



## 2016 EUROPEAN SOFTBALL CHAMPIONS



**Czech Republic seizes the title of Men's European Champion for the third time in a row. This marks the ninth time overall for the Czech men's squad.**

Men's European Championship took place in Montegranaro, Italy, July 11 - 16.

-  The **Czech Republic** won the Championship as the only undefeated team. This was the third time the Czechs won three consecutive Men's European Championships. From now on, their focus is on getting ready for the 2019 Men's World Championship, which the Czech Republic will be hosting in Prague and Havlíčkův Brod.
-  **Denmark** has taken silver medals eight times so far and seized the European Championship title in 2008. Led by new coach, Israel Nukunuku, the Danes did an outstanding job, even though a number of rookies were on their roster. Team Denmark became the leader of statistics in many categories. Danish batters recorded 14 homeruns throughout the tournament. Also pitchers from Denmark: Kim

Hansen, Rasmus Sorensen and Lucas Lohmann excelled, having struck out a combined total of 79 batters.

3.  For the first time in history of Men's European Championships, team **Belgium** won a medal. The players talked about their dream of beating the Dutch and they celebrated a huge success when they actually accomplished this goal. However, they secured their medals in another game, against Great Britain. Team Belgium was the surprise of the Championship having won the bronze medals.
4.  The **Netherlands** performed as a team with a very strong offense and a very aggressive style of playing. The Dutch lost their game against Belgium, which eventually cost them a medal.
5.  National Team of **Great Britain** has not missed a championship since 1999. Team GB mostly relied on its pitcher James Darby, while a number of younger players were nominated to get more experience for the future.
6.  Many young players, who also attended the Junior Men's World Championship, were part of the **Israeli** Men's National Team. Not relying on an individual, team Israel collectively worked on getting the best possible result.
7.  Team **Croatia** was one of the strongest in the tournament, but was left out in the placement bracket having lost two games by only one run in their round-robin games. Because of a rain-out, team Croatia couldn't play its seventh-place game and shared the final standings with team Italy.  
 This was the first time in history team **Italy** participated in Men's Softball Championship. The players were emotional and proud to have the chance to represent their own country in front of many spectators.
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9.  Team **Germany** participated in the European Championship only once, in 1995. This year's attendance was a sign of the German men's fastpitch program revival. Excited and happy, the Germans shared ninth place in the final scoreboard.  
 Also the **Swedish** team premiered at Men's Championship this year. The players suffered from lack of experience, but their love for the game was incredible. Despite losing all games, the players kept smiling and learning for the future.

Daily video recaps are available on the [ESF YouTube channel](#)  
Photogallery from the event is on the [ESF Facebook page](#)  
Results, statistics and more information on the [ESF website](#)



Sportfotografie  
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### Historical win for Great Britain

European Championship Junior Women in Softball took place in Sant Boi and Gava, Spain,  
1 - 6 August.

1.  National Team of **Great Britain** has not won a single European Championship in fastpitch softball or baseball until this success. Great Britain is without any doubt the best slowpitch nation in Europe, having won all the slowpitch European Championships. For the first time in history of official fastpitch softball and baseball competitions in Europe, the British team took gold medals in European Championship Junior Women.
2.  **Italian** team was a tough competitor for the British National Team and kept the opponent's batters short of scoring until the bottom of the seventh. The final game was the most dramatic of all the tournament's games.
3.  **Czech Republic** were the defending champions from 2014. The team was hoping for a better result, but despite its 6 - 0 lead against GB, lost 6-7, and also suffered a 13 - 0 defeat against team Italy.
4.  For **Germany**, Junior Women are the strong category. The team proved to be well prepared, but was a bit disappointed with not seizing a medal, unlike in 2012.
5.  **Belgium** has been part of the last five Junior Women's Championships and recorded its best result in this competition by placing fifth. Belgian player Celine Janssens hit two homeruns.
6.  This was the first time **Russia** placed outside the top four in this competition.
7.  The host country's team, **Spain**, hoped to place in the top six, but ended up fighting for the seventh place against Lithuania. Team Spain won the seventh-place game 13 - 0.

8. 🇱🇹 **Lithuania** participated in two European tournaments with the same roster. While in the U22 Women's Championship Lithuania placed last (eighth out of eight teams), in the younger category Lithuania left four more teams behind.
9. 🇪🇺 **Croatian** team competed at EChJW for the seventh time. Croatian player Marina Vitalich excelled with the highest batting average of the tournament.
10. 🇩🇰 This was only the fourth attendance of the **Danish** team in this competition, which is still waiting for a better result.
11. 🇷🇸 **Serbian** National Team, led by Sasa Havelka, also participated in the Women's World Championship in Canada in July.
12. 🇮🇱 Team **Israel** shows a lot of softball enthusiasm by participating in many women's categories, but is still waiting for a success.

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### **First ever attendance, gold for the Dutch.**

European Championship U22 Women was held in Pardubice, Czech Republic, July 4 - 9.

1. 🇳🇱 The **Netherlands** dominated the whole tournament and remained undefeated. The Dutch team only played one seven-inning game as all the remaining games finished prematurely on mercy rule. The Dutch team has participated in this competition for the first time in history.

2.  Team **Russia**, on the other hand, has not missed this tournament since it was established in 2008. Russian players placed in the top three every single time and they even won the last two Championships.
3.  The **Czech Republic** is another regular participant of this competition and has always been a tough opponent for the Russians. As the hosting team, the Czechs were a little disappointed with only taking the bronze medals at the end.
4.  **Slovakia** gave an outstanding and unexpected performance and many agreed that this team deserved better than the fourth place. Despite a non-medal position in the final standings, the Slovakian team changed history by beating the Czechs.
5.  Team **Poland** was led by a Dutch headcoach – Ben ten Pas. The team proved that the softball program in Poland does not only develop the level of softball, but also strengthens passion for this game in its players.
6.  Despite placing sixth, the **Greek** team performed some of the most exciting defensive plays of the tournament. Loren-Kathy Stavrou, the Greek pitcher, was one of the best pitchers in this event according to the statistics.
7.  **Ukrainian** coach Vasyl Kysil said, that his team mostly consisted of young players, who were proud to represent their country. Team Ukraine competed also at all four of the previous U22 Women's Championships.
8.  Team **Lithuania** is a team with the shortest history. Softball program in Lithuania has only started about three years ago. The team consisted of very young players, who were mainly gaining more experience. Even though, they played exceptionally well. This roster may actually participate in this category again not only in 2018, but also in 2020.

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Junior Alpina Fastpitch would like to invite men's fastpitch teams to participate in the 2nd Open Italiano tournament. The tournament will be held in Azzano, Italy, October 8 - 9.

For more details check the competition details at the [ESF website](#).



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