



EUROPEAN SOFTBALL FEDERATION PRESS RELEASE

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The Czech Republic becomes the European Champion in softball for the third consecutive time

July 19, 2016



Men's European Championship in fastpitch softball was held in Montegranaro, Italy, July 11 – 16. Ten teams competed in the tournament, which shows growth of softball programs in Europe.

The final standings were:

1. Czech Republic (Gold)
2. Denmark (Silver)
3. Belgium (Bronze)
4. Netherlands
5. Great Britain

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6. Israel
7. Croatia
Italy
9. Germany
Sweden

 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.

 Team Denmark is one of the most successful teams in Europe, when it comes to men's fastpitch softball. 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 was on their roster.

Team Denmark became the leader of statistics in many categories. Danish batters recorded incredible 14 homeruns throughout the tournament. Also pitchers from Denmark: Kim Hansen, Rasmus Sorensen and Lucas Lohmann excelled, having struck out a total of 79 batters.

 For the first time in history of Men's European Championships, team Belgium won medals. 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.

 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 cost them a medal. The Netherlands seized the European Champion title back in 1993, 1995 and in 2003. They are one of the teams which regularly place in the top four.

 National Team of Great Britain has not missed a championship since 1999. Its performances seem a bit unstable though, placing third, fourth but also eighth various times. Team GB mostly relied on its pitcher James Darby, while a number of younger players were nominated to get more experience for future.

 Israeli softball program is mostly focused on men's softball. Many young players, who will also attend the Junior Men's World Championship, were part of the Men's National Team. Not relying on an individual, team Israel collectively worked on getting the best possible result.

 Team Croatia was one of the strongest at 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. The Italians showed good batting skills, but lack of pitching experience cost them chances of a better result.

 Team Germany participated at 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.



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 Also Swedish team premiered at Men's Championship this year. The players suffered on lack of experience, but their love for the game was incredible. Despite losing all games, the players kept smiling and learning for the future.



More information [here](#), or on request at: hnovotna@europeansoftball.org

Photos by Sasha Schneider (www.sushysan.de) and Lauro Bassani. More photos at the [ESF Facebook](#).

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