination round opponents early and made the leads stick as they disposed of Waller Roofing 23-17 and Team Elite 26-10. Against Waller, DLP erupted for eight runs in the bottom of the 2nd to break a 2-2 tie and go ahead to stay. Josh Hearn’s rbi single put his club on top 3-2. Larry Tostrude’s three-run blast capped off the inning. DLP pulled away with four runs in the 5th and four in the 6th. Waller scored five runs in the top of the 7th to make the final 23-17.

Matt Rear collected five hits, Tostrude and Mark Holstein combined for eight, and Hearn and Danny Jordan each went 3-for-4.

Game two was never in doubt after DLP jumped out to a 12-0 lead in the bottom of the 1st. A Mark Holstein slammer and a three-run Justin Wiscinski bomb highlighted the inning.

Ryan Thiede, Travis Clark and Matt Rear were each perfect in four trips to the plate, and Wiscinski and Larry Tostrude shared six hits.

DLP’s didn’t pull out their final two victories until the 7th inning. Against Elk & Elk they put up five unanswered runs to claim a 20-15 win. Danny Jordan singled in the go-ahead run. Todd Ankney added a big two-run single to make it 19-15. Justin Wiscinski held Elk & Elk scoreless in the bottom of the 7th. Jordan banged out four hits, and Ankney and Mark Holstein chipped in three apiece. Josh Hearn delivered a big pinch-hit double to start the 7th.

That lifted DLP into the finals for a re-match with EAP. The locals were poised for a sweep of their challengers, as they took a 17-14 lead into the bottom of the 7th. But Mark Hostein walked and went to 3rd on a Josh Hearn pinch-hit double. Todd Ankney walked to load the bases, and Danny Jordan followed with an rbi single to cut the lead to two. That brought up Justin Wiscinski, who promptly launched a walk-off slammer out of Riverstar Park to bring the curtain down on the tournament’s largest division.

Holstein and Jordan pounded out four hits each, and Wiscinski pitched in with three to power the champions.

7TH ANNUAL BASH FOR CASH ASA “C” CHAMPIONSHIP BRACKET FINAL STANDINGS

1. DLB/Shirtsandlogos.com, Milwaukee, WI 4 0
2. EAP/Wessel/Real Estate/Easton, Cincinnati, OH 2 1
3. Zanesville Eagles Airie 302, Zanesville, OH 2 1
Elk & Elk/Combat, Wickliffe, OH 1 1
5. Bigalkes/Damage Control, Milwaukee, WI 0 1
3AC/Meager, Elyria, OH 0 1
Elite Softball, Cadiz, KY 0 1
State Wide Title/Global Mort., Centerville, OH 0 1
9. Street Kids/Easton/Penn Av., South Bend, IN 0 1
Weller Roofing, West Chester, OH 0 1

**7TH ANNUAL BASH FOR CASH ASA "C"
CONSOLATION BRACKET FINAL STANDINGS**

1. Barille/The Boys, Kent, OH 3 0
2. Rock Tenn/Walkers, Muncie, IN 2 1
3. Mike Foulks A.B./Team Insanity, Covington, KY 1 1
PBSI/1 Coll Remodeling/Ffield Blvd., Cinti., OH 1 1
5. Last Call/Club Trio/Penn Av., Lawrenceburg, IN 1 1
TPE/S & S, Trenton, OH 1 1
Cincinnati Guido's, Cincinnati, OH 0 1
Thornton's/Circle City, Camby, IN 0 1
9. Derby City Softball, Louisville, KY 0 1
TPC Softball, Columbus, OH 0 1

**7TH ANNUAL BASH FOR CASH CLASS "C"
DIVISION ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM**

Matt Reed Zanesville Eagles Airie 302
 Gary Lynce Elk & Elk/Combat
 Shane Spicer EAP/Wessel/Real Estate/Easton
 Ryan Richmond EAP/Wessel/Real Estate/Easton
 Steve Schon EAP/Wessel/Real Estate/Easton
 Brady Knoll DLB/Shirtsandlogos.com
 Ryan Theide DLB/Shirtsandlogos.com
 Matty Rear DLB/Shirtsandlogos.com
 Josh Hearn DLB/Shirtsandlogos.com
 Mark Holstein - HR Leader (14) DLB/Shirtsandlogos.com
 Gary Hammerle - ODP EAP/Wessel/Real Estate/Easton
 Justin Wicinski - MVP DLB/Shirtsandlogos.com

**Louisville Club Claims Bash For Cash-ASA "D/E" Title At Riverstar...
 Back-To-Back-To-Back 11th Hour Rallies Lift Problem Drinkers/Diesel/Elite**

Problem Drinkers/Diesel/Elite rallied from behind to win their final three games in their last at bat to complete a six-game sweep of the elimination round of the Bash For Cash-ASA "D/E" Division March 15-16 at Riverstar Park.

In the quarter-finals and semi-finals, Problem Drinkers scored two runs in their final at bat to trim Team Evansville and Huber Lawn Care 11-10, then stunned Halloween Express in the finals by overcoming a 14-11 deficit in the bottom of the last inning to win 15-14.

The champions disposed of three round robin opponents, then steamrolled past three more teams in the elimination bracket before running into Team Evansville in game four.

"We showed a lot of heart coming back in the last inning of the last three games," said Problem Drinkers manager Jeremy Coulter. "I attributed that to hard work, determination, a total team effort and never giving up."

The offensive leaders for Problem Drinkers included Jeremy Duke at .769, D. J. Muhall at .726, Jason Blevens at .687 and Chris Henon at .672.

Duke and Muhall were named to the All-Tournament team along with Tod Heines and Richie Dahlman. Mat Fiedler was selected Tournament MVP.

"Mat had a lot of key, crucial hits with runners in scoring position and a lot of key home runs to put our team up early," said Coulter. "With a forty minute time limit, that was huge. That played a big factor this weekend."

Coulter said that the tournament was run under a forty minute time limit and used a one-pitch format due to inclement weather.

In addition to earning MVP honors, Fiedler was also the home run leader in the tournament with seven.

Coulter said that Duke, his club's leadoff hitter, "led off every game with a hit.

"It seemed like he got a base hit every time up," remarked Coulter. "That would start the carousel and we just jumped on his back and he led us."

Pitching and defense were also big for the Problem Drinkers, noted Coulter.

"Jason Blevens did an outstanding job pitching. With a one-pitch you have to throw a strike."

Coulter said his two middle infielders, Teddy Dahlman and Todd Heines "turned numerous double plays throughout the weekend" as part of the Problem Drinkers' five-man infield.

Problem Drinkers mowed down Nuway Drywall 14-1 in four innings in their pool play opener, then brushed aside Troy Redman 10-5 and Dixon Softball 17-12.

In the elimination round, Problem Drinkers used a nine run 4th to break open a 4-4 contest and never looked back in an eventual 17-10 victory over Dirt Ten in game one. Mat Fiedler, whose three-run blast put his club ahead to stay at 7-4, went 3-for-4 along with Jeremy Duke and D. J. Muhall.

Pitcher Jason Blevens took control in games two and three, tossing back-to-back shutouts over JEP (14-0) and Double J (15-0). Chris Henon's three-run shot highlighted a seven run 1st against JEP. Henon and Todd Heines shared eight hits and Brent Bishop added three. Then in game three Henon, Richie Dahlman, Chris Lang and Jason Blevens combined for a dozen hits versus Double J. The winners blew open a 3-0 game with an eight run 2nd that featured a Mat Fiedler slammer and a three-run D. J. Muhall swat.

Problem Drinkers walk in the park turned into a run through the gauntlet in their final three games.

First they found themselves trailing Team Evansville 10-9 in their final at bat in the quarter-finals. But D. J. Muhall came to the rescue with a two-run single that produced an 11-10 victory. Mat Fiedler collected four hits, and Muhall and Chris Henon each went 3-for-4.

Next Richie Dahlman doubled home the tying run and scored the game winner on Jerry Morris' single as Problem Drinkers slipped past Huber Lawn Care 11-10 in their last at bat. Muhall and Jeremy Duke pounded out four hits apiece, and Richie and Teddy Dahlman chipped in with a 3-for-4 effort.

Even more drama awaited in the finals. Trailing 14-11 with one out, Problem Drinkers got a solo shot from Brent Bishop to cut the deficit to 14-12. That turned the order over to the top of the line-up, which promptly connected on five consecutive singles to lift their club to a dramatic 15-14 victory. Jeremy Duke and Todd Heines singled to set the table, then Chris Henon, Mat Fiedler and D. J. Muhall followed with rbi singles for the win.

Duke was perfect in four at bats, and Heines went 3-for-4.

Problem Drinkers' Jeremy Coulter said that the tournament featured "great competition all weekend long," and "was run the best way it could have been under treacherous rain and mud conditions.

"And it was definitely worth the wait," concluded Coulter.

**7TH ANNUAL BASH FOR CASH CLASS "D-E"
DIVISION ALL-TOURNAMENT TEAM**

Jason Ciocca Ohio Warpigs
Brian Marshall Spectrum Graphics
Chris Reffett Halloween Express
Greg Martin Halloween Express
Marcus Anderson Halloween Express
Richie Dahlman Problem Drinkers/Diesel/Elite
J. D. Mulhall Problem Drinkers/Diesel/Elite
Jeremy Duke Problem Drinkers/Diesel/Elite
Todd Heines Problem Drinkers/Diesel/Elite
Matt Fiedler - HR (7) Problem Drinkers/Diesel/Elite
Josh Fryman Halloween Express
Matt Fiedler - MVP Problem Drinkers/Diesel/Elite

Champions Stomp Sunrise Dental 19-6 In Finals...

Miller/Mast Escapes Nasty Boys, Sweeps Bash For Cash-USSSA "D" NIT Field At Pastime Park

Harrison, Oh.--Miller Builders/Mast Home Center rallied for six runs in the top of the 7th to stun the Nasty Boys 8-5 in the winners' bracket semi-finals, then trimmed Pioneer Financial 4-3 before spanking Sunrise Dental 19-6 in the championship game to complete a seven game sweep of the Bash For Cash-USSSA "D" National Invitational Tournament March 15-16 at Pastime Park.

The championship earned Miller/Mast a berth to the USSSA "D" World Tournament September 18-21 in Kissimmee, Fl., plus \$600 in travel expense.

Runner-up Sunrise Dental of Redford, Mi. was awarded a paid national berth.

Miller/Mast survived three close calls - including a pair of one run games - en route to the title, winning two games in the top of the 7th and one in the top of the 6th.

But it was the 8-5 victory over the Nasty Boys that proved to be the pivotal game of the tournament, said Miller/Mast player-coach Rob Sickafoose.

"That was the best game of the day. We thought we were done," said Sickafoose. "We scored six runs with two outs. That was crazy. Ivan (Ivan Yoder) had a big hit, and we took the lead. They had us. Nasty Boys' infield is good - you can't get anything by them."

Yoder's big hit was a bases loaded triple that knotted the score at 5-5. Yoder then trotted home with the eventual game winner on a single by Sickafoose.

Clutch hitting and solid infield play carried Miller/Mast to the title, said Sickafoose.

“We didn’t have big batting averages, but we came through at the right time - especially Ivan Yoder,” said Sickafoose. “He gave us the lead about three times smacking balls off that fence.

“We also turned nine double plays behind our middle infielder Bink Carter and second baseman Jeremy Gurski,” noted Sickafoose. “That was big. Jeremy made diving play after diving play.”

Gurski was named to the All-Tournament Team along with Sickafoose and Welson Anderson, who both batted .650. Pitcher Reuben Miller led Miller/Mast in hitting with a .700 mark to help earn MVP honors.

“He usually never hits,” remarked Sickafoose. “But this weekend he tore it up. Also he didn’t walk anybody and fielded the middle well.”

Miller/Mast used a nine run 3rd to overcome a 4-1 deficit and grab a 10-4 advantage, and never looked back on their way to a 13-5 spanking of Precision Softball of Chicago in their opener. Chris Sleck delivered a key rbi single to put his club ahead to stay at 5-4, and Chris Snyder followed with a two-run single to stretch the lead to 7-4.

Rob Sickafoose and Reuben Miller each went 3-for-4 for the winners.

In game two Weldon Anderson singled and scored on a Reuben Miller double to help Miller/Mast pull out a 6-5 victory in the bottom of the 7th. Chris Snyder collected three hits.

Next Miller/Mast used a five run 4th to erase an 11-7 lead and went on to dispose of TCU/Slovene Center of Akron 14-11. Tadd Decker’s rbi single put the winners ahead to stay at 12-11. Miller/Mast added a lone run in the 5th and one in the 6th to close out the scoring. Reuben Miller held TCU scoreless over the final three innings to preserve the win.

Ivan Yoder banged out three hits, and Jack Gardner and Weldon Anderson chipped in two apiece.

Miller/Mast exploded for eight runs in the top of the 1st and went on to steamroll Sunrise Dental 21-6 in six in game four. A two run single by Rob Sickafoose highlighted the 1st. Chris Luck laced out four hits, and Tad Decker, Reuben Miller and Weldon Anderson shared nine hits.

That pitted Miller/Mast against Nasty Boys, who were poised to advance as they took a 5-2 lead with two outs in the top of the 7th. But then the wheels fell off the wagon, as Ivan Yoder banged a three-run triple off the fence to knot the score, then rode home with the eventual game winner on Rob Sickafoose’s bingle. Chris Snyder paced the offense with three hits.

Late scoring also proved key to Miller/Mast in the winners' bracket finals, as they eked out a 4-3 win over northern Ohio rival Pioneer Financial of Akron with a run in the top of the 6th. Tad Decker walked in the top of the 6th, went to 2nd on a fielder's choice, then raced home what proved to be the game winner on an Ivan Yoder double. Decker, Aaron Miller and Chris Snyder shared six hits to lead the offense.

In the finals Miller/Mast broke open a 1-1 contest with a fourteen run outburst in the bottom of the 2nd. An rbi single by Weldon Anderson put Miller on top for good at 2-1. Another rbi single by capped off the inning. Rob Sickafoose delivered the big blow of the inning with a two-run single.

Anderson collected four hits overall. Sickafoose, Reuben Miller and Bink Harter chipped in with three hits each.

Qualifying right out of the gate was sweet, said Miller/Mast's Rob Sickafoose.

"We love it. That's what we wanted to do. We've had 22 tournaments on our schedule to try to get to Florida and we got it in our first tournament. If we didn't win an NIT, we were going to try to get a berth on points," said Sickafoose.

Sickafoose called tournament hosts Pastime Park "awesome.

"We never played there before. The owners and managers were awesome too. We couldn't believe how they got the fields ready as much as it rained."

7TH ANNUAL BASH FOR CASH USSSA "D" NATIONAL INVITATIONAL FINAL STANDINGS

1. Miller Builders/Mast Home Ctr., Massillon, OH 7 0
2. Sunrise Dental, Redford, MI 8 2
3. Pioneer Financial Services, Canton,, OH 4 2
4. Nasty Boys, Dayton, KY 4 2
5. Airtight Construction,, Parkersburg, WV 4 2
6. Detroit Squeeze, Warren, MI 4 2
7. Scorchers, Akron, OH 4 2
8. Cincy Trailblazers, Cincinnati, OH 4 2
9. Ante Up, Covington, KY 4 2
10. Fat Batz/Team Xplosion/Fin. L., Burlington, KY 4 2
11. Midnitters, Louisville, KY 4 2
12. Silvertowne/Justin Howard, Winchester, IN 4 2
13. Big O Softball, Florence, KY 3 2
14. Precision, Chicago, IL 3 2
15. Adis Place/Hofbrauhaus, Newport, KY 2 2
16. Main Event Softball, Noblesville, IN 2 2
17. Big Show Softball, Louisville, KY 2 2
18. Blue Collar, Independence, KY 2 2

- Renegades/Worth/DJ3/Huddy Park, Erlanger, KY 2 2
- Cincinnati Sports Medicine/Easton, Cinti., OH 1 2
- Diamond Foolz, Independence, KY 1 2
- Dream Team, Cincinnati, OH 1 2
- TCU, Slovene Center, Akron, OH 1 2
- Team Lightning, Cincinnati, OH 1 2
- 25. Exteme/Turner Property Property, Hamilton, OH 1 2
- Kentucky's Finest, Villa Hills, KY 1 2
- Smokin Pigs, Hamilton, OH 1 2
- Team Bring It/Mad Max, Cincinnati, OH 1 2
- Auto Express Reloaded, Cincinnati, OH 0 2
- BAMF Softball, Cincinnati, OH 0 2
- Primetime Softball, Louisville, KY 0 2
- Wildlife Taxidermy, Charleston, WV 0 2
- 33. BA Cutter, Reading, OH 0 2
- Barnstormers Softball, Independence, KY 0 2
- Goof Troop, Milford, OH 0 2
- Hitmen Softball, Hillsboro, OH 0 2
- Moose Lodge 1469/Lights Out, Crscent. Spr., KY 0 2
- Team Longshanks,Piqua, OH 0 2
- Take It Or Leave It/Schmoe's, Aurora, IN 0 2
- Toxic Skeeters, Brandenburg, KY 0 2

**7TH ANNUAL BASH FOR CASH USSSA “D”
NATIONAL INVITATIONAL ALL-TOURN. TEAM**

Vic Klein Nasty Boys
 Keith Hightchew Nasty Boys
 Kevin Yun Pioneer Financial
 Steven Schoonover Pioneer Financial
 Rod Vaughan Sunrise Dental
 Derek Shuk Sunrise Dental
 Keis Motembo Sunrise Dental
 Weldon Anderson Miller Builders/Mast Home Center
 Roc Sickafoose Miller Builders/Mast Home Center
 Jeremy Gursky Miller Builders/Mast Home Center
 J. J. Price - ODP Sunrise Dental
 Reuben Miller - MVP Miller Builders/Mast Home Center

**Hoosier Club Outlast Defending Champs 15-5 In Finals...
 Dented Bats Dethrones D & S In Bash For Cash-USSSA Women's “C-D” At
 Riverstar**

Dented Bats mercy-ruled D & S Engineering 15-5 in the second championship game to capture first place in the Bash For Cash-USSSA Women's “D” World Qualifier March 15-16 at Riverstar Park.

Defending tournament champion D & S forced the tournament to its limit with a 13-11 victory over Dented Bats in the first finals, but ran out of gas in the second finals as the Hoosier club prevailed.

The championship netted Dented Bats a paid berth to the USSSA Women's "D" World Tournament September 19-21 in Kissimmee, Fl. D & S was awarded a paid berth to the U-Trip "C" World and \$100 travel expense.

The winners were led offensively by Debbie Pigg (.688), Jodi Landreth (.682), Jodi Callen (.667), Amy Whitis (.619) and Ashley Kiser (.523).

Kiser, Shannon Poland, Amy Cannon and Shelly Dailey were selected to the All-Tournament team. Jodi Callen was named tournament MVP.

"Ashley hit .523 and played a great left field," commented Dented Bats manager Donnie Brown.

Brown said Poland was picked because his club was having "defensive struggles at 3rd base, and she pretty much closed it up from the second game on."

Cannon was selected for her .619 batting average, said Brown. And Callen was picked MVP "because she hit great and had a great defensive tournament at 2nd base."

Brown also noted that hitting leader Debbie Pigg "had a great tournament fielding and hitting.

"She was clutch the whole tournament," praised Brown.

The key to winning the tournament was that "everybody hit real well," said Brown.

"We were right at .600 as a team. We only had one girls below .500. We were kinda streaky, but we put together some pretty big innings."

Dented Bats made a statement in their opener, overwhelming Lady Stix 24-4 in five behind four hits each from Jodi Landreth, Melinda Rhymes and Deb Pigg. The winners trailed 4-3 after an inning and a half, but erupted for eight runs in the bottom of the 2nd and never looked back. A Rhymes single put Dented Bats ahead to stay at 5-4. Debbie Pigg's two runs double was the big blow of the inning."

SOS Softball/BW3's battled Dented Bats to an 11-11 stalemate through six innings in game two, but in the top of the 7th, the Indiana club struck for three runs, then held on for a 14-11 victory. Kelly Cable's rbi single put the Bats on top for good at 12-11, then Shelly Dailey followed with a big two-run single as the advantage swelled to 14-11.

A nine run 1st sealed a 17-8 rout of D & S Engineering in the winners' bracket finals. Jodi Callen's slammer and a two run Deb Pigg double highlighted the inning. D & S cut the lead to five at 10-5 after five, but Dented Bats pulled away with four runs in the 6th and three in the 7th. Jodi Landreth collected five hits, Bridget Jones added four and Jodi Callen three to pace the offense.

D & S disposed of SOS in the losers' bracket finals, then avenged their loss to Dented Bats with a 13-11 victory. The locals took an early 3-1 lead in the second finals, but Dented Bats came to life in the 3rd with a seven run outburst to grab an 8-3 lead, and D & S never recovered. Shelly Dailey's bases loaded triple gave Dented Bats the lead in the 3rd. Melinda Rhymes followed with a two-run double.

Jodi Callen pounded out four hits, and Shanna Poland and Debbie Pigg each went 2-for-3 to lead the champions.

Dented Bats Donnie Brown said he was never concerned about the final outcome.

"I knew at the end when we came back and had a chance to beat them that we'd win," said Brown. "They were pretty dead the second game. We almost beat them in the bottom of the 7th (in the first finals), and we knew once we had it going, we would come out on fire again."

7TH ANNUAL BASH FOR CASH USSSA WOMEN'S "C-D" DIVISION FINAL STANDINGS

1. Dented Bats, Indianapolis, IN 4 1
2. D & S Engineering, Cincinnati, OH 4 2
3. SOS Softball/BW3's, Cincinnati, OH 3 2
4. Crosley's, Cincinnati, OH 2 2
5. Battin Bullets, Indianapolis, IN 2 2
Dizzy Hens, Louisville, KY 0 3
Lady Stix 0 3

7TH ANN. BASH FOR CASH USSSA WOMEN'S CLASS "C-D" DIVISION ALL-TOURN. TEAM

Punky Kater Crosley's
Beth Fields SOS Softball/BW3's
Jessica Hardy SOS Softball/BW3's
Amy Schweinefus D & S Engineering
Cristy Craig D & S Engineering
Emily Cannady D & S Engineering
Ashley Kaiser Dented Bats
Shannon Poland Dented Bats
Amy Cannon Dented Bats
Shelly Dailey Dented Bats

Tonya Williams - ODP D & S Engineering
Jodi Callan - MVP Dented Bats