

WBSC Europe VP Softball Report, Issue 20

November 21, 2022

TO: Softball Europe National Federations

Dear friends,

The 2022 season has come to an end and I am happy that we were able to play all our events on the fields with no restrictions. I would like to take this opportunity, as always, to update you on our activities and operations with the intent to keep you informed of what is being accomplished within Softball Europe.

Season 2022 review:

In 2022 Softball Europe was responsible for 14 events, the same as in 2021, which in itself was a busy season, playing the extra 2020 championships which were deferred due to Covid. What is truly interesting and an accomplishment was that with the same number of events there was more activity in team's participation – 135 vs. 107; fields used – 25 vs 21; and games played – 550 vs 457.



Covid had little impact on the organization of events this season, although individual officials travelling might have had to meet certain requirements such as masks on flights. Several umpires are known to have tested positive, one during a tournament and several others on their return home. The only event which had to take specific action was EMRYT, where precautionary restrictions were placed on the numbers attending and their accommodation arrangements. I would like to personally thank all organizers from the 6 countries that hosted our events. I would like to point out the outstanding job of our WECh organizers – RFEB, Barcelona and Spain.

The newly appointed Softball Commission had their first meeting in person in Vienna at the end of October. The main topic was the evaluation all of SE events in order to improve for future. Attached are the Minutes [here](#). The Final Report by SE Technical Director Mike Jennings will be circulated at the Congress 2023.

EMRYT and MASTERS:

EMRYT and MASTERS have a special place in the Softball Europe calendar. EMRYT is one of the main tools of development of youth, the MASTERS is our way to bring back our experienced players to the playing field and to recollect their common enjoyment again. In order to keep this tradition going we continue to look for long term agreements to host them.

WBSC Europe has agreed with the Collecchio Baseball and Softball Club and the Italian Baseball and Softball Federation (FIBS) to host the European Massimo Romeo Softball Youth Trophy until 2025. Collecchio, Italy, is confirmed to be the home of the European Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy (EMRYT) in 2023, 2024, and 2025.



Since the first edition in 2012, the Collecchio Baseball and Softball Club has hosted the youth festival, providing an exceptional event and experience for all the young athletes and their coaches. I am personally very happy, as Collecchio is the home for our most important development tool: the Massimo Romeo Trophy. The children come to Collecchio from all over Europe to enjoy this incredible experience. I want to thank the Collecchio club, its municipality, and the Italian Federation for providing hospitality and a great organization.

The 2022 ones were the third Softball European Masters Cups. Since 2019, the event has been held in Barcelona, Spain. In 2022, the minimum age of the Masters Cups was raised from 35 to 40 to better involve the European softball community. Over these past three years of conducting the tournament, the organizers of Sant Boi and Viladecans have provided us with outstanding facilities and friendly people, who have contributed to the growing success of the MASTERS, which is important to achieve our goal of this event. I have been there personally for every event, and it is clear to me that we have found the perfect home for our MASTERS with all the teams looking forward to next year and have already started planning their trip. We already started to talk with Spanish Baseball Softball Federation (RFEBS) to sign a 3 year contract for hosting the MASTERS in Barcelona (2023, 2024 and 2025).

World Cups:

A number of our European Championships in 2022 were also qualifiers for World Cups. I would like to congratulate the top 3 teams from WECh, hosted in Barcelona, Spain – the Netherlands, Great Britain and Italy – for qualifying for the first stage of WWC 2023. Europe has the privilege to host this first ever two stage format for 18 teams. The first stage will be hosted in July in Ireland, Spain and Italy, which will be a great opportunity to promote world class women's softball on our continent.



I would also like to congratulate the Czech Republic and Israel who will be representing Europe at the inaugural U23 MWC, which will be held in 2023. The Czech Republic and Italy will represent Europe at the U15 WWC 2023 in Tokyo. Next year the inaugural Coed Slowpitch World Cup is planned, where Europe will be represented by Great Britain, Germany and the Netherlands. I wish all the best to all of them.

ESCA camp:

The fifth ESCA Training Camp took place in Diessen, Netherlands, from October 26 to 30, 2022. Thirty-four players and twenty-seven coaches from sixteen countries participated in the camp with the goal of "getting better together".

The training camp included classroom workshop sessions, individual and small group training moments, game situations, and game competitions, plus a number of skills events designed for both learning and enjoyment.

In fact, top instructors from all over the world offered 10+ workshops to the athletes and coaches. Many games were played for a total of over 30 hours of softball.



ESCA Coordinator Craig Montvidas commented: "the dust has settled, but I can proudly say that "our 5th ESCA training camp was a major success. The number one goal of the ESCA training camp can be found in its motto: GETTING BETTER TOGETHER. Everyone who attended - players, coaches, and instructors - came away a smarter Softball person."

Thanks to an agreement with WBSC Coach Commission, the coaches taking part in the ESCA Training Camp took exams to become licensed coaches (level 1) according to the WBSC international standards – more [here](#).

SE Competitions 2023 - 2026:

As I mentioned, season 2022 has come to an end and it is time now to look forward to the years to come. November 1 was the deadline for bids for hosting of Cups 2023, youth European Championships 2023 and 2024 and adult European Championships 2023 – 2026. The list of candidates is [here](#). As only one bid was received and all technical aspects are based on the SE Technical Regulations, the 2023 Congress will formally approve bids. If more than one bid is received, voting by future participants in the case of Cups, or previous participants in the case of Championships 2024, will be held at 2023 Congress in the Softball Europe Friday session as always. If no bids are received, NFs will have the right to send in a bid, but no later than February 9. The full list of bids will be discussed at 2023 Congress in Softball Europe Friday session to complete it for final approval by WBSC Europe Congress.

Entries to all 2023 European Competitions will be called soon with deadline December 31, as usual. Entries to EMRYT and MASTERS will be called later.

Umpires Clinics and Blue Convention 2023:

As the ESCA project develops our players and coaches, SE approved also SE Umpires Development Plan 2023+. Four programs of this plan will be run – regional clinics, SE certification clinics FP and SP, 3rd Blue Convention and Exchange Umpires Program.

It is well known fact that there are many problems which exist in some countries for the training of umpires, which sometimes leads to the attendance of inexperienced umpires at Softball Europe certification clinics, which is a problem for the level and development of the clinics. That is why, during the 2023 season, we will continue to offer to the NF's that are in this situation, the possibility of



conducting these regional clinics so that the umpires of these countries start with a training according to their knowledge and experience.

SE FP Certification Clinic will be run in two stages – the first stage will be an online session about rules and mechanics, and the second stage as a live evaluation on the field. This clinic will be run during spring 2023. After careful consideration of the current Slowpitch situation, we have decided to postpone the clinic for the 2024 season. The 3rd Blue Convention will be run on the second weekend of March and all details will be announced soon. The time has come to refresh our minds of who is a member of the SE umpiring family. Each SE umpire is our link to all the other umpires in each respective country. Through the participants of the Blue Convention, we hope to reach all softball umpires in Europe, to unify the general umpiring style, rules interpretation and to become stronger and better after the COVID pandemic.

If you have any questions, suggestions, feel free to contact me anytime.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "G. Waage".

Gabriel Waage

WBSC Europe Vice-President Softball