

WBSC Europe VP Softball Report

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TO: Softball Europe National Federations

Dear friends,

The 2023 season is in the progress. As always, I would like to take this opportunity to update you on our activities and operations with the intent to keep you informed of what is being accomplished within Softball in Europe.

European Championships 2023:

In total three locations hosted European Championships 2023, and all events were qualifiers for World Cups. I warmly thank all organizers to make our pinnacle events, which finally were without any health restrictions.

The [U-16 and U-18 Men's Softball European Championships](#) opened the WBSC Europe Softball season in cities Sezimovo Ústí and Tábor, Czech Republic. In the final of the [U-16 MSECh](#) Czechia emerged victorious over Denmark, securing the championship title for the third time in a row.

The [U-18 MSECh](#) came to its conclusion as Czechia and Israel faced off in the championship game. Czechia secured the championship title and both, Czechia and Israel, will represent Europe at U18 MSWC in Mexico, November 11 – 19, 2023.

The [Men's Softball European Championship](#) was played at Hurricane Park in Hørsholm, Denmark, from July 24 to 29. Twelve national teams were competed for the title of European Champion. Czechia emerged triumphant in the MSECh 2023, solidifying their status as one of the continent's softball powerhouses. The Netherlands secures WBSC Men's Softball World Cup spot after a hard-fought victory against Belgium in Bronze Medal Game. Czechia, Denmark and the Netherlands will represent Europe at MSWC 2024.



The [U-18 Women's Softball European Championship](#) was held in the city of Prague, Czechia. Scheduled to run from July 30 to August 5, 2023, this event was showcase of twenty national squads. The host nation clashed with Italy in the gold medal game. Both teams had already secured their positions in the upcoming WBSC World Cup due to their top two finishes in the championship. The bronze medal had been claimed by Ireland, prevailing over the Netherlands. Czechia, Italy and Ireland will represent Europe at U18 WSWC 2024.

Women's World Cup in Europe:



Europe became the center of women's world class softball in July. After nine years, the WBSC Women's Softball World Cup came back to Europe. The last time was in 2014 when the premier softball event took place in Haarlem, Netherlands. The 17th edition of the Women's Softball World Cup started on 11 July in Dublin, Ireland, with Group A, followed by Group B in Valencia, Spain, from 18-22 July. Group C was played in Castions di Strada and Buttrio, Italy, from 22-26 July. It was great story over three weeks and

European teams and hosts performed very well. Thanks to all three hosting NFs and congratulate to Netherlands and Italy for qualifying to Final stage 2024. I am really happy to see current [World Ranking of Women's Softball](#), when 5 European countries are among top 13 countries in the world. It is big step for European softball.

Upcoming Cups:

As European 2023 season for national teams is closed, the month of August is the month for European club competitions. In total 90 clubs from all of the Europe will compete in total 8 European Cup competitions. Fastpitch women's cups will be held in Saronno and Caronno (Italy), Zagreb (Croatia) and Moergestel (The Netherlands). Men's Super Cup will be held in 3 locations in the Netherlands and Coed Slowpitch Cup starting now in Sofia (Bulgaria). Our special Cup dedicated to our future generation – EMRYT – is held in Collecchio (Italy). The season will be closed on end of October with MASTERS in Sant Boi and Viladecans (Spain). I wish all players to have great time at European fields.

Education of umpires, coaches and players:



From June 22-25, 2023, a [Softball Umpire Certification Clinic](#) was held in the town of Havlíčkův Brod, Czechia. This event took place at the Hippos Aréna Softball Field, home of the WBSC Men's Softball World Cup in 2019. WBSC Europe Softball Umpiring Committee member Raoul Machalet, also responsible for the umpire development, expressed his satisfaction with the umpires' performance during the clinic. "All umpires worked really hard and all improved significantly during the clinic," he stated.

WBSC umpire certification clinic that will start in Saronno (Italy) on August 16. This clinic will be held by instructors Raoul Machalet, Germany and Scott MacLaren, Canada. Clinicians will have theoretical preparation and WSEPC in Saronno will be used for their practice.

Once again, Softball Europe, in cooperation with the European Softball Coaches Association (ESCA), will be organizing the [2023 ESCA training camp](#) this October. International coaches and players throughout Europe, all sharing the same passion - softball & baseball #gettingbettertogether



Information from NFs and WBSC:

Five senior and four junior elite national squads participated in the [Prague Softball Week 2023](#). Over thirty-five games were played from June 28 to July 6, 2023. The Prague Softball Week has been welcoming over the years some of the best teams from the whole world. In 2023 as well, the Czech softball community witnessed a successful comeback for the Prague Softball Week tournament.



Italian Women's Softball National Team former star pitcher and Olympian [Leslie Malerich](#) was inducted into the Florida State University Hall of Fame. She played in the Italian Softball League from 2002 to 2010, appearing in 151 games and starting 121 as a pitcher. She posted a career 0.74 ERA and a 71-19 record, striking out 785 over 645.1 innings. Malerich represented Italy 68 times, including the Athens 2004 Olympics.

All [Little League softball tournament qualifiers](#) were played in the Czech Republic, in Chomutov and Most, which made for easy logistics for the countries attending the softball qualifiers. A special thank you to the Czech Softball Association and the host clubs for hosting the whole softball tournaments and making them so successful. Also thank you to the Netherlands for being such great hosts in the previous years for the softball tournaments.

July 2nd, 2023 marked a somber day for the European softball community as it bid farewell to [Jacques Reinenbergh](#). Hailing from Belgium, Reinenbergh's significant contributions to the sport left an indelible mark on the European Softball Federation (ESF).

The International World Games Association (IWGA) announced that both men's and women's softball have been officially confirmed as medal disciplines for [The World Games 2025](#). The decision was taken by the IWGA Executive Committee following a proposal by the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC). Eight teams will compete in each of the two disciplines in Chengdu, China, with 15 players on the roster, for a total of 240 softball athletes.



WBSC Europe Softball Commission:

WBSC Europe Softball Commission is working mainly online – [Minutes](#) – and solving all items regarding all European competitions under WBSC Europe jurisdiction. As we have finally our international season without health restrictions, we are seeing the progress of interests to play internationally, but also some troubles to host all events. We would like to find out the reasons of current situation and we distributed survey with specific questions to specific NFs based on their activities at European fields. The aim is to have the answers from the clubs and from the Federations. We will evaluate whole situation after the season including deep discussion about structure of big competitions, how these are sustainable. Feel free to send me any of your somments to this topic to have complete picture as much as possible.

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

Best regards,



Gabriel Waage
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