

WBSC Europe VP Softball Report

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TO: Softball Europe National Federations

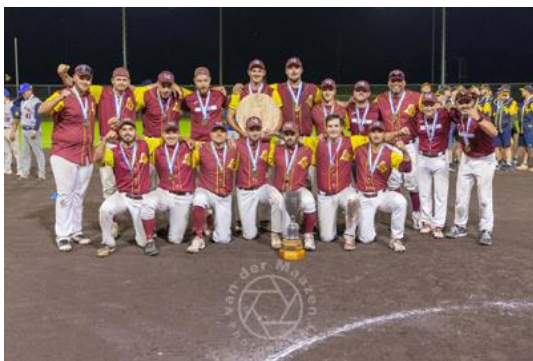
Dear friends,

The 2023 season has ended and we are preparing the 2024 season. The most important news of course is the [IOC's decision about the sports at the LA 2028 program](#), which I believe all of you have read. 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 Cups 2023:

The month of August is usually the month for our Fastpitch Cups. This year we also had the Slowpitch Cup and at the end of October is reserved for the MASTERS.

Olympia Haarlem (NED) triumphed for the second consecutive time at the [Women's Softball European Premier Cup](#), after beating the home team Saronno (ITA) during the gold medal game. Another Dutch Clubs triumph occurred at the [Women's Softball European Cup Winners Cup A](#) as **Sparks Haarlem (NED)** won the title, and the **Mix (GBR)** claimed Gold at [Women's Softball European Cup](#) in Zagreb and have the right to play in WSEPC 2024. **Roef! (NED)** celebrated their triumph at the [Women's Softball Cup Winners Cup B](#), and Austria moving up to the Cup Winners Cup A 2024.



The main European Tournament which is considered a top powerhouse in men's Fastpitch was the Men's European Super Cup held in Haarlem. The Czech Champion, **Locos Břeclav** made history by taking the gold at the [Men's Softball European Super Cup](#) for the first time in history. Another Czech team, **Spectrum Praha** took the gold in the [Men's Softball Europe Cup](#).

The [Coed Slowpitch European Super Cup 2023](#) was held from July 8 to August 12, in Sofia, Bulgaria. In the final game, **H20 (GBR)** outplayed **Eastpro** to clinch the gold medal with a score of 10-8. The game was held at the Oktomvri ballpark in Sofia.

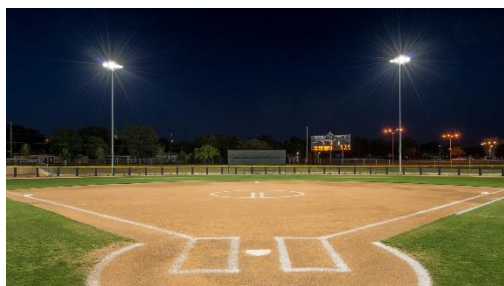
Czech teams dominated also at the European Masters Cups in Sant Boi and Viladecans this year. **Čechie Carrots** clinched back-to-back titles in [Women's Softball European Masters Cup](#) and **Prague United** claimed Victory in [Men's Softball European Masters Cup](#).

2023 European Softball Ranking:

The 2023 [European Softball Rankings](#) have been officially released by the WBSC Europe Softball Commission, providing an overview of the current standings in women's softball, men's softball, and slowpitch. The rankings are derived from the outcomes of the two most recent championships in the senior and junior categories – see [here](#).

Host cities of 2024 – 2027 European softball events:

The European softball community is gearing up for an action-packed year in 2024 with various tournaments and championships set to unfold across different locations. WBSC Europe has revealed the allocation of events for the upcoming seasons following the call for bids – see [Calendar 2024 – 2027](#).



Five events are still not allocated, but let me inform you about the progress. **The Women's European Championship 2024**, our pinnacle event, will be allocated soon. We are in the final stages of discussing the details with KNBSB, that this event will be held in Utrecht, the Netherlands in the first week of September. Also we would like to allocate the MASTERS to Sant Boi and Viladecans for the next three years based on the same principle as EMRYT.

Bids for hosting vacant events are open until **February 9, 2024**.

The bidding form can be found [here](#). If no host is secured by the deadline, these events may face cancellation, leaving a void in the softball calendar for the year.

The entries for European Softball Competitions are now open:

WBSC Europe opened the registration process for teams taking part in the 2024 Softball European Championships and the Softball European Cups.

The registration process for teams eligible for the 2024 Softball European Championships and the Softball European Cups is open. The deadline for National Federations to enter teams is December 31st, 2023. The forms are available for the National Federations to download at WBSC Europe websites: [link to download the form for the European Championships](#) and [link to download the form for the European Cups](#). For knowledge of the spot of the competitions, mainly in Women's Cups, please use [2024 Official Standing](#).

**Development projects in Europe:**

As Petra Čizmić Pokrajac has been appointed as [the Chair of the Development Commission](#) for WBSC Europe, our development programs have gained ground in several areas. EMRYT returned in our calendar with full power, which is great news. The 10th European Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy unfolded in the town of Collecchio, Italy, from August 16th to August 19th, 2023. This annual event celebrated the development of softball in Europe with 13 youth teams from 8 countries in [EMRYT Division Sport](#) and [EMRYT Division Future](#).



Another similar event added to our calendar was the – [Prague International Softball Cup](#). The first weekend of September was full of youth softball at the SK Joudrs Prague and SaBaT Prague venues. 17 teams representing 5 countries met at the Prague International Softball Cup U13: Czech Republic, Croatia, Italy, Germany, and Austria.

The 8th [Central Europe Softball Women's Euroleague](#) had 7 teams from 3 countries. A similar concept of regional tournaments is planned also for other parts of Europe as additional projects between national and European competitions.

The new system of development funding has been provided by the WBSC to the Continental Confederations. Apart of WBSC Europe development projects we have asked National Federations for development requests for support. In total 15 requests were received and 9 of them will be supported. I would like to congratulate the WBSC Europe Development Commission for a great job.

"Getting better together" – EBSCA training camp:

From October 18th to 22nd, the Dutch town of Diessen transformed into a hub of baseball and softball excellence as the EBSCA Training Camp unfolded. Drawing over 100 players and coaches from various corners of Europe, the [EBSCA Training Camp 2023](#) proved to be an international melting pot of talent, with participants from Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom. While the Israeli contingent had registered interest, the circumstances prevented their participation. 30 coaches, 5 specializing in baseball and 25 in softball, and 74 players - 8 in baseball and 66 in softball — whose average age stood at 14.5 years, participated in the EBSCA Training Camp 2023.



Florian Lautenschläger appointed as WBSC Europe Director of Softball Umpires:



Florian Lautenschläger has been appointed as the new [Director of Softball Umpires](#) for the World Baseball Softball Confederation Europe. Former WBSC Europe Director of Softball Umpires Nacho Pardo will remain involved in the working group but stepped down as he assumed the role of WBSC Director of Softball Umpires.

Florian already introduced his plan about development of umpires 2024, which will be delivered to NFs at the Congress, where Florian will be present.

The [WBSC Umpire Certification Seminar](#) was held from August 17th to 24th during the Women's Softball European Premier Cup. The Seminar saw the successful certification of seven new umpires, now eligible for World Championship nominations.

WBSC Europe Softball Commission Meeting:

WBSC Europe Softball Commission had their post season meeting in Antwerp on November 4. This meeting evaluated the 2023 season and based on reports and recommendations, we made some decisions to improve our competitions. WBSC Europe Softball Commission also evaluated the aspects of streaming and also discussed results of a survey about the relationship of National Federations and Clubs to WBSC Europe Softball Competitions. Finally we looked over the bids we received for Softball Competitions 2024 – 2027. [The Minutes](#) provides more details and we are preparing the outcomes to present at the Congress in February 2024.

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

Best regards,



Gabriel Waage
WBSC Europe Vice-President Softball