



# West University Softball Association

*Fall 2020 Newsletter*

Winter is coming, and with the slight break from softball it is time to reflect on the success of our Fall Ball campaign. Despite the uncertainty that abounded when the league made plans to host a fall season in August, it was clear there was support from our league parents to conduct a fall season. While enrollment lagged our previous year's high-water mark, WUSA successfully supported 345

athletes this fall. Scheduling games during the week and optional practices on weekends was a change this fall season allowing a lighter number of touches many of our families were looking for as we



conducted the season amidst COVID. Due to favorable weather conditions and a responsible approach to COVID precautions, the league conducted 100% of its planned fall game schedule. WUSA introduced an end-of-season tournament culminating fall ball's developmental approach and primed the competitive spirits of players and coaches alike as a prelude to our spring season.

Speaking of spring, early bird registrations are off to a great start. It will be hard to top the record enrollment seen for spring 2020, when over 850 girls registered, but we expect a strong turnout. We look forward to implementing a

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few targeted changes that will make the softball experience even better for our players, coaches and parents. This newsletter highlights some of our structural and rule-based changes. From revised division splits and modest rule changes, to attention to COVID precautions and access to watching games remotely, the league is always looking to improve. This spring will be no different.

### **2021 Spring Season Division and Rules of Play Changes:**

#### New 7U Division Added with Rules of Play Updates

The former 8U division was one of WUSA's largest and most diverse skill level divisions with ~250 players. Starting the spring 2021, the former 8U division which had 7 year-old and 8 year-old girls will be separated into two age divisions based on the player's age on December 31<sup>st</sup>. Having distinct 7 year-old and 8 year-old divisions better aligns player skills and the softball experience for more parity. Slight changes in rules across the divisions will also safely grow a players' softball skills as they age up while balancing competitiveness of play. A rule change at the 7U division that addresses stopping play when the ball is thrown to the pitcher will prompt players to make the proper softball decision and address unfettered baserunning prompted by overthrows to the pitcher.

8U: With the formation of the 7U division, no rule changes are planned for 8U at this time. 8U girls play with an 11-inch, firm ball (DX5) and have coach pitch.

9U: Continues with one inning of girl pitch with subsequent innings of machine pitch using an 11-inch, hard ball

10U: Continues with two innings of girl pitch with subsequent innings of machine pitch using an 11-inch, hard ball

12U: All girl pitch using a 12-inch, hard ball.

## Safety Protocols:

As with every aspect of life, COVID introduced player safety concerns as we returned to play. Feedback from families to the league indicated that our managers, coaches and players did a good job of maintaining the



expectations of social distancing, hand hygiene, and communication about possible exposures. We thank our WUSA families for being forthcoming with health information so we were able to respond timely. We also received feedback requesting more attention to masking by fans at the games. Signage



was placed throughout the facilities to remind attendees of their personal responsibility to support this effort. We rely on the regular communications of team managers to help carry that message to their team's families and we expect our WUSA families to support our efforts. As we prepare for the spring season with a larger number of participants, these efforts will continue and our emphasis to families will remain for regular communications and adherence to social distancing, masking and hand hygiene when attending WUSA events.

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## **Facilities Updates:**

### **Game Cameras at South Campus and McGovern Fields**

After an interruption in service late this fall season, the WUSA game cameras should be back for the spring. No matter the reason, be it social distancing, out of town, or just plain pulled in three directions at once, don't miss a WUSA softball moment! WUSA game cameras allow parents, friends and family to watch practices and games live if they can't be there in person.



Take advantage of this great feature by linking to the “your gamecam” website [here](#). Contact your team’s manager for the gamecam login and password for the 2020 fall season. Share the [link](#) and password with friends and family.

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## **WUSA & University of St. Thomas Host College Softball at South Campus**

This fall, the [University of St. Thomas](#) began softball practices at south campus as they field a women's NCAA Division III softball program. WUSA's South Campus Field #4 will be UST's, "Home Field" starting Spring 2021.

WUSA is very excited for the opportunity to showcase our facilities and once again welcome collegiate-level softball to WUSA's South Campus.

UST's schedule has nine home games planned for South Campus in the



spring and WUSA players and families are welcome to attend games. Having collegiate level players practicing and playing games at WUSA facilities gives our league's younger players the opportunity to dream about playing at the collegiate level and perhaps a chance to pick up some skills that will help them on their way.

As part of our relationship with UST, coaching staff from UST will provide some instruction to our league's managers and coaches in an effort to help our league improve the capabilities of our managers and coaches to teach young players the proper, fundamental techniques for success in softball.

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## **Spring Season Off-the-Field Events Updates**

The WUSA Spring Season has traditionally included several cherished events such as the Season Opening Parade in West University, the Father-Daughter Dance, Adult Social, and Hit-a-Thon to name a few. Not only are these fun events to attend outside of softball for players and parents alike, they serve an important fundraising role for the league to support our scholarship program and maintenance of our facilities.

While these events are not likely to occur as in the past given the current health climate, our WUSA Auxiliary and board are looking at a number of creative, socially distanced, outdoor ideas to keep the off-the-field fun part of our spring season. Stay tuned for more on this... and it may not hurt to warm-up your cornhole throwing technique!

## **South Campus Upgrades**

Over the fall months, WUSA has continued work on planned updates to our facilities by attaining permits for the planned expansion of the South Campus concession building and the



addition of a covered pavilion between Fields 4&5. Other planned updates include the addition of dedicated warm-up space for pre-game throwing and pitching. These spaces will provide improved safety to players and spectators.

WUSA seeks donations to support this exciting expansion. If you are interested in contributing to WUSA's capital improvement projects, please contact us.

## Sponsorships

We remain deeply appreciative for our sponsors who help us offer so many great softball experiences to our WUSA families especially in these uncertain times. We ask that our league families support our sponsors so [link here](#) for our 2020 sponsor listing. WUSA has several sponsorship opportunities at different price points and can create customized sponsorship opportunities to meet a sponsor's specific interest. To learn more about our sponsorships and how you can become a WUSA sponsor, please [contact us](#).



From all of us at WUSA, enjoy the winter and we look forward to a great 2021 filled with amazing softball memories!

**Michael Liebl**

WUSA Executive Vice President

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- January 5<sup>th</sup> 2021: Spring Ball Registration Closes
- January 8, 9, 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021: Spring Player Evaluation Tryouts (7U ages and above) SignUp Genius will be sent the week of Jan 4<sup>th</sup>.
- January 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> 2021: Team Meetings
- January 16<sup>th</sup> 2020: Coaches Clinic at South Campus

If you missed any of our past newsletters, link to them here:

[Summer 2020](#)

[Spring 2020](#)

[Winter 2019](#)

[Fall 2019](#)



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