



european  
softball  
federation

# newsletter

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All correspondence to: [info@europeansoftball.org](mailto:info@europeansoftball.org)

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## FROM THE EDITOR

The ESF Newsletters will be published every four weeks and will contain a wide range of information about softball in Europe. If you want to publish an article, message or announcement on a softball topic in the Newsletter (on events, rules, equipment or anything else), please send your copy (in Word), preferably accompanied by pictures, to: [info@europeansoftball.org](mailto:info@europeansoftball.org).

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*This Newsletter is published under the responsibility of the Executive Board of the European Softball Federation.*

## COLOFON

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Dear Sport Friends,

This is the first issue of our new ESF Newsletter, where we will give you regular information about the plans and decisions of the ESF Executive, but also news of softball highlights and developments from Europe and around the world. Since the combined ESF/CEB Congress in Bled in February, you have probably already noticed that there have been changes to both the ESF website and to communications to ESF Federations and other interested parties.

These changes have come about thanks to the hard work of volunteers, and are now being extended to the ESF Newsletter, which will be published under the editorship of **Anton Kops** (ESF Development Commissioner), with help from **Bob Fromer** in Great Britain. The plan is to publish the Newsletter every four weeks and in urgent cases an additional issue will be published as well.

The Newsletter is open to all ESF Federations for any notice, announcement or article that you want to place in it, and the deadlines for each issue are shown below.

I am pleased to note that competitions have had a successful start in the various leagues across Europe, and in cooperation with local organizers, our staff is working hard to ensure that the ESF tournaments planned for this season are successful as well.

The umpires, scorers and officials for these tournaments are in the starting blocks and I hope the weather will be kind to us over the summer.

A Calendar with details of all ESF competitions in 2013 is at the end of this Newsletter.

Finally, we will keep you informed about progress in the campaign to return our sport to the Olympic program for 2020 following the decision of the IOC Executive to short-list baseball-softball along with wrestling and squash. The final decision will be made by the full IOC Assembly in September. So this year will be decisive for both baseball and softball and I am hopeful of a positive result.

On behalf of the Executive Board, I wish you all a perfect sporting season and hope to meet you this summer at a softball venue somewhere in Europe

**André van Overbeek, President**



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## IN MEMORIAM: ROB KERKMAN

Former international softball umpire and Commissioner Rob Kerkman, who served as Umpire-in-Chief for the European Softball Federation, passed away on Wednesday, May 8 at the age of 66 after a battle with illness.

Rob Kerkman, born on December 20, 1946 in Zandvoort, Netherlands, was an umpire who was well-respected by coaches and players both in Dutch and international women's and men's competition.

Rob belonged to that select group of umpires whose very presence displayed leadership on the field, but he also was one of those umpires who never attracted attention to himself, but simply did his job for the good of the game.

After concluding his active umpiring career, Rob served as an ESF Umpire Commissioner from 2001-2004. Shortly thereafter, he became a member of the ESF Technical Commission and served as such through 2009. He then became the ESF's Umpire-in-Chief in 2010, a position which he had been meant to fill this season.

While it was known that Rob had recently become ill, his passing came as a blow to his many friends and colleagues, who have been saddened by the news.

The ESF would like to offer our condolences to Rob's family at this difficult time.

Andre van Overbeek  
President

Ami Baran  
Secretary-General



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## IN MEMORIAM: XAVIER MATEU

It is with great sorrow that we have learned of the untimely death of Xavier Mateu, the Secretary General of CEB and Technical Director of the Spanish Federation. Xavier, only 50 years old, had a heart attack and passed away on June 6.

Xavier was devoted to the development of baseball both in Spain and Europe and he spent a lifetime working for these causes.

He always had a smile on his face, and was always there with an encouraging word or action.

Xavier will be deeply mourned and sadly missed by everyone in the European baseball and softball community.

At the European Cup Tournaments played in Barcelona and Regensburg this year, a minute of silence for Xavier was held before the games and the flags were set at half mast in his honor. These tournaments have been dedicated to Xavier Mateu's memory by the CEB Executive.

The ESF offers our condolences and best wishes to Xavier's wife and daughter.

Andre van Overbeek  
President

Ami Baran  
Secretary-General

*Thanks to Marco Stoovelaar*



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## ESF UMPIRE CLINIC 2013

The ESF Basic Fastpitch Umpire Course for 2013 was held in Prague during May, with nine participants from Germany, Italy, Great Britain, Canada (for GB), Lithuania, Slovakia, France, Bulgaria and the Ukraine.

The clinic was held in Radotin, in a sports center that includes a hotel, classroom, sports facilities and a softball field. Instructors for the ESF were **Carolien Stadhouders** and **Bert Loggen**.

This year, the start of the clinic was on Wednesday evening, whereas in the past the clinic had started on Monday. This meant that participants and instructors had to work hard to cover all the rules and mechanics.

Participants were asked to study the rules of softball and the mechanics of the three-umpire system before coming to the clinic. The emphasis during the first two days was on the more complex rules such as DP/re-entry, hitting, baserunning, obstruction and interference.

In the afternoons, sessions were held on the softball field, where the participants spent time on signals, position behind the catcher, timing and positions on the bases. The field session on Friday was followed by a written examination.

On Saturday and Sunday, the umpires worked games in the National Junior Championship tournament at the fields of the Eagles Club in Prague. During the first day, all participants umpired three games – one each at home, first and third, so they could be evaluated at all three positions.

After the tournament, the clinic ended on Sunday evening when awards were presented to the following candidates who successfully passed the course:



**Megan Hylton, Germany**  
**Nicolas Roux, France**  
**Paul Mastalerz, Canada (for Great Britain)**  
**Roberto Valentinis, Italy**  
**David Hurley, Great Britain**  
**Branislav Susila, Slovakia**  
**Nikolay Pilev, Bulgaria**

The two candidates from Lithuania each received a Certificate of Attendance.

We want to thank all participants for their enthusiasm and hard work, and special thanks to Pavel Prachar and Gaba Waage for their hospitality and organisation during the clinic.

**Carolien Stadhouders**  
**Bert Loggen**



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## BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL MAKE OLYMPIC SHORTLIST



WBSC Co-Presidents Ricardo Fraccari and Don Porter during the Olympic bid.  
(Photo Richard Julliard)

### “WE ARE IN THE SEVENTH INNING NOW...”

Baseball and softball merged into a single International Federation in 2012 – the World Baseball and Softball Confederation (WBSC) – to improve their chances of getting back in to the Olympics with the disciplines of men's baseball and women's fastpitch softball. The two sports had been cut by the IOC in 2005, the first sports dropped since polo in 1936, and had been off the program since the 2008 Beijing Games.

WBSC Co-President **Riccardo Fraccari** said, "We are humbled and honoured. The decision motivates us to work even harder on behalf of our athletes."

"We're in the seventh inning now," said WBSC Co-President **Don Porter**. The sports are proposing separate baseball and softball events of eight teams each, played as back-to-back six-day tournaments at a single venue.

Against many people's expectations, baseball and softball (or baseball-softball, as the sports are now known for Olympic purposes) have made a short list of three sports to be considered for inclusion in the 2020 Summer Olympic Games. The announcement was made by the International Olympic Committee's Executive Board on May 29 in St Peterburg, Russia.

Wrestling, which was dropped from the Olympics three months ago, and squash were the other two sports to make the cut, while five sports – karate, roller sports, sport climbing, wakeboarding and the Chinese martial art of wushu – have been eliminated from contention.

The IOC Executive will submit wrestling, squash and baseball-softball to the full IOC Assembly for a final decision on September 8 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Only one sport will be chosen.

Despite a tradition dating to the ancient Olympics, wrestling was surprisingly cut from the list of core sports by the IOC Executive in February 2013. The decision caused an international outcry and prompted the United States, Russia, Iran and other countries to join forces in a bid to bring the sport back.

### VOTING ROUNDS

The decision on the short list came after each of the eight candidate sports made 30-minute closed-door presentations to the IOC Executive Board.

The Board then voted by secret ballot over several rounds, with wrestling winning on the first round with eight of the 14 votes.

Baseball-softball beat karate by 9-5 in a head-to-head vote to win its spot on the list and squash got through in the final round, getting eight votes to defeat wushu with four and sport climbing with two.

*"It was never going to be an easy decision but I feel my colleagues on the board made a good decision in selecting baseball-softball, squash and wrestling to be put forward in Buenos Aires," IOC President **Jacques Rogge** said in a statement. "I wish the three short-listed sports the best of luck in the run-up to the vote in September and would like to thank the other sports for their hard work and dedication."*

The IOC decision was watched closely by the three cities bidding to host the 2020 Games - Istanbul, Madrid and Tokyo. A decision on the 2020 host city will also be made in September.

*(From the British Softball Federation website)*





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## EUROPEAN TEAMS INVITED TO 2014 SLOWPITCH WORLD CUP

The International Softball Federation (ISF) will be holding its third Co-ed Slowpitch World Cup at its headquarters facility in Plant City, Florida in the United States from January 26-29, 2014.

The ISF had previously held Slowpitch World Cups in Plant City in 2002 and 2005. The 2014 event marks a major attempt on the part of the ISF to provide an official international competition for the co-ed slowpitch format in recognition of its continued growth and development around the world.

ESF VP of Development, **John Austin** commented "The tournament represents a fantastic opportunity for players from Europe to test themselves against teams from other parts of the world, something that they would not normally have the opportunity to do. The placing of the tournament on the official ISF calendar of events also recognises the growth and development of the slowpitch format and provides players and coaches from all around the world with a new and exciting competition that will provide the motivation to continue their development efforts."

A minimum of six teams will be required for the event to be held, and the ISF has had interest so far from a number of countries, including the USA, Canada, the Cayman Islands, Great Britain, Ireland, Germany and Nigeria, plus enquiries from South America and Asia.



The entry fee for the event is \$500, and the deadline for entries is August 23.

Entries can be either from national, club or travelling teams, and players just need to be resident in the countries from which the entry is submitted. They do not have to be citizens of that country.

As Europe is the only ISF region to hold an official regional Co-ed Slowpitch Championship, the ISF will be looking to Europe to support the event and for European teams to test themselves against slowpitch teams from North America and around the world.

For more information about the Slowpitch World Cup or to request an entry form, contact ISF Director of Competition Laurie Gouthro on: [lgouthro@isfsoftball.org](mailto:lgouthro@isfsoftball.org).

## BEEBALL BAGS NOW AVAILABLE IN THE ESF/CEB WEBSHOP

This complete BeeBall Starters Kit for teams is now available for federations, clubs and schools. Including 12 Vinyl Gloves, 2 Soft Bats, Batting Tee, Homeplate and Bases and 6 soft balls. (Soft touch BeeBall Balls (8 and 8.5") not included).

This set has been developed especially for starting teams as a promotion tool for BeeBall.

**For CEB/ESF Federations 5 complete sets will be given FREE in case a BeeBall Clinic organized by the BeeBall Development Commission is given.**

Separate Starterskits can be ordered at € 145,- exclusive postal/transport costs.

For more information please contact our Development Commissioner for BeeBall,

**Anton Kops, at [apakops@tiscali.nl](mailto:apakops@tiscali.nl)**





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## Official ESF Competitions 2013

COMPETITION	DATE	LOCATION	WEBSITE	
2013 XVIII. EChW,	7 - 13 Jul	Prague (CZE)	<a href="http://euro2013.softball.cz/">http://euro2013.softball.cz/</a>	
2013 VIII. EChJB	8 - 13 Ju	Stenlose (DEN)	not available	
2013 IX. EChCS	17 - 20 Jul	Pardubice (CZE)	<a href="http://www.slowpitch2013.cz/">http://www.slowpitch2013.cz/</a>	
2013 VII. EChCG	5 - 10 Aug	Ostrava (CZE)	not available	
II. European M.Romeo Youth Trophy	14 - 17 Aug	Collecchio, Parma (ITA)	not available	
XX. European Cup Women "B"	19 - 24 Aug	Dupnitsa (BUL)	not available	
XXII. European Cup Winners Cup Women	19 - 24 Aug	Torre S.Patrizio, Fermo (ITA)	not available	
XXXVI. European Cup Women "A"	19 - 24 Aug	Prague (CZE)	not available	
II. European Super Cup Men	26 - 31 Aug	Castions delle Mura - Udine - Italy	not available	