

Welcome to Southern Lakes Fastpitch. In this blog, both Jennifer and I will be discussing various aspects of our experiences with the ups and downs of travel softball, from a parent, coach, player and college player perspective. Words of wisdom, experiences (both positive and negative) from both perspectives, and fun stories and takeaways from countless hours of participating in travel sports.

For those who do not know us, I (Tim Ruesch) have been involved in youth sports all my adult life. I am a licensed official and have officiated thousands of games, whether it was baseball, basketball or our beloved softball! I have also coached youth sports for the past 16 years. My sons baseball teams and all three of my children's basketball teams were usually blessed with my presence. Most recently, I have coached travel softball for the past five years with Jennifer and her teams.

During that time, as an official, I have learned from some of the best coaches. How they interact with their teams, their assistant coaches. Their philosophies on playing time, balancing priorities of developing players and winning games. This does not necessarily meant that I learned from all positive aspects. There are games when I would leave and say to myself, "That coach does not realize how his actions are being taken." The same thing holds true as a coach, interacting with officials. Some are prepared, some are not. Some are approachable, some not. Some are having a good day, some are having an off day. Being understanding to all of these dynamics is something that I hope makes me a better coach and official.

My daughter, Jennifer, will be adding a lot of topics on here as well. Jennifer is currently a freshman at the University of Maine – Presque Isle (UMPI) where she will be playing softball. She will be discussing all aspects of her life, from the past to now. Items like the recruiting process, transitioning from high school to college sports, to high school and travel ball experiences.

If there are any topics that you would like us to discuss, shoot us a message at southernlakesfastpitch@gmail.com. We would love to hear what questions you might have.