

CLEARING THE BASES

with Brett Helmer



H

ello Softballers,

First off, I'd just like to thank everyone who participated in the Toys for Tots tournament at Big League Dreams in Cathedral City, California in December. We had a great turnout, and I saw truckloads of toys being brought in for the kids (that's the draw for us). It was a great way to end the year.

I hope everyone had a fantastic and relaxing holiday season, but with the tournament season looming right around the corner, it's time to get back in the gyms and batting cages to hone your skills.

Speaking of skills, the 2010 Brett Helmer "Real Skilz" Manufacturer Challenge Tournaments kicked off Jan 29th in West Covina. Easton debuted its new series of ASA bats at the three-day competition, where softballers representing a variety of different manufacturers swung away with un-doctored Easton bats. We had a tremendous response to the new line, which includes the CV12, Stealth Speed XL and Synergy Speed BH. Look for these bats in stores now.

Also, look for a new series of 1.20 bats – made for all associations other than ASA, in retail stores by April 1st. I'll have one or two signature bats in this new line.

I had a great time at the ISA Winter Nationals in Winter Haven, Florida last month. Anything that gets me out of the cold of the Northeast, and into the sunshine of Florida is fantastic in my book. The A-level teams got a chance to show off their revamped rosters,

and see what they need to work on. I'm looking forward to the USSSA Nationals in Kissimmee, Florida this week. Teams from every division will have a five-six game guarantee, so everybody will get a chance to play.

The Long Haul Bombers Tour will start up again in April. Fellow Team Easton member Brian Wegman and I will take on teams from competing manufacturers Worth, Miken and DeMarini in a home run derby competition, which will take place at Major League Baseball stadiums around the nation. Brian and I plan to show what softball sluggers can do on an MLB field!

I talked a little last time about a new USSSA women's fastpitch league. I just wanted to reiterate that the league is definitely a go. This was a great idea by the USSSA, as the women's fastpitch market is booming right now. We, as manufacturers, will all be getting involved.

I wanted to finish up by telling everyone to be on the lookout at your regional tournaments for Easton trailers loaded with our baseball and softball gear. Brian Wegman's company – B2 Sports – is rolling an Easton trailer around the Cincinnati-area, while Sirene Johnson of our Enough Said women's team has one in Tallahassee. We're looking to set up roving trailers in Minnesota, Connecticut and maybe out west. Our aim is to set one up at all the major tournaments – I think it's going to go over huge.

Lastly, I'd like to thank all of you for taking the time to read "Clearing the Bases." I hope you had a great holiday season, and we'll see you on the field.

Happy Hitting,
Brett

