



USA Softball of Michigan



Blues Across Michigan

USA Softball of Michigan Blues Across Michigan wants to recognize multiple USA Softball Umpires from the USA Softball of Michigan program every month for their accomplishments on the field in the local area, State or National Championships as well as how they have given back to the game off the field.

By being recognized does not always relate to the number of National or State Championships an umpire has participated in. This honor encompasses an umpire's accomplishments, both on and off the field, in their Local area and District in addition to their contributions at the State or National level.

These umpires represent what being a member of the USA Softball of Michigan umpire family is all about and bring attention to the widespread and diverse umpire community in our program across the State.

For February we are recognizing three individuals from our program that have given a lot of time in helping out at the local level and in some cases excelling at the National or International level



Larry "Lars" Schroeder

(Larry (r) receiving his USA Softball Gold Medal Award from District 6 UIC Don Newsted)

Larry 'Lars' Schroeder is a veteran of more than 40 years of umpiring softball in USA Softball Districts 5 & 6.

Umpiring mostly out of Ann Arbor and Saline, Lars started his career umpiring in the very competitive Men's Fast Pitch leagues in Ann Arbor. He then moved onto the Slow Pitch game where he continues to umpire today.

Despite having double hip-surgery a few years ago, Lars has resumed a busy schedule of games built around his work for the City of Ann Arbor.

From his work in Ann Arbor in the 1980's and 1990's, he earned a few assignments in the MASA State Tournaments. Even doing well at these tournaments, Lars decided to stay at the local recreational softball fields where he's logged over 13,000 games and is a local institution in Blue.

For his efforts, Lars was elected by his peers in 2018 to the District 6 Hall of Honor, to go along with his Gold Medal Award in the USA Softball Medals Program.

One of Schroeder's original and oldest partners in Fast and Slow Pitch, Don Newsted, who has worked hundreds of games with Schroeder in their careers, commented on the veteran umpire.

"Working with Lars has never been dull. He's got character, personality and a personal flair when he works games that has led to some interesting times, but he's also very passionate and dedicated in what he does on the field, and for the most part, does it very well."



Dave Selden-District 15

Dave Selden is a well-known Fast Pitch umpire from Reese in District 15. Dave began his umpiring career in the Thumb Fast Pitch league and still umpires in this league today. Dave has represented the USA Softball of Michigan program numerous times mostly at the Men's Major Fast Pitch Nationals.

Dave aspired to umpire at the highest level of the Men's Fast Pitch game on earth. This past year he was selected to represent the USA Softball of Michigan and the USA Softball program in Prague, Czech Republic at the Men's Fast Pitch World Championship. Dave who outworked, outhustled other umpires from around the world earned the Plate in the Championship game between Argentina and Japan. A very huge honor and became one of a few USA Softball Umpire of Michigan umpires to achieve this high honor.

With this honor, Dave was ultimately selected as the Umpire of the Year by the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) for 2019 to become the first USA Softball of Michigan umpire to achieve this honor.



Bill Ankoviak-District 15

Bill Ankoviak is a former long time Saginaw area Modified player and manager. Bill competed at the highest levels during his playing and coaching careers. Bill transitioned over to the USA Softball umpire family at the end of his playing career. He began umpiring at the local league and state tournament level.

In 2013, Bill was selected as an umpire for the 10 Man Modified National Championship in Port Huron. This was the first of many National Championships in the Modified game. Bill has also been selected for Modified National Championships in Fond Du Loc, WI, Rockford, MI, and most recently in North Branford, CT. in 2019.

After the 10 Man Modified Championship in 2019 Bill earned his Elite Umpire Status. Bill's hard work and dedication to perfecting his game helped earn this status and prestigious honor.

Congratulations to Larry Schroeder, Dave Selden, and Bill Ankoviak for being recognized as our Blues across Michigan umpires for this month. Thank you for what you do at the local level in representing the USA Softball of Michigan program.