ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF THE BRITISH SOFTBALL FEDERATION

This is the official Notification and Information Pack for the
2020 British Softball Federation Annual General Meeting, including the annual
League Heads Forum plus additional workshop sessions.

Venue:
The Hough End Centre
Mauldeth Road West
Chorlton
Manchester M21 7SX
http://www.gmpsportsclub.com/default.aspx

For conference parking please use the following postcode in your SatNav: M21 7TL.

Date:
Saturday 29 February 2020
10.00 am-4.00 pm

Map Reference:
https://www.google.co.uk/maps/place/Manchester+M21+7SX/@53.4377756,-2.2566506,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x487bb20b919abd19:0xdc1a7c93556eeb21!8m2!3d53.4378414!4d-2.255932
**Schedule:**

10.00-11.45  Softball League Heads Forum  
11.45-12.00  Tea/coffee break  
12.00-13.00  Separate workshop sessions on Changes to NSL Rules and Play, Health and Safety/Safeguarding and Inclusive Rules.  
13.00-13.45  LUNCH  
13.45-14.00  AGM Registration  
14.00-15.00  AGM Session 1  
15.00-15.15  Tea/coffee break  
15.15-16.00  AGM Session 2  

**Parking:**
See SatNav reference for parking above, although parking is also available in the car park for the Hough End Centre itself.

**Directions by Car:**
From the South, come into Manchester on the A5103 (Princess Road) and turn left at Mauldeth Road West. The parking area and venue will be on your left.

**Directions by Public Transport:**
The nearest train stations are the Light Rail/Metrolink stations at Withington or Barlow Moor Road. Manchester Piccadilly is 10-15 minutes by taxi.

**Food and Drink Options:**
Sandwiches and paninis may be available at the AGM venue, but it might be advisable to bring a packed lunch or to go out for food during the lunch break. Tea and coffee will be available during breaks during morning and afternoon sessions and drinks can be purchased from the bar.
AGM ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance at the BSF AGM is linked to participation in National Championships. Attendance is now required by:

- All NSL 1 and NSL 2 teams.
- All slowpitch softball leagues that wish to send teams to Nationals at any level.
- All 2019 league divisional winners that wish to take up the place they have earned in the Co-ed Slowpitch League Nationals in 2020 at the appropriate grade.
- All teams that won their grade (Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze) at the 2019 Co-ed Slowpitch League Nationals if they wish to be guaranteed a place in the 2020 Nationals as defending champions.

Please note that, in general, a league representative cannot also represent a team at the AGM. However, a League Head who is a genuine registered playing member of a team from that league that has won a place in the 2020 BSF Co-ed Slowpitch League Nationals can represent both the league and that team. But such a person will only have one vote, not two.

If you are representing both your league and team at the AGM, as in the paragraph above, please let the BSF know beforehand (email Competitions Officer Liz Graham on: liz@softball.org.uk).
# BSF AGM 2020: AGENDA

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REPORT FROM THE 2019 BSF AGM

The British Softball Federation’s 2019 AGM packed a lot of discussion and activity into a few short hours on Saturday 23 February at the Police Sports Club in Bushey, Hertfordshire, and still managed to finish early.

The day included the annual meeting of the BSF League Heads Forum (postponed from November 2018), a Skype webinar on concussion in softball by a leading Canadian physical therapist, a session by BaseballSoftballUK CEO John Boyd on the upcoming London Series and a new slowpitch coaching initiative, the formal AGM itself and then the presentation of BSF awards for the 2018 season.

Just under 50 people attended the afternoon AGM (and most of those were present for the concussion webinar that preceded it), while 22 people from leagues around the country were present for the morning’s League Heads Forum.

The fact that some issues were discussed during the League Heads Forum undoubtedly saved time when these issues were raised again at the AGM, and the BSF Executive will consider – and will survey League Heads – on whether the two meetings should be held together in future.

LEAGUE HEADS FORUM

As always, the League Heads Forum was an opportunity for constructive discussion between Slowpitch League Heads and members of the BSF Executive, and a number of topics were covered.

Affiliation Fees

There were no major concerns with the new fee structure for affiliated teams, which, as previously announced on the BSF website, has been simplified for 2019, with 10 fee categories condensed to four. Some fees have gone up, others down and some have stayed the same, but the overall effect will be to produce slightly more revenue. The full fee schedule can be seen here: http://www.britishsoftball.org/news/view/bsf-sets-out-new-affiliation-fees-proposal1.

Questions raised were around the grandfathering of fees for teams currently in the former four-year progression to full fees, and the large jump from Years 2 to 3 for new teams in the new fee structure. However, it was generally agreed that it made sense to hold fees down for the first couple of years while teams get established.

There were, however, questions about how the money from affiliation fees is spent.

How is the BSF’s income spent?

The general answer to this question is in the Accounts and Budget presented on Page 24 in the 2019 AGM Pack: http://www.britishsoftball.org/uploads/_documents/Files/2019%20BSF%20AGM%20Pack1.pdf. However, Jenny Fromer unpicked some of these figures further, especially the amount spent to support
national teams, and there was a request from the meeting for figures showing the total cost of national team attendance at ESF or WBSC competitions compared to what the BSF puts in. These figures will be circulated to League Heads shortly.

There was a clarification that Civil Liability Insurance is provided through team fees while Accident and Injury insurance remains an optional extra. However, the BSF has engaged new insurers this year, and accident and injury cover for leagues that opt in will be cheaper than in the past but with better coverage.

**NSL National Championships**

Lesley Morisetti told the meeting that the Nationals for NSL 1 and NSL 2 will be run as in 2018, with one-up, one-down between the divisions and two teams dropped from the bottom of NSL 2 based on league season results.

However, attempts to get NSL 3 league play off the ground for this season, while initially looking promising, have been scuppered by a number of teams withdrawing. So NSL 3 play will again be via a 12-team National Championship tournament to be played in Manchester on the weekend of 31 August-1 September, with the two finalists being promoted to NSL 2 for 2020.

Discussion suggested that the problem with NSL 3 league play may have been the need for teams to commit to additional tournaments beyond those they normally play, and the question was raised as to whether NSL 3 league games could be staged, like NSL 1 and NSL 2, at Diamond tournaments. The BSF will raise this with Diamond Series organisers.

Meanwhile, there is now another year to work out the best way to run NSL 3 league play and to get commitment from teams.

**League National Championships**

This year, the League Nationals will be open to all qualified teams, and the question of whether there will be a Platinum Division along with Gold, Silver and Bronze will be decided based on entries. The BSF plans to webstream final games from the League Nationals for the first time.

There was some discussion about how strong teams could be stopped from winding up in an unsuitable division on Day 2 and winning it, but the consensus was that round-robin play on Day 1 usually put teams in appropriate divisions for Sunday.

There was a suggestion that the BSF should survey teams that qualify for the League Nationals but don’t attend to find out why.

Another suggestion was that the League Nationals should alternate between Farnham Park and a venue in the Midlands or the North to distribute travel burdens more fairly.

**Single-Sex Nationals**

This year, Fiona Kielthy will be organizing the Single-Sex Nationals (as well as the League Nationals), leaving Liz Graham to concentrate on running the NSL and NSL Nationals as well as her role as BSF Membership Officer. The Single-Sex Nationals will again be in Birmingham, and half of the eight diamonds will be fenced, with men’s and women’s teams scheduled equally on these fields.
A question was raised about whether US Air Force men’s teams should still be allowed to enter the tournament, as they tend to overwhelm our domestic teams and may put some teams off entering. The Executive will consider this and reach a decision shortly.

**BSF Website upgrade**

At last year’s AGM, Jenny Fromer had said that there would be a new look to the BSF website for the 2019 season, but this will not be the case.

Work on upgrading the website is under way, but it will be a more complicated project than first thought, in part because the BSF website shares a platform with the BSUK site, and the two sites are several versions behind on this platform. The BSF site will be cloned to see what happens when the latest version of the platform is installed, but if this is successful, then visual changes to the site should be able to follow quickly.

**Coaching**

Over the past few years, money has been ring-fenced by the BSF to spend on slowpitch coaching projects but has rarely been spent. So the meeting was asked what kinds of coaching projects players might want. Answers included:

- Masterclass player clinic sessions run in conjunction with local leagues for up to 20 players paying a small fee.
- Indoor taster sessions with good coaches as a recruitment tool.
- More BSUK three-hour modular courses offered to leagues (which can apply for BSF Development grants to help support the cost).

Mike Jennings pointed out that the BSF’s initiative for B and C-grade teams, where a team receives a day’s coaching and then game management support at a subsequent tournament or league game was still on offer, paid for by the BSF, even though take-up over the last few years has been thin.

**BSF Development Grants**

Take-up of BSF Development Grants has been less than expected in recent years, which is why the BSF has put less money in this particular pot in this year’s budget. These grants, which are generally capped at £250 but can be more, are open to leagues, clubs, teams and occasionally individuals, and are generally given for projects involving new or existing youth programmes, coaching or umpire development and clinics or initiatives to recruit new teams and players -- although other types of projects, including facility enhancement, can be considered.

Projects most likely to receive grant awards will be those with specified and measurable outcomes, clear plans for achieving them and detailed costings -- and where the BSF is not the sole source of funding.

Suggestions from League Heads were that the lack of take-up may sometimes be because there is no one to drive a project through, and because there was a perception that the grants were largely to do with youth initiatives. It was also suggested that there should be better coordination between the BSF and BaseballSoftballUK about what kinds of development support could be made available.
The BSF will revise the Development Grant application form to make criteria clearer, and will make the form more readily available, working closely with leagues.

Points from the BASU AGM

The 2019 BASU AGM ([http://www.britishsoftball.org/news/view/well-attended-basu-agm-reflects-on-another-successful-year](http://www.britishsoftball.org/news/view/well-attended-basu-agm-reflects-on-another-successful-year)) was held on 9 February in Bristol, and a number of points emerged that will be of interest to League Heads and tournament organisers:

- BASU believes that qualified First Aid is essential at tournaments, and if no First Aider is present the BASU Crew Chief can stand down the umpires. First Aid can be provided by a player, but only if First Aid is their priority during the tournament.

- BASU would like a statement included in all Tournament Packs about players who may be unsafe to play because of alcohol or drugs. Umpires will first warn, then eject any player who they think may be a danger to themselves or others.

- BASU has asked the BSF to only include sanctioned tournaments – tournaments that meet BSF criteria with regard to safety and other provisions – in the Events listing on the BSF website. However, BASU umpires can be engaged to umpire at unsanctioned tournaments and can wear BASU uniform when doing so to maintain authority.

BASU Training Officer Chris Moon posed a question to the meeting: how can BASU help leagues to develop and maintain umpires – especially when fewer leagues seem to be hosting courses?

Indoor Softball

More and more Indoor tournaments are being held around the country, with very different rules. Neena Patel from the Windsor and Maidenhead League wanted to know if the BSF could harmonise the rules, while recognising that they are often venue-dependent.

The BSF will look at the possibility of doing this, perhaps on an Indoor Facebook page as well as posting on the BSF website.

CONCUSSION WEBINAR

Following the League Heads Forum and then a lunch break, the formal BSF AGM was preceded by an hour-long webinar on concussion in softball presented via Skype from Canada by Jessica Mancini, a former high-level college softball player who holds an MSc in Physical Therapy and treats outpatients with orthopaedic problems in the Toronto area as well as continuing to coach softball and promote education on concussion management.

The webinar was a condensed version of a session that Jessica had delivered to GB National Team staff members at a meeting organised by the GB Management Committee (GBMC) late in 2018.

Concussion has become an increasingly important topic in sport, and while it may be less of a problem in softball than in so-called contact sports such as rugby, American football, ice hockey and others,
Concussions can still occur in fastpitch or slowpitch softball and it’s useful for people to understand the causes, symptoms and treatment.

Jessica’s presentation covered three main topics:

- What is concussion and how can it occur?
- How is concussion identified?
- Treatment and return-to-play protocols.

One of the key points that Jessica made is that while concussion is usually associated with blows to the head, it frequently occurs when force or impact is applied to other parts of the body and results in recoil or whiplash effects to the head and neck.

Whenever a concussion is suspected after an incident on the field, Jessica said, the player involved should be removed from the game for an initial assessment. Even if that proves negative and the player returns to the field, they should be monitored closely for the rest of the game as the onset of symptoms can sometimes be delayed.

Following discussion of the different ways in which symptoms can manifest and the different body systems that can be affected, Jessica described a widely-used six-step process for return to play once a concussion has been medically confirmed.

Anyone interested in more detail can contact the BSF (info@britishsoftball.org), which can provide the slides from Jessica’s presentation.

The BSF Executive will survey those who attended the AGM to see if this kind of session as part of the AGM Day was regarded as useful.

**Matters Arising**

The formal AGM session was opened by BSF President Jenny Fromer, who welcomed those in attendance and then referenced a number of “matters arising” from the 2018 AGM held a year earlier in Manchester. These included:

- A decision by the Executive to hold new BSF Hall of Fame inductions every three years rather than every other year. This will create more time to identify appropriate candidates and will also mean that Hall of Fame inductions will alternate between AGMs held in the North and the South.

- At the 2018 AGM, Jenny had reported that the possibility of a merger between the BSF, the BBF and the BSUK had receded due to the BBF’s unwillingness to proceed with the idea, even though the Boards of all three organisations had approved it. Now, Jenny reported, the prospect of the merger happening was even more remote, though an upcoming Strategic Review by BSUK might change the landscape.

- Over several years before 2018, the BSF had created plans to invest money in various enhancements to the sport, but had failed to carry them out, resulting in annual operating surpluses. In 2018, however, as Jenny had set out in her President’s Report in the AGM Pack, the BSF had spent most (though not all) of the money it intended to spend, much of it on enhancing National Championships, including webstreaming.
• At the 2018 AGM and subsequently, the BSF had put out calls for volunteers to help with various roles and projects because of a lack of capacity among a small volunteer Executive Board. That call had been partially answered, Jenny said, with capable people coming forward to help with running the League and Single-Sex Nationals, BSF website re-development, the Softball World Series and liaison with BSUK over the development of softball in universities.

• The post of National Teams Officer (and Chair of the GB Management Committee) had remained vacant during 2018 for lack of a candidate, but Jenny told the meeting that Alexis Markham-Hill had volunteered to stand for the position and so the post would be filled at the conclusion of the AGM.

• Jenny also referenced the fact that Jo Malisani, whose position as a Fastpitch Development Manager was jointly financed by the BSF and BaseballSoftballUK, had resigned her position in December after almost three years in post, though she remains active as a coach and volunteer with GB Softball. The intention is to re-fill the position, but not until the middle of 2019.

• Finally, Jenny suggested to the meeting that as all candidates for the BSF Executive were unopposed, there was probably no need for a formal voting process, and the members agreed by a show of hands.

At this point, before completing the rest of the AGM agenda, Jenny invited BaseballSoftballUK CEO John Boyd to give a presentation.

BASEBALLSOFTBALLUK SESSION

John began by briefly covering the following topics:

• The BSF and BBF have delegated a number of responsibilities to BSUK, mainly to do with development, and have assigned to BSUK the right to represent the sports to Sport England, UK Sport and the British Olympic Association. If BSF and BBF members are in doubt as to whether to go to BSUK or to their Federation over a particular matter, they can ask by contacting their Federation or by emailing info@bsuk.com.

• John noted the unfortunate decision, announced on 21 February, that baseball and softball will not be retained on the Olympic programme for Paris in 2024, though the sports are likely to be returned when the Games are held in Los Angeles in 2028. This means that many talented athletes will lose the chance to represent their country on the Olympic stage in 2024 and gives an even sharper focus to the quest by the GB Women’s Fastpitch Team and the GB Baseball Team to qualify for Tokyo later this year.

• John offered an invitation to all of those at the AGM, most of whom are team captains and/or members of league committees, to sign up to receive The Clubhouse, an e-newsletter published every two months by BSUK and designed for club and league administrators. People can sign up to receive The Clubhouse and other BSUK publications here: https://baseballsoftballuk.us2.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=bf88013c30f61369b03d355fe&id=205d96a200.

The main part of John Boyd’s presentation centered on two topics: the potential benefits for baseball and softball in the UK from the upcoming ‘London Series’, the games between the New York Yankees and
Boston Red Sox scheduled for 29-30 June at the London Stadium; and a new coaching venture aimed at slowpitch players: a BSUK Slowpitch Softball Academy.

The London Series

The London Series, John told the meeting, could potentially have a bigger impact on baseball and softball in the UK than the Olympics – but only if Major League Baseball ensures that there is a legacy from the event and a connection to the local playing community.

BSUK is working with Major League Baseball on a legacy plan that could reach around 14,000 people, mainly in East London. The key elements would include the creation of new baseball and fastpitch softball Little Leagues, schools programmes, a new corporate softball league and a tie-in with the Invictus Games.

In addition, there are plans for a new LGBT softball event in London, an event at Walton-on-Thames where the first recorded instance of baseball took place in the 18th century, and baseball and softball youth camps.

There will be a call for volunteers from the local playing community to help at the London Series, and BSUK is also planning to run MLB-themed slowpitch tournaments during the early part of the season and a watch party for the London Series games at Farnham Park. Meanwhile, MLB will be hosting Fan Engagement events at the Truman Brewery in Brick Lane from 27-30 June.

Slowpitch Academy

Plans by BaseballSoftballUK to create a Slowpitch Softball Academy this year were unveiled for the first time at the AGM.

Designed for slowpitch players who want to get better, the Slowpitch Academy will feature expert coaching to prepare players for game play, using the same tools and methods as the existing baseball and fastpitch Academies.

The first Slowpitch Academy session will be on 27 April in the South East region, with further dates to be announced, including sessions in Bristol and Manchester. There will be no age restrictions, but John Boyd stressed that the Slowpitch Academy is aimed primarily at adults. There will be a cost – to be determined – to attend Slowpitch Academy sessions, as there is for the baseball and fastpitch Academies. More details will be published soon.

Finally, John asked the meeting for suggestions on what high-level slowpitch players would most want from coaching aimed specifically at them, and was given two answers:

- More repetitions on dirt fields.
- Coaching on correct techniques in all aspects of the sport.

THE AGM

When the AGM resumed, Jenny Fromer summarised a key element in her President’s Report: that the BSF Executive, as a volunteer Board, had serious capacity issues in accomplishing everything it needed and
wanted to do, and was planning to buy in a small amount of administrative support in 2019 as a first step towards a future goal of more extensive paid administration.

Bob Fromer, who is reducing his role at BaseballSoftballUK from April, had been asked to take on this admin role for the BSF, and the result should be better and more efficient communication and better monitoring of BSF programmes and initiatives.

Jenny also told the meeting that while she had initially intended to serve (if elected) for three two-year terms, the limit allowed by the BSF Constitution, the second term that she was now starting would be her last due to the pressure of balancing the role with a full-time job, and succession planning will begin shortly.

Jenny then summarised for those at the AGM the topics that had been covered earlier at the League Heads Forum session, after which the rest of the AGM was completed quickly.

**Accounts and Budget**

The 2017-18 accounts and the 2018-19 budget were approved by the meeting. Having achieved an overspend of £17,700 in 2017-18, about £6000 less than planned, the BSF is planning another overspend against income of around £10,700 in 2018-19, which will still leave reserves in a healthy position.

This overspend will come mainly on additional webstreaming (from the League Nationals as well as the NSL Nationals) and the paid admin support mentioned above.

**Umpiring**

Chris Moon stressed that BASU was always looking for new tournament umpires (42% of all tournament games called by BASU last year were by just 10 umpires). BASU will be sending a recruitment flyer to leagues.

Chris also announced a change in BASU courses. The standard two-day course will still be the way that umpires get qualified, but after an umpire has sat this course on three occasions, subsequent re-qualification will be via a one-day course that will focus on scenarios rather than rules. The hope is that leagues will also be interested in this course and will run two-day and one-day courses in alternate years.

In answer to a question, Chris told the meeting that a stand-alone Slowpitch Rulebook is available to download from the World Baseball Softball Confederation website, and the BSF might consider binding it and offering the Rulebook for sale.

**LGBT Panel**

Luis Arrevillagas, who chairs BaseballSoftballUK’s LGBT Panel, was unable to attend the meeting, but Jenny Fromer read a statement from Luis on the Panel’s work and progress.

**Motions and Proposals**

No motions or proposals were submitted to the AGM either by members or by the BSF Executive.
Elections

As noted above, there was no formal voting process for candidates standing for the BSF Executive, as all were unopposed. All of the following were elected for two-year terms except as noted below, with the first four Officers also serving as Directors of BSF Ltd:

President: Jenny Fromer
Treasurer: Laura Burkhardt
Competitions Officer: Liz Graham
National Teams Officer: Alexis Markham-Hill

General Officer/Farnham Park Liaison: Steve Getraer
General Officer/Finance: Mike Jennings
General Officer/National Championship Support: Lesley Morisetti
General Officer/National Teams Support: Stella Ackrell
General Officer/National Teams and GBMC Support: Jana McCaskill*

* Jana is serving the second year of a two-year term in 2018-19 and was not up for election.

The position of General Officer/Coaching remains vacant, and anyone interested should contact the BSF via info@britishsoftball.org.

Any Other Business

Mike Jennings, who serves as the European Softball Federation’s Technical Commissioner, told the meeting that the World Baseball Softball Confederation now has bat regulations that are slightly different from the ESF’s, and this could come into play for GB Slowpitch Team players in 2020 when the WBSC will hopefully be holding a Slowpitch World Cup for national teams. Any such players planning to buy new bats would be advised to check that they are WBSC-approved.

BSF ANNUAL AWARDS

At the end of the AGM, the BSF’s annual awards for 2018 were presented. Each year, awards are made in categories where nominations have been received, and this time they went to the following people:

The Glover Cup for long-term service to softball was shared by Liam Morrison and David Morris.

Liam Morrison has tirelessly recruited and encouraged new players to come to the Softball 101 beginner sessions that he runs as the Development Officer for the Greater London Softball Mixed League, as well as contributing time and effort to finding coaches, equipment and resources for these sessions. He has also committed a significant amount of his time, not just to running the sessions, but to following up with the new teams that have emerged from them and maintaining a network of teams and coaches who all support each other.

David Morris volunteers across an increasing number of areas. He manages the Chichester Falcons Softball Club in the Solent League, a club that has founded a junior fastpitch section that David also runs, and he organises an annual fastpitch tournament in Chichester which has grown in scope year on year. In addition,
David serves on the Great Britain Fastpitch League Committee and manages the GBFL website. In 2018 he was a key volunteer at the successful London Cup international fastpitch tournament. Locally, David also delivers softball to people with disabilities in coordination with local community services. All in all, he has quietly made an enormous contribution to the softball landscape and has genuinely increased opportunities to participate in the sport.

The President’s Club Award to a club or team that has achieved significant success in terms of development and/or results went to the London Raiders Softball Club.

The London Raiders have been going strong for over 20 years, growing from a single team to a club that, at one point, fielded six teams in two London leagues. At its heart, the club has been a home for players identifying as LGBT to come together over softball and has since grown to welcome people who identify as non-binary and straight. The club has participated in most London Pride marches and sent teams to the Gay Games around the world, including those in Sydney in 2002 and Montreal in 2006. Today, five Raiders’ teams compete in the GLSML’s Minor and Major divisions.

The Raiders have also taken an active role in driving equality in softball through participation on BaseballSoftballUK’s LGBT Advisory Panel, formed in 2017, one of whose key outputs was launching inclusive playing guidelines in 2018.

With a strong ethos on developing new players, creating a year-round social environment and championing tolerance and acceptance at all times, the London Raiders are a worthy recipient of this year’s BSF President’s Club Award.

The League Glover Cup, awarded for significant innovation or development by a BSF league, was given to the Greater London Softball Mixed League (GLSML).

With 53 teams across seven divisions and with home fields across the city, the Greater London Softball Mixed League is one of the flagship co-ed softball leagues in the UK. Founded in or around 1982, the GLSML is not only one of the longest-running leagues in the country but has championed and implemented innovative ideas as the sport has evolved. Run by a representative committee of 15 volunteer officers (many of whom run their own teams), the league has continued to grow and progress in terms of both membership and social responsibility.

In addition to its 14-game league schedule, the GLSML organises two one-day tournaments during the season for league teams: the Firstball (usually in May or June) and the Lastball (usually in August). Unlike many leagues that play their games at a centralised location every week, the GLSML organises a whole host of events throughout the season to increase inclusion, player and umpire development and social opportunities. Along with organising post-tourney and post-season parties, other events include their New Players Day aimed at connecting new and experienced players to teams in need, the long-running GLSML All-Star Day that features nominated players for a North v South series of games, numerous BASU umpire training courses, and the popular ‘Softball 101’ development nights where beginners can learn to play the game in a safe and confidence-building environment.

Under the leadership of Kat Macann for the past four years, the GLSML has been one of the most engaged leagues in the country across the full spectrum of the sport and aims to continue developing the league for the inclusion and enjoyment of its members.
The Tournament of the Year award went to a tournament that made its debut in 2018, the Codebreakers Cup, organised and run by the Milton Keynes Softball League.

The Radcliffe School in Milton Keynes was the venue for the first-ever Codebreakers Cup in 2018.

Three Milton Keynes teams were joined by nine others from around the country to compete for the Colossus Trophy. The tournament had a strong Bletchley Park theme, with pitches named ‘Station X’, ‘BP’ and ‘Room 47,’ all codenames for the nearby home of the World War II codebreakers at Bletchley Park, and players and spectators were entertained by classic wartime music as teams arrived.

Teams were split into three groups to compete for the Colossus Trophy, and those that didn’t qualify played for the Bombe and Enigma titles. Everything was co-ordinated from Hut 14 and a special codebreaking quiz proved popular as teams tried to emulate local hero Alan Turing. As well as a trophy, the winning team took home a keg of local Colossus craft ale. All fields were fully-fenced and a Facebook event ran throughout the day with up-to-date results.

This was the first-ever tournament held by a league in Milton Keynes, and with places filled in under a week, teams keen to enter the 2019 version, scheduled for 28 September, should move fast. Well done to the Milton Keynes Softball League for adding an innovative tournament to the calendar.

The Youth Team of the Year award went to the GB Under-13 Girls’ Fastpitch Team.

Under Head Coach Jodie Rushin and Manager Julie Spittle plus Assistant Coaches Nadya Pavlova and Eylsee Laporte, the GB Under-13 Girls played at the ESF’s annual Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy competition in Italy as the London Cubs and had their best-ever result since this competition began in 2012.

Finishing fifth in the much tougher Sport Division (previously the team had competed in the Futures Division) was an impressive achievement. Wins over teams from Russia, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands showed the progress that the GB Under-13 programme has made and is a tribute to hard work and enthusiasm and the bond between players and staff.

The Betsy Holden Award for outstanding achievement in softball organization or development by a young person was given to Jessica Vernon.

Jess Vernon has been playing baseball and softball (slowpitch and fastpitch) for only a short time: her first softball tournament was in October 2015 and she played baseball and fastpitch for the first time in 2016.

However, she quickly demonstrated a desire to use her former experience as a cheerleading coach in her new sports, and for two seasons has assisted with practices, coaching both the adult softball and baseball teams at Bracknell Baseball and Softball Club. She has also challenged herself as a player and learned a lot as a coach by signing up to the High Performance Academy, playing as much as she can and attending the BSUK Coach Summit in both 2018 and 2019.

In 2018, Jess successfully re-established a youth programme at the club, encouraging volunteers to visit schools and school fayres with her for taster sessions and to assist with coaching at the sessions she ran at the club for young players. She also arranged for players to travel to the BSUK youth event at the London Cup in July. Jess was also effectively the adult softball team’s head coach, planning and running sessions almost every week, and she also delivered practice sessions for the club’s baseball squad.
In short, Jess has demonstrated a high level of commitment to her chosen sports and her own personal development as a coach.

Coaching Awards

Softball coaching awards used to be part of the BSF’s annual awards presentation, but are now made at the BaseballSoftballUK Coach Summit in January.

Coaching awards made at the 2019 Coach Summit to members of the softball community were:

- **Young Coach of the Year**: Dan Patterson
- **Softball Youth Coach of the Year**: Alexis Markham-Hill
- **Softball Adult Coach of the Year**: Ryan Turtill
- **Services to Coaching**: Joss Thompson
- **Volunteer of the Year**: Kim Hannessen

Details on achievements by these award winners (and others who were nominated for the awards) can be found here: [http://www.baseballsoftballuk.com/news/view/candidates-shortlisted-for-2019-bsuk-coach-awards](http://www.baseballsoftballuk.com/news/view/candidates-shortlisted-for-2019-bsuk-coach-awards).
2019 was a rollercoaster of a year – the peaks were high and the troughs were extremely low.

Strangely perhaps, the pinnacle for me, on reflection, was baseball: the MLB London Series. Sure, as an ardent Yankees fan, this ticked a lot of personal boxes: Yankees players, past and present, up close and personal; two more games in the win column; and the spectacle of professional baseball a few tube stops away. But I call it the pinnacle in the context of ‘speaking’ to the softball membership. This was a huge event for our community and we are a group that turned out in massive numbers and treated it as a shared experience. Look back at Facebook and Twitter from June 2019: it was wall-to-wall London Series.

From a BSF point of view, I am proud that we worked hard to ensure that softball was an equal beneficiary of the inevitable spoils. Our players were included in the camps, the elite coaching opportunities and the giveaway tickets. We provided the lion’s share of the volunteers for Play Ball! Park and for other activities. And our GB players were also given critical on-field and clubhouse roles for the event. An absolute highlight for me was watching GB Under-22 player Laura Hirai throwing soft-toss with Yankee left fielder Brett Gardner each time the Yankees took the field.

It was only around a month later that I got to experience another peak first-hand when I travelled to the Netherlands to watch the GB Women compete in the Europe-Africa Qualifier for the 2020 Olympic Games. Going in to the tournament, we knew we were not the favourite to advance and that it was a one-shot deal in that only one team would be headed to Tokyo. There was tireless work behind the scenes to access resource to support the team, and grants were secured from both UK Sport and the World Baseball Softball Confederation. Added to this were two generous private donations which meant that we had given the team the best possible chance for success.

What followed was an incredible five days in Utrecht where the temperatures regularly soared to over 100 degrees Fahrenheit and the GB Women progressed unbeaten through the tournament, including notable victories against the Czech Republic and especially the Netherlands. They went on to meet Italy, the only other unbeaten team, in the final. Back home, the following and support was impressive and so it was a collective heartbreak when Italy emerged as the team that would be going to Japan. Added to this was the knowledge that baseball/softball would not be on the programme for the Paris Olympics in 2024. None were more devastated than the GB Women’s Team players and staff, and it has been a difficult off-season for them figuring out if they are ready to pick themselves up and start again with a more distant 2028 goal to chase.

The international scene was the backdrop for another low point in the year when, a few days prior to the European Under-16 Women’s Championship, the GB Team was forced to withdraw due to a lack of players, the result of injuries, passport issues and some late player withdrawals. This news was again most acutely devastating for the players, parents and staff who had been working towards the tournament. But the ramifications for the programme are significant as GB is barred from participating in this year’s European Championship, now for an Under-15 age group, which affects a number of talented young athletes.

Back home, a high point was the response to the BSF’s requests for volunteers to help with our workload, and I particularly want to thank Fiona Kielthy, who came forward to run the Single-Sex and League Nationals and who did so with in her usual high level of organisation and dedication. Thanks also to Lucas Kelly, who assisted in delivering the 2019 World Series. The converse of this is a theme that grows year on
year at the national level -- of a growing workload and fewer bodies -- and the reality that the BSF is more in need of help than ever.

With every positive development, from being an integral part of the MLB London Series to successfully accessing UK Sport funding, comes a workload that is more and more difficult for a handful of volunteers to manage. Many of the items discussed at BSF meetings, such as our bidding to host European competitions or bringing back the London Cup, lead inevitably to a larger question even than how we might pay for this. The question is always who has the capacity to do the work. The reality is that without more people actively engaged at the national level, there are things that we should do, or would like to do, that may not happen.

2020 has already started with a number of challenges. Calendar congestion, particularly with a second London Series, has led to a decision not hold the Single-Sex Slowpitch Nationals this year. Currently, no one has been identified to run the 2020 League Nationals. A late Italian bid for the European Men’s Slowpitch Championship is likely to mean a direct clash with Diamond 2. The Softball World Series tournament has had to be relocated and the decision has been taken to move it to Farnham Park, which means fewer available pitches and therefore fewer places.

Last year, when I was re-elected for a second term as BSF President, I confirmed that this would be my final term. For full disclosure, when I first stood for the position I had envisioned completing the maximum six years allowed. But two years in, I had already recognised that I did not have the capacity to do this. I accept that this is not the best ‘sales pitch’ for my successor -- and given this, I have two specific goals for 2020.

The first is to lessen the ancillary workload to the role – which for me has primarily been the automatic Director position on the BSUK Board and necessary hands-on involvement with the national teams programme. Both these areas will still carry responsibility and workload, but ideally both will be better contained.

The second goal is to find a successor.

Inevitably, we will make the usual pleas for people to come forward at this AGM. Also inevitably, this will likely not lead to much. More realistically, I am asking the people who read this to consider whether either they themselves, or perhaps someone they know, might have an interest in taking on a national role. As a Committee, this will be a conversation that we will likely be having with you throughout the year.

A more positive sales pitch would genuinely be that there are fantastic people involved at all levels of our sport who care about how softball develops and who have a real sense of service to the community. Among these would be your colleagues on the BSF.
COMPETITIONS DIRECTOR’S REPORT
AND NSL OVERVIEW

Liz Graham & Fiona Kielthy

2020 Dates:

- **Co-Ed Slowpitch League Nationals**
  Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze
  8-9 August at Farnham Park

- **NSL3 Nationals**
  8-9 August at Farnham Park

- **NSL1 and NSL2 Nationals**
  5-6 September at Farnham Park

2019 Results:

**Single-Sex Slowpitch Nationals: July 2019**

**Men’s Platinum**
Winner: Lakenheath
Runner-up: Pyros (East Midlands)
Final MVP: Mike Smith (Lakenheath)

**Men’s Gold**
Winner: Latinos (Manchester)
Runner-up: Hoggs (Manchester)
Final MVP: Anthony Reyes (Latinos)

**Men’s Silver**
Winner: Sheriffs (East Midlands)
Runner-up: Bobcats (Birmingham)
Final MVP: Darrell Peters (Sheriffs)

**Men’s Bronze**
Winner: Bracknell Scorchers
Runner-up: Scottish Hitmen
Final MVP: Bill Sinclair (Bracknell Scorchers)

**Women’s Platinum**
Winner: No Balls (London)
Runner-up: Manchester Minx
Final MVP: Vicky Chapman (No Balls)
**Women’s Gold**
Winner: Sheriffs (East Midlands)
Runner-up: Lakenheath
Final MVP: Tracy Sharpe (Sheriffs)

**Women’s Silver**
Winner: Solent Ladies
Runner-up: Blitzches (London)
Final MVP: Nicky Puckett (Solent Ladies)

**Women’s Bronze**
Winner: Crazy Bats 1 (Manchester)
Runner-up: Crazy Bats 2 (Manchester)
Final MVP: Annie Downes (Crazy Bats 1)

**NSL Leagues and Nationals**

**NSL 1 Nationals**
Winner: Knights (Windsor)
Runner-up: Pioneers (London)

**NSL2 Nationals**
Winner: Blitz Bombers (London)
Runner-up: Naturals (London)

**NSL3 Nationals**
Winner: Spittin’ Camels (Manchester)
Runner-up: Fuzzy Ducks (London)

**NSL1 League**
Winner: Travelling Dodgers
Runner-up: Chromies
Promoted: N/A
Relegated: LNZ

**NSL2 League**
Winner: Blitz Bombers
Runner-up: Naturals
Promoted: Blitz Bombers
Relegated: Blitz Havoc and Misfits

**League Co-Ed Nationals 2019**

**Platinum**
Winner: Fuzzy Ducks (GLMSL)
Runner-up: Jets (Bristol)
MVPs: Tash Humphris and Palmer Hestley (Fuzzy Ducks)

**Gold**
Winner: Pyros (East Midlands)
Runner-up: Mouserat (GLMSL)
MVPs: Lucy Groves (Mouserat) and Josh Peat (Pyros)

Silver
Winner: Bracknell Scorchers (Windsor)
Runner-up: Tigers (Manchester)
MVPs: Emily Newall and Dave Hendy (Bracknell Scorchers)

Bronze
Winner: The Mafia (GLSML)
Runner-up: Zombies (Solent)
MVPs: Holly Penwarden (The Mafia) and Scott Amero (Zombies)

2019 BSF League Champions – Invited to 2020 Nationals

<table>
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<tr>
<th>League</th>
<th>D1 Winner</th>
<th>D2 Winner</th>
<th>D3 Winner</th>
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<td>Beyond Bermuda Guns &amp; Base Invaders</td>
<td>Pimlico Pirates</td>
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<td>G.O.T</td>
<td>The Mafia</td>
<td>Pimlico Parrots</td>
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<td>Framestore</td>
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<td>Solent</td>
<td>Itchen Knicks</td>
<td>Spitfires</td>
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<td>Windsor</td>
<td>Maidenhead Royals</td>
<td>TV Rattlesnakes</td>
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NSL Details

As many as 24 teams indicated that they wanted to play in an NSL3 league competition in the run-up to the 2019 season, but unfortunately most of them dropped out over time, leaving us with just seven teams. So we decided to play a full round-robin over one weekend, with the two relegated teams from NSL2 invited to take part (one accepted, one declined), leading to an eight-team event held in Manchester.
The winners after the round-robin gained the two vacant places in NSL2 2020: Spittin’ Camels (Manchester) and Fuzzy Ducks (London).

To avoid a similar situation this year, we will open up the NSL3 competition in June to teams wanting to take part and gain a place in NSL2 for 2021. Six places will be available plus two on a waiting list, and teams must fully commit at that point to a weekend consisting of a full round-robin, with the first-place and second-place teams taking the spots in NSL2.

The two relegated teams from NSL2 will also be invited; if one or both decline the places will be filled with a team or teams from the waiting list.

NSL1 and NSL2 will move to two-up, two-down for the 2020 season, as agreed two years ago.
In 2019, four of the nine GB National Softball Teams – the GB Co-ed Slowpitch Team, GB Senior Women’s Fastpitch Team, GB Under-18 Men’s Fastpitch Team and GB Under-13 Girls’ Fastpitch Team, also known as the GB Cubs – played in European Championships, Qualifiers or Cups, and the GB Women’s Team also played in the WBSC Europe-Africa Olympic Qualifying Tournament.

Two other teams, the GB Under-22 and Under-19 Women’s Fastpitch Teams, which did not have an official ESF or WBSC competition in 2009, entered different competitions in one of the world’s top invitational tournaments, the Canada Cup, along with the GB Under-16 Women’s Fastpitch Team, who were using the Canada Cup to prepare for Europeans.

Unfortunately, due to injuries, passport issues and player withdrawals, the GB Under-16 Women’s Fastpitch Team was forced to pull out at a late stage from the European Under-16 Championship due to a shortage of players, leading to some financial and reputational damage.

Overall, however, 2019 results were the best in GB Softball history, with the GB Co-ed Slowpitch Team winning gold, the GB Women’s Fastpitch Team winning bronze at the European Championship and silver at the Olympic Qualifier, and the GB Cubs also winning silver – their highest-ever finish – in the competitive Sport Division at the European Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy.

It’s also worth noting, in assessing the achievements of 2019, that the British-based fastpitch club team The Mix won silver at the 2019 European Women’s Cup.

Taken together, these results are yet another tribute to the hard work and talent of our players, as well as the volunteer coaches, managers and administrators who run or support our national teams. Only the GB Women’s Team received public funding in 2019 because of the possibility of getting to the Olympics. For all our other teams there is no public funding, and while the BSF provides some financial support, the vast majority of the costs of international competition for these teams falls on players and their families. None of our fastpitch teams get to train or compete together nearly as often as their main rivals. And yet our results in 2019, along with other recent success, mean that GB Softball continues to punch well above its weight on the international stage, and we moved up two places in the WBSC Women’s Softball world rankings in 2019 to 12th in the world.

For the GB Senior Women’s Team, finishing second to Italy at the Europe-Africa Olympic Qualifier, after dramatic wins over the Netherlands and the Czech Republic had propelled GB into the final, was seen as a disappointment, since only the tournament winner would get to play in Tokyo. But this shouldn’t overshadow a tremendous performance by the GB Women in both the Europeans and the Qualifier that confirmed our place as one of Europe’s elite teams.

Here is a bit more detail on how all our teams fared:

GB Co-ed Slowpitch Team

Head Coach: Stephen Patterson
Team Manager: Kellie Whitaker

Eleven teams – the largest number ever – entered the 2019 European Co-ed Slowpitch Championship, played in the Hungarian capital, Budapest, from 16-20 July, including first-time entries from the
Netherlands, Italy and Hungary. The GB Slowpitch Team went with a mission to recapture the title they had lost for the first time in the history of the competition to Germany in 2017, and it was very much mission accomplished. GB went undefeated in the tournament behind outstanding pitching from Dan Spinks, excellent tactics and game management from Head Coach Stephen Patterson and solid contributions from every member of the 18-player squad. On offense, Mike MacDowell led the way with an astonishing 22 hits in 24 at-bats, including five home runs. GB defeated Germany in the final by 13-3.

**GB Women’s Fastpitch Team**

**Head Coach:** Rachael Watkeys  
**Team Manager:** Simon Mortimer

The summer of 2019 was the culmination of more than three years’ preparation to try to secure a place in the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo, and the GB Women’s Team could not have gotten closer. The first task for what was probably the strongest Senior Women’s Team in GB Softball history was to finish in the top six at the European Women’s Championship played in Ostrava and nearby towns in the Czech Republic and Poland from 30 June to 6 July, and the GB Women did this in style, taking the bronze medal and finishing the tournament with a 9-2 record, losing only to the Netherlands and Italy. But these were the teams that GB would have to beat in the Europe-Africa Olympic Qualifier, played from 23-27 July in Utrecht in the Netherlands, to gain Europe’s one place in Tokyo.

After straightforward wins over Spain and South Africa to open the Qualifier, the GB Women put up a magnificent performance to defeat the Netherlands 5-2 behind a gutsy pitching effort from Georgina Corrick, key hits from Alicja Wolny, Amy Moore and Lauren Evans and potentially game-saving catches in the seventh inning by outfielders Aubrey Peterson and Katie Burge. The result effectively eliminated the Netherlands from contention, and this was followed by a 4-2 win over the Czech Republic that put GB into the final against Italy, with the Olympic place at stake. But GB couldn’t solve Italian pitcher Greta Cecchetti, and a strong Italian batting line-up kept on the pressure for a 5-0 win. The GB Women had a magnificent summer but fell just short of the ultimate prize.

**GB Under-18 Men’s Fastpitch Team**

**Head Coach:** Ian Tomlin  
**Team Manager:** Jill Russell

A new GB Under-18 Men’s Fastpitch Team, formed to reflect changes in WBSC and ESF age groups from Under-19 to Under-18, played its first-ever tournament at the ESF Under-18 Men’s Fastpitch Qualifier, held from 16-19 October in Gezer, Israel to qualify teams for the 2020 WBSC Under-18 Men’s World Cup. Only four teams took part and GB was matched against the two strongest men’s fastpitch programmes in Europe, the Czech Republic and Denmark, plus the host team Israel.

With many players who were new to fastpitch and certainly new to high-level competition, the GB Team opened strongly by pushing Israel hard in a 7-6 loss, but were unable to win a game during a tournament they always knew would be primarily a learning experience. The experience will put the team in good stead for the first European Under-18 Men’s Championship in 2020.
GB Under-13 Girls Fastpitch Team

**Head Coach:** Jodie Rushin  
**Team Manager:** Julie Spittle

The GB Under-13 Girls’ Fastpitch Team, playing at the annual Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy competition from 14-17 August in Collecchio, Italy as the GB Cubs, have been improving year on year in this tournament, but 2019 provided a major breakthrough. Behind the pitching of Georgia Wilson and a fine all-round team effort, the Cubs won four of their five round-robin games in the more competitive Sport Division, beating two Italian and two Czech teams, and reached the final for the first time since the Massimo Romeo tournament began in 2012.

The Cubs’ opponent in the final was Italy 1, whom GB had beaten 1-0 the day before. However, an injury limited Georgia Wilson’s effectiveness in the final, and Italy took the title. But the GB Cubs will have been thrilled by their best-ever performance in a European competition.

GB National Teams at the Canada Cup

Three GB National Teams – the Under-22 Women, Under-19 Women and Under-16 Women – played in different competitions at the annual Canada Cup Tournament, one of the world’s top invitational competitions, held in Surrey, British Columbia between 5 and 14 July.

The Under-22 and Under-19 Women were attending the tournament because they did not have an official ESF or WBSC tournament in 2019 and it was a way to keep up momentum in those programmes; the Under-16 Women were attending the Canada Cup to prepare for their Under-16 European Championship later in the summer in Croatia.

Problems arose because the GB Under-16 and Under-19 Teams had intended to share players, since their competitions were at different times, only to discover just before the Canada Cup began that this was against tournament rules. The meant that some Under-16 players had to play exclusively for the Under-19s, while the organisers found some local players to make up the numbers for the depleted Under-16 squad.

In addition, the GB Under-22 Women had entered the Canada Cup Elite Division, the second-strongest adult division, but Olympic Qualifying Tournaments scheduled for the summer meant that there were fewer entries to the Elite Division than usual. So the division was cancelled and entrants were transferred to the International Division, featuring some of the world’s strongest teams.

GB UNDER-22 WOMEN  
**Head Coach:** Jo Malisani  
**Team Manager:** Whitney Hollis

Faced with a schedule in the Canada Cup International Division that included games against the Canadian and Chinese Taipei Senior National Teams and two games against the Canadian Junior National Team, the GB Under-22 Women played well but could not manage a win in seven games. However, four of the seven games were lost by only three runs or fewer, and this level of opposition provided vital game experience for the GB team.
**GB UNDER-19 WOMEN**

**Head Coach:** Robbie Robison (Greg Seeley)
**Team Manager:** David Morris

The GB Under-19s, including a number of younger players from the GB Under-16 squad, played three exhibition games and then seven games in the Canada Cup Futures Gold competition for a valuable total of 10 games against strong US and Canadian travel ball teams. In the Canada Cup itself, there were two GB wins and several close losses.

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**GB UNDER-16 WOMEN**

**Head Coach:** Jo Malisani
**Team Manager:** Jo Malisani with help from other staff

The GB Under-16 Women’s Team, having lost some of their strongest players to the Under-19s when the organisers refused to let players play in two competitions, nevertheless managed two wins in six games and several other games were close.

Players on all three GB Teams at the Canada Cup will have gained from the experience.

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**Changes in age brackets**

Changes in age brackets for national youth teams, mandated by the World Baseball Softball Confederation, began to come into effect in 2019 and this will continue in 2020. The ages for official European and/or WBSC softball competitions are now:

- Senior Women and Men
- Under-23 Men
- Under-22 Women (ESF only)
- Under-18 Women and Men
- Under-16 Men (ESF only)
- Under-15 Women
- Under-13 Girls or Mixed Teams (ESF only)
- Under-12 Mixed Teams (WBSC only)

In addition, the fact that softball will be on the programme of the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 2020 has led to changes to the years in which competitions happen. Some competitions will happen two years in a row during this transition period; others will have a three-year gap. By 2022, all competitions should have settled back into a biennial pattern.

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**Official competitions in 2020**

Only some GB National Teams will have an official ESF competition in 2020, and none of our teams will be competing in WBSC tournaments this year.

The **GB Women’s Fastpitch Team** will compete in the European Women’s Championship, which is taking place for the second year in a row, from 7-13 June in the Friuli-Venezia region in northeast Italy, and will need to finish in the top three, as we did in 2017 and 2019, to qualify for the 2021 WBSC Women’s World Championship.
When this AGM Pack was put together, no host or date had been officially confirmed for the European Men’s Slowpitch Championship. But the tournament looks certain to be held and the **GB Men’s Slowpitch Team** will hope that they can defend the title they won at the first-ever running of this event in 2018.

The **GB Men’s Fastpitch Team** will compete in the European Men’s Fastpitch Championship in Ledenice, in the Czech Republic, from 22-27 June, hoping to better their fourth-place finish in 2018.

The **GB Under-18 Men’s Fastpitch Team** will compete in the European Under-18 Men’s Fastpitch Championship from 6-11 July in Sezimovo Usti in the Czech Republic.

The **GB Under-13 Girls Fastpitch Team**, the GB Cubs, will compete in the ESF’s annual Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy competition, to be played from 12-15 August in Collecchio, near Parma in Italy.

The **GB Co-ed Slowpitch Team** had hoped that the first-ever WBSC Slowpitch World Cup, a world championship tournament for national teams, would take place in the autumn of 2020, and there is still an outside chance that that could happen. But the first edition of this landmark slowpitch event is more likely to take place in the spring of 2021.

Meanwhile, the **Windsor Knights** and **Chromies**, and the **Pioneers** as defending champions, will hope to compete in the European Co-ed Slowpitch Super Cup, though no host or dates had been announced when this AGM Pack was compiled.

The **London Angels**, winners of the Great Britain Fastpitch League Women’s Division in 2019, will compete in the European Cup-Winners Cup from 17-22 August (the venue was still to be decided when this AGM Pack was compiled).

Finally, a Meteors Men’s Team, including a number of young GB players, will enter the European Men’s Super Cup from 24-29 August in Prague, Czech Republic.
## BSF ACCOUNTS & BUDGET

### BSF Accounts: Year ended 30/9/19 + Budget 2020 proposed

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<td>Marketing / Events</td>
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<td>Meetings / Travel</td>
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<td><strong>109,850</strong></td>
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<td><strong>-16,200</strong></td>
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<td><strong>-23,850</strong></td>
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<td><strong>-19,349</strong></td>
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### BALANCE SHEETS

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<th>Actual</th>
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<th>Actual</th>
<th>Forecast</th>
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<td>Reserves b/f</td>
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<td>63,324</td>
<td>68,509</td>
<td>68,509</td>
<td>50,796</td>
<td>50,796</td>
<td>54,287</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profit / Loss</td>
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<td>-23,850</td>
<td>-17,713</td>
<td>-10,690</td>
<td>3,491</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-19,349</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reserves c/f</td>
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<td>47,124</td>
<td>46,509</td>
<td>50,796</td>
<td>40,106</td>
<td>54,287</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34,938</td>
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</table>
In 2019, the BSF simplified its fee structure, with fewer payment categories, with the result that fees were slightly higher for some categories of members and lower for others.

The BSF is proposing that there will be no changes to fees in 2020. Fees for 2020 – identical to those in 2019 – are shown below.

**Full-Member League Teams: £200**

**Associate Member Teams: £100**

Associate members include:
- Independent tournament teams with no league affiliation.
- Scottish league teams.
- Great Britain Fastpitch League teams.
- New league teams* for the first two years of their existence.
- BASU as an organisation.

* New teams that have joined leagues in the past three years and are in the previous fee structure that involved a three-year progression to full-member rates will continue in that progression but will pay £200 when they reach the full-member rate.

**Junior Members: £75**
- Under-18 teams (50% of rostered players must be under-18).
- University teams playing in BSF leagues.

**Special Membership: £75**
- A one-off team membership to allow entry to one specific competition.

**GB National Teams: £25**
- This fee is to provide Civil and Public Liability insurance for GB National Teams when they train and play in the UK.

**University Teams not in BSF Leagues: No fee**

As has been the case since 2017, teams that enter the BSF Single-Sex Slowpitch National Championship or the Softball World Series will not be required to pay an additional affiliation fee for insurance purposes provided that all members of the team are rostered with co-ed slowpitch teams or fastpitch teams affiliated to the BSF. This will continue to be the case in 2020.
BSF ANNUAL AWARDS

The BSF will announce the winners of its Annual Awards for the 2019 season at the 2020 AGM. Awards are only made in categories where nominations have been received, and will be awarded in 2020 in the following categories:

- **The Glover Cup** for outstanding long-term services to softball by an administrator or organiser.
- **The President’s Club Award** for outstanding performance or development by an affiliated club or team.
- **The Team Glover Cup** for outstanding achievement by an adult team.
- **The Tournament of the Year Award.**
- **The Umpire of the Year Award.**
- **The Youth Team of the Year Award** for outstanding performance or development achievement.
- **The Betsy Holden Award** for outstanding achievement by a young person in developing or promoting the sport.

BSUK COACH AWARDS

*In addition to the awards listed above, softball and baseball coaching and volunteer awards for achievements in 2019 were presented on 25 January 2020 at the annual BSUK Coach Summit in Milton Keynes. The softball awards presented were:*

**SOFTBALL YOUTH COACH OF THE YEAR**

*Given to an outstanding contributor to coaching young people in softball in Great Britain in 2019.*

This shortlisted nominees were: **Paul Archer** for his work in Newham across a number of initiatives, including the launch of the Baseball5 programme at New City Primary School; **Jodie Rushin** for her work with the GB Cubs, the Under-13 Girls’ Fastpitch National Team, which led to a highest-ever second-place finish at the European Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy tournament in 2019; and **Linni Mitchell**, BaseballSoftballUK’s North West Coach who runs a number of softball programmes in the Manchester area, particularly with girls, refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants.

The winner was **Paul Archer**.

For the past 18 years, Paul has been coaching adults, children young people, community groups and disability multi-sport sessions in the London Borough of Newham. Having attended a BaseballSoftballUK Activator Workshop in the past year, Paul has been involved with setting up and delivering softball sessions in the area, including as part of Newham Ability Camp, which provides sporting activities to disabled young people. Paul has also delivered sessions at the Newham Show to young...
people and adults on behalf of BSUK, delivered baseball/softball sessions as part of the Access to Sport Holiday programme for disabled young people in Hackney and been instrumental in getting New City Primary School, where he works full-time, involved in the Fun At Bat and Baseball5 programmes.

**SOFTBALL ADULT COACH OF THE YEAR**

*Given to an outstanding contributor to adult softball coaching in Great Britain in 2019.*

The shortlisted candidates for this award were: **Jodie Bull**, MK Diamonds Club Head Coach and a major part of the success of the Milton Keynes Softball League; **Claire Read**, London Softball League coach and a key part of the Regent’s Park 101 beginners’ programme; and **Rachael Watkeys**, Head Coach of the GB Women’s Fastpitch Team, who helped lead the squad to their best-ever Olympic Qualifier performance.

This year’s honours were shared by **Jodie Bull** and **Rachael Watkeys**.

Jodie has been supporting the development of the MK Diamonds Softball Club and other MK Softball League teams as both a coach and a valuable member of the Executive Committee for many years. She has given countless hours both on the pitch and on the road, commuting sizeable distances to get to sessions. Her considerable experience and knowledge have helped many players develop their softball skills, while her welcoming and supportive attitude has contributed to the growth in player numbers in the area. She goes above and beyond in a whole host of areas, giving up weekends to run sessions for league coaches so that they can develop their skills further, advising both players and the Committee on equipment, mentoring umpires, leading the organisation of this year’s Codebreakers Cup Tournament and answering the many questions that get fired at her by coaches, captains and Committee members on a weekly basis.

Rachael co-led the GB Women’s Fastpitch Team through the 2019 European Women’s Championship, which was also an Olympic Pre-Qualifier, and on to the Europe-Africa Olympic Qualifiers, including a showdown in the final against Italy, the game that determined Europe and Africa’s representative at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. This was an outstanding achievement and the team’s performance surpassed the expectations of nearly everyone in European softball – but not those of the staff and players on the GB Women’s Team, who believed they could do it. There has been no greater achievement by a British softball team to date. Rachael has now led the GB programme at a consistently high level over the last few years, and despite falling heartbreaking short of the desired Olympic outcome, the GB Women’s Team now clearly ranks as one of the top teams in Europe.

*Other awards presented at the Coach Summit had nominees from both softball and baseball, but the winners were from baseball:*

The winner of the award for Services to Coaching was **Liam Carroll**, GB Baseball Senior Team Head Coach and BaseballSoftballUK High Performance Academy coach.

The winner of the Volunteer of the Year award was **Richard Evans**, Chairman and Head Coach for the Bristol Bats Baseball Club.
ELECTION OF BSF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

People standing for office on the BSF Executive are elected for two-year terms. All the Directors and General Officers shown below served the first year of their current term in 2019 and intend to serve the second year in 2020, but this does not preclude nominations being made for these positions.

The position of Technical Officer, which has hitherto been appointed by BASU, will now be open for nomination.

Candidates standing for positions (if any) are listed.

DIRECTORS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Standing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President:</td>
<td>Jenny Fromer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer:</td>
<td>Laura Burkhardt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitions Officer:</td>
<td>Liz Graham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Teams Officer:</td>
<td>Alexis Markham-Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Officer:</td>
<td>Chris Moon</td>
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GENERAL OFFICERS (up to six specific Officer roles can be created by the Executive):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Standing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Officer / Farnham Park Liaison:</td>
<td>Steve Getraer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Officer / Finance:</td>
<td>Mike Jennings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Officer / National Championship Support:</td>
<td>Lesley Morisetti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Officer / National Teams Support</td>
<td>Stella Ackrell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Officer / National Teams Support:</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Officer / Coaching:</td>
<td>Vacant</td>
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APPOINTED OFFICERS:

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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Appointee</th>
<th>Appointed By</th>
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<tr>
<td>London Liaison Officer:</td>
<td>Alan MacFarlane</td>
<td>BSF</td>
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</tbody>
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CONSTITUTIONAL MOTIONS

From the BSF Executive

The BSF Executive is proposing to amend the following sections of its Articles of Association – titled Appointment of Directors and Other Office Holders – to read as follows. New text is shaded in yellow.

19. **Methods of appointing directors**

19.1 The members of the Board shall be the Executive Officers per 19.1.1 through 19.1.4, and other Officers whose numbers and roles shall be determined from time to time by the Board, dependant on the needs of the Company:
   19.1.1 the President;
   19.1.2 the Treasurer;
   19.1.3 the National Competitions Officer;
   19.1.4 the National Teams Officer.

19.2 There shall be a minimum of three and a maximum of five Directors, who shall include the President and the Treasurer. Any additional Director(s) shall be appointed by the Board, drawn from the elected members thereof.

19.3 The Board may at its discretion award honoraria to such persons as it thinks fit provided that the honoraria shall not to any extent be determined by or conditional upon the profits or losses derived from some or all of the activities of the Company or by reference to the level of the Company's gross income from some or all of its activities.

19.4 All acts carried out in good faith at any meeting of the Board or of any sub-committee, or by any person acting as an Officer, shall, notwithstanding it be afterwards discovered that there was some defect in the appointment or continuance in office of any such person, be as valid as if every such person had been duly appointed or had duly continued in office.

20 **Elected Officers**

Each prospective elected Officer shall submit a CV demonstrating the skills they bring to their proposed roles. Directors shall hold office for a period of two years and are eligible for re-election only for a further two periods, except in the case of the President, who may be re-elected for a fourth or further term if no other candidate(s) present(s) themselves for election. The election for Officers shall be conducted in accordance with Article Error! Reference source not found..

21 **Termination of Director's and other elected Officer’s appointments**

21.1 Without prejudice to the provisions of Section 168 of the 2006 Act, a person shall cease to be Director of the Company and / or member of the Board as soon as:
   21.1.1 that person ceases to be a director by virtue of any provision of the Companies Act 2006 or is otherwise prohibited from being a director by law;
   21.1.2 a bankruptcy order is made against that person;
   21.1.3 a composition is made with that person's creditors generally in satisfaction of that person's debts;
21.1.4 a registered medical practitioner who is treating that person gives a written opinion to the Company stating that that person has become physically or mentally incapable of acting as a Director and may remain so for more than three months;

21.1.5 by reason of that person's mental health, a court makes an order which wholly or partly prevents that person from personally exercising any powers or rights which that person would otherwise have;

21.1.6 unless the Board resolves otherwise, that person shall without sufficient reason for more than three consecutive Board meetings have been absent without permission of the Board;

21.1.7 that person is requested to resign by all the other members of the Board acting together;

21.1.8 being a Director who, when the term of office expires, is not re-elected; or

21.1.9 notification is received by the Board from the person that they are resigning from office, and such resignation has taken effect in accordance with its terms.

21.2 A person who is removed from office as a Director for whatever reason shall be deemed to have resigned from their Executive position and the vacancy shall be filled in accordance with these Articles.

**MOTIONS OR PROPOSALS TO THE 2020 BSF AGM**

There were no motions or proposals to the AGM this year from the BSF or from members.
BASU REPORT

Chris Moon
BSF Technical Officer

Trainers in 2019: Chris Moon, Pete Saunders, Mike Jennings and Luis Arrevillagas (slowpitch) and Jana McCaskill and Bridget Cameron (fastpitch).

Assessors in 2019: Chris Moon, Pete Saunders, Mike Jennings, Luis Arrevillagas, Jes Sandhu and Lesley Morisetti (slowpitch) and Jana McCaskill and Bridget Cameron (fastpitch). A total of 37 assessments were carried out in 2019 (25 in 2018) and a total of 36 delegates sat two-day courses in 2019.

Slowpitch Advanced Course: The new-style two-day Advanced Slowpitch Course was held in Slough over a weekend in April with eight attendees, who also worked at the GB Slowpitch Open on the Sunday afternoon, using a two-umpire system.

Relief Umpires: Overall, and importantly, there was a decline in the number of relief umpires used during the 2019 season.

Slowpitch Nationals: In the case of the Slowpitch Nationals, the cost of using multiple umpires for most games was partially subsidised by the BSF and BASU. This is done to provide a better experience for the players as well as provide our umpires with more experience in using the two-umpire system. We have received very positive feedback from these efforts.

BASU Umpires abroad

We were well represented abroad in 2019.

Pete Saunders, Lesley Morisetti and Darrell Pitman represented British Softball at the European Co-ed Slowpitch Championship in Budapest, Hungary, with Chris Moon officiating as Umpire-in-Chief.

Chris Moon was appointed as the ESF Slowpitch Training Officer and has also been appointed as the ESF Slowpitch Umpire-in-Chief.

Jana McCaskill officiated at her second WBSC Junior Women’s World Fastpitch Championship in Irvine, California, and was given the honour of being the plate umpire at the Grand Final between the USA and Japan.

BASU is looking to send a number of umpires to a Softball Europe slowpitch clinic in 2020.
Summary

After more than 25 years of operation, BASU has grown in both stature and numbers, and looking forward to 2020, it is hoped that the organisation will continue to serve the softball community with the same professionalism and enthusiasm as in the past.

With the continuing growth of softball around the UK, BASU will continue to need a new influx of qualified umpires every year and we would like to encourage leagues to organise regional courses. Some leagues are very active in this process but there are some leagues that could do more. Tournament umpires generally start as league umpires, so we need to keep the number of qualified league umpires as high as possible.

Any league Umpire-in-Chief looking to host a BASU course in 2020 should contact Chris Moon (chrisjmoon@hotmail.co.uk).
# 2020 SOFTBALL CALENDAR
(as of 28 January 2020)

**Slowpitch = Black**
**Fastpitch = Red**
**Baseball = Green**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>VENUE</th>
<th>ORGANISER</th>
</tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 11</td>
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<td>Jan 12</td>
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<td>Jan 17-19</td>
<td>Schiedam Women’s Fastpitch Indoor Cup</td>
<td>Schiedam, NL</td>
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<td>Jan 19</td>
<td>Windsor &amp; Maidenhead Winter Indoor Tournament</td>
<td>Rickmansworth</td>
<td>Adrienne Elly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 25</td>
<td>2020 BSUK Coach Summit Indoor Slowpitch Fundraiser for NW Junior Men’s Fastpitch</td>
<td>Milton Keynes</td>
<td>Chris Rawlings</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Jill Russell</td>
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<td>Feb 1-2</td>
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<td>Feb 15</td>
<td>BASU AGM</td>
<td>Nottingham</td>
<td>Pete Saunders</td>
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<td>Feb 22</td>
<td>Manchester Indoor Single-Sex Tournament</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Linni Mitchell</td>
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<td>Feb 23</td>
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<td>Feb 29</td>
<td>BSF AGM + League Heads Forum</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Jenny Fromer</td>
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<td>Mar 1</td>
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<td>Mar 7-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 14</td>
<td>Manchester Winter Indoor T’ment</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Linni Mitchell</td>
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<td>Mar 21-22</td>
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<td>Mar 28-29</td>
<td>National University Softball Chps</td>
<td>Farnham Park</td>
<td>Chris Rawlings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 29</td>
<td>Windsor &amp; Maidenhead Spring Indoor Tournament</td>
<td>Rickmansworth</td>
<td>Adrienne Elly</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Apr 4-5</td>
<td>BBF Season Opener T’ment</td>
<td>Farnham Park</td>
<td>Gerry Perez</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Great Britain Fastpitch League 1</td>
<td>Farnham Park</td>
<td>David Morris</td>
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<td>Two-Day BASU Course: Jersey</td>
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<td>Apr 18-19</td>
<td>Two-Day BASU Course: Bristol</td>
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<td>GB Challenge Tournament</td>
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<td>Apr 25-26</td>
<td>National University Baseball Chps</td>
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<td>May 2</td>
<td>Great Britain Fastpitch League 2</td>
<td>Farnham Park</td>
<td>David Morris</td>
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<td>May 3</td>
<td>Chicks with Sticks and Let the Boys Play Tournament 1</td>
<td>Farnham Park</td>
<td>Alan Le Marquand</td>
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<td>May 9-10</td>
<td>MLB Slowpitch Cup</td>
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<td>Luis Arrevillagas</td>
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<td>May 16-17</td>
<td>Diamond Series 1 + NSL</td>
<td>Farnham Park</td>
<td>Craig Moran</td>
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<td>May 23-24</td>
<td>Sefton/Liverpool Tournament</td>
<td>Liverpool</td>
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<td>Great Britain Fastpitch League 3</td>
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<td>May 30-June 1</td>
<td>3rd Achille Challenge Tournament</td>
<td>Paris, France</td>
<td>Simon Mortimer</td>
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<td>All About the Base Men’s SP T’ment</td>
<td>Farnham Park</td>
<td>Sara Daughtrey</td>
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<td>Michael Connolly</td>
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<td>UK Little League Qualifiers</td>
<td>Farnham Park</td>
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<td>Jun 7-13</td>
<td><strong>European Women’s Fastpitch</strong></td>
<td>Friuli Region, Italy</td>
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<td>Jun 13-14</td>
<td>London Series: Cards v Cubs</td>
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<td><strong>European Men’s Slowpitch</strong></td>
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<td>Jun 20-21</td>
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<td>Jun 22-27</td>
<td>European Men's Fastpitch Championship</td>
<td>Ledenice, CZ</td>
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<td>Leeds Tournament</td>
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<td>Chicks with Sticks and Let the Boys Play Tournament 2</td>
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<td>Jul 6-11</td>
<td>European U-18 Men's Fastpitch Championship</td>
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<td>Windsor Invitational Tournament</td>
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<td>Diamond Series 3 + NSL 2</td>
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<td>Let the Girls Play &amp; Sons of Pitches</td>
<td>Farnham Park</td>
<td>Lucy Binding</td>
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<td>Aug 8-9</td>
<td>BSF Co-ed Slowpitch League National Championships</td>
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<td>Liz Graham</td>
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<td>Aug 12-15</td>
<td>Massimo Romeo Youth Trophy</td>
<td>Collecchio, Italy</td>
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<td>European Women's Fastpitch Cups</td>
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<td>Windsor &amp; Maidenhead Autumn Indoor Tournament</td>
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