

(TRAINING ROOM)



with Dale Weiser

Hello, my name is Dale Weiser aka "DW" in the softball world, and I am a free lance softball reporter. My website SoftballCenter.com focuses on "upper level" men's slow pitch softball which is often referred to as the "Major" level. The website has tournament reports, player interview pages, news, statistics, pictures, video clips, and a message board. I will also bring you an update on the Major level softball news from around the country each issue in this column for Softball Magazine.

The 2011 season began "unofficially" as it always



does with the WSL "Bash 4 Cash" open division tournament and home run contest which is held in and around Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati, Ohio on March 18th through the 20th. This annual tournament features mostly "pick-up" style teams made up of a mix of Major level players and some of the top local talent. The home run contest this year was won by Combat's Robert "Robo" Blackburn. The tournament was played in less than favorable conditions with Nordkap Construction from Minnesota taking home the championship.

Above: Joey Formosa - GTL 3rd Baseman, Left: Geno Buck - Pitcher for GTL; Bottom: GTL before the Vegas Championship.
Next page, Top: Resmondo in the field; Bottom: Kevin Filby GTL Slugger





The majority of the Major level of softball today is played in the Conference USSSA which is a 38 team league generally considered to be the top teams in the country and its participants include four Major classified teams, nine 'A' teams, twenty two 'B' teams, and three 'C' teams.

Teams are classified by the past history of the players on their roster and by how many players they may have on the Major Player List. This list is comprised of the top 96 slow pitch players in the country. A 'Major' classified team can have an unlimited amount of players from this list. An 'A' team is allowed to have up to five Major players on their roster, a 'B' team can have one Major player on their roster, and 'C' and below teams cannot have any Major players on their rosters. Major and 'A' teams traditionally have players on their rosters from multiple States.

The "official" opening to the 2011 season began with a new Conference USSSA event called the "Sin City Classic" in Las Vegas, Nevada April 1st through the 3rd. GTL Cartel/DeMarini from Othello, Washington, the 2010 USSSA 'A' World Champs who moved up into the Major class for 2011 won the tournament with an undefeated 5-0 record. GTL followed this with a win in the first of two Conference tournaments in Kissimmee, Florida April 14th through 17th and were led in both by MVP pitcher Geno Buck. In the second Florida event, veteran softball power Resmondo-Specialty Tank/Worth based out of Winter Haven, Florida beat a tired GTL team in



the finals after GTL rattled off 8 straight wins in the loser's bracket to force the "if" game against Resmondo.

In the 4th Conference event of the season in Kansas City, Missouri, Resmondo went undefeated and beat upstart RFC/Hub's Pub/Syndicate in the finals. Resmondo followed this with a win in the "Texas Legends" tournament championship when they defeated rival GTL in both the winner's bracket championship and the finals over Mother's Day weekend.

So it looks as though most of the tournaments that the super powers GTL and Resmondo play in will be decided between them. Look for this trend to continue throughout the summer and into the post season.

Outside of Conference play, the biggest tournament so far in this young 2011 season was the Corky's Early Bird in Owatonna, Minnesota. This tournament was an ASA Open event and was won by Sonny's based out of Wyoming who defeated Rip City in the finals in front of the huge crowds traditionally witnessed at the Corky's tournament.

Here is a comprehensive "Upper" level schedule for 2011:

March 18-20 WSL "Bash 4 Cash" in KY; April 1-3 USSSA "Sin City Classic" in Las Vegas, NV; April 15-16 USSSA HOF Classic - Dual Tournament in Kissimmee, FL; April 29-May 1 USSSA "Cactus Classic" in Phoenix, AZ; April 29-May 1 USSSA "Mike Turney Memorial" in Kansas City, MO; May 6-8 USSSA "Texas Legends" in Euless, TX; May 6-8 ASA Corky's in Owatonna, MN; May 13-15 USSSA Columbus Major NIT in Columbus, IN; May 20-22 USSSA "Music City" Classic in Gallatin, TN; May 27-29 USSSA "Peach State Shootout" in Marietta, GA; June 3-5 USSSA "Mike Davis Memorial" in Concord, CA; June 3-5 USSSA "Space City Classic" in League City, TX; June 10-12 USSSA "Windy City" in Joliet, IL; June 17-19 USSSA Dudley Budweiser in Brooklyn Center, MN; June 24-26 ASA McQuade in Bismark, ND; June 24-26 USSSA Worth/TYJA Northeast in North Branford, CT; July 1-4 USSSA Busch Pepsi Classic in Sherwood, AR; July 1-4 USSSA MAJOR NIT I - Dual in Kent, WA; July 1-4 Pif "The Pif" in Montreal, Canada; July 8-10 USSSA Smoky Mountain Classic in Maryville, TN; July 15-17 ASA Firemans, MN; July 15-17 USSSA Cincinnati Major in Cincinnati, OH; July 22-24 USSSA Rocky Mountain Shootout in Aurora, CO; July 29-31 USSSA Carolina Shootout in Raleigh, NC; July 29-31 NSA 'A' World in Michigan City, IN; August 5-7 USSSA Worth Last Chance in Sterling Heights, MI; August 19-21 USSSA 'A' World in Kissimmee, FL; September 2-4 USSSA Conference Championships in Kissimmee, FL; September 9-11 WSL 'B' World in Panama City, FL; September 16-18 USSSA 'B' World in Kissimmee, FL; September 21-25 USSSA 'Major' World Series in Kissimmee, FL; October 1-2 ISA 'Elite' Worlds in Citizens Park, SC; October 1-2 ASA 'A' World in Oklahoma City, OK.

Current Conference USSSA Top 10 Rankings as of 5/9/2011: 1. Resmondo-Specialty Tank/ Worth, FL; 2. GTL Cartel/DeMarini, WA; 3. RFC/Hub's Pub/Syndicate, KS; 4. Jean Shoppe/Team TPS/D2E/Elite, TN; 5. Suncoast Reebok, FL; 6. Team Combat/LaserVision/D2E/Supreme, WA; 7. Sonny's/Beacon/Cowboys/Sidelines, WY; 8. Turano/Angle Inn/Sports55/LB, NJ; 9. Down2Earthsports.com/Worth, GA; 10. EWS/ShirtsandLogos/Drgraphx/Easton, IL.