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SEPT. 10, 2022**



## NEWS: USA Softball announces updates to High Performance Program



OKLAHOMA CITY — USA Softball is excited to announce updates to the High-Performance Program (HPP), which will serve as a pipeline to the USA Softball National Team Program. In effort of providing an equal opportunity for players to show their talent, the HPP will focus on evaluating player skills and growing the game of softball in the United States, specifically in the Junior Olympic (JO) Girls’ Fast Pitch division.

“The High Performance Program was previously launched in 2021 during the middle of a difficult time with the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Chief Sport Development/Performance Officer, Chris Sebren. “USA Softball regions were limited at the time due to many areas of the country being shut down for events. Now that regions across the U.S. are back to hosting events again, we are excited to provide these latest updates in effort of providing a clearer path to our goal of naming age specific National Team Athlete Pools who will ultimately be considered in representing the U.S. in international competitions.”

## HIGH PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

Through the HPP, athletes around the country will have the chance to make a USA Softball National Team at multiple age groups. Working first at the regional level, the best talent will get identified to make regional teams, and potentially be selected to a USA Softball National Team.

The HPP includes **10 regions across the U.S.** with athletes ages 13u, 14u, 15u, 16u, 17u & 18u eligible to participate.

Through evaluation, placement, and re-evaluation each year, the HPP can identify athletes for advancement consideration — working to discover the **future Women's National Team athletes.**

Regional Identifier → Regional Invitational Event → National Selection Event



The evaluators for the Regional Identifier and Region Invitational Event will be current & former Women's National Team members.

**Evaluators**

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The HPP will consist of three levels: Regional Identifiers, Regional Invitational Events and National Selection Events. Athletes will begin by participating in a Regional Identifier where their skills will be evaluated and considered for the Regional Athlete Pool. Fifteen athletes from each age division and region will be selected to move on to the second phase: the Regional Invitational Event. Here, athletes will compete against other Regional Athlete Pools in a game-setting and be evaluated based on their play in competition. This stage of the HPP process will begin no earlier than June 6 and will conclude on or before September 11. The top athletes from each Regional Invitational Event will move on to the final stage of the HPP process – the National Selection Event where an 18-player roster for each age specific National Team will be announced at its conclusion. From these rosters, possible invitation for team participation in a USA Softball National Team trial, pool, or event will be extended based on World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) events for the following calendar year.

"The High-Performance Program provides a great opportunity for athletes across the U.S. to enter the pipeline to a USA Softball National Team Program for a chance to represent the U.S. on the international stage,"

said two-time Olympian and former USA Softball Women's National Team member, Kelly Kretschman. "We are excited to add the involvement of current and former Women's National Team members as HPP evaluators in effort of providing our participants with ratings and feedback from the best of the best. This program is a huge step in the right direction for our sport and we are excited to get things started for the 2022 season."

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Consisting of the 10 USA Softball Regions throughout the country, the HPP is inclusive to all that wish to participate. Age groups and tryout dates may differ from region to region based on seasonal and regional considerations; however, an athlete can attend an identifier outside of their region while still being considered for the Regional Athlete Pool in their respective area.

HPP Identifiers will be run by local coaches with athletes being evaluated by current and former USA Softball National Team players. Additionally, participating athletes will be exposed to USA Softball National Team coaches and selection committee members. Serving as an opportunity for athletes to compete against the nation's top Junior Olympic (JO) talent, HPP participants will have the opportunity to represent their region in competition in hopes of one day representing their country on an international stage as a part of the USA Softball National Team Program.

Additional information for the High Performance Program can be found at [HPP.USASoftball.com](https://www.hpp.usasoftball.com).

**About USA Softball**

USA Softball (USAS) is a 501(c)(3) not-for profit organization headquartered in Oklahoma City, Okla., and is designated as the National Governing Body (NGB) of Softball in the United States and a member of the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee. One of the nation's largest sports organizations, USAS sanctions competition through a network of Local Associations, which includes all 50 states and select metro associations. USAS is dedicated to providing people of all ages the opportunity to play the game they love at a variety of levels by offering recreational, league, tournament and competitive play for fast pitch, slow pitch, and modified pitch. USAS annually conducts thousands of tournaments throughout the country including over 100 National Championships. The USAS umpire program is among the nation's largest and are widely known as the best trained umpires in the game.

As the NGB for the sport of softball, USAS is responsible for training, equipping, and promoting the six USA Softball National Teams that compete in events such as the Olympics, Pan American Games, World Championships, and other international and domestic events. For more information on USAS, including its founding and history as the Amateur Softball Association of America (ASA), please visit, [www.USASoftball.com](http://www.USASoftball.com).



**Houston, TX**  
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