



**EUROPEAN
SOFTBALL
FEDERATION**

NEWSFLASH

November 2010

FIRST SOFTBALL COACHES CLINIC IN PORTUGAL IS A HUGE SUCCESS!

by FPBS

Training at a high level with the ESF

The Portuguese Baseball and Softball Federation (FPBS) recently completed the first part of two clinics for the inaugural Softball Coaches Clinic in Portugal.



"It was great! Coaches André van Overbeek and Argenis did a terrific job! It was an amazing start to the FPBS Softball Clinics!" said Manuel Oliveira and Petr Stribrcky, two of the attending coaches. *"Everyone is highly motivated from being there! A truly inspiring and informative atmosphere!"*

Sandra Monteiro, president of the Portuguese Baseball and Softball Federation commented further by saying: *"It was a magnificent step forward for the development of Softball in Portugal. This clinic included not only the coaches of the senior softball*



teams participating in the national championship, but also a surprising number of Physical Education teachers interested in the development of Softball and Baseball in schools.

In fact, 70% of the participants at the clinic were these educators, most of them already involved in developing their own youth Softball programs."

With the huge success of these recent clinics, the FPBS is planning to follow up by partnering with the ESF and is proud to announce the second part of this intensive course.

It will be held at the Sports Academy of Rio Maior under the supervision of Professor Pedro Sequeira; President of the Coaches Department of the Sport Sciences School of Rio Maior.

Subject and content of these clinics will include: Chapters on the Pedagogies of Sport, Didactics of Sport, Observation and Analysis of Sport habits for Softball.



CURIOSITY / STATISTICS

by the ESF Secretary General

Some interesting numbers about our 2010 European Competitions!

- 12 Tournaments played: 5 by national teams, 7 by club teams
- 27 Federations have participated to at least one of our ESF competitions out of 36 Federation members.
- 96 Teams: 61 Female teams, 21 Male teams, 14 Coed teams
- over 1500 Athletes
- 6 Countries have hosted at least one ESF competition
- 378 Games have been played
- 8 Different countries won a gold medal (4 countries two gold medals)
- 113 Umpires assigned in 2010 competitions, out of total 130 ESF Umpires (117 male, 13 female)
- 20 are the Countries of the Umpires assigned in 2010 competitions

ANOTHER BIG YEAR AHEAD FOR SLOWPITCH IN EUROPE IN 2011

by Bob Fromer

Slowpitch softball should enjoy another busy year in 2011, with two ESF competitions coming up and a high level of development activity as the format continues to grow.

For countries already involved with slowpitch, and those who would like to be, here is what's on offer next year.

European Slowpitch Championships (EChCS)

The eighth European Slowpitch Championships will be held from July 19-23 in Dupnitsa, Bulgaria. This will be the first time the event has been held in two consecutive years, as the ESF is trying to even out the number of Championships held each year and is moving the EChCS to odd-numbered years.

The 2010 Championships in Prague had eight teams -- the largest number ever -- but there are hopes that this will grow in 2011. Bulgaria will be entering the competition for the first time as the host country, and the Netherlands is considering a first-time entry as well.

Although Great Britain were too strong for everyone else in Prague and took their seventh consecutive title, six of the remaining seven teams were very evenly matched and enjoyed a large number of close and exciting games.

As always, entries for the 2011 European Slowpitch Championships need to be submitted by January 1st, 2011, so if your country is thinking about sending a team, enter now!

European Slowpitch Cup (ECCS)

The fifth European Slowpitch Cup will be held in 2011, and August 3-6 are the dates set aside for it in the ESF calendar.

But the competition still needs a host -- so any country or club that would like to host the ECCS in 2011 should contact Bob-Fromer, the ESF's Slowpitch Development Commissioner, on bobfromer@onetel.com. The dates for this tournament can be changed if necessary to suit the host.

The 2010 ECCS in Slovenia was a highly-enjoyable six-team tournament in which all the teams were competitive, and this is one of the ESF's friendliest events.

Again, entries for the 2011 European Slowpitch Cup need to be submitted by January 1st, 2011. So get your entries in now!

Slowpitch Clinics

A number of countries have hosted one-day or two-day ESF Slowpitch Clinics over the past few years, and requests for 2011 have already been received from Switzerland and Slovenia.

These clinics typically cover slowpitch rules (and how they differ from fastpitch), slowpitch pitching and hitting techniques, slowpitch umpiring (especially calling balls and strikes) and slowpitch offensive and defensive strategy. But clinics can also be designed to suit the needs of the country requesting it.

For 2011, the ESF would like to encourage small groups of neighbouring countries to get together and share a slowpitch clinic. One possibility is to divide the clinic into three or four modules and deliver it on three or four weekends over a couple of months, with each country hosting a module and with the final weekend incorporating a tournament where everyone can show what they have learned.

But the ESF will still consider clinic requests from individual countries.

The usual model is that the ESF pays the travel costs for clinicians to deliver the course, while the host country provides room and board for the clinicians and a suitable venue for the clinic, depending on the time of year.

Any country or club interested in hosting an ESF Slowpitch Clinic in 2011 should contact Bob Fromer.

Slowpitch Umpire Courses

The ESF needs more slowpitch umpires, but the four-day ESF Slowpitch Umpire Course is sometimes too long and too expensive



for umpires who are just starting out in the format.

So to help fill the gap between the small modules on umpiring delivered at ESF Slowpitch Clinics and the full ESF Umpire Course, the ESF is now offering a two-day Slowpitch Umpire Course that can be delivered over a weekend.

The course will be modelled on the qualification course used by the British Association of Softball Umpires (BASU) and will be delivered by BASU trainers. In the UK, this course qualifies umpires to work on a national level at tournaments and national championships.

While the course will not produce ESF certification, it will be a big step towards it.

Any country or club interested in hosting a two-day Slowpitch Umpire Course in 2011, or finding out more about it, should contact Bob Fromer.

ESF Slowpitch Development Pack

At this year's ESF Congress in Turkey, it was mentioned that an ESF Slowpitch Development Pack was in preparation, consisting of

posters, flyers and postcards to advertise the slowpitch format, an „Introduction to Slowpitch“ booklet, a Slowpitch Pitching Guide and a promotional DVD.

The posters, flyers and postcards all have space for local contact details.

It has taken a while to get this Pack together, but it will be ready in time for the 2011 ESF Congress in Antwerp, and a number of copies of the Pack will be distributed to delegates free of charge at the Congress.

The Pack will also contain instruction and prices for countries to order more copies of any of the materials included in the Pack. The posters and postcards, which can be put in sports clubs and sports centres, health clubs, libraries, schools and companies, can be particularly useful in promoting the sport.

Slowpitch Softball World Series in the UK

Great Britain is the leading slowpitch country in Europe, and major slowpitch tournaments are held in the UK on almost every weekend from the middle of April to the end of September.

Many of these tournaments are open to entry from teams outside the UK, and these will shortly be listed on the ESF website calendar.

But one tournament specifically designed to attract teams from Europe is the annual Softball World Series, which will take place on the weekend of September 10-

11, 2011 at a sports club near London's Heathrow Airport. The World Series is a competitive but very friendly tournament designed for teams that represent countries or regions from around the world. Some of the teams are made up of ex-pats living in the UK and represent the USA, Canada, Africa, Australia/New Zealand, South America, Japan etc. Other teams represent Scotland and England, while teams regularly fly in from Ireland, Jersey and Guernsey. In the past, teams from continental Europe have come from Belgium and Germany.

Anyone who wants more information about the Softball World Series or who would like to enter a team should contact Bob Fromer.

2011 could be the biggest year yet for slowpitch competition and learning in Europe! For more information on any of the activities mentioned in this article, contact Bob Fromer on bobfromer@onetel.com.



ESF EC MEETING, ANTWERP NOVEMBER 2011

by Michael Schmidt



The ESF Executive Committee met in Antwerp on the weekend of 19-21 of November.

On the Agenda were various topics – including a review of the 2010 tournaments and the different problems that arose from them, followed by the tournament Technical Reports as well as a lengthy discussion about the new playing format, used on an experimental base in 2010 in Vienna (EChJG).

One of the main decisions was to continue the Championship Format of one Pool, also for the Senior Women's Championships 2011 in Italy.

The Vienna Games were very successful with an enormous amount of interest from the Public Institutions, as well as the general public, media, and followed by business partnerships. One of the conclusions was that the tournament received such public interest, is that it

was one large tournament with teams from 15 European countries.

The teams for the Italy games 2011 will be drawn into groups - depending on the different levels (ranking of the previous championship), as it is common among other sports such as soccer. The drawing shall be held during the 2011 ESF Congress in Antwerp, and will be broadcast live through Internet streaming.

The ESF Development Commission organized different Clinics throughout Europe, such as a School Teacher's Clinic in Turkey, the first ever softball Coaches Clinic in Portugal as well as a scorekeeper training, including the new live stats program the ESF will use at their tournaments.

The new ESF Game ball, first time used and produced in 2010 for the ESF Tournaments fulfilled all expectations and has been offered to the national federations, who have already taken this opportunity and placed a considerable number of orders for 2011.

We have also seen a successful first time ESF-Live-Internet-TV-Coverage of the Haarlem games. Although we had some technical difficulties with the live stream and a last minute advertising campaign we had more than 40.000 people watching the finals of the European Champions League –(more than 90% of the visitors were from Europe.)

The Secretary General inspected the location for the next ESF congress in February 2011 and it looks that we shall have a well organized Congress by the Belgium Softball Division for our Member Federations and their delegates.