

Publisher's Comments by Mark Linnemann

An unfortunate misconception regarding the "Player Lists" that have been adopted by the Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky USSSA Classification Boards has surfaced and needs to be clarified.

The concept of "Player Lists" to help regulate team classifications was the brainchild of former USSSA Executive Director Al Ramsey. Some 25 years ago, the USSSA was struggling to distinguish between Men's Major and Men's "A" teams. Teams that were too strong to play "A," but who arguably struggled to compete with some of the top Major teams in the country, were being permitted by their State Director to play "A." This caused a domino effect, pushing teams down at all levels. Ramsey came up with the rather brilliant idea of creating a "Major Player List," and limiting the number of Major Players that could compete on an "A" team.

Now "Player Lists" are being adopted throughout the country as a tool to help with the classification process. And as has always been the case with the "Major Player List," these new lists are not without controversy.

As divided as individual opinions might be regarding classifying teams, they are even more divided about classifying players. Neither one is an exact science. But there are so many intangibles about players - batting averages, home run power, speed, defensive skills, power on a 300' fence vs. a baseball field, age, etc. - that even with statistics, it can be nearly impossible to decide whether to draw a line above or below an individual's name distinguishing what level of play best characterizes his game.

But what people lose sight of is that at least by breaking down rosters according to individual player strength, there is at least some measuring stick for judging team strength. As a wise man once said, you can judge a tree by the fruit it produces. And more often than not, player lists, despite their subjectivity, are ultimately more likely to produce an accurate team classification than if a team is classified simply by a State Director or classification board operating without them. So players and teams sometimes need to overlook whatever disagreements they might have about whether this individual or that individual belongs on an "A" list, "B" list or "C" list, and look at the end product. I. e., they need to look at the team and ask themselves whether changing the classification of a particular player is likely to affect the classification of an entire team. And generally speaking, unless a team is right on the fence between one level or another, or adds an impact player who clearly raises the level of play of a team, one player is not likely to alter a team's classification.

But an even more significant "hang up" or trap that players and teams fall into regarding "Player Lists" is the mistaken belief that these lists are the sole criteria for classifying a team. All too often, teams believe that if they assemble a team and that the team's roster falls below the guideline of four players of a particular classification, that this is a license to play at the lower level.

Player lists were never intended to be a loophole for teams to sandbag. And they were never intended to replace the USSSA national by-law pertaining to classifying teams, which states: "The main criteria for classifying teams is the overall strength of the team offensively and defensively regardless of whether the team has any home run hitters. Example: Depending on the strength of the offense and defense, a team with no home run hitters may be classified Major, "A," "B," "C," "D" or "E."

So the first criteria any State Director or classification committee must consider is the overall offensive and defensive strength of a team. "Player Lists" do not change that criteria. They are a tool to help State Directors and classification boards regulate classifications, but they are not the primary consideration for determining a team's class. Let's try to understand why that can't be so.

First of all, there are probably no more than fifteen to twenty states that currently use player lists. In order to be consistent and fair to all teams, State Directors or their classification committees must use the national criteria - overall offensive and defensive strength - vs. a local criteria that is not even utilized in most states. If one state classifies teams based on overall offensive and defensive strength of a team, and another based on a player list that might not be very well done, it sets the stage for national inconsistency.

Secondly, and as we've just mentioned, what if a State Director or classification committee completely botches up their state or area's player list, enabling a team that should clearly play "C," for example, to play "D?" Should that team be permitted to run roughshod over their opposition and win a World Tournament because of a flawed player list?

Third, what if a player or two with "A" level skills, for example, move into an area, or suddenly take up softball, after a player list has been published, and these studs join a team and clearly change the team's classification. Should all the teams in that program suffer because these individuals names aren't on some list?

Or what if some wealthy sponsor wants to put together a powerhouse "D" team, and he recruits the ten or eleven very best "D" players in an area or state to help him dominate play. Should this team be permitted to play "D," even though they have no "C" list players?

Here's yet another consideration. The local by-laws of the Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky boards permit teams who are over the player limit to appeal their classification after two tournaments if they don't believe they are competitive at the level that has been assigned to them. So can we have it both ways? Can teams who are over the limit be dropped down in class if they clearly can't compete at the level where they are classified, and yet teams who are clearly capable of competing at the next level be permitted to play under that level just because they are under the limit of some player list? No! Teams must realize that the first obligation is to play at a level where their overall offensive and defensive strengths are best suited.

Let's keep player lists in perspective. They are a tool. They were never intended to replace USSSA national by-laws. They don't automatically give teams who fall below a set limit of players on some subjectively compiled list the right to play beneath their ability. Teams can try to "build" their teams based on the list, but there's no guarantee that the team they've built is going to get a free pass to play at one level or another.

The message for all of us to respect the game, our opponents and ourselves. If we really love the game of softball, we would never try to do anything to harm it. If we really respect our opponents, we would never try to play against players and teams with skills that are inferior to our own. And if ever want to have any self-respect, we will always try to play at the highest level possible instead of trying to be the best of the worst.

In My Opinion by Ron Jeffers

The next big softball event is the Norwood Sorrento's-Greater Cincinnati Softball Hall of Fame Ceremony. Mark Linnemann is responsible for helping to start and fund this wonderful event, and he has a dedicated, hard-working committee to assist him with the selection of those that are to be honored each year.

I actively served on the selection committee from its inception, but believe me, this outstanding Hall of Fame would not exist if it were not for the tireless efforts of Mark and his lovely wife, Diane. I have been blessed to have been honored and inducted in five different Halls of Fame, but none of them is planned and delivered with the pomp and ceremony as the one we have here. Mark and Diane spend countless hours before this wonderful event in preparation so it comes off with the style and dignity of any event honoring professional players in other sports.

It is a dauntless task for two people to plan and deliver an event of this magnitude each and every year, and although they would never mention it, Mark and Diane have always had to finance a portion of this out of their own pockets.

Although Mark chose to lead the USSSA program over the ASA program in greater Cincinnati many years ago, he has always been extremely supportive of both organizations. He and his committee work diligently to find the best softball people to induct into this wonderful annual event, and is not biased in any way toward the people who played only in the ASA program.

No other area in this country has a working program where the ASA and USSSA leaders and local organizations work hand-in-hand for the betterment of softball. Everywhere else in the United States the softball czars of the two competing softball programs have fought each other like dogs, and their local softball teams and players have suffered enormously as a result of this infighting. Not so here, Mark Linneman and Danney Saylor have a marvelous working arrangement that would and should be the model for softball programs all over this country to follow.

Our Hall of fame is made up of men and women who played in one softball program or the other, with many who have now played in both. Mark and his committee could care less which program the players were in. They are only interested in the player's playing ability and what he or she has brought to the game of softball locally and nationally. The players resume is what is important and not the national organization they played in.

Today and in the future the Hall of Fame committee has a tremendous task in front of them. Players and teams now want to play in the lowest classification they are allowed to participate in, and this makes it much more difficult for the selection committee to find the deserving players. We once had a very large pool of men and women players to choose from who had long and illustrious careers playing in the super, major and class A divisions, but that is not true anymore. Our players and teams once no longer pride themselves in playing against the very best players and teams in the World. The teams and players today want to play against anyone they can beat.

Mediocre or average is defined as "THE BEST OF THE WORST OR THE WORST OF THE BEST." How do you select players who have played their softball career in this manner?

There are so many players in this generation who are content to play down as far as they can to win that the ASA organization had to do away with their top two classifications in both men and womens play. No more Super or Major divisions with the elimination of class A soon or already meeting it's demise.

With the game in it's current state where do we find a new pool of players deserving to be enshrined along side the tremendous players who honorably went in the Hall before them? Do we now select more players from the illustrious distant past who played their careers playing against the very best softball players and teams, or do we lower our proud and selective standards and honor players who put up the big numbers and wins against mediocre competition?

The Greater Cincinnati Softball Hall of Fame is a proud group of individuals, and I believe to fill the Hall, in the future, with players of less abilities and pride is disrespectful to all the deserving people who have been honored from the past.

This is a real dilemma for the current Hall of Fame selection committee, and it is going to continue to be a monumental problem for them up and until this generation of athletes gets some pride and has a change of attitude. Playing the Little Sisters Of The Poor, and being the best of the worst was not the attitude of the past great players and teams, and if I decide to cast my vote in the future, the current player would find it extremely hard to ever get my vote or respect.

What ever happened to players who wanted to not only be the best they can be, but wanted to compete against the best softball players in the World? Maybe this generation should be called the "Milk-Toast" generation.

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

What's Your Gripe? by Ron Jeffers

Q. Ron, we had an unusual play happen in our indoor softball league game this month, and I am wondering if the umpire made the right call. The other team had a runner on second base with two outs in the bottom of the 7th. We were winning by one run. The batter hit a triple, scoring the runner, who missed third base. The next pitch was thrown, and the umpire called "illegal." At that point we appealed that the runner missed third base. The umpire said this was a legal appeal because we appealed prior to a legal pitch. That gave us the win, and the other team went nuts. The league director then over-ruled the umpire, saying you could not appeal after the next pitch is throw. Who was right?

A. The league director was correct in over ruling the umpire. Once a pitch (legal or illegal) has been delivered, the defensive team forfeits their right to any appeal. The team at bat should have told the umpire "we want to play the game under protest." Once the umpire allowed the appeal by the defensive team. Your letter does not tell me if this situation was handled in this manner, but the umpires decision should only be over-ruled after one of the teams announced they wanted to protest the game as a result of the umpire improper ruling of one of the rules of the game.

Q. Ron, I noticed that ASA's umpire clinic will not feature any guest clinicians from out of town this year. Do you feel the local umpire staff is qualified to run this clinic without outside help? Even if so, doesn't it enhance the clinic to have someone from the ASA national staff come to Cincinnati to run the clinic?

A. I think a good knowledgeable umpire from outside this area is the very best option for a clinic for any sport, but unfortunately this is expensive for everyone.

Jerry has been hiring the best clinicians he could get, for many years, for the ASA umpires here in Cincinnati, and he honestly has tried, but Jerry himself is probably the best the Amateur Softball Association has to offer at this time.

All the great clinicians ASA had for many years, and Jerry hired in the past, are no longer in the clinic business. The ASA National umpire staff is depleted and weaker than any time in the past, and you will not get anyone half as knowledgeable as Jerry.

In addition to Jerry's outstanding rules knowledge, he has an umpire resume second to none in all the softball programs, and he has the very best knowledge of what is happening in the softball world both here and nationally. People sometimes do not realize how good he is because he is local and one of us.

Jerry will do a great job for you. I would even come to his clinic myself if I were physically able.

Q. Ron, I read your last article where you talked about all the law suits ASA has paid out recently, and I wondered how does this affect the local umpires?

A. First off I would never umpire a game where the teams, league or tournament is not registered with the national organization where you belong. If you are only registered as an ASA umpire then do not umpire any game unless both the teams are also registered with the ASA organization. If you are only registered with USSSA I would only work their games. This is the only way you are going to protect your rear end from any future lawsuits.

When a player is injured he or she will sue everyone they can for as much as they can, and that includes you. Your homeowners insurance policy or car insurance will not cover you for this legal action, and your only hope is if the teams and you are both registered with either ASA or USSSA.

Attorney fees alone could bankrupt you if you are named in a legal action such as when a player is hit in the head with a thrown ball, and the player is not wearing a helmet.

If a rule is in the rule book, you as an umpire do not have the authority to ignore it either. Register with one of the national organizations, and follow my instruction, and you can stay out of the courts, and maybe you will be able to hold on to your house.

Q. Part of the batters box is in fair territory, and I want to know what is the ruling if a batted ball bounces up and hits the batter while he or she is standing in the portion of the batters box that is over fair ground. Isn't the batter out for getting hit with a fair batted ball?

A. Your rule knowledge on this situation is excellent, but any umpire who wants to stay alive and succeed in the umpire business will always rule this play a foul ball and a dead ball. Any time a batter gets hit with his own batted ball it should always be ruled a foul ball (no matter where the batter is standing in the batters box). Knowing the rules is great, but better yet know how to apply the rules. This will keep you alive and advancing in your avocation or profession.

CRC News

Early Registration Underway; All Balls, Bases And Umpires Included In Fees... CRC Continues Successful Three-Season Format In '08; Features Central Locations

The 2008 Cincinnati Recreation Commission Adult Softball Program will begin priority registration for teams who played in the spring of 2007 on Monday, February 4th and run through Tuesday, February 12th. All teams - old and new - may register beginning Wednesday, February 13th, and continue until all leagues are filled.

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 SEASON FORMAT

Our three season (spring, summer, and fall) leagues at Schmidt worked out so well again in 2007 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. 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.

MANAGERS ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

An organizational meeting for team managers will be held on Wednesday, March 19th. Once again for your convenience, there will be two sessions at 6:00 PM and 7:00 PM in the CRC office first floor auditorium. We highly recommend that all team managers attend.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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

UMPIRES

Umpires will be assigned by the Cincinnati Recreation Commission. The CRC Athletic Division will be holding umpire training on Sunday February 24th from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. 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 Bill Bailey at 352-1627 for further information.

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.

New CRC Athletic Supervisor Promises To Be Hands On, Grow Softball Leagues

If you play in a Cincinnati Recreation Commission softball league, and haven't met Bill Bailey yet, you probably will soon.

"I definitely like to be hands on and like people to know my face as well as my name," says Bailey, the new Supervisor of Adult Athletics. "I want them to know if they have any concerns, I'll come around and talk to them or they can call me down at the office."

Bailey officially started in his new position on December 3rd, but many team managers, players and umpires got to meet him when he worked in the department last year.

“Ron (Ron Odenbeck, the previous Supervisor) had a medical condition last spring and was going to be out for an extended period of time,” recalls Bailey. “Because there was a lot going on, they needed someone to fill in, and I got the opportunity back then to come down and fill in for Ron while he was out.”

Bailey quickly fell in love with the job.

“That experience told me that I definitely wanted to work in athletics,” he says. “I really enjoyed that opportunity. I got a feel for what athletics was all about and how it provides various recreational opportunities for people in Cincinnati. I really enjoyed that short stay in the spring and when the opportunity came to move to athletics, I jumped on it.”

Bailey says he has spent the last fourteen years working for the city as a director and then supervisor of various community centers. But then last year when the city offered an early retirement incentive and 22 employees took the buyout, there were a lot of opportunities to make a move.

“I seized the moment and transferred to athletics,” says Bailey. “I always wanted to have a total experience of what recreation has to offer the city of Cincinnati. After fourteen years, I wanted to do some bigger programs and projects. When you’re working in rec centers, you’re only working in the community where you are. But I wanted to do something bigger and grander on a city-wide scale. So this opportunity came up and I jumped on it.

“I’m excited,” beams Bailey. “I really enjoyed the four or five weeks I was here in the spring. I got a chance to get out to the fields and meet a lot of our umpires and team captains and to talk to them about some things about our leagues. I felt like they were appreciative of the fact that I was at least coming out there. They knew somebody in CRC really valued their participation in our leagues. I hope to continue that this softball season. It’s an opportunity to get feedback.”

Bailey’s sojourn to his present position was a long one that focused around his desire to raise his children around family, plus a life-long love for recreation.

A Pennsylvania native, Bailey spent his teen years “bouncing back and forth between Pittsburgh and the Akron-Canton area” before getting a physical education degree from Ohio State. There he met two people who would alter the course of his life.

The first was an individual who helped Bailey secure a job as a physical education teacher and intramural director and athletic trainer in Riverside, Ca.

The other was his wife, Tracey.

“She was a gymnast on the Ohio State gym team, and a West Chester girl,” says Bailey. “She’s the reason we came back (to Cincinnati). We had our first two children, Cory and Gabby, out there, but when they became almost school age, that’s when we decided to move back to Cincinnati, because that’s where family was, and we wanted to raise our kids around family. And the best opportunity for me to get a job was in recreation, and that’s when I made the switch from education to recreation.”

Bailey says he played “a little baseball and basketball in high school,” but was “primarily a student trainer or student manager.

“Those opportunities got me the opportunity to go to Ohio State, where I spent five years in my under graduate studies and then one year getting a masters degree - all in physical education.”

As Supervisor of Adult Athletics for the city of Cincinnati, Bailey says he is “directly responsible for overseeing any adult athletic opportunities.

“Our main sports now include softball, baseball, volleyball, football, basketball and tennis,” says Bailey. “But we’re looking to expand our adult offerings for athletic opportunities. So if anybody has any idea for a sports activity that’s a little different or outside the box, give us a call and we’ll see if we can put something together.”

Despite getting his feet wet last spring, Bailey says this will be his “first full year when I’m actually doing any planning.

“Last year I was just maintaining, so I’m just trying to be the ultimate sponge and absorb everything so that next time I go through everything it will be a more efficient running machine,” he says. “With being brand new, I’m relying on other people to tell me what needs to be done. So hopefully I’ll learn and absorb. I’d like to see our leagues grow, like to provide opportunities for people to play across the city, and I hope to get the leagues up and running that people want to be in.”

Some leagues have to be temporarily moved due to construction, explains Bailey.

“CRC softball used to be huge,” continues Bailey. “There used to be a lot more leagues across the city. I don’t know if we’ll ever get back to where softball is king and had so many teams, but my goal is to grow softball and make it a positive experience for everyone who is participating, and to provide people who are participating exactly what they want.

“I appreciate everyone who continues to play in our leagues, and we look to make whatever improvements are needed,” concludes Bailey. “And if you left us, for whatever reason, if you would, give us a chance to win you back. Give me a call, sign up, and see if the experience has changed for the positive.”

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

The Cincinnati Metro Amateur Softball Association is pleased to announce that it will host the 2008 ASA National Umpire Camp on June 17-22 at Eggleston and Rumpke Parks.

The National Umpire Camp is the only advanced school in the country offered to slow pitch umpires, and 2008 will mark its first trip to Cincinnati and the Midwest.

The Camp provides umpires an opportunity to improve their umpiring skills, prepare for a higher level of competition, and work towards their "Elite Umpire" qualifications.

"This camp is designed to help bring out the best in an umpire's ability," says Cincinnati ASA Umpire-In-Chief Jerry Fick, who is organizing the clinic. "It's a way for an umpire to jump start his or her career and be the best they can be."

Fick says the camp places an emphasis on mechanics and umpire techniques. Some of the key items that will be covered include: improving ASA plate mechanics, setting position prior to pitch, judging pitch height, strike zone - zone master equipment, changes to ASA base umpire mechanics, the three umpire system, videos of games and drills to further assist in an umpire's development, and national championship umpire expectations.

The clinic will also cover 2008 rule changes, major slow pitch rules and case book plays. "It's also a chance to meet with other ASA umpires who have the same aspirations and lofty goals," says Fick.

The instructional staff for the clinic is assigned from the ASA National Umpire Staff on an approximate ratio of one per twelve participants. The staff is expected to include: Craig Cress, Director of Membership Services/Director of Umpires; Kevin Ryan, Supervisor of Umpires; Larry Montgomery, Deputy Supervisor of Umpires, Bernie Profato, East Central Region Umpire-In-Chief; Mike DeLeo, Great Lakes Region Umpire-In-Chief; and Jerry Fick, Midwest Region Umpire-In-Chief.

The fee for the camp is \$400 per participant, and includes all camp instruction and materials, Advanced SP Camp shirt, meals, and transportation to and from the Cincinnati Airport. Early registration is encouraged as class size is limited.

The Howard Johnson Inn-Cincinnati North, located at 400 Glen Springs Drive in Springdale, will be the host hotel for the Camp. A block of rooms has been reserved at a special rate of \$59 plus tax. Umpires can make their hotel reservation directly with Cincinnati ASA when registering for the school. Umpires should indicate on their registration form whether they prefer their own room, or to share a room with another specific umpire, or if they would like for an umpire to be assigned for them to room with.

Umpires sharing a room will pay only \$29.50 per night plus tax. The room rate includes a continental breakfast. All rooms have a microwave, small refrigerator, iron and ironing board. There is an onsite coin laundry and outdoor pool. Out of town umpires are encourage to use this hotel since several camp related activities will be held there.

Participating umpires will have the opportunity to umpire local league games during the week and a National Championship qualifying tournament on June 21 and 22. The instructional staff will observe participants in these games and many games will be videotaped for later review. A stipend will be paid for these games and the amount will depend on the number of umpires working.

Umpires will receive a school shirt upon arrival. Additional shirts will be available for purchase. Game uniforms will be navy blue pants, ASA lettered light blue pullover shirt, blue or black socks, ASA lettered cap, black belt, and navy blue ASA logo ball bag. Umpires may also bring an ASA jacket. Umpires should plan to dress as they would for an ASA National Championship tournament.

For more information or to have an registration form mailed or emailed, call Dee Fick at 513-563-2755, or email asauc@fuse.net.

National, Metro Qualifiers, Also Highlight 2008 Calendar...

56th EMR Group-Ohio Army National Guard ASA Metro Again Tops Extensive Rumpke Slate

Crosby Township, OH.--The 56th Annual EMR-Group-Ohio Army National Guard Amateur Softball Association Cincinnati Metro Championship will again be the featured event on an extensive 2008 tournament calendar at Rumpke Park in Miamitown.

With almost 350 teams competing in eleven divisions of play, the city tournament is the largest ASA Metro Tournament in the nation - a distinction it has held for twenty three years running.

This year's Metro Tournament will again kick off with three industrial divisions on July 18-20 - two weekends before the open divisions begin.

ASA Cincinnati Metro Commissioner Danney Saylor says that all entries for the Industrial Metro must be received at Rumpke Park by noon on Saturday, July 12th. The drawing will be on Tuesday, July 15th and play will begin Friday night, July 18th.

Then on Thursday, July 24th, eight open divisions - Men's Major, A, B, C, D and E Rec and Women's C and D - get underway, with play concluding 12 days later on Wednesday, August 6th. Saylor says the deadline for these divisions will be at noon on Saturday July 19th, and the drawing on Tuesday, July 22nd.

August 9-10 the tournament continues with the 35-Over and 40-Over divisions.

The Cincinnati ASA announced last month that this year's Metro will continue to conduct the E Rec and Women's C and D divisions that have been added in recent years, and to utilize the "quad" format for the C and D divisions.

ASA Metro Commissioner Danney Saylor calls the E Rec division a "huge success.

"This division was created to give recreational teams, which comprise the majority of teams in Greater Cincinnati and that play primarily for fun, a division where they could be competitive. These teams simply could not compete in the D division."

In the E division, teams will need to apply early for consideration by the Metro Tournament Committee, says Saylor. No home runs are permitted, and a maximum of four runs per inning may be scored. Only one umpire per game will be used in order to make the division more affordable, and a ten run mercy rule will be in effect. Additionally, any ball hit out of the park results in an inning ending out with no runs scored.

"We can't see where any team that has never participated in the Metro would not want to venture forth and try that division," says Saylor.

"The Women's Metro also had a solid field again in its second year, so we'll be bringing back both divisions again this summer," says Saylor.

The "Quad Format" introduced in 2004 for the Metro's two largest divisions - class C and D - will also continue. The four "Quads" will include an American Division, National Division, Central Division and an East Division. The winner of each division will advance to a double elimination tournament to determine an overall champion.

"The purpose of the quad format is to provide better competition," explains Saylor. "The winners get playoffs, and there's better bracket flow at those locations holding the North, South, East and West Divisions. Also, it's such an arduous journey using this format, that when you finally get a winner, there's no doubt who the winner is," adds Saylor. "Plus, the quad format provides more teams more opportunities to take a shot at the championship."

Saylor says that the ASA will continue with their popular "Metro Qualifiers" for 2008. This included awarding money to the winner based on the number of teams in the tournament, and awarding points to use in seeding the Metro and conferring additional awards and prizes.

Saylor says that teams can still just wait and enter the Metro, "but now teams can play ASA qualifiers prior to that and be rewarded."

Saylor says that based on points awarded by order of finish in Metro Qualifiers, teams with the most points will draw into the second round if there are play in rounds, "probably avoiding a Thursday or Friday night game," points out Saylor.

In addition, says Saylor, \$25 from each entry fee will be credited to the winning team for their Metro entry fee.

Saylor says that interest was so high in these events last year, that he has scheduled nine Saturday or Sunday Metro Qualifiers at the park in 2008.

Thirteen ASA B, C and D National Qualifiers will also be held at Rumpke this year including Saturday April 19, May 10 and June 21, also Sunday April 20, May 11 and June 22, and Independence Day Weekend, July 4-6. The July 4-6 tournament also includes an A division. These tournaments feature direct berths to ASA Nationals.

Several special events have also been scheduled for 2008, including the "7th Annual Bash For Cash" March 15-16 and Sluggerfest Girls' Youth Fast Pitch on June 14-15 and June 28-29.

Capping off Rumpke's special events will be the Nazarene National Tournament, which will be held over the Labor Day Weekend on Saturday, August 30th and on Monday, September 1st.

Three USSSA events are also slated for Rumpke. The 7th Annual "USSSA City Slam" for Men's C and D teams will be on Memorial Day Weekend, May 24-25. Then on back-to-back weekends - Saturday, April 26th and Saturday, May 3rd - the Cincysoftball.com "Big D" and "Big E" USSSA World Qualifiers will be held.

Each tournament will feature 32 teams and a combined awards and travel expense package of \$2,400, including four paid berths to the USSSA E World on April 26th and a paid D World berth on May 3rd. The E World is slated for September 11-14, and the D World for September 18-21. Both events will be in Kissimmee, Fl. Teams are guaranteed four games, and a unique bracketing formula allows teams to compete for a division title and paid berths no matter where they finish in pool play.

Rumpke will also announce a new "Elite" division for men's play featuring an exciting new format in the March SOFTBALL NEWS.

A complete listing of Rumpke Park softball tournaments appears below. For additional information, call Rumpke Park at 738-2646.

2008 RUMPKE PARK SOFTBALL COMPLEX SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT CALENDAR

2008 ASA METRO QUALIFIERS

Men's B, C & D Metro Qualifiers	March 8 & 9
Men's B, C & D Metro Qualifiers	March 29 & 30
Men's B, C & D Metro Qualifiers	March 31 & April 1

Men's B, C & D Metro Qualifiers April 12 & 13
Men's B, C & D Metro Qualifiers May 4 (Sunday)
Men's B, C & D Metro Qualifiers May 31 & June 1
Men's B, C & D Metro Qualifiers June 14 & 15

2008 ASA NATIONAL QUALIFIERS

Men's B, C & D National Qualifiers April 19 & 20
Men's B, C & D National Qualifiers May 10 & 11
Men's B, C & D National Qualifiers June 21 & 22
Men's A, B, C & D National Qualifiers July 4-6

2008 ASA METRO CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

Men's A, B & C Industrial Metro July 18-20
Major, A, B, C & D Open Metro July 24-August 6
Women's C, D & E Open Metro July 24-August 6
Men's 35-Over, 40-Over Metro August 9-10

2008 USSSA QUALIFIERS & CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

Men's E World Qualifier April 26
"Cincysoftball.com 'Big E' - Four Paid World Berths!"
Men's D World Qualifier May 3
"Cincysoftball.com 'Big D' - Paid World Berth!"
USSSA City Slam National/State Qualifier May 24-25
USSSA City Slam National/State Qualifier May 24-25

RUMPKE PARK MISCELLANEOUS SPECIAL EVENTS

Bash For Cash March 15-16
Sluggerfest Girls' Youth Fast Pitch June 14-15
Sluggerfest Girls' Youth Fast Pitch June 28-29
Nazarene National Church Tourn. August 30-September 1

RUMPKE PARK FRIDAY NIGHT THREE GAME ROUND ROBINS - ONLY \$79!

April 4, 11, 18 & 25; May 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30; June 6, 13 & 20; July 4, 11, 18 & 25;
August 8, 15, 22 & 29

MEN'S CLASS B, C & D ROUND ROBINS

March 22 (Saturday), April 27 (Sunday), July 19 (Saturday), July 20 (Sunday),
September 6 (Saturday), September 7 (Sunday), September 13 (Saturday), September 14
(Sunday)

BASEBALL

Southwest Ohio Baseball NIT April 5-6
Brinkman NIT June 7-8
Baseball State Tournament July 12-13
Baseball September 6-7
Baseball September 13-14
Baseball September 20-21
Baseball September 27-28
Baseball October 4, 11 & 18

ASA Round Robins, Metro Qualifiers, Wood Bat Classic Highlight 2008 Westside Calendar

Addyston, Oh.--Six special events, including the Amateur Softball Association Cincinnati Metro and the "6th Annual Wood Bat Classic" will highlight a 25-weekend Westside Sports Park softball tournament calendar for 2008.

Westside, which is located at 25 East Main Street in Addyston, is known for its "family atmosphere," according to Park Manager Paul Beltsos.

"It's pretty laid back - pretty casual," says Beltsos, whose family has owned and operated the ball park since it was built in 1981. "We just completed our 27th year and we're still going strong. We have no gate fees and no parking fees. We have some good leagues, and most of our teams have been there forever. And everybody gets along."

Westside features four fenced diamonds, a covered concession area, restrooms, "and a children's play area, plenty of parking and free admission," says Beltsos, who jokingly describes himself as "one man crew."

"I'm the park manager, bathroom attendant and groundskeeper," laughs Beltsos

Beltsos does acknowledge that he gets some help from his brother, Chris, one day a week.

The staple of the Westside's tournament program is Saturday and Sunday round robins.

"Most are the standard three game format with an upper B and C and lower D and E divisions," says Beltsos. "We use ASA rules and award a team trophy and individual t-shirts to the winners."

Six special events have worked their way into the park's tournament calendar in recent years, including the Amateur Softball Association Cincinnati Metro, and a "Wood Bat Classic."

“We’re kicking off the season April 19 and 20 and April 26 and 27 with our special ‘Pre-Season’ Round Robins,” says Beltsos. “Other featured events will be our 4th of July Round Robins on Friday, July 4th, Metro Entry Fee Round Robins on July 12 and 13, Metro Tune-Up Round Robins on July 19 and 20, the ASA Cincinnati Metro Championship July 26th, and our 6th Annual Wood Bat Classic.”

Beltsos says that all of these events except for the Metro Tournament and Wood Bat Classic use the same format as the park’s regular weekend round robins - three game round robin format with an upper B and C and lower D and E division. Awards will also be the same, including a team trophy and individual t-shirts.

There will be one exception as far as awards for these special events. On July 12 and 13, two weekends before the Metro, Westside offers a paid entry fee into the Metro in Saturday and Sunday “Metro Tourney Entry Fee Tournaments.”

“We also co-host the first round of the Metro,” notes Beltsos.

Westside’s tournament program wraps up each fall with the Annual “Wood Bat Classic,” which is held in either mid-to late September or in early October.

“We always wait until the Bengals release their schedule before we set the tournament date,” says Beltsos.

Beltsos says the tournament uses “wooden bats (supplied by Westside) and high compression balls to compensate for the bats.

“Last year was the fifth year we had it and we had a big turnout,” says Beltsos.

The attraction is “live balls and no home run limits.

“It’s softball the way it used to be,” says Beltsos. “We still have some good players hitting them out.

“Last year was our biggest response ever,” adds Beltsos. “It’s getting more popular every year. The waiting list was the largest we’ve ever had.”

Westside’s league program also has something of a “retro” flavor, offering a single, fourteen game season with a one and out post-season tournament similar to the format used in leagues before parks began running multiple seasons.

“We do that because we have flooding many years and because we don’t have any lights,” explains Beltsos.

Westside offers twilight men’s leagues on Sunday at 5:05 PM, 6:10 PM and 7:15 PM, and Monday through Friday at 6:15 PM and 7:15 PM.

For league or information at Westside, call the park office at 941-6687, or visit the park website at www.westsidesportspark.com.

2008 WESTSIDE SPORTS PARK SOFTBALL CALENDAR

April 19 & 20 ASA Pre-Season Tune-Up
April 26 & 27 ASA Pre-Season Tune-Up
May 3 & 4 ASA Round Robins
May 10 & 11 ASA Round Robins
May 17 & 18 ASA Round Robins
May 24 & 25 ASA Round Robins
May 31 & June 1 ASA Round Robins
June 7 & 8 ASA Round Robins
June 14 & 15 ASA Round Robins
June 21 & 22 ASA Round Robins
June 28 & 29 ASA Round Robins
July 4 - Friday 4th Of July ASA Round Robin
July 5 & 6 ASA Round Robins
July 12 & 13 Metro Entry Fee ASA Round Robins
"Paid Entry Fee To ASA Metro Tournament"
July 19 & 20 Metro Tune-Up ASA Round Robins
July 26 ASA Metro Tournament
August 2 & 3 ASA Round Robins
August 9 & 10 ASA Round Robins
August 16 & 17 ASA Round Robins
August 23 & 24 ASA Round Robins
August 30 & 31 ASA Round Robins
September 6 & 7 ASA Round Robins
September 13 & 14 ASA Round Robins
September 20 & 21 ASA Round Robins
September 27 & 28 ASA Round Robins
Annual Wood Bat Classic - Date TBA

USSSA News

USSSA Umpire Organizations Announce Training Classes

Greater Cincinnati's United States Specialty Sports Association umpire groups are now accepting registrations for their 2008 training schools. Additional information can be obtained by contacting one of the groups listed below:

ARMCO PARK UMPIRES - For information on umpiring at Armco Park call Park Manager Don Keys at 937-728-3220. Dates and times of classes will be listed in the February CINCINNATI SOFTBALL NEWS.

BUCKEYE/METROPOLITAN UMPIRE ASSOCIATION - Now recruiting both new and experienced umpires. Classes will be held February 12, 19 and 26, and March 4, 11, 19 and 25. An onfield clinic will be held March 22. A District IX Umpire Clinic is tentatively scheduled for March 2nd. Competitive rates, bonus program, awards program, extensive training - leagues and tournaments. Call Expressway Park at 831-2273 for additional information.

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

NORTHERN CINCINNATI UMPIRES - Classes will be held at Taylor Elementary School on Springdale Road starting February 28th at 6:30 PM. For additional information call Jerry Meyer at 741-7505 or email at jerry.meyer@fuse.net.

PASTIME PARK UMPIRES - For information on 2008 umpire classes contact John Herbert at 300-5246, or email the park at manager@pastimepark.com. New umpires are welcome.

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

WESSEL SPORTS - METRO CINCINNATI UMPIRES - EGGLESTON PARK AND RIVERSTAR SPORTSPLEX - Classes will be held on Monday evenings from 7 to 8:30 PM at Starlite Ballroom. Call Eggleston Park at 385-5304 or Riverstar Park at 232-4263 to register.

Expressway Park League Meeting March 12th At Holiday Inn Eastgate

The 2008 Expressway Park team managers' meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 12th, from 7:00 PM until 9:00 PM at the Holiday Inn Eastgate.

Team managers will receive their managers' packets at the meeting, and 2008 league and USSSA rule changes will be reviewed.

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

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

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

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

Expressway Park Announces 2008 Sponsorship Program

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2007 Bud Light-Worth-USSSA Women's All-City Team...

Kron, Hudson, Schweinefus Named 2008 "Players Of The Year"

Karen Kron of Ty-1-On, Tricia Hudson of Shooters and Amy Schweinefus of D & S Engineering have been named Bud Light-Worth-USSSA Women's B, C and D "Players of the Year," respectively, for 2007.

Kron batted .563 to earn Most Valuable Player honors in the USSSA World Tournament last September in Kissimmee, Fl. as she powered Ty-1-On to a World Championship. She also earned All-State honors.

Hudson led The Shooters to a third place finish in the C State, and a fifth place finish in the C National and World.

Schweinefus was an All-State and All-World selection for D & S Engineering, which won the Ohio USSSA State Tournament, placed second in the Great Lakes Nationals and fourth in the U-Trip D World.

Manager of the Year honors went to Ty-1-On's Colleen Needham, Fred Dunson of the Shooters, and Kim Wilson of D & S Engineering.

Needham guided Ty-1-On to five tournament titles, including the USSSA State and World Championships, and to a 1st place finish in the Great Lakes Division rankings and 3rd place finish in the USSSA National rankings.

Dunson's Shooters had six top three finishes, one tournament championship, a 3rd place state tournament finish, and 5th place finishes in the Great Lakes National and World Tournaments. The Shooters were the top ranked team in the Great Lakes Division and 6th in the nation.

Wilson's D & S squad notched four first place finishes, including an Ohio State Championship, runner-up finish in the Great Lakes Nationals and 4th place finish in the U-Trip D World. D & S earned a number one ranking in the Great Lakes Division and were the 19th ranked team in the country.

Also named to the B All-City team were Ty-1-On's Lisa Richter, the Offensive MVP of the World Tournament, and All-World selections Theresa Hirschauer and Lisa Tyler.

Rounding out the C All-City team were the Shooters Misti Sellars, an All-State selection, and Heidi Gildow and Katie Weiss. They were joined on the team by Hill & Griffith's Kristy Booher, Melisa Moon, Tracey Wharff and Carrie Williams. All four captured All-State honors in 2007.

Liz Ulland, the State Tournament MVP and Defensive MVP of the Great Lakes Nationals, All-Stater Emily Cannady and Christa Brinker were named to the All-City D team from D & S. James Arnold was represented by Jessica Hardy, Jessica Smith, Lora Strong and Kelly Throckmorton. Sara Melvin, Tara Beavers, Trish Bailey and Wray Jean Connor were named to the team from Yadda/Premium East. Selection from the Intimidators included Susan Mattes, Amber Turner, Amy Steel and Amy Todd. Pelle's

placed All-State selections Beth Fields, Stacy Moree, Heather Dickinson and Kassie Brock on the team. While the Milford Hit-Hers were represented by Christy Yeager, Kim Mayne, Caryn Rieck and Kelly Taylor.

**2007 WORTH-BUD LIGHT-CINCINNATI WOMEN'S
USSA CLASS "B" ALL-CITY FIRST TEAM**

Lisa Richter Ty-1-On
Theresa Hirschauer Ty-1-On
Lisa Tyler Ty-1-On
Karen Kron - Player of the Year Ty-1-On
Colleen Needham - Manager of the Year Ty-1-On

**2007 WORTH-BUD LIGHT-CINCINNATI WOMEN'S
USSA CLASS "B" ALL-CITY SECOND TEAM**

Andrea Costa Ty-1-On
Mary Jane Ranz Ty-1-On

**2007 WORTH-BUD LIGHT-CINCINNATI WOMEN'S
USSA CLASS "C" ALL-CITY FIRST TEAM**

Kristy Booher Hill & Griffith
Melisa Moon Hill & Griffith
Tracey Wharff Hill & Griffith
Carrie Williams Hill & Griffith
Misti Sellars Shooters
Heidi Gildow Shooters
Katie Weiss Shooters
Tricia Hudson - Player of the Year Shooters
Fred Dunson - Manager of the Year Shooters

**2007 WORTH-BUD LIGHT-CINCINNATI WOMEN'S
USSA CLASS "C" ALL-CITY SECOND TEAM**

Gina Lawrence Hill & Griffith
Heather Sauerbeck Hill & Griffith
Terry Shepard Shooters
Aline Harris Shooters
Terri Bennett Shooters
Jen Yantz Shooters

**2007 WORTH-BUD LIGHT-CINCINNATI WOMEN'S
USSA CLASS "D" ALL-CITY FIRST TEAM**

Christy Yeager Milford Hit-Hers

Kim Mayne Milford Hit-Hers
Caryn Rieck Milford Hit-Hers
Kelly Taylor Milford Hit-Hers
Beth Fields Pelle's
Stacy Moree Pelle's
Heather Dickinson Pelle's
Kassie Brock Pelle's
Susan Mattes Intimidators
Amber Turner Intimidators
Amy Steel Intimidators
Amy Todd Intimidators
Sara Melvin Yadda/Premium East
Tara Beavers Yadda/Premium East
Trish Bailey Yadda/Premium East
Wray Jean Connor Yadda/Premium East
Jessica Hardy James Arnold
Jessica Smith James Arnold
Lora Strong James Arnold
Kelly Throckmorton James Arnold
Liz Ulland D & S Engineering
Emily Cannady D & S Engineering
Christa Brinker D & S Engineering
Amy Schweinefus - Player of the Year D & S Engin.
Kim Wilson - Manager of the Year D & S Engineering

**2007 WORTH-BUD LIGHT-CINCINNATI WOMEN'S
USSSA CLASS "D" ALL-CITY SECOND TEAM**

Leslie Gentil Milford Hit-Hers
Emily Molina Milford Hit-Hers
Nicky Massey Milford Hit-Hers
Amy McCarty Milford Hit-Hers
Laura Mitchell Pelle's
Mindy Sawyer Pelle's
Lliz Werrmann Pelle's
Chandra Shannon Intimidators
Shelly Drewry Intimidators
Ruth Holden Intimidators
Samantha Hardy James Arnold
Rhonda Murphy James Arnold
Molly Lee Yadda/Premium East
Sharon Singleton D & S Engineering
Christy Craig D & S Engineering

USSSA Men's "C-D" NIT, "The Memorial" Are Signature Events... Armco Park Announces 2008 Tournament Calendar

Lebanon, Oh.--A USSSA Men's Class "C-D" National Invitational Tournament and the 28th Annual "Memorial Tournament" will again be the signature events on the 2008 softball tournament calendar at Armco Park in Lebanon.

Located at 1223 N. SR 741 just five minutes from I-75 and fifteen minutes from I-71, the complex features four lighted diamonds with excellent infields, concrete dugouts, Jox Boxes and 300 foot fences.

Also, Director of Softball Don Keys points out that the diamonds "have been extensively reworked" to provide optimum playing conditions again for 2008.

"They're in excellent shape - we could play on them today," Keys told the SOFTBALL NEWS in late January.

Counting the "C-D" NIT and the Memorial, Armco's schedule will feature twenty USSSA qualifiers, three State Championships and three U-Trip National Invitationals for the upcoming season. Armco's State Championships will be the Men's Corporate State on June 21st, the Men's Class "C" and "E" Fall States on October 4-5. Other USSSA championship events will include the District XIII championships for Men's "D" and "E" teams on May 10, a Men's "B-C" NIT June 14-15, and a Mixed Couples NIT July 7-8.

Armco's "C-D" NIT will be May 3-4, and the Memorial May 24-25.

The 10th Annual Armco Park Early Bird will kick off the season at Armco on March 29th and boasts a state and paid national berth. The 14th Annual Spring Challenge state-national qualifier follows on April 5th, with the first place team receiving \$25 per team entered, and the second place \$15 per team entered in travel expense money. The 10th Annual Ron Velde Memorial state-national qualifier on April 12, the 14th Annual D. K. Invitational state-national qualifier, and the the popular Miami Valley Umpires "J. R. & Syl Stidham" Memorial state-national qualifier on April 26th will round out the month.

May's first offering will be a USSSA "C-D" National Invitational, featuring direct, paid berths to the USSSA Men's "C" World Tournament in Sterling Heights, Mi., and the "D" World Tournament in Kissimmee, Fl. Both events will be held September 18-21. \$600 in team travel expense will also be awarded (based on 13 teams). That will be followed by the USSSA District XIII Men's "D," and "E" Championships on May 10th. Both divisions will feature state and national tournament berths. A Worth round robin state-national qualifier is slated next on May 17th, then the renowned USSSA "Memorial" Tournament - featuring a seven game round robin format - will be held on May 24-25. Men's Rec and Coed Rec round robins will close out the month on May 31st.

Kicking off the month of June will be the 13th Annual Bob Berry Memorial Class "C," "D" and "E" state and national qualifiers on June 7th. The tournament is held in honor of

the park's former Director of Softball. Next up will be a Men's "B-C" National Invitational, boasting paid World berths to the "B" World September 12-14 in Kissimmee, Fl., and to the "C" World September 18-21 in Sterling Heights, Mi. \$600 in travel expense will also be awarded based on 13 teams. Next up will be the Corporate State Tournament on June 21st, then a USSSA state-national qualifier on June 28th.

Leading off the month of July will be the USSSA "4th of July Explosion" on July 4-5, followed by a USSSA Mixed Couples National Invitational featuring World Tournament berths and travel money for the first place team on July 12. The Miami Valley Umpire One-Pitch Classic "D-E" qualifier follows on June 19, then a Men's "E" World Qualifier - featuring a direct berth to the USSSA "E" World Tournament September 11-14 in Kissimmee, Fl. follows.

August's offerings will include an Armco Park "Benefit" qualifier on August 2nd, a "Last Chance" qualifier on August 9th, and back-to-back Armco Park round robin qualifiers on August 16th and 23rd.

The final events scheduled at Armco will be held on September 27th and October 4-5, when the USSSA Director's Fall Classic and the USSSA Men's Class "C" and "E" Fall State Championship bring down the curtain on the 2008 season.

Armco Park features a rainout hot line, electric scoreboards, a security staff, numerous picnic shelters, children's playground equipment with "Big Toy," a 125 acre stocked fishing lake, golf driving range, miniature golf course, sand volleyball courts, and horse shoe pits.

League play is offered at Armco on week nights for men's C, D, E and coed teams. A fourteen game session begins April 7th, followed by a ten game fall doubleheader league.

For information on tournament or league play at Armco Park, call the park office between 9 AM and 4 PM on Monday through Friday at 513-727-3989. Or visit the Armco Park website csn at www.armco park.com.

2008 ARMCO PARK TOURNAMENT CALENDAR

2008 USSSA MEN'S QUALIFYING TOURNAMENTS

March 29*	10th Annual Early Bird - Upper/Lower (S/N)
April 5*	14th Spring Challenge - Upper/Lower (S/N)
April 12*	10th Annual Ron Velde Memorial - Upper/Lower (S/N)
April 19*	14th Annual D. K. Invitational - Upper/Lower (S/N)
April 26*	J. R. & Syl Stidham Memorial - Upper/Lower (S/N)
May 17*	USSSA-Armco-Worth Round Robins - Upr./Lwr. (S/N)
May 24-25	The "Memorial" Men's Comp./Rec Divis. (S/N)
	"Seven Game Round Robin!"
May 31	USSSA Men's Rec & Co-Ed Rec Round Robins (State)

June 7* 13th Annual Bob Berry Memorial - C, D, E (S/N)
 June 28* USSSA Qualifiers - Upper/Lower (S/N)
 June 4-5 3rd Annual 4th Of July Explosion - Upper/Lower (S/N)
 July 19 Miami Valley Umpires Invitational - D-E (S/N)
 July 26* USSSA Men's E World Qualifier (S/N/W)
 August 2* Armco Park Benefit Qualifier - Upper/Lower (S/N)
 August 9 USSSA Last Chance Qualifier - Upper/Lower (S/N)
 August 16 Armco Park Round Robins - D/E (S/N)
 August 23 Armco Park Round Robins - D/E (S/N)
 September 27 USSSA Director's Fall Classic - Upper/Lower

2008 USSSA CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENTS

May 3-4 USSSA Men's C-D NIT (S/N/W)
 "Direct Paid Berth To USSSA World September 18-21"
 May 10* USSSA District XIII Championship - D/E (S/N)
 June 14-15 USSSA Men's B-C NIT (S/N/W)
 "Direct Paid Berth To USSSA World Tournaments"
 June 21 USSSA Corporate/Industrial State Tournament
 July 12* USSSA Coed NIT - C, D, E (S/N/W)
 October 4-5 Men's Class C Fall State Championship
 October 4-5 Men's Class E Fall State Championship

* - Sunday is rain date

S/N - Two State & Two National Berths

S/N/W - Two State, Two National, World Berth(s)

Five Free, Five \$50 Round Robins And Midnight Madness: First Come, First Served!

USSSA Men's C And D States Highlight Northern Kentucky Sports Park Calendar For 2008

The Kentucky USSSA Men's Class "C" and "D" State Tournaments, six round robins and four "Midnight Madness" tournaments will highlight the Northern Kentucky Sports Park tournament calendar for the 2008 softball season.

Northern Kentucky Sports Park is scheduled to kick off tournament play with a division of the 7th Annual "Bash for Cash" on March 14-16.

Conveniently located just off of I-275 at 620 Mason Road in Taylor Mill, Northern Kentucky Sports Park features three lighted diamonds with 300' fences, a heated and air-conditioned sports bar and children's play area.

Thirty five teams participated in State Tournament action last year at the park in August.

"They're our marquis events," says Northern Kentucky Sports Park manager Rodney Sexton. "We should get 12 to 20 teams depending on who comes out and plays."

The “D” State will be held on August 9-10. Last year Good Guys/GBI Cincinnati - the eventual 4th place finisher in the “D” World - double-dipped Two-N-Out.com 8-4 and 10-9 to capture the title.

The “C” State will be held the following weekend, August 16-17. Sentry Fire/Apex/LBYC trimmed NKY/Cincy Bandits 13-12 to complete a three game sweep of the 2007 field.

Both the “C” and “D” State Tournaments feature paid berths to the USSSA World Tournaments, based on 12 teams. The “C” World is September 18-21 in Sterling Heights, Mi., and the “E” World September 11-14 in Orlando, Fl.

Currently, only two qualifiers are slated for the park in 2008, “but during the year if teams ask about them, we might add more. It all depends on how the year goes,” says Sexton.

Northern Kentucky Sports Park’s qualifiers are scheduled for August 2-3. Both a “D” and “E” division will be held. The entry fee is only \$50.

Besides the State Tournaments, the park’s other big event will be the “Firecracker Classic” Midnight Madness tournament on July 3-4, says Sexton.

“We’re going to have a band and food and games for everybody. We’re expecting over 25 teams.”

The weekend following the “Bash for Cash,” the Park will offer a sponsorship tournament, the “Knights Invitational.”

“It’s an early season round robin that we used to run years ago with my team, and we’re trying to build it back up,” says Sexton. “We used to get 50 to 60 teams. It’s on Easter weekend, so it will only be held on one day. Teams will have a choice of \$375 cash or a sponsorship.”

Round robins are scheduled for April 4-5, May 3-4 and July 12-13. The April and May tournaments boast a “free” entry fee. “We’re trying to get teams playing at the park,” says Sexton. “They only have to play for the umpires. We haven’t done as much softball as we have in the past, so hopefully this will help us to get more teams playing. We started that last year. Teams get three or four games and all they have to do is pay for the umpires. We’re trying to get our rec teams to say ‘let’s go on out and play.’”

Northern Kentucky Sports Park’s “Midnight Madness” tournaments will be held on April 25th, May 30th, July 3-4 and August 22nd. The April and May offerings are only \$50.

Why is the park charging such a low entry fee?

“At the beginning and end of the year and in July we have down time,” explains Sexton. “We did it last year and it worked out great. The \$50 we charge takes care of the umpires.”

Sexton says the Midnight Madness tournaments average about a dozen teams.

“We start the tournaments after our league games on Friday night so we can be done early in the morning and get ready for baseball,” says Sexton.

Kentucky Sports Park will also offer league play for men’s, women’s and mixed couples teams. Men’s C-D-E leagues are available Monday through Sunday nights. A Women’s league is being offered on Monday nights, and Mixed Couples leagues on Sunday, Wednesday and Friday. Tuesday night will feature a competitive “D” league. An eight game season plus tournament is \$325. The discount price for teams paying for both the spring and summer sessions by February 15th is \$550, and by March 15th is \$600. A \$100 deposit is required. League fees include all sanction fees, balls and umpires, as well as scorebooks, a subscription to the CINCINNATI SOFTBALL NEWS for each team manager and on-site management.

Sexton says that “several improvements will be made to the park” in 2008 in response to comments that patrons have made.

“We’re putting in a new backstop on field three and new netting and mats under the ground and bases and pegs, and we’re painting and fixing the lights and cutting back some trees,” says Sexton. “And we’re in the process of trying to get new scoreboards. If we’re able to do everything we’re hoping to it’s going to be nice.”

For any additional league or tournament information, call Donny Fisher at 859-291-4839. Or visit the park’s website at www.nksportspark.com.

2008 NORTHERN KENTUCKY SPORTS PARK SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT CALENDAR

ROUND ROBINS

April 4 Friday Round Robin - FREE!
April 5 Saturday Round Robins - FREE!
May 3 Saturday Round Robins - FREE!
May 4 Sunday Round Robins - FREE!
July 12 Saturday Round Robins - ONLY \$50!
July 13 Sunday Round Robins - ONLY \$50!

MIDNIGHT MADNESS

April 25 Friday Midnight Madness - ONLY \$50!
May 30 Friday Midnight Madness

“All Night Long Party” - Only \$50
July 3-4 Thursday & Friday Midnight Madness
“Firecracker Classic - Band And Games!” - Only \$75
August 22 Friday Midnight Madness - FREE!

SPECIAL EVENTS

March 22 Knights Sponsorship Tournament
1st Place \$375 Based On 12 Teams - Only \$75!

USSSA QUALIFIERS

August 2-3 Last Chance Men's D - ONLY \$50!
August 2-3 Last Chance Men's E - ONLY \$50!

USSSA CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS

August 9-10 Kentucky USSSA Men's D State
August 16-17 Kentucky USSSA Men's C State

Packages Now Available For Corporate And Family Events...

USSSA Men's, Women's, Mixed Qualifiers Highlight Triple Creek Calendar

Triple Creek Softball Complex has announced its tournament schedule for the 2008 season, and again this year the park will offer USSSA men's, women's and mixed couples qualifiers and round round robin tournaments.

In the past couple of years, Triple Creek has added a new snack bar, new restroom facilities, additional sheltered seating, new players' benches, new offices, a new large playground, and an expanded menu. It has become one of the premier facilities in the area for your recreational softball needs. In 2007, leagues were nearly at full capacity as teams continued to discover all that Triple Creek has to offer. Leagues are offered each night of the week including Saturday and Sunday leagues. All softballs and umpire fees are included in the league fee. Costs for the spring, summer, and fall leagues are \$345 for one season, \$620 for two seasons, or \$875 for all three seasons.

“Triple Creek is not only a great place for the avid softball player, but also for the families,” says Hamilton County Park District Athletic Coordinator Jamie Kist. “The atmosphere is unmatched among other softball complexes with our 177 acres of park land, fishing pond, walking trails, four of the best softball fields in the area and a playground for the kids. All of our league and tournament games are finished by dark so players have more time to socialize at the park or get home at a decent hour. And best of all, there is no daily admission to the park. You only need an annual Motor Vehicle Permit for \$5 which is valid at all Hamilton County Park District locations.”

New this year is the ability to rent the facility for corporate or family event. "Companies can have their picnic or a day away from the office at the Park and have us take care of everything. Our packages include dinner, drinks, shelter rental, manicuring the fields, and even tournament bracketing if they would like a little friendly competition," says Kist.

Opening the curtain on Triple Creek's 2008 tournament calendar will be a first year event, a Men's "D-E" round robin on April 19th. A USSSA "E Rec" state qualifier follows on May 3rd. The winning team earns a berth to the USSSA Men's "E Rec" State Tournament August 23-24 in Milford, Oh. Next up is a Men's "D-E" qualifier on May 17th. The highest finishing Men's "D" and Men's "E" teams will advance to the USSSA "D" or "E" National Tournaments, to be held Labor Day Weekend in Ft. Knox, Ky., and Indianapolis, In., respectively. The Ohio U-Trip "D" State will be in Milford, and the "E" State in Harrison. Both will be held August 16-17.

Three weekends later on June 7th, a U-Trip "E" World qualifier will be held at Triple Creek, and will feature a direct paid berth to the USSSA "E" World September 11-14 at the Walt Disney's Wide World of Sports Softball Complex in Lake Buena Vista, Fl. State and National berths will also be awarded.

Wrapping up the month of June will be a Mixed "D-E" World qualifier on the 28th. The highest finishing Mixed "D" and "E" teams will qualify for the USSSA Mixed "D" World Tournament October 17-19 in Lake Buena Vista, Fl., and the Mixed "E" World October 17-19 in Garland, Tx. State tournament berths to Cincinnati on August 23-24, and National berths to Dayton on September 27-28 will also be awarded.

A women's "D-E" State-National qualifier will be held two weekends later on July 12th. The top teams from each class qualify for the Ohio State tournament, with the "D" state slated for August 9-10 in Milford, Oh., and the "E" state July 26-27 in Athens. Berths to the "D" National Labor Day Weekend in Milford, Oh., will also be awarded.

The number of berths and travel expense awarded in each USSSA qualifier will be based on entries.

"The Hamilton County Park District is delighted to offer our tournament participants the opportunity to advance to USSSA championship play," says Athletic Coordinator Jamie Kist. "And we're especially pleased to be hosting an 'E' World qualifier at the park which will feature a paid berth to Walt Disney World's reputable facilities. This is softball's hottest destination."

Rounding out the schedule will be a men's "D-E" round robin on Saturday, July 12th.

Kist notes that Triple Creek's softball tournament calendar has been abbreviated in recent years to accommodate an expanding youth baseball program.

“Also,” points out Kist, “this enables the Park District to focus its attention on a more manageable and realistic softball program.”

Kist says that when teams compare the cost for tournaments at Triple Creek versus what teams are getting for their money at other area parks that “it’s a fantastic value.”

Triple Creek will also be offering youth softball tournaments along with adult softball and youth baseball tournaments, adds Kist.

“In this ever-changing world of softball, we must learn to improvise and continue to develop diverse programs that people enjoy,” says Kist. “We will attempt to accommodate everyone.”

Triple Creek Park accepts phone in registrations. Simply call and sign-up using your VISA or MasterCard. Teams can also sign up on the internet by visiting www.greatparks.org. For more information about the tournaments or leagues offered at Triple Creek, call 742-1091.

A complete schedule of Triple Creek Park tournaments is listed below.

2008 TRIPLE CREEK PARK TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

April 19 Men's D-E Round Robin
May 3 USSSA Men's E Rec State Qualifier
May 17 USSSA Men's D-E Round Robin
June 7 USSSA Men's E World Qualifier
“Direct Paid Berth To USSSA E World September 11-14 At
Walt Disney's Wide World Of Sports, Lake Buena Vista, Fl.”
June 28 USSSA Mixed D-E State-National Qualifier
July 12 USSSA Women's D-E State-National Qualifier
July 12 Men's D-E Round Robin
This tournament schedule is subject to change.
Please call 742-1091 for details
or to sign up over the phone.

Membership Swells To 135 In Local Hall..

Six Earn Ultimate Honor With Norwood Sorrento's Hall Of Fame Election

Three male players, a female player, a sponsor and a veteran ASA Regional Umpire-In-Chief have earned the highest honor in area softball with their election to the Norwood Sorrento's-Greater Cincinnati Softball Hall of Fame.

Elected were sponsor Dan DeClaire of Sardinia, senior player Dick Ernst of Dillsboro, In., Amateur Softball Association Midwest Region Umpire-In-Chief Jerry Fick of

Cincinnati, short-centerfielder Marsha Del Friedhoff of Cincinnati, catcher Randy Lewis of Rising Sun, In., and Dale Overman of Ft. Wright, Ky.

Daniel D. DeClaire's DeClaire Insurance softball team is believed to be the longest continually sponsored team in the Greater Cincinnati area. The sponsorship has spanned three decades, beginning in 1979. The team's 2,450-1,259 won-lost record and 3,709 games played may be unsurpassed in slow pitch softball.

DeClaire played and managed for his team for twenty-one years from 1979 until 1999. From 1980 through 1995 the team played at the USSSA "B" level, averaging 116 wins over sixteen years and compiling an 1,865-996 won-lost record. The team competed in the USSSA "B" world in 1994- '95, and enjoyed a top ten Greater Cincinnati and Ohio ranking for eleven seasons from 1985- '95.

In 1987 the team began focusing on the masters program, and won eleven ASA or USSSA 35-over state titles, and four 40-over USSSA state titles. DeClaire captured a 35-over World championship in 1997 and a 40-over World crown in 2000. The team was runner-up in the 40-over world in 1998.

DeClaire Insurance has participated in 134 leagues and in 563 tournaments, and plans on continuing to compete again in 2008.

Richard Louis "Dick" Ernst is the first senior player elected to the Greater Cincinnati Softball Hall of Fame.

Ernst began his senior career in 1987 in the Dunham Senior Center 55-over league. Two years later his Masters Twelve 55-over team captured the ASA National Championship and Ernst won the home run title and was named to the All-American team. Since then his teams have collected five national titles, and Ernst has been named to nine All-American teams in the 55-over, 60-over, 65-over and 70-over programs. He was inducted into the Senior Softball Hall of Fame in 1996.

Primarily a middle infielder, Ernst has a lifetime batting average in the senior program of over .650. He has won numerous league titles and league batting titles over the past twenty years.

Ernst has also been active at the organizational level, serving as a league commissioner for over ten years. He is chairman of his league's rules committee, which standardized an official rule book, and he takes pride in having contributed to the growth and popularity of senior softball.

Coincidentally, Ernst's father, Ray, authored the first-ever ASA and USSSA slow pitch national rule books. Ray Ernst is also a member of the ASA National Hall of Fame.

Jerry Dan Fick is best known as the Umpire-In-Chief of the ASA Cincinnati Metro Tournament for the last 31 years. An ASA umpire for 37 years, Fick is the ASA's

Midwest Region U-I-C and has been a member of the ASA's National Umpire Staff for six years. He has attended fifteen National Umpire Clinics, has been U-I-C at over 20 ASA National Championships, an instructor at over 20 ASA National Umpire Schools or Advanced Schools, conducted clinics and schools in 18 states as well as Germany and Italy.

Fick's ASA honors include National Indicator Fraternity 1989, Certificate of Achievement 1991, and Region 10 Award of Excellence 1997. He hosted the 1999 National Umpire School and has operated the longest running ASA Clinic with a national staff member serving as a clinician in the nation. He also worked in three ASA National Tournaments.

Randy James "Chub" Lewis is best known as the slugging catcher for the Watanabe Optical softball teams of the mid-to-late nineties. He is one of the most prolific home run hitters in Greater Cincinnati softball history, clubbing over 100 home runs for nine consecutive seasons. During the peak of his career, he finished among Cincinnati's top ten home run hitters seven times. He led the city in home runs in 1990 with Scotties.

With Watanabe Optical, Lewis captured two ASA Metro Titles and an ASA National Championship in 1993. He was a three-time ASA All-American selection, the 1993 Greater Cincinnati Men's Major "Rookie of the Year," two-time Greater Cincinnati "Player of the Year," and seven-time first team Men's Major All-City selection. In 2000, Lewis was named to the Greater Cincinnati All-Decade Team for the nineties, "Player of the Decade," and to the Greater Cincinnati All-Century team.

Marsha Del Friedhoff was the short-centerfielder for three legendary women's softball teams in Cincinnati from 1961 through 1968, and competed in eight ASA national championships.

Friedhoff played for J. C. Rutenshroer Florist from 1961 through 1963, participating in the first ever ASA National Tournament in 1961. Rutenshroer was runner-up in the 1962 nationals, which was held in Cincinnati.

In 1966 and '67, Friedhoff joined Dana Gardens, capturing a national title in 1966 and a runner-up finish in '67.

The following two years she played for Escue Pontiac, winning her second national championship in 1968 in Cincinnati.

Friedhoff recorded the final out in both the 1966 and '68 national tournaments.

A lifetime .450 hitter, Friedhoff was known for hitting line shots over the infield. She also played 1st base and left field in addition to shortcenter.

Dale Overman is best known as the shortstop of the Universal Insurance teams of the late seventies. He later starred in the 35-over division with Newport Steel from 1986- '90, and then in the 50-over division with Joseph Chevrolet beginning in 2000.

With Overman at short, Universal Insurance captured league titles at Rolling Hills Lakes and White Oak. Universal captured a USSSA Central Division Men's Class "A" Championship in 1977 and the Ohio Valley Classic in 1979. Overman was named MVP in the '79 OVC.

From 1986 through 1989, Overman's Newport Steel teams won four consecutive Kentucky ASA State Championships, and finished in the top five in National Tournament play. In 1999 he played with Florida Crush in the 50-over division, winning three national senior titles, then joined Joseph Chevrolet, capturing a National Championship in 2001 and earning tournament MVP honors.

A lifetime .650 hitter, Overman was known as a spray hitter to all fields who frequently used his speed to take the extra base.

Robert "Red" Moore Elected To National Softball Association Hall Of Fame

Robert "Red" Moore of Verona, Ky., has been elected to the National Softball Association Hall of Fame.

Moore will be inducted during ceremonies at the organization's national meeting next November in Lexington, Ky.

Moore, whose "Red's Boys" teams have been a fixture in the NSA "A," "B" or Masters programs for most of the last decade, calls his selection "an absolute honor when you look at the kind of players they have in their hall of fame and the organization being started in Kentucky. "I'm a Kentucky softball man," says Moore. "I remember hearing about Gatliff Motors and Lang's Pet Shop winning all those world championships. It's an outstanding honor. It's hard to put into words how good it feels."

Moore's journey from the family farm in Boone County, Ky. to the National Softball Association Hall of Fame began in 1963 when he starred for his knothole team, Haines Marathon, and was picked to be a ball boy for the Cincinnati Reds. Also that year his cousins asked the thirteen year old to play softball for Shady Nook Bar on Sunday afternoon in a "roving" league in Boone County, and Moore's life-long love affair with the game of softball began.

Moore continued to play in the league until he was 16, when Florence Lions Park opened. For the next eight years he played at the Lions facility until Green Mountain Park opened just one mile from Moore's family farm.

"I drove all the posts for the outfield fence, dragged and mowed the fields and ran the umpire association there that served the 120 league teams that played there every week,"

recalls Moore. Moore also played ball there six nights a week and in tournaments every Saturday and Sunday. His Steve Pub's team from Green Mountain was once ranked second in the state of Kentucky.

In the early eighties, Moore and a handful of teammates joined a team run by Dennis Gitch and won a tournament in Painesville, Oh. The following year they became Avis Enterprises, which eventually won the Major "Open" Division of the Cincinnati Metro playing under the F & C Athletic banner in 1986.

Unfortunately, Moore had moved to second shift with his job with the railroad and was unable to be part of F & C's Metro Championship team. Finally in 1990, he formed his Red's Boys team that has been active in league and tournament play in the tri-state for most of the last seventeen years.

Among Moore's successes in league play were a pair of championships in the Major League at Softball and a runner-up finish in the powerful Wednesday Night Major League tournament at Rumpke Park. In tournament play his team finished 13th in the largest ASA "A" National Tournament in Jacksonville, Fl.

Moore took a sabbatical from softball to care for a handicapped cousin for three years until he passed away in 2001, then returned to re-form Red's Boys. Over the next five years they enjoyed three runner-up finishes in world tournament play, ten top five finishes, fourteen top ten finishes and sixteen top thirteen finishes. His teams boasted 24 all-world players, and Moore was named to three all-world teams as manager.

Moore says that finishing second in the NSA B and NSA B "Super" in 2004 was one of the most rewarding accomplishments of his career. "We still have not won a world championship," he laments. "But we did go on to earn a 5th place finish in the NSA A World the following year."

Another highlight came in 2006 when he merged with Team Illinois.

"We decided to go to the NSA AA World, which is their highest level," says Moore. "We faced a team with eight major players on Saturday night and started the game at 11:30 PM due to a rain delay. When we got to the bottom of the 7th we were down fourteen runs, and one of their big name players asked the coach what time they were playing in the morning. He was going to the hotel.

"Well, that fired my boys up and we scored fifteen runs in the bottom of the 7th with only one out and ended up getting 4th in that world," remembers Moore.

"Winning Burkesville back in the early ninties was another one of my most enjoyable moments," adds Moore. "There would be 3,000 to 5,000 people in the stands on Friday and Saturday night. There was nothing else for them to do."

Besides never winning a world tournament, Moore regrets not having won a city tournament.

“We were third in the Metro one year, but I never really achieved there like I had hoped to,” he says.

In addition to fielding a competitive NSA B team last season that captured the Kentucky State Tournament and finished 9th in the Super B World, Moore launched a 40-over team of Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana players with help from veteran sponsor Herb Price of Indianapolis. Moore will continue to sponsor that team in 2008, keeping alive his dream of winning that elusive world championship.

“I just enjoy softball and want to stay in it as long as I can,” he says. “I’m happy to have my 40-over team. I enjoy it and I feel you should do what you enjoy.”

USSSA Men’s “D” NIT’s, Kentucky “E” Rec State, Benefit Tournaments Highlight 2008 Rivershore Calendar

Hebron, Ky.—Looking to qualify for the USSSA “D” World Tournament this September at Walt Disney’s Wide World of Sports in Florida?

Look no farther than Rivershore Sports Complex, which opens for its twelfth season of tournament play on March 15-16. Rivershore is conveniently located at 7842 River Road, just off Tanner and Rt. 238 North in Hebron, Kentucky, a short drive from I-275.

Four USSSA Men’s “D” National Invitational Tournaments will be the marquis events on an eleven-weekend slow pitch calendar for the 2008 season. Each features a paid berth to the USSSA “D” World Tournament and \$600 travel expense (based on 13 teams).

“We’re the ‘door to Disney,’” says Park Director Patty Amrein, who returns to the park for her fifth season. “Disney’s Wide World of Sports is the most popular softball destination in the country, and more teams will qualify for the ‘D’ World Tournament at RiverShore than at any tournament facility in the tri-state.”

Rivershore’s first “D” NIT, the USSSA “Bash for Cash” remains on the third weekend in March for 2008. Each of the park’s remaining NIT’s, however, has changed its date for the upcoming season.

“We’ve shuffled dates in such a way as to avoid conflicts with other tournaments in the tri-state,” explains Amrein. “Hopefully area teams will find our dates to be a good fit in their tournament schedules.”

The “Bash for Cash” was one of the largest “D” NIT’s in the country last year, drawing 39 teams. That will be followed two weekends later on March 29th. Rivershore’s second NIT last year was in April, but was rained out. Six weekends later on May 10th, Rivershore will host its third “D” NIT, then close out its USSSA qualifying season on July 5-6. Last year Rivershore’s third NIT was held the first weekend in June, and the final event in mid-July.

“We’ve worked earnestly with local USSSA officials to do what is best for the softball community in scheduling these events,” says Amrein. “Hopefully these dates will represent a win-win situation for the teams, other local parks and Rivershore.”

SoftballFans.com/Miken of Portage, Mi., took home the gold last year at the “Bash for Cash,” tripping up DeHaan & Bach/Trailblazers of Cincinnati 15-14 and 25-7 in a double finals. TPE/Backstabbers of Cincinnati crushed Best Way Frame/Nasty Boys 24-9 in the championship game of the June NIT, while HLS Bonding/Big Sonny’s of Columbus, Oh., and Dizzy Roosters of Louisville, Ky. shared the July title.

Rivershore’s adult softball calendar is rounded out by three league fee tournaments, several round robins, ASA Metro qualifiers, benefit tournaments, invitationals and the inaugural Kentucky USSSA Men’s “E Rec” state tournament.

League fee tournaments are scheduled for March 30th, May 11th and August 17th. Each date is a Sunday. Season Opening Round Robins will be held on March 22nd. On the weekend of April 4, 5 and 6, there will be a Spring Warm-Up Round Robin on Friday, a Spring Warm-Up Friendly Coed tournament on Saturday, followed by a Spring Warm-Up Friendly tournament for men’s teams on Sunday. The Sunday tournament will offer both open and recreational divisions.

After a seven week void, slow pitch play picks back up with the U-Trip “D” NIT July 5-6, then continues the next two weekends with the “Team Alex-Cystic Fibrosis Benefit” for coed and men’s teams, and an ASA Metro Qualifier and a Midnight Madness tournament on Saturday, July 12th. An ASA Metro Qualifier for “D” and “Rec” teams wraps up the weekend on July 13th.

The following weekend, Rivershore hosts a Special Olympics invitational on Saturday, July 19th, then on Sunday a “Last Chance” Metro qualifier.

August dates include the USSSA “E Rec” state on the 8th and 9th, the “Special Olympics Regional” on August 16th, a Fall League Fee tournament on the 17th, and the “Northern Kentucky River Rumble Cash Tournament on Labor Day Weekend, August 30-31.

The curtain comes down on the slow pitch season with the “Halloween Spooktacular Coed Round Robin” October 25th.

Amrein says Rivershore is “optimistic” about the future of the USSSA “E Rec” program and the inaugural state tournament scheduled at the park on August 8-9.

“We’re excited to offer the opportunity for our grassroots teams to participate in the Kentucky USSSA ‘E Rec’ State here at Rivershore,” says Amrein. “Most of our league teams are recreational level teams, and this affords them a great opportunity to compete for a state title at their level of play.”

Rivershore still has league openings six nights a week for men’s, women’s and coed couples teams. Men’s leagues are offered Sunday through Friday, women’s leagues on Wednesday, and coed leagues on Sunday and Friday. League formats and league fees, including discount program information for teams playing double-headers and registering for both spring and summer seasons, are listed online at www.rivershoresports.com. A \$200 deposit is required to hold a league spot.

“Teams can register on-line or download an application and mail it in with their fees,” adds Amrein. “Our fees include one new softball per game, umpire fees, association fees, rule books and scorebooks.” Additional balls must be provided by the teams.

For additional league or tournament information, call 859-586-8500, or visit Rivershore’s website at rivershoresports.com.

2008 RIVERSHORE SPORTSPLEX SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT CALENDAR

2008 USSSA NATIONAL INVITATIONALS

March 15-16 USSSA “Bash For Cash” Class D NIT

March 29 USSSA Class D NIT

May 10 USSSA Class D NIT

May 10 USSSA Class D NIT

July 5-6 USSSA Class C-D NIT

“USSSA D NIT’S Feature A Direct Paid Berth To USSSA D World Plus \$600 Travel Expense Money!”

2008 LEAGUE FEE ROUND ROBINS

March 30 - Sunday Summer League Fee

May 11 - Sunday Co-Ed Summer League Fee

August 17 - Sunday Fall League Fee

2008 ASA METRO QUALIFIERS

July 12 Men’s

July 13 - Sunday Men’s Rec & Men’s D

July 20 - Sunday Last Chance Men’s

2008 SPECIAL EVENTS

March 22 Season Opening Round Robins
April 4 - Friday Spring Warm-Up Round Robin
April 5 Spring Warm-Up Friendly Coed
April 6 - Sun. Spring Warm-Up Friendly Men's Open
April 6 - Sunday Spring Warm-Up Friendly Men's Rec
July 12 Cystic Fibrosis Benefit (Coed & Men)
July 12 Midnight Madness
July 19 Special Olympics Invitational
August 16-17 Special Olympics Regional
August 30-31 No. Ky. River Rumble Cash Tournament
October 25 Halloween Spooktacular Coed Round Robin

USSSA STATE TOURNAMENT

August 8-9 Men's "E Rec"

ADDITIONAL TOURNAMENT INFORMATION

Visit Our Website at www.rivershoresports.com