

WISCONSIN FASTPITCH SOFTBALL



COACHES ASSOCIATION

John Ruffolo

President

District 4: Division 1

Cindy Suess

Vice President

Clinic Director

Membership Director

Greg Lampe

Executive Director

Awards Committee

Jane Briehl

Treasurer

District 3: Divisions 2,3

Tom Drohner

Border Battle Coordinator

District 1: Division 1

Morgan Stenslein

District 1: Divisions 2,3

Tim Whitford

All-Star Coordinator

Sue Stoltenberg

Secretary

Newsletter Coordinator

District 2: Divisions 4,5

Jeff Agnew

Hall of Fame Coordinator

Jeff Hodgson

District 3: Divisions 4,5

Brad Ceranski

District 1: Divisions 4, 5

Scott Ritzema

District 4: Divisions 2,3

Clinic Vendor Coordinator

Jared Faherty

All-Star Game Coordinator

Melinda Hull

District 2: Divisions 2, 3

All District/State Awards

Academic All-State Awards

Jamie Olson

District 3: Division 1

Billi Vertz

District 2: Division 1

Wisconsin Fastpitch Softball Coaches Association

THE LINE DRIVE

January 10, 2024

Message from the WFSCA...

Happy New Year! After many years serving on the board as a district representative, I am honored to be the new president of WFSCA, following in the footsteps of such an outstanding leader as Brad Ceranski. Brad's steady leadership and advocacy for high school softball in Wisconsin has provided me with a guide for the future, and I am blessed to be supported by the wisdom of executive director Greg Lampe and a talented group of coaches who serve on the WFSCA board.

As we begin 2024, Cindy Suess, our clinic coordinator, is busy preparing another great coaches clinic at Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells on February 10-11. Cindy has lined up some great clinicians whose sessions will have something to offer to new coaches and veteran coaches alike. On Saturday evening, we'll be honoring the amazing careers of four new Hall of Fame members at the induction banquet, an inspiring event organized by HOF coordinator Jeff Agnew, followed by the coaches social (*free beer!*) in the vendor hall. Chula Vista's indoor water park makes the clinic a great place for coaches to bring their entire families. The annual WFSCA Coaches Clinic is a weekend not to be missed!

WFSCA takes its strength from the dedication of coaches from around the state who share our passion for high school softball. Our high level of membership strengthens our voice with the WIAA as we advocate for policies that benefit our athletes. WFSCA awards such as All-District/All-State, selection for the Senior All-Star game, or induction into the Hall of Fame gain their legitimacy from the participation of coaches like you. The WFSCA is dedicated to facilitating your participation in our organization because that's what makes it so well respected across our state.

As we build up to the start of the 2024 season, please reach out to myself or any of the board members with thoughts or concerns about WFSCA. We are here to make the high school softball experience special for our athletes, and we welcome your input. We look forward to seeing you at the clinic in February!

Sincerely,

John P. Ruffolo

WFSCA President

Save the Dates 2024



February 10th, 11th	Coaches Clinic (Chula Vista - WI Dells)
March 11th	Earliest Date for Practice
March 16th	Earliest Date for Scrimmage
March 19th	Earliest Date for a Game
May 16th, 21st, 23rd	Regional for (D2 - D5)
May 21st, 23rd	Regionals for D1
May 28th and 30th	Sectionals
June 6th, 7th, 8th	State

Please check the WFSCA website regularly for other upcoming important deadlines such as All-Star Nominations, All-District - All-State Nominations, Academic All-State, and Coaches Awards. **YOU MUST BE A HEAD COACH AND A MEMBER OF THE WFSCA TO NOMINATE YOUR PLAYERS.**

www.wfsca.org

All-Star Nominations are due by April 19th, 2024 by 11:59 pm

All-District/All-State Nominations are due by May 31st, 2024 by 11:59 pm

Academic All-State Nominations are due by June 14th, 2024 by 11:59 pm

Coaches Awards are due by June 14th, 2024 by 11:59 pm

All registered coaches will receive numerous emails as to when the nomination portals are open.

WFSCA 2024 Updated Districts

Division One (Large Schools)

District 1 (Rep - Tom Drohner)

Big Rivers	Mississippi Valley
Lake Superior	Wisconsin Valley

District 2 Billi Vertz

Bay Conference	Fox Valley Association
Fox River Classic	North Shore

District 3 (Rep - Jamie Olson)

Badger Large	Big Eight
	Classic Eight

District 4 (Rep - John Ruffolo)

Greater Metro	Southern Lakes
Milwaukee City	Woodland East
Southeast	Woodland West

Division Two & Three (Medium Schools)

District 1 Morgan Stenslein

Big Rivers	Heart O'North
Cloverbelt East	Lakeland West
Cloverbelt West	Middle Border
Coulee	Mississippi Valley
Dunn-St. Croix	Wisconsin Valley

District 2 (Rep - Melinda Hull)

Bay Conference	Marinette & Oconto
Central Wis. East	North Shore
East Central	Northeastern
Fox River Classic	Packerland
Great Northern	

District 3 (Rep - Jane Briehl)

Badger Small	Six Rivers East
South Central	Capitol North
Classic Eight	Southwest Wisconsin
Rock Valley	

District 4 (Rep - Scott Ritzema)

Big East	Milwaukee City
Southern Lakes	
Capitol South	Trailways South
Eastern Wisconsin	Wisconsin Flyway
Metro Classic	Woodland East
Midwest Classic	Woodland West

Division Four & Five (Small Schools)

District 1 (Rep - Brad Ceranski)

Cloverbelt East	Dunn-St. Croix
Cloverbelt West	Heart O'North
Coulee	Lakeland East
Dairyland	Lakeland West

District 2 (Rep - Sue Stoltenberg)

Central Wis. East	Marawood South
Central Wis. West	Marinette & Oconto
Central Wis. South	Northern Lakes
Indianhead	Packerland
Marawood North	

District 3 (Rep - Jeff Hodgson)

Ridge & Valley	Six Rivers West
Scenic Bluffs	SWAL
Six Rivers East	

District 4 (Rep - Cindy Suess)

Big East	Trailways North
Capitol South	Trailways South
Eastern Wisconsin	Wisconsin Flyway
Metro Classic	

ALL- DISTRICT AND ALL- STATE

The All-District Teams for medium and small schools will be comprised of eighteen selections and broken down in the following manner:

- Pitchers - 1**
- Catchers - 1**
- Infielders - 4**
- Outfielders – 3**
- At-Large (players from any position) - 9**

The number of selections on the All-District Team for large schools will be prorated based on the number of member schools in each district during the current season. This adjustment is to balance the number of players recognized proportional to the member schools in the districts. The position make up will be adjusted if there are less than eighteen selections on a team.

At the All-State level, an eighteen member 1st and 2nd Team will be recognized for the large, medium and small schools along with Honorable Mention selections. It is important to remember this is a WFSCA selection process so only athletes from schools in which their Head Coach is a member are eligible for recognition. Please make sure to register as a WFSCA member and nominate the deserving members of your team this year.





The Wisconsin Fastpitch Coaches Association
would like to congratulate the
2024 Hall of Fame Inductee Class!



TOM ANDERSON- Necedah and Iola-Scandinavia High Schools

Presented by long-time assistant coach Stacy Bestul, daughter Brooke Manley, and son Brett Anderson.



Tom Anderson is entering his 33rd year as head softball coach at Iola-Scandinavia. Tom got his start in coaching softball as an assistant coach at Necedah High School under Carol Kubicek in 1991 before moving on to Iola-Scandinavia the next year. He was a 5th-grade teacher for over 30 years before retiring in 2017, but he continues to coach softball. His teams have taken 8 spring training trips to Disney World over the years. His teams have won 4 conference championships, 10 regional championships, 2 sectional championships (losing four sectional championship games), and winning the WIAA D-4 state championship in 2023.

His current coaching record is 440-257. Tom has been a WFSCA conference rep for many years and has coached in the Senior All-Star series three times.

Tom has been married to his wife Sara for 33 years and they have two children: Brooke (Brandon) and Brett (McKenna) along with three grandchildren: Gideon (3), Jaelyn (1 ½) and Amelia (1).

Debra Braatz - Waterloo High School

Presented by Amy Schaumann

Deb started the softball program at Waterloo High School in 1987, and she is now entering her 36th year as the head softball coach for the Pirates. This coaching stat represents Deb's dedication to growing the sport of softball as well as her loyalty to and belief in the abilities of the athletes at Waterloo.

Deb has been a teacher in Waterloo for the past 40 years and is currently teaching 4K-4th grade Elementary Physical Education. While at Waterloo, she has coached multiple varsity sports including Volleyball, Basketball, Track and Field, and Softball.

While coaching softball at Waterloo High School, she has compiled an overall record of 510-160. Deb's coaching record includes 12 conference championships, 5 Regional Championships, 1 Sectional Championship, and 1 State Runner-up. Deb's coaching success and knowledge of softball are reflected in her overall record, but also in the other coaching awards and positions she has held. She has coached in multiple WFSCA Softball All Stars Games, served as the Capital Conference South Representative, was selected as Eastern Suburban Conference Coach of the Year, and has also served on the WIAA Advisory Board.



Deb has been married to her husband Larry for 33 years. He is always her strongest supporter, and Deb and Larry have worked countless hours together to ensure the softball fields are ready for the girls' home games. When Deb is not coaching or planning for the softball season, she spends most of her time outside with their German Shepherds and enjoys working in the yard.

WFSCA Announces 2024 Hall of Fame Inductees (Continued)

Tim Roehrig - Kaukauna*Presented by Bill Huss*

Tim Roehrig took over the Kaukauna Fastpitch program in 2000 and has worked tirelessly to build the program into a state contender since. During his 24 years, the program won 12 Fox Valley Association titles, 14 Regional titles, and 5 State titles in 2010, 2017, 2021, 2022, and 2023. During that span, the Kaukauna program built a 52-game winning streak in 2010/2011 and a new state record winning streak of 81 games between 2021/2023 with the upcoming 2024 season in waiting. His career record is 512-75 at Kaukauna with 51 First Team All-Conference Players, 32 All-State Players, and 4 Gatorade Players Of The Year.



Tim's success would not have been possible without his unbelievable cast surrounding him. Bill Huss, Steve Meredith, Mark Herzfeldt, and Kyle Dunphy are the best group of assistant coaches in the state, and their knowledge and passion drive the program. Denny Lauer, his pitching instructor from day 1, and Jim Jellish, a hitting instructor, have put in thousands of hours to help build the program into the champion it is.

Tim has been married to Crissy, the most understanding and patient wife in the world. His daughter Lilly was an all-conference player for Tim in 2021 & 2022. His son Jonah carries the same passion and drive as his father and loves sports as much as his dad. Tim's parents Gary and Kathy and his father and mother-in-law Pete & Sandy have always supported him in every way possible. He could not have done it without them.

Gene Van Dyck - Dodgeville*Presented by daughter, Regina Lord*

Gene Van Dyck, a prominent figure in Wisconsin fastpitch softball, transitioned from playing fastpitch himself to assistant coach at Dodgeville High School in 1989.

Taking the helm as head coach in 1992, Gene boasts an impressive record of around 500 wins. He has led the Dodgers to two state runner-up finishes, a state championship, three Sectional championships, and over a dozen regional and conference titles each.

Beyond high school, Gene guided his summer travel team to victory in the 18U open ASA state championship and secured two Badger State game runner-up titles. Despite starting coaching in his late 40s, Gene's impact extends over 30 years. During which, he coached his daughter who was the starting pitcher on the State runner-up team, and his granddaughter who was the starting pitcher on the State championship team.

Off the field, Gene enjoys fishing, hunting, and working with and watching his four granddaughters excel as softball pitchers, and his five grandsons kick, hit, or shoot some type of ball. He can be found many days of the week at Wilson Park in Dodgeville, working with any young athletes interested in becoming better softball players. Lastly,

Gene also celebrated 50 years of marriage this past year and refers to his amazing wife Rita...as a "Saint"!

WFSCA HALL OF FAME MEMBERS

Class of 2009

- David Jones – Platteville
- Mary Lou Jones – Platteville
- Tory Acheson – Tennessee Tech / Whitnall
- Phillip Adam – Ashwaubenon
- Pete Kopplin – Marshfield
- Darrell Laschen – Loyal
- Debbie Mauleg – Marion

Class of 2010

- Greg Lampe – Oak Creek
- Bob LeCaptain – Denmark / Green Bay West
- John Malin – Kimberly
- Russ Shaub – Middleton
- Bob Tomlinson – Poynette
- Rod Wilterdink – Cedarburg

Class of 2011

- Steve Ryan – Waunakee
- Diane Yager – Seneca
- Steve Schmikla – McFarland
- Jim Haines – Pepin

Class of 2012

- Mike Regner – LaCrosse
- Del Schneeberger – Johnson Creek
- Kris Allison – Westosha

Class of 2013

- Dale Buvid – Monroe
- Jim Turner – Altoona
- Paul Olson – Fort Atkinson

Class of 2014

- John Schroeder – Beloit Memorial
- Don Vruwink – Milton
- Glenda Smith – Tigerton

Class of 2015

- Tim Pederson – Amherst
- Bob Sulser – Beloit Memorial
- Marvin Youngbeck – Mayville

Class of 2016

- Dave Keel – Homestead
- Roger Schlieve – Horicon
- Jim Wickert – McFarland / Madison College

Class of 2017

- Jeff Setz – Eisenhower
- Tim Hering – Whitewater
- Denny Coppernoll – River Valley

Class of 2018

- Cindy Suess – Verona / UW Oshkosh
- Tom Drohner – Stevens Point
- Doug Mock – Oakfield
- Don Bjelland – Grantsburg

Class of 2019

- Dale Gray – Wisconsin Dells
- Jerry Cognetta – Elmwood / UW Stout
- Jim Kivisto – Hurley
- Ken Franke – Kewaskum / Mayville
- Sandy Waltzer – Antigo

Class of 2020

- John Peterson – Madison
- Joel Claassen – Pius
- Gary Haus – Rice Lake
- James (Louie) Lawinger – Hamilton / Platteville
- Dan Bayreuther – Janesville Craig

Class of 2021

- Jeff Agnew – Fort Atkinson
- Rich Anderson – Germantown/ Brookfield East
- Jack Miller – Greenfield
- John Rosenberg – Muskego
- Ken Stilley – Private Pitching Coach / Carthage College
- Tim Whitford – Winneconne

WFSCA Hall Of Fame Members Continued

Class of 2022

- *Janel Batten—Oshkosh West, Appleton East
- *Patty Jansen—Watertown
- *Stephanie Hauser— WIAA Contributor
- *Jeff Hodgson—Belmont

Class of 2023

- Jane Briehl - River Valley
- Brian Phelps - Gilman
- Todd Felch - Wausau East / Mosinee
- Bill Greskiw - Burlington Catholic Central



Introducing Our 2024 Speakers

February 10th and 11th Chula Vista Resort

Sign up and register at: <https://www.wfsca.org/>

2024 COACHES CLINIC



Ashley Sunshine

OGX Co-Owner
Director of Pitching



John Tschida

Head Softball Coach
Saint Mary's University of Minnesota



Krista Stoker

OGX Co-Owner
Director of Hitting

SPEAKERS

Congratulations to the 2023 State Qualifiers and Champions

Division 1

Kaukauna - Tim Roehrig
Superior - Mike Sather
Menomonee Falls - Lou Sanicola
Oshkosh West - Tim Kohl
Sun Prairie East - Jamie Olson
Waterford - Ryan Krueger
Arrowhead - Emily Martin
Oak Creek - Jeff Trask

Champions: Kaukauna

Runner-up: Superior

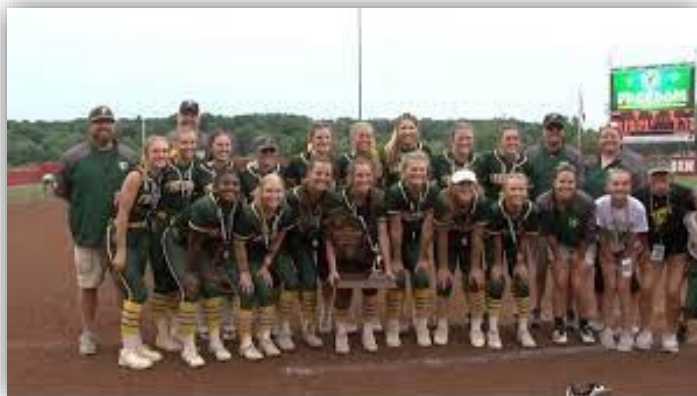


Division 2

Freedom - Tim Dietzen
New London - Tony Porath
 Melinda Hull
New Berlin Eisenhower - Kaelyn Hogan
Turner - Brian Maxwell

Champions: Freedom

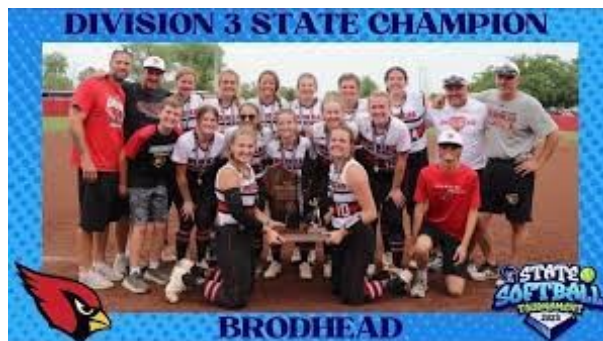
Runner-up: New London



2023 State Qualifiers and Champions, continued:**Division 3**

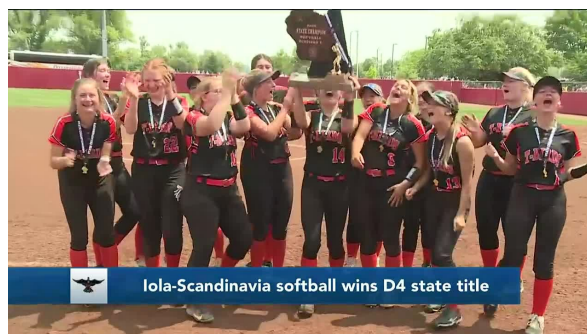
Broadhead - Steve Krupke
Mayville - Steve Pliner
Somerset - Josh Wells
Mishicot - Dawn Shimek

Champions: Broadhead
Runner-up: Mayville

**Division 4**

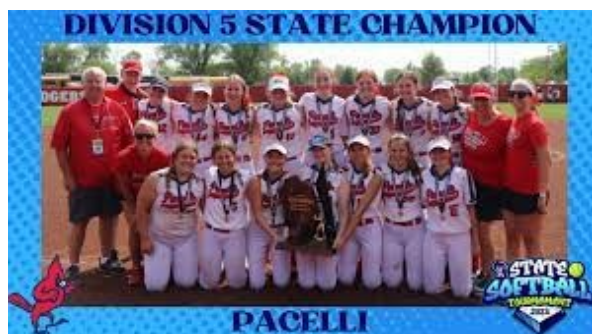
Iola-Scandinavia - Tom Anderson
Waterloo - Deb Braatz
Grantsburg - Don Bjelland
Stratford - Mandy Pankratz

Champions: Iola-Scandinavia
Runner-up: Waterloo

**Division 5**

Pacelli - Ann Molski
Oakfield - Rob Schaefer
Assumption - Charlie Nelson
 Rob Schill
McDonell Catholic Central - Rick Baier

Champions: Pacelli
Runner-up: Oakfield



Thank You, Coach.

When a player says, "Thank you, coach," I always say, "Thank you," back. The truth is, they don't have to show up, and when they do show up, they don't have to listen. We see and hear about the negative side of coaching so much. Players are transferring all the time. Parents are hard to please. Kids don't work as hard as they used to, they are selfish, and they aren't as tough as they used to be.

The complaints and excuses are endless, and many of them are valid.

But being a coach is one of the most important jobs in the world. We have the ability to impact lives in ways that no one else can, and we interact with more kids than most, so the quality of our coaching, teaching, and mentoring, and our ability to build meaningful relationships really can change the world.

When the going gets tough, remember how important and sacred the player/coach relationship is. Remember how coaches have impacted your life - positively and negatively. Remember that you are having the same impact on the lives of the athletes and families that you lead - positively and negatively.

Remember the kid who came to you with no skills and no ambition who became a star.

Remember the kid who would never talk who now talks your ear off every practice.

Remember the kid who cried at their first practice because they didn't want to be there and cried at the last practice because they didn't want it to end? Remember the phone calls and text messages with parents who were lost and didn't know what to do with their own kid, and who needed you to help guide them and to reassure them that everything was going to be okay.

Remember that team that you were afraid wouldn't win a single game but won the league?

Remember the team that you thought was going to win it all but couldn't win a game?

Remember the lessons that you learned in trying to keep those kids' heads up and to keep fighting through the losses. Remember the lessons that those kids taught you as you struggled to keep your head up and fight through the losses.

Remember the team meals and the team bus rides. Remember the pre-game talks and the post-game talks. Remember the big wins, and remember the devastating losses. Remember the winning streaks and how fun they were, remember the losing streaks and how you thought you would never win again, and remember the big wins that broke the never-ending losing streaks.

Remember the pep rallies, the cheerleaders, the roar of the crowd at the field when someone scored a goal, or hit a home run, or scored a touchdown. Remember the roar in the gym when someone gets a game-changing dunk, a momentum-shifting three, a big steal, or a game-winning shot at the buzzer?

There is nothing like being a coach. There is nothing like the feeling of appreciation and honor when a kid thanks you and when their parents thank you. When they do say thank you, make sure you say thank you back because they trusted you. They trusted you with their career. They trusted you with their kid. That is a big responsibility.

Be thankful.

www.aocoachesdiary.com