

HOW WE GOT HERE...

by Paul Cooke
2020.10.20

It was more than 23 years ago when I first stumbled upon the unique and wonderful world of competitive fast pitch Wiffle®Ball.

It happened unexpectedly. My brother and I typed “wiffleball” into an internet search engine at the suggestion of our dad, since we had recently played a lot of plastic baseball in front of the house. We did not expect to find much and were stunned when we did. Up popped a dozen or so websites dedicated to players, teams, leagues, tournaments, and equipment from all cross the United States. We were hooked, instantly.

The first website that appeared in the search was for the North American Wiffleball Championship. We browsed through it - our jaws hanging somewhere near our feet as we read through page by page - until coming to an advertisement the 1997 tournament. Up top was a quote - attributed only to “Brad from El Fuego”. More than 20 years later, I still think about this quote often. Nothing I have read since has captured the goofy but inclusive essence of the competitive Wiffle®Ball player body quite like it.

“I still can’t believe the mix of stoners, jocks, and steel workers that amass for such a spectacle.”

In many ways, the game of competitive Wiffle®Ball is as whimsical as the ball that spawned it. The timeless American toy was invented by David N. Mullaney of Shelton, Connecticut in 1953. So ubiquitous is the Wiffle®Ball that the term is often used as a catch-all for any plastic baseball, even though the Wiffle®Ball is a very specific, unique, and trademarked product.

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Since its invention, the ball has provided generations of children a taste of what it is like of to be a professional-level baseball player. It is a ball designed to eliminate barriers. Only have a narrow street or small yard to play in? No problem! You only have yourself and a couple of friends to play with? That is not an issue either. You do not have to be a

great athlete or a naturally gifted one to learn to throw a curveball, slider, drop pitch, or riser that beats what even the best major leaguers can do with a hardball. All that is needed is time, practice, and perseverance.

“One of the deepest joys, though, is that ‘wiffle’ repays those who take it to heart,” wrote the *Baltimore Sun*’s Jonathan Pitts in a 2002 article on competitive Wiffle®Ball.

Given the inclusive nature of the ball, it should come as little surprise that the backgrounds of the competitive player body are rather diverse. There is not a Wiffle®Ball player archetype. Competitive wifflers are so wide-ranging that - as El Fuego’s “Brad” observed nearly a quarter-century ago - you are just as likely to find a nine-to-five blue collar worker or burnout at a major tournament as you are a lifetime athlete.

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This is not to imply that competitive Wiffle®Ball is not actually that *competitive*. The beauty of the sport is that the guy drinking a beer and smoking a cigarette in between at bats is just as likely to be an upper level and highly-driven player as the guy on the other team who looks like he lives at the gym. When it comes to the fast pitch version of the game, the ball allows people of all backgrounds to compete in a highly competitive and skilled competition if they put the work in. The players come from all walks of life, but that does not mean that anyone can do it, not without the previously mentioned time, practice, and perseverance.

Because the ball was invented with kids in mind and is still most wildly used for that purpose, there is a common misconception that adults playing competitive Wiffle®Ball are stuck in a state of arrested development or suffering from Peter Pan syndrome. When most people think

of Wiffle®Ball, they think of kids or families harmlessly tossing the ball around on the beach or at a family picnic. That is one great use for the ball. Competitive fast pitch Wiffle®Ball is another. They are only the same in as much as they use the same tool(s).

The inimitable Jerome “The Legend” Coyle – himself a former highly competitive player, who likely lands in a cross-section of the steel worker/stoner categories from El Fuego Brad’s groupings – had this to say about that dichotomy.

“It’s a kid’s toy,” Coyle told Javier Solano of the *Newport News Virginia Press* in 1993. *“But in the hands of an adult, it’s not a kid’s game.”*

While people come to the sport for a variety of reasons – many, for example, are drawn in by the tightly knit communal aspect – virtually all come in part because of the competitive itch that Wiffle®Ball can scratch. How else do you explain players leaving their homes at 3:00 AM on a Saturday morning and driving 5 hours to *pay* to play all day in 95-degree heat? Or how about those that board a plane multiple times a year just for a chance to play players from other parts of the country? Those of us that play have gotten a lot out of Wiffle®Ball – lifelong friendships, unforgettable memories – but the chance to compete in a skilled and competitive sport is almost always a chief motivating factor.

That undying thirst for Wiffle®Ball competition eventually played out to its logical conclusion – an annual nationwide tournament to crown the

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best team in the sport. When players and teams outgrow being the best in their neighborhood, then their local league, and then their greater geographic region, there is only one other place left to go to satisfy that competitive drive.

Take for example Rick Ferroli of Hanover, Massachusetts. In 1977, Ferroli – at the time, a college baseball player – started an 8-person Wiffle®Ball league with his friends to pass the lazy summer evenings. That initial concept eventually turned into an 8-team league, which then gave way to week-long tournaments with teams traveling

from outside the immediate Hanover area. By 1989, Ferroli hosted an annual Massachusetts State Tournament that regularly attracted twenty or more teams from around the Bay State. His team - the Hanover Pirates - were also regularly winning those tournaments. Naturally, Ferroli saw a national tournament as the next step for both his competitive and promotional aspirations. Thanks to his unique-for-the-time backyard field and significant media coverage, Ferroli successfully promoted a 32-team national in August of 1989. For Wiffle®Ball players that play the no-baserunning running, legal ball alteration style of the game predominately found in the northeast, that 1989 tournament is generally considered the first National Championship.

In the thirty-one years that followed, only five years (1993-1994, 1998-2000) passed without a National Championship-branded tournament under that general style of gameplay. Only two of those years (1993 and 1994) came and went without a summer-defining national event, even if no tournament officially promoted itself as a National Championship. The promoters have changed over the years, but that National Championship has remained a fixture of the otherwise fragmented, start-stop Wiffle®Ball scene.

The fragmented nature of competitive Wiffle®Ball can – like most anything else related to it – be traced to the game’s backyard, childhood roots. Wiffle®Ball, Inc. has largely avoided running their own events or even telling anyone how to play. They have a set of suggested rules but as anyone who was ever a kid knows, kids do not pay any mind to suggested rules. You could survey 30 players at this National Championship Tournament and assuming none are related or childhood friends, you would likely get 30 different responses to how they played Wiffle®Ball growing up. Few of us grew up playing the same way in our backyards and that rule variation follows us when we leave the backyard.

There are a million ways to play Wiffle®Ball and no single one is any less valid than another. While uniformity has its benefits, there is a certain charm to Wiffle®Ball’s stylistic diversity. Just like one professional poker player may prefer Texas Hold ‘Em over Omaha High-Low and another player might have the opposite opinion, so too may one wiffler prefer base running and yellow bats and another might prefer no base running and bigger barreled bats. There are different variants of competitive Wiffle®Ball that are attractive to different people. Variety is a great thing to be embraced, not a detriment.

Due to the competitive drive of Wiffle®Ball players – and sometimes promoters as well – barriers have often been erected along organizational, stylistic, or even geographical lines. When that occurs, it is antithetical to the purpose of the Wiffle®Ball, which is inclusion. As the name implies, United Wiffle®Ball’s goal is to open the style of Wiffle®Ball it promotes – a style that shrunk in popularity of much of the prior decade – to a wider, more inclusive group of Wiffle® enthusiasts. Rather than erect barriers, the goal is to break them down.

It is a goal that is a long way away from truly being achieved, but the inaugural United Wiffle®Ball National Championship at PeoplesBank Park is hopefully a successful first step in that direction. The event is sold out at 40 teams, marking the first time in more than a decade that a fast pitch National Championship has attracted participation of that size. More importantly, the participation is diverse. Teams that have never played fast pitch competitively, teams that have never not run the bases, and teams from all parts of the country are scheduled to participate. In doing so, styles and strategies will meet head-on in a way rarely ever seen in the history of competitive Wiffle®Ball. This is – in that way as well as others – truly an unprecedented event.

It is an unprecedented event for an unprecedented year. So much changed so quickly in 2020, including our ability to socialize in all of the normal ways we had come to take for granted. To that end, Wiffle®Ball has been a comforting presence for so many this summer. All over the country, wifflers – albeit, a little later than normal – were able to enjoy their favorite past time. It wasn’t always the same. There were more masks, more bottles of hand sanitizer, and fewer post-game handshakes. But at the end of the day Wiffle®Ball was still Wiffle®Ball and in this year, that qualifies as something worth celebrating. We hope that this even provides one last opportunity this year to compete, to socialize (while wearing a mask and staying six feet apart!) and enjoy all that competitive Wiffle®Ball has to offer.

MAX...

By Jim McElhatton

Four years ago, my sons, Sawyer and “Shoeless” Jackson, now 14 and 16, and I formed a barnstorming wiffle ball team, Squad 51. Since then, we have played in tournaments from New York down to Georgia. We’ve logged many thousands of miles and have lost far more times than we’ve won (though we’ve come close to stealing a tournament or two).

All along the way, what’s most important, is that we’ve spent time together. Early on in our journey, at every stop along the way, even at tournaments where we found ourselves far over our heads, the wiffle community has treated us with great respect and camaraderie.

Not long after his journey began, we played in a tournament up near Yonkers where there were a lot of teams from the Golden Stick league. When I showed up with my middle school age kids and our then team manager/driver (my leadfooted mom, Dolores) an organizer asked if we were lost. Nope, I said. We’re here to play.

By the end of the night, other teams were offering my mom adult beverages and players were taking my sons aside to show them how to scuff a ball. I don’t think we scored a run all night, but it was about as much fun as I have ever had.

My mom, who came along on trips with us, passed away not longer after that. But one day we were reminiscing and laughing about the trip. Later, she sent me an email. “We’ll always have Yonkers,” she wrote. And that’s just one reason why wiffle ball is so important to me.

Here’s another: two years ago, we played in a tournament in Sea Isle City, New Jersey. There had to be at least 60 teams. We did OK. I think we went 1-3. But what I remember most is tossing the ball between games to my four year old, Max. And worrying.

By then, we knew there was something amiss. He was struggling. His right side had become increasingly weak, and doctors weren’t sure why.

One week later, after what we thought was going to be a routine MRI, Max was rushed into the hospital and diagnosed with a brain tumor. He was placed on chemo. He’s now on his third treatment regimen.

This is all you need to know about Max: After coming home from the hospital in June following two emergency surgeries, he literally couldn't take more than a few steps unaided. But he wasn't interested in asking why me? Instead, on his first night home, he asked us, "Heh, can we practice walking tomorrow?"

He didn't care to look back, he just wanted to put in the work and get it all back.

Right now, he is doing much, much better.

Four days ago, he asked me to play wiffle ball. There are challenges ahead. But I believe in hope, science, medicine, faith, family and friends. I believe that through all of this, Max will be out there with us again one day soon. Not just watching, but playing on Squad 51, too. He's got a beautiful, even swing. And I hope you all get to see that swing soon enough.

After Tim Cooke called me several weeks back asking if Max would throw out the first pitch at this weekend's tournament, it's hard to put in words what it meant to me and to my family. I'm so proud of him, of his brothers, too.

I also am so very thankful to the wiffle community at large for caring. So many of you, teams and players we've met along the way, have reached out to ask how he's doing or have posted something nice on social media. Getting the call asking Max to throw out the first pitch was moving beyond words.

Beyond this weekend, though, I have a feeling we'll be back someday. Hang on, because he's still only in the first grade. But give him a little time.

I know he and his brothers and I will all be out there one day playing some of you. And one other thing. You better be ready. Because this kid can hit.

**603 ALL-STARS
NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**2008 Fast Plastic National Champions
2009 Fast Plastic National Runner Up
2010 Golden Stick Wiffle®Ball League National Runner Up
2012 GSWL National Runner Up
2013 GSWL Massachusetts Regional Champions
2015 GSWL National Champions [Draft Tournament]**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Gary Lavoie (c) – RHP/RHB – Age 38 – New Hampshire

Paul Coutoumas – RHP/RHB – Age 38 – Massachusetts

Rob Donahue – RHP/RHB – Age 35 – New Hampshire

Patrick Leahy – RHP/RHB – Age 36 – Massachusetts

John Hickey – RHP/RHB – Age 33 – Massachusetts

For a 5-year period a decade ago, the fast pitch national championship ran through the 603 All-Stars.

The New Hampshire-based team first arrived on the national scene in 2004 at the Fast Plastic NCT and slowly worked their way up through the ranks, culminating with a national championship in 2008. That victory was the start of a remarkable five year run where 603 finished first or second at the fast pitch national championship four times. With a GSWL Massachusetts regional championship in 2013 and a second national title won at the draft style 2015 GSWL national tournament to their name, the 603 All-Stars are arguably the most accomplished fast pitch Wiffle®Ball franchise of all time.

603's roster remains relatively intact from their heyday. Four of the five players of their 2020 United Wiffle®Ball tournament roster played on the 2008 national championship team. A key to their past successes has been the ability and luxury to spread tournament innings out amongst three or four different pitchers, which will likely be the case this October as well. The 603 All-Stars' lineup runs similarly deep, with Lavoie in particular constituting a very tough out. None of the 603 All-Star players have been very active recently, as only Coutoumas played regularly in 2019 and only Donahue – with a few games in GSWL Pro in 2019 – has seen any recent fast pitch action. Whether that time off results in the team being well-rested or rusty will likely go a long way in determining their fate this October.

If the 603 All-Stars do leave Pennsylvania as the United Wiffle®Ball national champions – and in the process, become the only franchise with national fast pitch titles in three different decades – there will be little doubt as to their standing amongst the all-time greats.

**ANARCHY
LOUISIANA**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Ben Schafer (c) – RHB/RHP – Age 19 – Louisiana

Daniel Hargaden – RHB – Age 23 – New York

Ryker Holloway – RHP/RHB – Age 17 – Louisiana

Representing Louisiana's Sycamore Park Wiffle®Ball League, this will be – depending on how one looks at it – either the second or third national tournament for Anarchy. Ben Schafer and Ryker Holloway - along with two other SPW players - competed in the 2018 Fast Plastic tournament in Frisco, Texas, but under the moniker the Renegades. Last year, Schafer led a SPW squad at Fast Plastic in Austin, Texas, but was the sole SPW player present. This year, Holloway returns to give Anarchy more of an SPW feel. The team still went outside of Louisiana for their 2020 squad, picking up Daniel Hargaden of the NY Dark Knights to give them a third.

As their most talent pitcher, Holloway holds the keys to Anarchy's tournament success. With a format that both encourages and benefits teams to throw upper tier pitchers early, Anarchy will not be at as big of a disadvantage as they otherwise might have been if they choose to hand the ball to Ryker right out of the gate. As with several other teams in similar situations, Anarchy's clearest path to Sunday is to get two wins out of their talented young pitch in the first two games and then roll the dice that he has enough left on Sunday to pull an upset or two.



BLACK DOG COUNTRY CLUB

MASSACHUSETTS

2016 GSWL Hall of Fame Classic Champions

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Matt Griffin (c) – RHP/RHB – Age 33 – Massachusetts

2008 Fast Plastic national championship runner up; 2012 Ultimate Wiffler; 2014 GSWL fast pitch national championship runner up; 2017 Fast Plastic national championship runner up

Brian DiNapoli – RHP/LHB – Age 30 – Massachusetts

2011, 2012 GSWL fast pitch national champion; 2014 GSWL fast pitch national runner up; 2015 GSWL fast pitch national runner up

Collin Prentiss – RHP/RHB – Age 22 – Massachusetts

Jay Ventresca – LHP/LHB – Age 44 – New Jersey

2002 USPPBA national runner up; 2013 GSWL fast pitch national runner up

Dan Whitener – RHP/RHB – Age 24 - Virginia

2018 Palisades WBL Cy Young

Last year in Cedar Park, Texas - on the second and final day of the 2019 Fast Plastic national championship - Remember the Name found themselves on the threshold of playing for a national championship. Up by a score of 4-1, the team needed only six outs to eliminate the two-time defending champions, C4, and punch their ticket to the finals. It was not to be, however, and by the time the 5th inning ended RTN's lead was gone. C4 closed out the game in the top half of the 6th and Remember the Name was left pondering how a victory that they had in hand had so quickly slipped through their grasp.

Losing a tournament in that fashion is going to leave a bad taste in the mouth of any team. Perhaps that is why team captain Matty Griffin is - at least for 2020 - pushing "Remember the Name" aside in favor of another go-to team moniker of his, Black Dog Country Club. While the name may have changed, the roster for the 2020 BDCC squad is largely the same as the 2019 RTN roster. In addition to Griffin, Brian DiNapoli and Dan Whitener are back for another go around. They will be joined by veteran hitter Jay Ventresca and New England Yard mainstay, Collin Prentiss.

This four-man roster does not have many holes and as a result, several of BDCC's peers have tabbed them as a pre-tournament favorite. The roster has a little bit of everything. Ventresca is as good and as experienced a hitter as you will find. Prentiss brings both youth and upside. Although his fast pitch experience is limited, his 5 runs allowed in 15 fast pitching innings in 2019 in GSWL Pro indicates he might have something. Griffin and DiNapoli are both veteran two-way players and form an enviable two-man core. Whitener possesses what might be the sport's most talented arm and has been a threat at the plate all summer long. Given all of that, it is not difficult to see why BDCC is getting so much pre-tournament love from fellow players and pundits.

BOMB SQUAD

NEW YORK

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Devin Torres (c) – RHP/LHB – Age 24 – New York
2019, 2020 Mid Atlantic Champion

Brendan Black – RHP/RHB – Age 27 – Massachusetts

Rich Guillod – RHP/RHB – Age 35 – New York

Rob Piervinanzi – RHB – Age 35 – New York

Mike Stiles – RHP/RHB – Age 19 - New York

One of the more sought-after players during the National Championship registration period was Devin Torres. While free agent players both equal and below Torres in talent signed on with quality teams, Devin himself stayed on the sidelines. Sueño checked in. The Meats had legitimate interest. Several other teams inquired. Yet Torres was hesitant to commit, which fueled persistent rumors that he intended to form his own team. Those rumors eventually proved true with the formation of the Bomb Squad.

Along with Torres, veteran New York wiffers Rich Guillod and Rob “Wiffman” Piervinanzi form the core of the Bomb Squad. Guillod was one of the cornerstones of the Palisades Wiffle®Ball League and will bring a fresh quality arm – not to mention a dangerous bat – with him to York. Guillod will be an interesting player to follow as he carries the enviable combination of experience and freshness, having stayed on the sidelines this year. Wiffman has the rep has one of the sport’s most dangerous hitters but he too has been relatively quiet when it comes to fast pitch wiffs the past two summers. If Wiffman locks in early, the Bomb Squad will be a very tough lineup to navigate through.

Rounding out the roster is one returning veteran and one fast pitch rookie. Brendan Black was a teammate of Piervinanzi’s on the MA Diablos in Golden Stick a decade ago. Known for his velocity, Black – even more so than Guillod – falls into the “experienced, but well rested” category, giving the Bomb Squad another potential ace up their sleeve. On the end of the spectrum is Mike Stiles, who will be making his fast pitch debut under the bright lights in York. Stiles does have Yard experience and while fooling around between games he has shown off natural velocity that could make him a weapon for the Bomb Squad.

Both Stiles and Black - and perhaps to a lesser extent Guillod as well - bring a ton of upside to their team but also a relatively high amount of uncertainty from a pitching perspective. Torres is more of a sure thing in that they know roughly what they will get from the back-to-back Mid Atlantic champion. This presents a philosophical rotation question for the Bomb Squad - do they go with their most reliable option early and roll the dice late or the other way around? The good news is that they *do* have a lot of options - and high upside ones at that - available for to them. If thinks click into place with one or two of the non-Torres pitchers, this team is looking a long tournament run.

**BOOMSTIX
LONG ISLAND**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Nick Tullo (c) – RHB – Age 35 – New York

Tyler Cann – RHP/RHB – Age 22 – New York

Ryan Petrone – RHP/RHB – Age 22 – New York

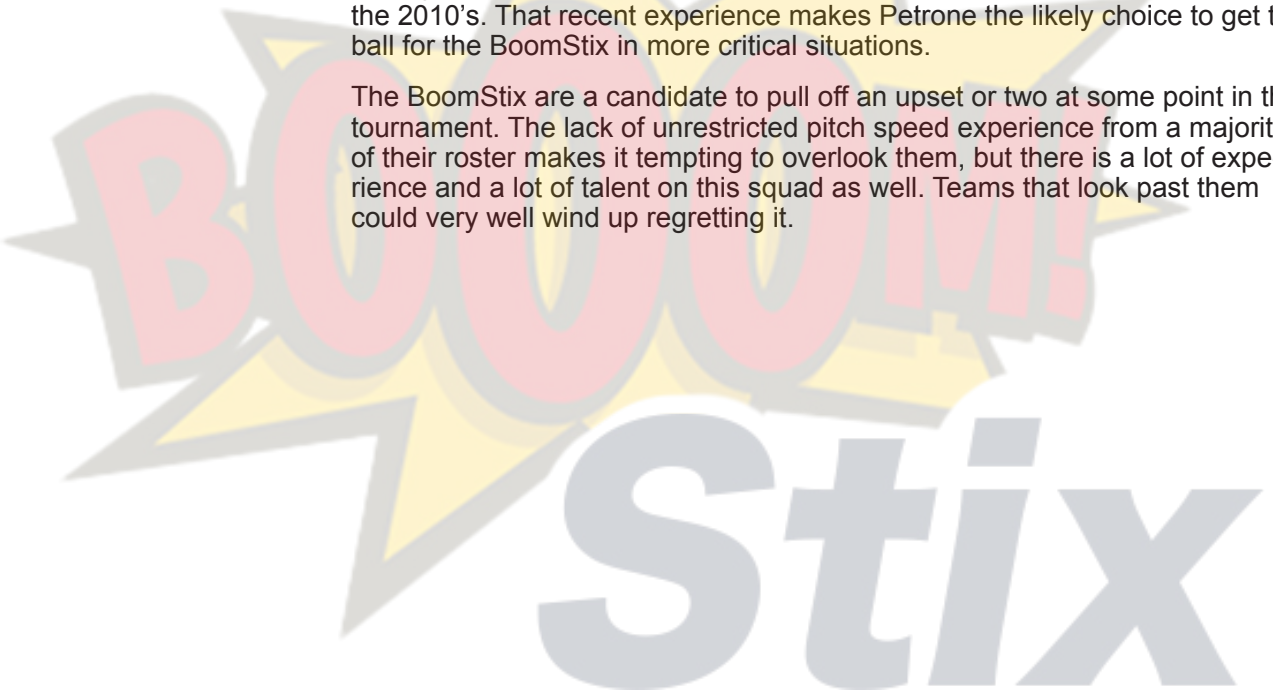
Matt Valenti – RHB/RHP – Age 24 - New York

Mike Valenti – RHP/RHB – Age 26 - New York

A trio of players from the NY Dark Knights (GSWL NY Yard) – Tyler Cann, Matt Valenti and Mike Valenti – comprise the core of the BoomStix roster. The Dark Knights slowly made their way up the ranks in the NY Yard scene between 2015 and 2018 before experiencing a breakout season in 2019. That year the Knights captured their first Super Qualifier in May and made it to the finals at two other NY Yard SQ's. While they have not quite reached those same heights in 2020, they continue to be a consistently competitive presence at the Long Island tournaments. Tyler Cann has been that team's best pitcher thus far in 2020 and he is bullish on his chances of being able to get hitters out in an unrestricted pitch speed environment. After two years of being the workhorse of the Knights' pitching staff, Mike Valenti has struggled at times in 2020, but will be another pitching option for the BoomStix in Pennsylvania. Both Valenti brothers and Cann are quality hitters in Yard. Most importantly of all, perhaps, is that these three – along with their other Dark Knight teammates – have proven to be unafraid of a challenge and capable to grinding through a tournament. Those are attributes that will suit them well as they embark on their first major fast pitch experience.

The other two members of the BoomStix roster should make up for any fast pitch experience that the others lack. Nick "Niffman" Tullo is the veteran of the group with over a decade of high-level experience in multiple styles and formats. Ryan Petrone has the most recent fast pitch experience of the five, having competed in Palisades WBL for several seasons in the latter half of the 2010's. That recent experience makes Petrone the likely choice to get the ball for the BoomStix in more critical situations.

The BoomStix are a candidate to pull off an upset or two at some point in the tournament. The lack of unrestricted pitch speed experience from a majority of their roster makes it tempting to overlook them, but there is a lot of experience and a lot of talent on this squad as well. Teams that look past them could very well wind up regretting it.



**BRONX ROYALS
NEW YORK**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Nick Martinez (c) - RHB - Age 28 - New York

Vin Lea – RHP/RHB – Age 23 – New York
2019 NWLA Tournament champion

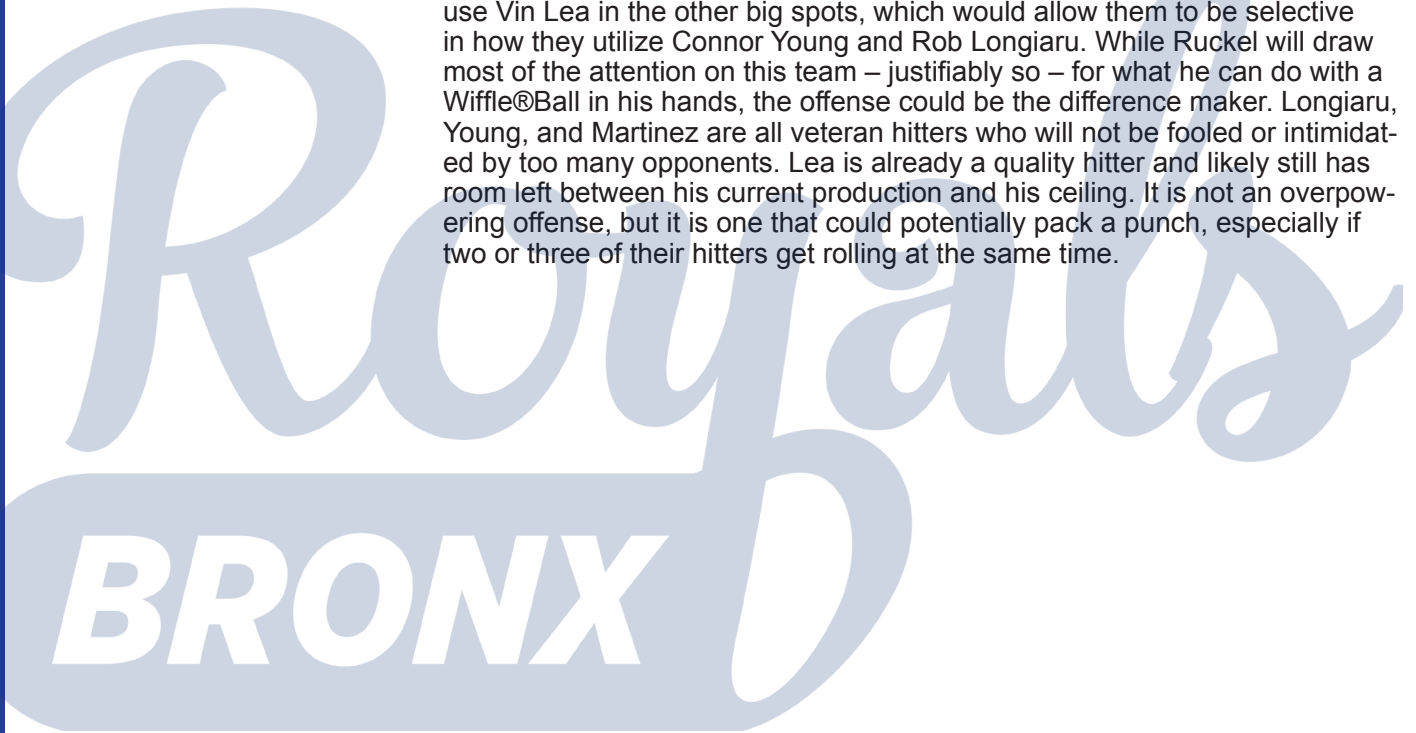
Rob Longiaru - RHP/RHB - Age 33 - New York

Cooper Ruckel - RHP/RHB - Age 19 - Texas
2019 Fast Plastic national championship Cy Young winner

Connor Young - RHP/LHB - Age 23 - New Jersey
2019, 2020 Mid Atlantic Wiffle® champion; 2019 RPWL champion; 2019 RPWL MVP

All four members of the 2019 Bronx Royals squad that finished in the top half of the Fast Plastic NCT field are back together for the 2020 United Wiffle®Ball National Championship. In addition to those returning players, the Royals went outside and added Connor Young to take advantage of the fifth roster spot available at this tournament. The resulting roster is an eclectic yet well-rounded mix of young players, veterans, bats, and arms.

After two years of turning heads in Texas at Fast Plastic but seeing his teams make relatively early exits, Cooper Ruckel helped lead the Royals to a top eight appearance in 2019 while also earning the tournament pitching award. The Royals could turn to Ruckel early and often during the tournament and use Vin Lea in the other big spots, which would allow them to be selective in how they utilize Connor Young and Rob Longiaru. While Ruckel will draw most of the attention on this team – justifiably so – for what he can do with a Wiffle®Ball in his hands, the offense could be the difference maker. Longiaru, Young, and Martinez are all veteran hitters who will not be fooled or intimidated by too many opponents. Lea is already a quality hitter and likely still has room left between his current production and his ceiling. It is not an overpowering offense, but it is one that could potentially pack a punch, especially if two or three of their hitters get rolling at the same time.



**BWBL TORENADERS
WILKES-BARRE, PENNSYLVANIA**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Steve Dotzel (c) – RHP/RHB – Age 29 – Pennsylvania

Zach Artim – RHP/RHB – Age 32 – Pennsylvania

Mark Belles – RHB – Age 31 – Pennsylvania

Chris Faulkner – RHP/LHB – Age 28 – Pennsylvania

Alex Fuchylo – RHP/RHB – Age 30 – Pennsylvania

The Torenaders are one of two teams out of the Wilkes-Barre (PA) based [Backyard Wiffle®Ball League](#) that are scheduled to compete in this year's United Wiffle®Ball National Championship Tournament. The Torenaders' roster is full of veteran BWBL players all of whom have recent – and sometimes extensive – NWLA Tournament experience as members of the BWBL Breaker Boys.

The team will be led on the mound by veteran pitcher Zach Artim. A fierce competitor, Artim owns a career 2.20 ERA in 79 innings pitched over the course of seven NWLA Tournaments (including three regional events). During the middle portion of the 2010's, Artim was one of the best pitchers in the NWLA Tournament. Last year, he was a late addition to the BWBL Breaker Boys' tournament roster and struck out 30 batters over 11 1/3 innings pitched versus the KWL Keggars and OCWA Freaky Franchise. He might have lost a little zip on his pitches in recent years but was still able to get hitters out at a good rate in 2019. Perhaps most importantly, Artim is a big-time competitor who is no doubt relishing the opportunity to battle the best in October.

The Torenaders have a lot experience elsewhere on their roster as well. Each rostered player has recent fast pitch experience at the NWLA Tournament. Team captain Steve Dotzel gives the Torenaders another veteran pitching option. The big right-hander sat out the NWLA Tournament in 2019 but had quite a bit of success between 2015 and 2018 in that event. Mark Belles has competed at the NWLA Tournament (or NWLA Tournament regionals) every year since 2015 and will be looked upon to contribute both offensively and defensively. Chris Faulkner and Alex Fuchylo each have one year of NWLA Tournament experience on their resumes. Both are potential pitching options for the Torenaders, but they will likely slot behind Artim and Dotzel on the depth chart.

C4
CONNECTICUT/PENNSYLVANIA
2017, 2018, 2019 Fast Plastic National Champions

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Ed Packer (c) - LHB - Pennsylvania
2013-2014 Golden Stick Wiffle®Ball League fast pitch national champion

Kevin Norris - RHP/RHB - Connecticut
*2013-2014 Golden Stick Wiffle®Ball League fast pitch national champion;
2019 Fast Plastic MVP*

Sean Steffy - RHP/RHB - Pennsylvania
2013 Golden Stick Wiffle®Ball national runner up; 2017 Fast Plastic MVP

Ty Wegrzyn - RHP/RHB - Connecticut
*2013-2014 Golden Stick Wiffle®Ball League fast pitch national champion;
2018 Fast Plastic MVP*

If C4 walks out of PeoplesBank Park this October the inaugural United Wiffle®Ball champions, they will have made fast pitch Wiffle®Ball history. Under even the broadest definitions of what constitutes a fast pitch national championship, no team has won national titles in four consecutive years. Only Team Trenton (winners of the Cincinnati-based North American Wiffle®Ball Championship in 1995, 1996, and 1997) and the Wood 'n Bats (winners of the Wiffle Up! World Series from 2005 through 2007) captured three straight national fast pitch titles. A win this October would put C4 in a class of their own – assuming, of course, that they are not already there.

The 3x defending champs are coming off the most challenging and impressive tournament win of their run. C4 faced a good deal of adversity at the 2019 Fast Plastic tournament and overcame all of it. Kevin Norris' MVP performance added to his resume as potentially the greatest player of all time. Norris took the ball for C4 several times at the 2019 Fast Plastic tournament and was the pitcher of record in the championship game. Sean Steffy also took on a different role in 2019, taking on a heavy workload for his team before the single elimination round and stepping up when the need presented itself. Ed Packer had his best offensive tournament of C4's three-year tenure while 2018 Fast Plastic tournament MVP, Ty Wegrzyn, battled through uncharacteristic pitching struggles but still contributed significantly to all facets of C4's third straight title win. What 2019 proved is that there is no game planning for C4. They are equipped to handle – and thrive in – any circumstances. However, they also have as big of a target on their back as any team ever has.

C4 had a relatively low-key summer but did compete as a foursome for the first time outside of a national championship at Mid Atlantic's Opening Day Tournament in June. From a fast pitch perspective - yet ANOTHER Yard national title notwithstanding - Norris and Wegrzyn had their least strenuous fast pitch season in many years. In theory that should have both at their freshest coming into this year's national championship than they have in (at least) several years.

Will C4 make fast pitch history or are the odds this time just too overwhelming to overcome?

**CHAOS
MASSACHUSETTS**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

John Lebrun (c) – RHB – Age 23 – Massachusetts

Adam Bridgeo – RHP/RHB – Age 18 – Massachusetts

Blake Hoffman – LHP/LHB – Age 22 – Ohio
2018 MAW Rookie of the Year

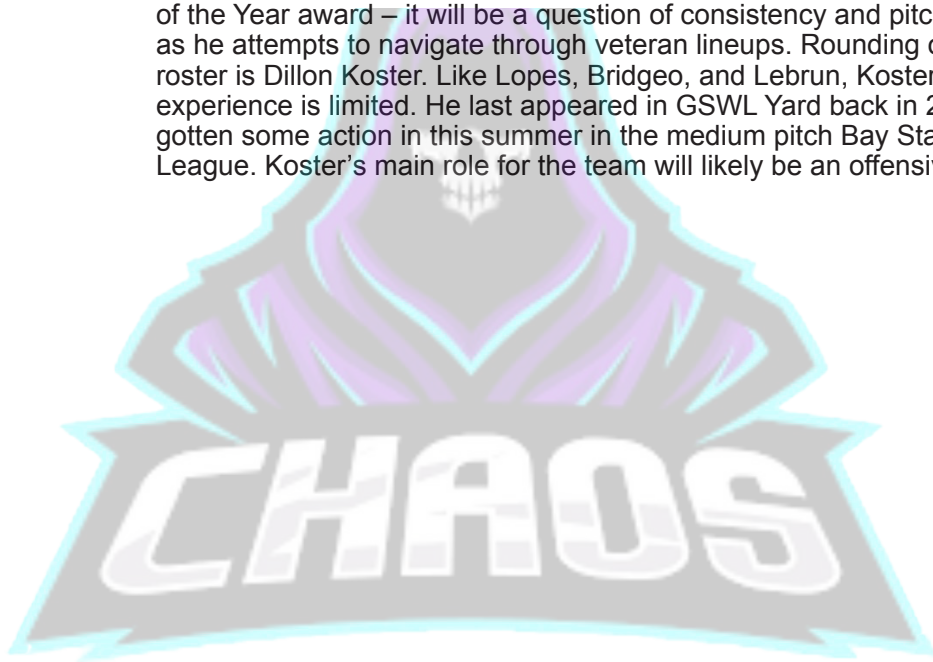
Dillon Koster – LHB – Massachusetts

Jeff Lopes – RHP/RHB – Age 20 – Massachusetts

Chaos is one of several teams at this year's tournament with significant Yard experience and success but not as much in fast pitch. The team is hoping they can make a seamless transition this October.

The core three players on the Chaos roster – captain John Lebrun, Jeff Lopes, and Adam Bridgeo – were teammates on the Black Widows in GSWL Yard in 2018 and 2019. Both Bridgeo and Lopes have proven themselves to be solid Yard pitchers. Both players posted a sub-3.00 ERA while throwing 40+ innings in each of 2018 and 2019. The million-dollar question for Chaos will be how well those two can translate their Yard numbers to unrestricted pitch speed Wiffle®. Bridgeo threw two innings in GSWL Pro last summer and got hit around a bit, but that's hardly a significant enough sample size to go off of. While Lebrun doesn't pitch, statistically speaking he was the Black Widows' best hitter during that same time frame, with batting averages approaching .400 in 2018 and 2019.

To address their relative inexperience in fast pitch wiffs, Chaos added Ohio southpaw Blake Hoffman. A naturally gifted pitcher who spent many years honing his craft before going the competitive route, Hoffman's stuff rivals that of most in the tournament. For Blake – the winner of the 2018 MAW Rookie of the Year award – it will be a question of consistency and pitch selection as he attempts to navigate through veteran lineups. Rounding out the Chaos roster is Dillon Koster. Like Lopes, Bridgeo, and Lebrun, Koster's fast pitch experience is limited. He last appeared in GSWL Yard back in 2014 but has gotten some action in this summer in the medium pitch Bay State Wiffle®Ball League. Koster's main role for the team will likely be an offensive one.



**CHEESEBALLS
RIDLEY PARK, PENNSYLVANIA**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Dennis Donegan (c) – RHB – Age 22 – Pennsylvania

Zane Johnston – RHP/RHB – Age 20 – Pennsylvania

Jack Liberio – RHB – Age 19 – Pennsylvania

Nate Smith – LHP/RHB – Age 19 – Pennsylvania

One of three teams out of the Ridley Park Wiffle®Ball League competing in this year's tournament, the Cheeseballs will be without captain and key player, Greg Myers. Nonetheless, the Cheeseballs still have enough talent and experience to sneak into Sunday.

In Myers' absence, Zane Johnston will take on an expanded pitching workload for his team. Zane has an unorthodox delivery – even by Wiffle®Ball standards – as he steps far to the right side of the rubber, tilts his body to essentially a 45-degree angle, and slings his arm across his body to deliver his go-to drop pitch. The delivery results in a dropper that slides away from right-handers as it dips. Johnston pitched well in both Ridley Park and Mid Atlantic this past summer. He will look to limit the number of free passes he gives – Zane allowed 43 walks in 35 two-out innings in Ridley Park – and if he does, he should give his team a chance to win more often than not.

Backing Johnston up is lefty Nate Smith, formerly of the Shortballs. Smith is a southpaw who is at his most effective when working down in the zone with his riser. As a first year RPWL team captain in 2020, Smith led his Angels past the Diamondbacks and Cardinals in the playoffs before falling to the Myers-led Pirates in the semi-final series. Smith – who bats right-handed despite throwing lefty – is an under-the-radar power threat and has picked up his fair share of big homeruns over the years in Mid Atlantic and Ridley Park.

If the Cheeseballs pitchers struggle at times, the club still has enough offensive weapons to win a slugfest. Johnston led RPWL in batting average this season and as mentioned, Smith has a propensity for big hits. Dennis Donegan is a calm, experienced presence in the Cheeseballs lineup. Although his final numbers are unimpressive, Donegan started turn a corner this year in Mid Atlantic, particularly in the power department. 5 of his 11 hits this summer went for extra bases. Jack Liberio had a nice summer in RPWL and MAW in his sophomore season in both leagues. Liberio led Ridley Park in both slugging and OPS and is a legitimate right-handed power threat.

**DEGENERATE GAMBLERS
NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Pete Slater (c) – LHB/LHP – Age 24 – New York
2020 MAW Winter Classic Champion

Jake Badick – RHP/RHB – Age 19 – New York

Tim Beck – RHB/RHP – Age 21 – New Jersey
2020 MAW Winter Classic Champion; 2018 MAW Championship Tournament runner up

John Polanco – RHP/RHB – Age 17 – New Jersey

If you were to construct a fast pitch competitive Wiffle®Ball team simply by marrying age with skillset, you would likely choose young pitchers and veteran hitters. Fresh arms and experienced, knowledgeable bats are a strong formula for success. It was with that approach that Pete Slater put together his Degenerate Gamblers' squad - a team where a couple of young arms will be backed by two dangerous, experienced hitters.

The Degenerate Gamblers will look towards John Polanco - a 17-year old, hard throwing right-hander from New Jersey - to lead them from the carpet. After years of experience playing in his local backyard league, John first dipped his toes into the competitive waters at the 2018 GSWL Yard Open. In 2019, he competed in MAW's Fall draft tournament and turned heads with his ability to blow pitches passed quality, veteran hitters. John is competing as a member of the Stompers in Mid Atlantic in 2020 and his tremendous potential is hard to miss. Polanco will be joined by another young pitcher from the Tri-State area, the Throwback's Jake Badick. Badick does not have much on his fast pitch resume yet but was a good pitcher last season in GSWL Yard and improved significantly as the year progressed. These two young players are not necessarily all-arm, either. Badick hit very well in Yard in 2019 while Polanco has demonstrated an advanced plate approach thus far in Mid Atlantic.

The Gamblers will rely on Slater and Tim Beck to supply the bulk of the offense, however. Slater is a well-traveled hitter and brings big game experience to this youthful squad. Slater's POC teammate, Tim Beck, does not have the same years of experience but has quickly turned into a young veteran in just a few short years. Beck started out in competitive Wiffle®Ball in his local Jackson Wiffle®Ball league. He debuted in MAW in 2017, gained much valuable experience as his Lemonheads team reached the finals of the 2018 Mid Atlantic Championship, was an integral part of the Lemonheads' seamless transition to Yard in 2019, and continues to excel in both environments in 2020. All of those at bats in such a short period of time have paid off for Beck. Just like Badick and Polanco have the potential to contribute to the Gamblers offensively, so too can Beck and Slater pitch if need be but likely not as a first option.

DEGENERATE
GAMBLERS

**DRAGONS
NEW YORK**

2018 Palisades WBL Minor League Champions

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Nick Lea (c) – LHP/RHB – Age 26 – New York

Mike Bucci – LHP/LHB – Age 22 – New York
2019 Palisades WBL Rookie of the Year

Tom Gannon – LHP/LHB – Age 23 – Massachusetts
2019 NWLA Tournament Champion

Michael Quezada – LHP/LHB – Age 25 – New York

Chris Sholkoff – RHB – Age 26 – New York

Not many teams can throw FOUR left-handed pitchers at the opposition. But that is precisely what the Dragons will have at their disposal this October at the 2020 United Wiffle®Ball National Championship Tournament. The Dragons are loaded with southpaws including team captain Nick Lea, Mike Bucci, Michael Quezada, and Tom Gannon.

2020 has been a breakout year for Lea on the carpet. After struggling with command issues for several years, he suddenly turned a corner in 2020. It started with 1 vs. 1 vs. 1 backyard games with his brother, Vin, and Bucci in the spring and has carried through to the 2020 MAW season. Nick has shouldered the bulk of the workload for the Dragons this year in Mid Atlantic and achieved mostly positive results in leading his team to elimination round in all three June and July MAW tournaments. Right alongside Nick on the Dragon's pitching depth chart is Tom Gannon. Gannon is once again one of the more well-traveled wiffers this year and continues to grow as a pitcher with each outing. Like Lea, Gannon's somewhat unorthodox style could present an issue match up for certain teams come October.

If the Dragons need additional help on the carpet, they could turn to Quezada who was the Storm's best pitcher this year in GSWL Yard. Quezada has some semi-recent fast pitch experience, as well, in both Palisades minors and majors. While the Dragons could also use Bucci on the mound - he has picked up innings for his team in MAW this season - the bulk of his contributions will likely come at the plate. Bucci uses a low crouched stance to generate a quick, line drive swing and is already a solid hitter with room for growth. Chris Sholkoff - a teammate of Quezada's on the Storm and a fellow former Palisades player - will also likely be utilized as a hitter-first option in October. Quezada, Lea, and Gannon should also provide some offense. Gannon carries deceptive power and has had a flare for the dramatic over the last couple of years when it comes to delivering big hits off quality pitchers. While the Dragons may lack a star player, they are a deep and experienced squad with a lot of different options, which is not a bad spot to be in at a large tournament such as this.



**FANWAY FIRE
MASSACHUSETTS**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Jake Veilleux (c) – Age 25 – Massachusetts

Kal Cavaco – Age 23 – Massachusetts

Ben Gauvin – Age 24 – Massachusetts

Nico Racine – Age 26 – Massachusetts

Anthony Saladini – Age 21 – Massachusetts

Fanway Fire is the younger of the two Fanway Park Wiffle®Ball teams competing at the 2020 National Championship Tournament. The team is led by hard-thrower Nico Racine. Racine led the Fanway Park Expos to Game 7 of the 2020 Fanway Park World Series. Although the Expos fell to the Giants in that decisive game, they held a 2-1 advantage in fast pitch games during the series with Racine handling the pitching duties. Nico comes at batters with a compact, overhand delivery and the ball just jumps out of his hand. It is a no-nonsense approach that has served him well in Fanway Park league play.

The Fire are game tested and like their fellow Fanway Park team, the Mountain Vibe, they will head to York with more game reps than at least half of the teams in the field. The combined medium pitch/fast pitch nature of Fanway Park also potentially works in the Fire's advantage in as much as it has served to save Racine and the team's other arms. The Fire are in an enviable position given that they have competed for years in a similar styled game to the one they will fine at the National Championship Tournament but are unknown to almost all of the rest of the field. They have experience but there is not much of a scouting report on them, which can be a nice spot to be in at a national tournament.



FANWAY MOUNTAIN VIBE MASSACHUSETTS

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Cody Snow (c) – Age 27 – Massachusetts

Steve Colella – Age 27 – Massachusetts

Nick Dunn – Age 33 – Massachusetts

Chris Proal – Age 32 – Massachusetts

Korey Wilson – Age 26 – Massachusetts

Located 45 miles northwest of Boston, Fitchburg, Massachusetts is home to Fanway Wiffleball. As the league's name heavily implies, Fanway's central feature is a beautifully constructed backyard replica of Fenway Park. Both the stadium and the league have been around for about a decade, but each have flown somewhat below the radar as far as other parts of the competitive Wiffle® world are concerned. That started to change in 2020, thanks to the introduction of the league's well-produced YouTube live streams. Now this October, Fanway will send two representatives to the United Wiffle®Ball National Championship in Pennsylvania.

The Fanway Mountain Vibe is the slightly older and more experienced of the two Fanway teams competing in United Wiffle®Ball. Four of the team's players are members of the Giants, who are currently knotted in a 1-1 series tie versus the Expos in the leagues Best of 7 World Series. The Giants have relied on Steve Colella to pitch their fast pitch games throughout the post-season (Fanway utilizes a double header, one medium/one fast pitch game model throughout both the regular and post season) and it stands to reason that the Mountain Vibe will do the same in October. Colella's bread-and-butter is a big sweeping slider that is effective both down and up in the zone. His quality stuff, good command, and solid velocity have led to two straight post-season shutouts for the Giants.

Also working in the Mountain Vibe's favor is that they are largely familiar with the rules and style of game that will be played at PeoplesBank Park. In addition to having plenty of fast pitch reps, Fanway Park hitters have swung Moonshot bats for years and they do not run the bases. That stylistic familiarity should work in their favor. Additionally, the blended medium/fast pitch nature of the league might pay off at the end of a long summer of wiffs. The Mountain Vibe players will have plenty of reps and recent game experience to rely on, but with only half of it coming in fast pitch they may not be as fatigued as some of their competitors.

HAZARDOUS LONG ISLAND

Geoff “Weatherman” Bansen - Age 32 - RHB/RHP - Lindenhurst, NY

2018 GAUL Champion

Gerard Fitzgerald- Age 34- RHB/RHP - Seaford, NY

2015 Palisades Wiffleball League Champion; 2015 Palisades Wiffleball League Playoff MVP

Joe “Cavs” Cavaliere - Age 24 - North Babylon, NY – LHB/LHP

Andrew Montero - Age 29 - Ozone Park, NY - RHB/RHP

Danny Morra - Age 26 - Levittown, NY - RHB/RHP

Team Hazardous enters the United Wiffleball National Championship Tournament with very little fast pitch national tournament experience but plenty of wiffleball experience over the last handful of years playing GSWL New York. Gerard Fitzgerald is the only member of this team who has ever been to an NCT in the past. The team will rely on Fitzgerald’s dangerous bat to carry their offence. Fitzgerald has been a GSWL mainstay since the New York regions inception in 2009, slugging over 80 home runs in that time. Fitzgerald is also one of the best contact hitters in the country, evidenced by his .358 batting average and .442 OBP since 2013. At times he has shown to be a filthy pitcher but inconsistencies on the mound over the years have prohibited Fitzgerald from becoming a reliable arm.

The team will rely on the young arms of Joe Cavaliere, Geoff Bansen, Andrew Montero, and Danny Mora to fill out it’s pitching staff. All four players have evolved into dependable pitchers in GSWL. The quartet’s 2020 combined ERA was 2.85. Morra is a fireballer who has shown potential to be a staff ace but has yet to show it in his few fast pitch experiences, notably in a 2019 MAW tournament. Cavaliere is a player to keep your eye on at the NCT. Cavaliere is an athletic, talented player with potential to be the next nasty lefty and will likely be on the bump in “must win” games for Hazardous. Hazardous will be hoping the talent and potential overcome the lack of experience and carry this team to contention into Sunday morning.



**JUGGERNAUTS
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA**

2019, 2020 Mid Atlantic Regular Season Champions

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Chris Sarnowski (c) - RHP/RHB - Age 26 - Pennsylvania
2018 MAW champion

Gino Joseph - RHP/LHB - Age 21 – Pennsylvania

Ryan McElrath - RHP/RHB - Age 25 - New York
2017 & 2018 Palisades WBL Champion

Tim McElrath - RHP/RHB - Age 25 - New York
2017 & 2018 Palisades WBL Champion

Ben Stant - RHP/LHB - Age 21 - Delaware

In the offseason between the 2018 and 2019 MAW seasons, Chris Sarnowski set out to construct a team that could make it through the rigors of a full tournament season and had the potential to win a Mid Atlantic title. The team that resulted – the Juggernauts – was inconsistent through the early part of the MAW tournament calendar before finding its stride in July and August and ultimately ended the regular tournament season atop the Mid Atlantic standings. Although they came up just short to ERL in the semi-final series of the Mid Atlantic Championship, the Juggernauts gelled by season's end. In addition to pursuing a Mid Atlantic title once again in 2020, the team will try to bring home a national one as well.

For Ryan and Tim McElrath, this Juggernauts team should provide more protection – both offensively and defensively – than they have previously experienced in national tournaments. The hard-nosed twins from Kingston, New York are battlers who always play as if they are have something to prove. They have proved plenty in the last few years alone, capturing the Palisades WBL championship in both 2017 and 2018, defying the prognosticators' predictions by reaching the final four at the 2018 Fast Plastic NCT, and consistently winning everywhere they go. Ben Stant has developed into one of the sport's most consistent – and often spectacular – all-around hitters. Arm troubles have limited Stant to one game at best per fast pitch tournament and there are also potential health concerns with Tim's arm, which has cemented Sarnowski as the Juggernauts number two pitcher. Recognizing pitching depth as a weakness, the Juggernauts have added Gino Joseph from the Stompers for the tournament to take on some of the pitching workload.

The Juggernauts are one of the few full season teams competing at the national championship and are coming off an excellent year in Mid Atlantic. The Juggernauts finished first in MAW during the regular season by a healthy margin. They beat out 17 other teams this past July to win the MAW Ridley Park tournament. The Juggernauts came up just short in the Mid Atlantic Championship this September, giving them an extra chip on their shoulder this October.



JUGGERNAUTS

**K-9's
MASSACHUSETTS**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Mike Sidorov (c) – RHP/RHB – Age 35 – Maryland

Cody Blake – RHB – Age 29 – Massachusetts

Elliot Knowler – LHP/LHB – Age 33 – Massachusetts

Ryan Mentock – RHP/RHB – Age 36 – North Carolina

Derek Radek – RHP/RHB – Age 31 – Illinois

The K-9's out of Massachusetts are one of Golden Stick's longest running franchises. For the 2020 National Championship tournament, they will return three of their key players - Mike Sidorov, Elliot Knowler, and Cody Blake - from the early-2010's version of the team that posted winning records in both the 2012 and 2013 GSWL fast pitch seasons. That trio will be joined by a pair of K-9 newcomers in Ryan Mentock and Derek Radek.

Knowler - referred to affectionately as the "Vanilla Gorilla" - was the K-9's number two pitcher (statistically speaking) during that early 2010's run. In 2012 and 2013, Elliot tossed a combined 78 1/3 innings and managed an impressive 3.4 SO/BB ratio to go along with a solid 2.46 ERA. The big left-hander has not been a regular post-2015 but did compete in the 2020 GSWL Yard Open. Knowler is likely to take the ball throughout the tournament, as he figures to be one of the K-9's more reliable pitching options even with his lack of recent fast pitch play.

Derek Radek's fast pitch layoff has been even longer at seven years. Radek was a staple of the Chicago wiffleball scene for many years and the K-9's hope that the time off will have him fresh and ready-to-go come October. Radek uses a high leg kick to accentuate his otherwise straightforward overhand delivery. He also hit very well in the offensive-heavy 2013 GSWL Midwest region.

Sidorov also figures to be a pitching candidate for the K-9's come October but will likely slot 3rd of 4th on the depth chart. Mike is an experienced fast pitch hitter and has gotten in some recent reps this year in Mid Atlantic. Blake profiles similarly to Sidorov - an experienced hitter who is not likely to see a lot (or any) time on the rubber. Rounding out the K-9's tournament roster is Ryan Mentock. Not much is known about this North Carolinian wiffler, other than he does have some competitive Wiffle®Ball experience.

The K-9's do not lack for experience or even pitching options. For this veteran franchise, their tournament outcome will likely be determined by how many quality innings they receive from Radek and Knowler after their time away from fast pitch Wiffle®Ball.

**LONGBALLS
RIDLEY PARK, PENNSYLVANIA**

2019 NWLA Tournament 3rd Place | 2019 MAW 2nd Place | 2020 MAW 2nd Place Regular Season

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Colin Pollag (c) - RHP/RHB - Age 22 - Pennsylvania
2016, 2017 & 2019 RPWL NL MVP; 2016 RPWL Champion; 2019 MAW Fall Draft MVP

Sean Bingnear - RHP/RHB - Age 22 - Pennsylvania
2017 RPWL Champion; 2019 MAW Fall draft tournament champion (captain)

Cam Farro - RHP/LHB - Age 18 - Pennsylvania
2018 RPWL Rookie of the Year; 2018 RPWL Champion; 2019 MAW Rookie of the Year

Dylan Harshaw - RHB - Age 22 - Pennsylvania

Tommy Loftus - RHP/RHB - Age 20 - Pennsylvania
9th on 2019 DROP 100; Captain of the RPWL Dodgers

The bigger the event, the better the Longballs were in 2019. In July, the Ridley Park squad went on a run at the [NWLA Tournament](#) and ultimately finished in 3rd place. The Longballs handed the eventual champions (AWAA Blue Kamikazes) their only loss, [eliminated the MAW Mafia from the tournament](#), and suffered their only losses at the hands of the first and second place finishers. Almost two months to the date later, the Longballs found themselves up one game to none in the best of three Mid Atlantic championship series against ERL (Connor Young, Devin Torres, Jordan Robles, Kenny Rodgers Jr.) [and were a mere seven outs away from the title](#). Unfortunately for them, ERL mounted a remarkable comeback and the Longballs had to settle for a second-place finish.

In 2020, the team got off to an incredible start as they went 6-0 to take down the stacked Mid Atlantic Opening Day Tournament in June. The Longballs defeated a murders row of C4, Juggernauts, and POC in the elimination round to win the title. They followed that up with another championship game appearance at MAW *Wiffle Bash* two weeks later.

The Longballs team that will compete at the United Wiffle®Ball National Championship in October has youth, experience, and depth – a potentially lethal trifecta. Pollag and Bingnear are “young veterans” with good power at the plate and quality stuff on the rubber. Tommy Loftus is one of the sport’s hardest throwers and is coming off a fantastic 2019 season at the NWLA Tournament and in Mid Atlantic. Farro is a young and talented two-way player who gained invaluable experience competing in MAW for the Blueballs in ‘19 and has been among the game’s best and most active players in 2020. Dylan Harshaw’s power bat has been a revelation thus far in 2020 - especially in big moments - and that makes the Longballs just that more dangerous of an opponent. As a unit, the Longballs are well-rounded and their pitching depth could leave them in better shape late in the tournament - if they make it there - than many of their competitors.

**LOS CRUSADERS
NEW JERSEY**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Brian Nguyen – RHB/RHP – New Jersey

Bryan Weiss – RHB/RHP – Pennsylvania

Craig Caras – RHB/RHP – Long Island

2016 Palisades WBL Champion

Andy Rapacki – RHB/RHP – Massachusetts

Erik Anderson – RHB/RHP – Rhode Island

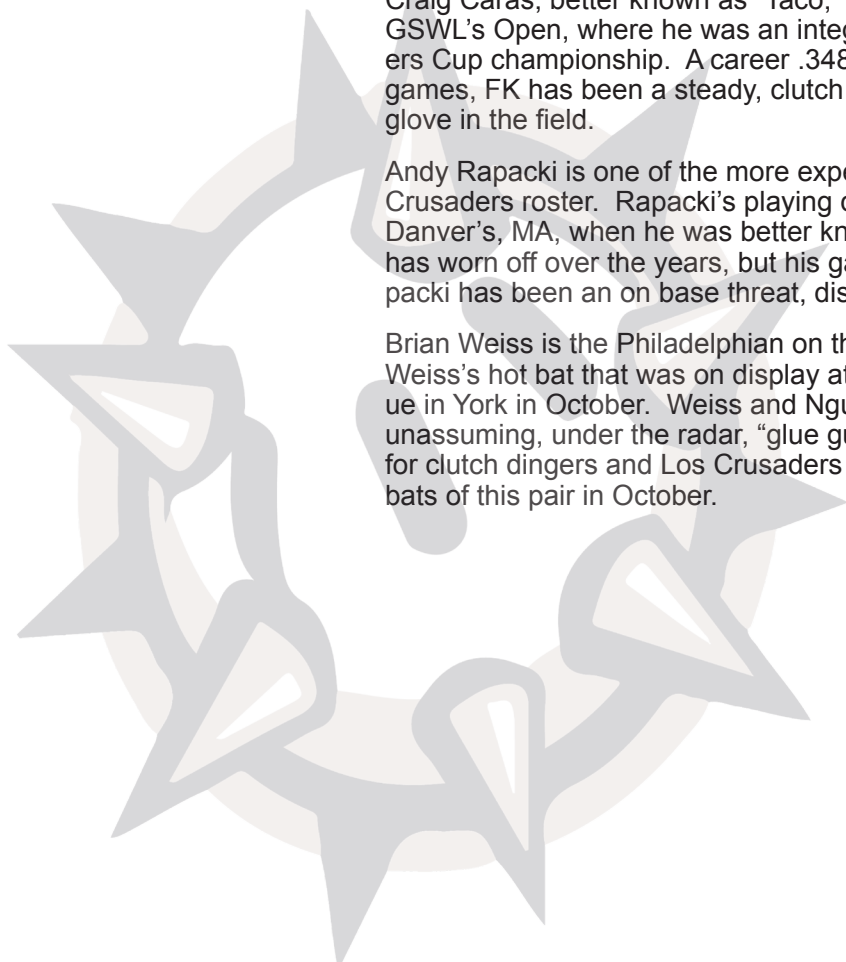
3-time GSWL Cy Young Award winner; GSWL Rookie of the year; 2011 GSWL OPEN Champs; 2012 GSWL OPEN Champs

Los Crusaders will bring a wealth of experience into the NCT, featuring a smorgasbord of GSWL veterans from five different states in the northeast. Captain Brian Nguyen's squad will lean on the dependable arm of two-time national champion Erik Anderson. Anderson will cook up a wide repertoire of pitches and will keep hitters off balance if this team is successful. Anderson sports an impressive 2.27 ERA over 103 regular games pitched since 2014 in GSWL.

Craig Caras, better known as "Taco," is coming off a stellar performance at GSWL's Open, where he was an integral part of the Dead End Kids' Players Cup championship. A career .348 hitter over 246 regular season GSWL games, FK has been a steady, clutch bat at the plate, and a very reliable glove in the field.

Andy Rapacki is one of the more experienced fast pitch players on the Los Crusaders roster. Rapacki's playing days go back to the original GSWL in Danver's, MA, when he was better known as the "Pac-man." The nickname has worn off over the years, but his game has not. Dating back to 2013, Rapacki has been an on base threat, displayed by his .404 OBP.

Brian Weiss is the Philadelphian on the roster and Los Crusaders will hope Weiss's hot bat that was on display at GSWL's August Yard Open will continue in York in October. Weiss and Nguyen are very similar players. Both are unassuming, under the radar, "glue guys" on a roster. Both have been known for clutch dingers and Los Crusaders will count on the leadership and clutch bats of this pair in October.



Los Crusaders

**LAS VEGAS WIFFLERS
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Matt Trzpis (c) – RHP/LHB – Age 44 – Nevada

Steve Trzpis – RHP/LHB – Age 41 – Nevada

Adam Bohnet – RHB – Age 45 – Nevada

Jordan Bohnet – Nevada

While many teams in this and other tournaments search the entire country over for talent, the Las Vegas Wifflers choose to keep their roster local. A stalwart of the fast pitch national championship tournament for more than a decade, the guys from Las Vegas have turned down past offers to join up with other teams, instead choosing to keep things local. That commendable choice has led to a relatively thin roster both this year and in years past. With only so many players to choose from in their hometown, the LV Wifflers have pursued a national championship the last three years as both a three-man and last year, a two-man squad.

That lack of depth might be an issue for some teams, but Las Vegas never seems phased by it. Rather, they appear to embrace it. Fewer rostered players mean more at bats for those on the roster, which is usually a good thing especially when you rake like these guys do. While going an entire tournament with just two pitchers is not appealing to most teams, the LV Wifflers have demonstrated they are both willing and capable to roll the dice with just Steve and Matt Trzpis to handle the pitching duties. Last year in Texas for Fast Plastic, the LV Wifflers covered seven games and 32 innings with just a pair of pitchers. Steve's uncanny ability to rack up innings during a long tournament is impressive and will surely be on display again this October.

Las Vegas' chances this October will be greatly aided by a hot start and by reducing the number games – to the extent possible – that they have to play. Although Steve can pitch deep into tournaments without a significant decrease in stuff, the fresher he is later in the tournament the better off the team will likely be. There is also the potential challenge of Sunday. Recently, Las Vegas hasn't had to deal with pitching Steve back-to-back days after throwing all day Saturday. Fast Plastic was a one-day tournament in 2017 and Las Vegas failed to make it to Sunday each of the last two years. If they advance to Sunday this year, a story to watch will be how well Steve's arm holds up working consecutive days.



MIDWEST MONSTARS MIDWEST

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Sam Skibbe (c) – RHP/RHB – Age 32 – Missouri
2016, 2017 NWLA Tournament Runner Up

Caleb Jonkman – RHP/RHB – Age 24 – Indiana
2017, 2019 NWLA National POTY; 2018, 2019 NWLA Tournament Runner Up

Jeremy Ratajczyk – RHB – Age 30 – Indiana
2018, 2019 NWLA Tournament Runner Up

Cameron Smith – RHP/RHB – Age 28 – Missouri

Auston Steffes – RHP/RHB – Age 20 – Minnesota

There has not been a Midwest presence at the fast pitch national championship the past several years, but the Monstars – a collection of players from Indiana, Missouri, and Minnesota – are looking to make some noise out east in 2020.

The team is captained by Sam Skibbe, the founder of the long running [Skibbe Wiffle®Ball League](#) in St. Louis. In addition to being a great ambassador of the game, Sam captained the SWBL Cardinals to second place finishes at the NWLA Tournament in back-to-back years (2016 & 2017) and is a very capable player in his own right.

The Monstars are anchored on both sides of the ball by 2017 and 2019 NWLA national player of the year, Caleb Jonkman. The Indiana native is the top player in three separate fast pitch leagues in his home state (Circle City, Leroy, Griffleball) and led the GBL Legends to a runner up finish at the 2019 NWLA Tournament. The tall right-hander is one of the sport's best players and the Monstars will look to him to lead at the plate and on the carpet. Providing offensive support is Jonkman's GBL Legends' teammate, Jeremy Ratajczyk. Ratajczyk was unquestionably the best hitter at last year's NWLA Tournament. Among hitters with more than one game played, Jeremy ranked second in batting average, fifth in slugging, and first in hits. He picked up hits in all of his team's eight games including multi-hit games against MAW (Robles) and RPWL (Bingnear, Drecher).

Behind Jonkman on the pitching depth chart is St. Louis-area flamethrower Cameron Smith. Cam is a full-time member of YellowBatz Wiffle®Ball in O'Fallon, MO and gained his first national exposure last July as a member of the SWBL Cardinals at the NWLA Tournament. Cam threw a tick under eleven innings that tournament and allowed just three runs on two hits. His best single-game performance came against the eventual champions - the AWAA Blue Kamikazes - when he allowed one run on two hits while striking out twelve in 5 2/3 innings pitched. Cam has an electric arm that allowed him to work around persistent command issues. Rounding out the Monstars is twenty-year old Austin Steffes from the Minneapolis based HRL and MNWA. Steffes will provide the Monstars with yet another potential pitching option as they navigate their way through the tournament.

More good news for the Monsters – both Smith (0 R in 7 IP versus Circle City and MAW) and Jonkman (1 R in 15 1/3 IP versus Wild & Wonderful, HRL, and AWAA) pitched extremely well at the NWLA Tournament in September. That two-headed pitching monster appears primed and ready to go this October.

**NY MEATS
NEW YORK**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Ryan Bush (c) – RHP/LHB – Age 28 – New York
2012, 2016 NWLA Tournament Champion; 2018 Palisades WBL Champion

Jimmy Cole – RHP/RHB – Age 28 – New York
2019 NWLA Tournament Champion

Tyler Flakne – LHP/LHB – Age 27 – Minnesota

Jimmy Flynn – RHP/RHB – Age 24 – Massachusetts

Chris Roeder – RHP/LHB – Age 28 – New York
2016 NWLA Tournament Champion

Two weeks after finding out that they would be without MAW teammate Kyle VonSchleusigen at the United Wiffle®Ball National Championship, the NY Meats took to Twitter to address their roster situation.

“If you have interest in playing with the MEATS,” the tweet began, “. . . please do not reach out to us. Meats must have interest in you first and will reach out. And no, we are not splitting up. . .”

The fact that many teams would have interest in the core Meats players for United Wiffle®Ball or that free agents would view the Meats as an excellent landing spot is no surprise. A core of Ryan Bush and Jimmy Cole is an excellent starting point for any team and the Meats – despite the unexpected loss of K-Von – were aware that they were still in a strong position to build a contending team. Their confidence in creating a competitor appears to have been justified. The NY Meat’s 2020 United Wiffle®Ball roster – while perhaps different than initially anticipated – is deep, flexible, and a legitimate contender.

Bush is a veritable Wiffle®Ball Swiss army knife. The hard throwing right-hander has much success throwing both clean and cut balls, he can give you six innings at the end of a tournament or pitch one or two innings per game throughout, and is an all-around hitter who is just as likely to beat a team with a walk as a he is with a home run. That versatility is particularly useful on this Meat’s roster, where the roles of the other pitchers might not be fully realized until tournament day.

When he isn’t swinging a nerf bat as hard as humanely possible, Cole is a solid pitcher in his own right with top tier breaking pitches. Cole will likely be good for a game – maybe two – on the carpet but won’t necessarily be a late tournament option for his team. Chris Roeder is an NWLA Tournament veteran with GSWL fast pitch experience in 2014. Like Bush, he can go clean or cut as the situation dictates. The fact that he hasn’t pitched much in big barrel/alterd ball environment in recent years could work to his benefit, as many opposing hitters are unfamiliar with what he brings to the table.

Tyler Flakne returned to the NWLA Tournament in style in 2020, leading to the HRL Dong Show to the title while earning MVP honors for himself. Jimmy Flynn was the last addition to the team and brings a lot of recent national championship experience with him to Pennsylvania. This Massachusetts wiffler swings a quality bat and like all of his teammates, he is an option to pitch. Flynn might be best served in a single-game role, however, where he can empty the tank during a key point in the tournament.

**OBOMBERS
OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Sylvie Serrano (c) – RHP/RHB – Age 35 – California
2010 Ultimate Wiffler

Rob Colon – RHB – Age 36 – California

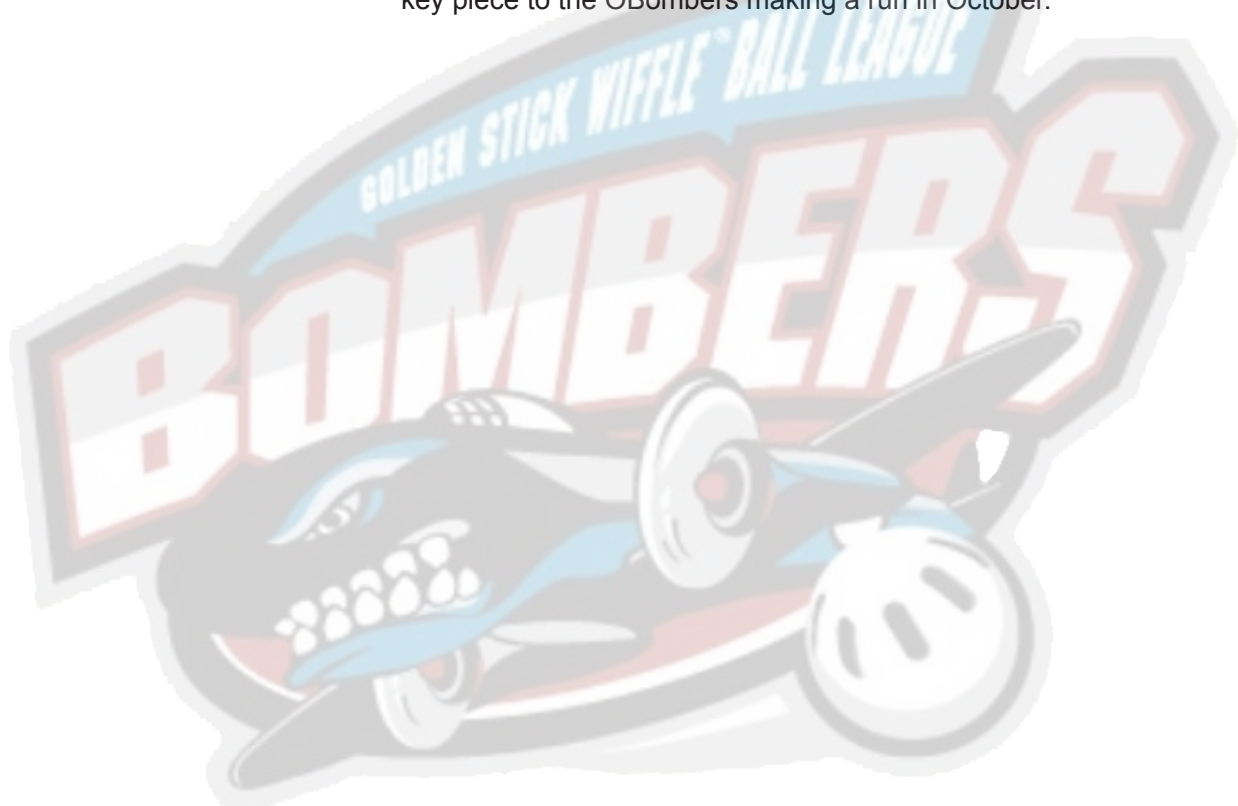
Dan Haverty – RHP/RHB – Age 21 – Massachusetts

Ryan Kaufman– RHP/RHB – Age 28 – California

Mike Tuohy – RHP/LHB – Age 22 – Connecticut

The Oakland based OBombers reached outside the Bay Area in putting together their 2020 United Wiffle®Ball National Championship tournament roster. Sylvie Serrano and Rob Colon looked some six hours down the road from Oakland to add southern California wiffler Ryan Kaufman, before reaching all the way across the country – some 3,000 miles away from their hometown – to add New England wifflers Dan Haverty and Mike Tuohy. The resulting roster is deep in pitching and carries enough offensive weapons to make the OBombers a significant threat at this year's tournament.

Haverty and Kaufman – who were teammates last year on the Legends of Wiffle in Fast Plastic – give the OBombers two electric arms to work with, something they were missing the past couple of years. While both pitchers may not have the big game experience of other top pitchers in the tournament, their talent is undeniable. Colon is one of those hitters who – when he gets on a roll – is a near impossible out. Serrano is solid on both sides of the ball and at this stage in his career is well-suited for the 3rd or 4th pitcher role he'll be able to settle into on this roster. On paper, Tuohy looks like the potential difference maker. A Wiffle®Ball prodigy who hasn't seen much fast pitch action in recent years – but is still solidly on the right side of the aging curve – Tuohy has the ability to impact the game on both sides of the ball. He played well in very limited action last summer in GSWL Pro and might be the key piece to the OBombers making a run in October.



OG GOON SQUAD PENNSYLVANIA

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

TJ Kish – RHP/RHB – Florida

Andrius Fink – RHB – Pennsylvania

Jose Marte – RHP/RHB – New York

Steven Simcox – RHB – Pennsylvania

Their rise has not exactly been linear, but few teams have been progressed as far and quickly in the last two years than the OG Goon Squad.

The Goon Squad first popped up at MLW's Long Island tournament last summer. They struggled in their first bigtime competitive experience and were an early exit. Motivated by that first experience, the trio of Kish, Fink, and Simcox headed to Massachusetts just before Christmas looking to redeem themselves at MLW's *Battle of Boston*. After splitting their two pool play games, the Goon Squad went on a nice little run in bracket play. In back-to-back one-run victories, the Goon Squad took down the MLW All-Stars and New England Cannons. Their tournament eventually ended at the hands of the Diamondbacks (Garrett & Devin Torres, Kenny Stengel) 4-2 in the semi-finals.

The Goon Squad followed up their solid Boston outing by going 2-2 at the 16-team Mid Atlantic Winter Classic in February, ultimately finishing in 9th place. The Goon Squad was a regular presence at MAW tournaments throughout the summer. The team saved their best ball for August and September. They reached the semi-finals at the MAW regular season finale in August to grab the 10th and final spot in the Mid Atlantic Championship tournament. Once there, they upset the Shortballs and Longballs in their first two games before running out of steam. While that late season one was greatly aided by the addition of Kenny Stengel, the other Goon Squad members improved each and every tournament. Kish has all the makings of a solid 2-3 game starter and is only lacking in experience at this point. Kish, Simcox, and Fink all looked more and more confident at the plate with each passing tournament with the results to show for it.

Joining the Goon Squad for the National Championship Tournament is 2020 rookie Jose Marte. Marte possess the most interesting wiffle origin story of the year. In June, Marte played in a Wiffle®Ball tournament in the Bronx for local softball players. He caught the attention of the Bronx Royals who showed him the finer points of pitching. When the Dragons needed another player for MAW in July, Vin Lea recommended Marte to his brother, Nick. Marte showed easy and deceptive velocity in his fast pitch debut (a win over the Joe Schlindwein Yawn Club). Marte joined his friends on the Outsiders for the MAW Ridley Park tournament a couple of weeks later and pitched his team passed High Cheese (Brian DiNapoli, Dan Haverty, Jimmy Flynn) in an upset in his team's opening game.

This is a team that you do not want to see on your schedule early. Kish and Marte are both capable pitchers. The one downside for each pitcher at this stage in their career – not counting experience – is stamina. Kish pitched more than one game in a tournament only once during the summer MAW season and Marte went twice just once, with a clear drop off between games one and two. Both pitchers have the stuff to hold offenses down, especially when they are fresh. The Goon Squad relied on the big home run all year and if they get one or two well-timed ones early in the day on the 24th, they have the ingredients to pull an upset or two.

**OLD LINE WC
MARYLAND**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Brian Griffiths (c) – Age 40 – Maryland

Jim Braswell – Age 42 - Maryland

Scott Shaffer – Age 47 - Maryland

Craig Gajewski – Age 41 - Maryland

Jeremy Davis - Maryland

There will be no toe-dipping for Old Line WC; these newcomers are jumping right into the deep end in their competitive Wiffle®Ball debut! The only team competing in this year's tournament without prior competitive Wiffle®Ball experience, Old Line has measured their expectations for their debut. A win for this group of Marylanders would be a success - not necessarily because they lack the talent (that is unknown - but because winning a game in a national tournament is always a difficult task for a brand-new team.

As their team name indicates, Old Line WC proudly represents the state of Maryland. Maryland has a deceptively rich - if somewhat shallow - fast pitch Wiffle®Ball history on a local and national level. The Catonsville Connection - a staple at Baltimore Wiffle Up! tournaments - won the Wiffle Up! World Series in 2000. Led by Will Pinder, Baltimore's Chilly Willy Blasters were a contender at any tournament they competed in during the late 1990's up through the 2001 USPPBA season. Playing out of Gaithersburg, Maryland, the Stompers finished in the top six in the country in 2002 (USPPBA, 6th) and 2003 (Fast Plastic, 3rd). The Old School Risers were a regular, competitive presence at Wiffle Up! tournaments and in Fast Plastics during the middle portion of the 2000's, while the A-Team made an unexpected to run to the final four at the 2018 Fast Plastic National Championship. Along with other quality teams like the No Johnnies and Greene Turtle, Maryland's fast pitch Wiffle®Ball is richer than it first appears, even if it does fall well below more traditional Wiffle®Ball hotbeds.



PHENOMS CONNECTICUT

2009 Fast Plastic National Champions | 2017 & 2018 Fast Plastic Runner Up

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Josh Pagano (c) – RHP/RHB – Age 34 – Connecticut
2006 Fast Plastic national champion; 2017 Fast Plastic national runner up

Jordan Robles – RHP/RHB – Age 25 – New York
*2019 Palisades WBL champion; 2017-2020 Mid Atlantic Wiffle® champion;
2019 Mid Atlantic MVP*

Kyle VonSchleusigen – RHP/RHB – Age 21 – Connecticut
2019 Palisades WBL champion; 2019 NWLA Tournament champion

David Wood – RHP/RHB – Age 29 – Georgia
2013 Goldenstick Wiffle®Ball League Georgia regional champion

The last three years at the Fast Plastic NCT, Josh Pagano-led teams – including Remember the Rookies in 2017 – marched to the finals only for their run to be ended by C4 each time. For the 2020 United Wiffle®Ball National Championship, the 2019 Phenoms trio of Pagano, Jordan Robles, and David Wood will be joined by Kyle VonSchleusigen, as the team looks to shed their bridesmaid label.

This team is loaded offensively. There is very little Pagano hasn't seen or done in the batter's box. He is a tough out in any part of a game or tournament, but he also possesses an uncanny ability to come through in the big moments. Robles, too, possess a flair for the dramatic and is one of the sport's most well-rounded offensive players. Wood was on fire throughout the 2019 Fast Plastic tournament. What VonSchleusigen might lack in terms of consistent on-base capabilities, he more than makes up for with his power.

From a pitching perspective, VonSchleusigen is as much of a replacement as he is an addition. Wood underwent Tommy John surgery earlier this year to repair a torn ligament in his pitching elbow and with the normal rehabilitation time for pitchers being 12 to 15 months after surgery, he will likely be a non-factor on the carpet this October. The pitching trio of Pagano, Robles, and VonSchleusigen rivals that of any other team in the field. The obvious story to watch for with the Phenoms – at least from a pitching perspective – is how they go about utilizing their tremendously talented pitching trio. More specifically there will be some intrigue as to who, if anyone, they will tab to pitch the final game of the tournament – be it against C4 or someone else – should they once again make it that far. One thing is for sure, this Phenoms team is well positioned for another long tournament run. Is this finally the year they deliver the franchise its second national title?

THE REPLACEMENTS PARTS UNKNOWN

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Wyatt Zuspan (c) – RHB/RHP – Age 24 – West Virginia

Vinny Albanese – RHB/RHP – Age 19 – Pennsylvania

Sean Erhardt – RHB – New York

Tyler Roush – RHB – Age 26 – West Virginia

Adam Tanic – RHP/RHB – Las Vegas

The final entry into the 2020 National Championship, The Replacements officially entered the tournament with less than a week to go, thanks to a late drop out. Do not let the fact that this motley crew came together at the last-minute fool you into thinking they will be pushovers, however. This is a team full of serious players with higher upside and more experience than you might normally find on a last-minute substitute.

At the core of The Replacements are West Virginia wiffers, Wyatt Zuspan and Tyler Roush. Both Wyatt and Roush have been key members of the Mothmen's NWLA Tournament roster since 2017. Both players also have some experience in the style of game that will be played in York. Roush competed with the Mothmen the last two years at the MAW Winter Classic and was a part-time member of the Stompers in MAW in 2019. Wyatt's non-base running, big bat experience came more recently at September's Mid Atlantic draft tournament. There he got about as good of a crash course on this style of Wiffle® as one could get, starting the first game of the day for his team with both Jordan Robles and Sean Steffy as his teammates to provide advice and encouragement. Roush had a superb NWLA Tournament at the dish, batting .273/.448/.450 over the course of five tournament game. Those hits were not freebies either; the bulk of Roush's damage came against quality pitchers like Kalamazoo veteran David Ayers, MAW's Noah Silverman, and WILL's Gino Joseph. Roush's hands are deceptively quick. The Replacements will likely need him to pick up from where he left off in Canonsburg if they are to go on a run.

The Replacements will also look for offense from Ridley Park's Vinny Albanese and GSWL mainstay, Dan Erhardt. Albanese has racked up a ton of fast pitch at bats in Ridley Park and MAW the last three years. The man they call Big Sexy is a quality mistake hitter and with all that recent fast pitch experience, The Replacements can count on him for strong at bats. Like it has been for many GSWL regulars, a half-decade has passed since Sean Erhardt played fast pitch with any regularity. Sean has swung a good bat in Yard the past two seasons and will hope that translates to the fast pitch National Championship.

The wild card for The Replacements is Las Vegas' Adam Tanic. The head of RIR Wiffle, Adam - along with about ten other players - recently (but not yet officially) set the Guinness World Record for the longest Wiffle®Ball game in history at more than 30 straight hours. The tall righty has a power bat and arm and was recently clocked in the upper 70's/80's. Adam is game to compete against the best in York and if he can harness his command and maintain his velocity for a game, The Replacements have a shot at pulling off an upset.

THE REPLACEMENTS



SAVVY GEORGIA

2011 GSWL Fast Pitch Comeback Cup Champions | 2013 GSWL Georgia Regional Champions

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Troup Brinson (c) – RHB/RHP – Age 47 – Georgia

Kevin Babler – RHB/RHP – Age 45 – California

Trent Jones – RHP/RHB – Age 26 – Georgia

Chris Moncrief – RHB/RHP – Age 46 – Alabama

Robbie O’Quinn – RHP/RHB – Age 36 – Georgia

After a seven-year layoff, America’s favorite Wiffle®Ball team returned to competition this summer. Now, the colorful Georgia squad has their sights set on another memorable national champion experience.

Savvy’s roots in competitive fast pitch Wiffle®Ball and the national championship reach all the way back to 2004, when newcomers Power Alley (Troup Brinson, Matt Moncrief, Chris Moncrief, and Kris Meeks) finished second in the new Fast Plastic Georgia region to earn a bid to the national championship. Over the next several years, Power Alley became a staple of the southeast and national fast pitch scenes, as much for their ability on the field as their infectious personalities off it. That showmanship reached another level when the core Power Alley members Smooch and Troup re-branded as the Super Savvy Psychos. Alongside Scott Bragg and a young upstart by the name of David “Road Toast” Wood, Savvy would go on to capture the Comeback Cup at the 2011 GSWL Fast Pitch nationals, win the 2013 GSWL Georgia regional title, and remain a competitive (and entertaining) presence at each and every tournament they entered.

Savvy faded into the sunset after the 2013 season. Wood and Bragg popped up from time to time in the latter years of the decade, but Savvy remained sidelined until 2020. The team re-emerged in GSWL Yard and for the first time in seven years, they will once again compete for a fast pitch national title.

This Savvy squad is slightly different from their heyday a decade ago. Wood moved onto the Phenoms and Bragg hasn’t played regularly in a couple of years. Troup and Smooch still form the hear-and-soul of this version of Savvy and they are once again joined by longtime teammate, Robbie O’Quinn. They have also brought in another long-time fast pitch veteran, Kevin “Babz” Babler. Savvy has one of the highest average player ages of any team in the field, but there is still enough left in the tank for a solid tournament run. Babz and Troup are options to pitch. Few teams have seen as many Wiffle®Ball pitches as these guys and you can’t buy that kind of experience.

To address that obvious hole, Savvy has signed up fellow Georgia Wiffler and Village Idiots member, Trent Jones, for this tournament. Still just 26 years old, Jones is a “young veteran” and should eat up the bulk of the team’s innings. Trent hasn’t had a ton of success recently in national tournaments, but the talent is undeniable. Perhaps a change of scenery will be just what the doctor ordered.

**SHORTBALLS
RIDLEY PARK, PA**

2019 KEYSTONE STATE GAMES GOLD MEDAL WINNER

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Teddy Drecher (c) – RHP/RHB – Age 19 – Pennsylvania
2017 RPWL Champion

Austin Bleacher – RHB – Age 22 – Pennsylvania

Frankie Campanile – RHP/RHB – Age 19 – Pennsylvania

Pat Farrell – RHB/RHP – Pennsylvania

Tyler Nachbar – LHP/LHB – Age 21 – Pennsylvania
2018 RPWL Champion

When the Shortballs debuted in Mid Atlantic in August 2018, it was easy to dismiss them as the Ridley Park Wiffle®Ball League *B-team* – the minor league version of the Longballs. They were younger, their team name was a tongue-in-cheek reference to Ridley's established team, and for their first couple of MAW events they struggled to win more than a game. It was a logistical - if not a tad unfair - conclusion to arrive at.

As it turns out, that initial impression was short-lived. In their third MAW event – the 2019 Opening Day Tournament – the Shortballs went 3-0 in pool play, walked off in dramatic fashion against the Longballs in the semi-finals, and dropped a close 1-0 game to ERL in the tournament finals. Not content with the runner up finish, the Shortballs came to the next event determined to finish what they started. They did just that, going 6-0 and avenging their previous championship game loss by downing ERL in the tournament finals. Those two tournaments solidified the Shortballs' standing as a top tier MAW team - a position they kept into 2020. The team has reached the elimination round at all three 2020 MAW tournaments and are a thorn in the side of any opponent.

The talent possessed by the Shortballs' pitching corps of Frankie Campanile, Teddy Drecher, and Nate Smith was never in the doubt, even when the young team was struggling to win games. By virtue of playing and learning in the Wiffle®Ball pitching factory that is the Ridley Park Wiffle®Ball League, all three players were advanced pitchers by their senior year of high school. They have only improved in the year+ since graduating. Frankie was a workhorse in MAW, RPWL, and elsewhere in 2019 and accumulated well over one-hundred high quality fast pitch innings. Drecher has always had the most impressive stuff of the group but he has reached another level in Mid Atlantic this year. Teddy has matured into a more fully developed pitcher in 2020 with both the ability and the know-how to pitch his way through imposing lineups. Campanile is expected to be a no-go pitching wise for the National Championship, but the addition of Tyler Nachbar from the Longballs will offset some of that. Nachbar had a breakout tournament of sorts this July in MAW as he pitched the Longballs to their second straight tournament title. The Southpaw should make for a nice 1-2 punch with Drecher.

The real difference maker for the 2020 Shortballs relative to prior years, however, is their offense. The team could not buy a run a couple of years ago and relied on well-timed, clutch hits in 2019, which is not necessarily a sustainable formula. Campanile did most of the big damage for the Shortballs in MAW this year. The addition of Austin Bleacher paid dividends as well. Bleacher has long been one of the better hitters in RPWL and at the NWLA Tournament and he is now demonstrating that in MAW, too. The Shortballs have seen a lot of pitching - a lot of different pitching - at young ages which may serve them well at PeoplesBank Park.

**SLAUGHTERHOUSE
WILKES-BARRE, PA**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

TJ Hannon (c) – RHP/LHB – Age 39 – Pennsylvania

Anthony Caladie – RHP/RHB – Age 25 – Pennsylvania

Brett Caladie – RHB/RHP – Age 21 – Pennsylvania

Nick Pugh - RHB/RHP - Pennsylvania

Curtis Wagner – RHP/RHB – Age 30 – Pennsylvania

Since 2004, the Backyard Wiffle®Ball League (“BWBL”) in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania has been a staple of the northeast Wiffle® scene. One of two teams representing BWBL at the inaugural United Wiffle®Ball National Championship, SlaughterHouse has several quality arms that could make them a tough match up for any team, especially early in the tournament.

SlaughterHouse will be led from the mound by veteran Curtis Wagner. Despite being a longtime fixture of BWBL, Wagner is not all that well-known in the Wiffle® world outside of his home league in large part because he has never played on BWBL’s NWLA Tournament team. His most prolific recent performance came at 2019’s Keystone State Games. In that tournament – which was one event as part of the larger annual amateur state games – Wagner led Bad Meets Evil to the gold medal round. Once there, he out dueled Frankie Campanile and shutdown the Shortballs to force a decisive game two of the championship series. Wagner was sharp in that game too but suffered a heartbreaking loss courtesy of a Teddy Drecher walk-off. Curtis throws a sidearm riser and sidearm drop, with the latter rating out as his best pitch. He has the ability to throw multiple games throughout the day and his arm will likely play a vital role in SlaughterHouse’s tournament.

Backing up Wagner on the mound will be the Caladie brothers, Brett and Anthony. As rookies in 2019, Brett and Anthony were all over the BWBL offensive and pitching leader boards. The pair played with Balls Deep at the MAW Winter Classic this past February. Anthony impressed right off the bat, shutting down the Hardos of Tim McElrath, Ryan McElrath, Jordan Robles, and Connor Young for four innings before tiring in the fifth. Anthony is a hard thrower whose off-speed stuff and command appeared to lag a little behind his velocity. Anthony and Brett both carry significant upside on the rubber and if they can harness their stuff for even one game in York, that will be a major boost to their team.

Rounding out the roster is BWBL co-founder and a familiar face around the northeast Wiffle® scene, TJ Hannon. Hannon has played all over throughout his career including the NWLA Tournament, Palisades WBL, and MAW, in addition to being a staple of BWBL. He is a pure hitter at this stage in his career and his teammates will no doubt lean on his experience to help guide them through the tournament.



**Sueño
NORTHEAST**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Dave Capobianco (c) – LHP/LHB – Age 43 – Maryland

Ryan Foley – RHP/LHB – Age 29 – Massachusetts

Ray Lutick – RHP/LHB – Age 21 – New Jersey

Kenny Rodgers Jr. – RHB – Age 25 – New York

Dave Wegrzyn – RHB/RHP – Age 31 – Connecticut

There are a lot of interesting looking rosters at this year's United Wiffle®Ball National Championship Tournament, but no team that quite matches the motley crew that is Sueño. Reading the names on the roster, this version of Sueño feels a bit like it was put together by drawing names out of a hat. It is difficult to find a lot of common threads amongst the players. The one that is there – a tremendous amount of fast pitch Wiffle®Ball talent and success – might be the only one that matters, however.

The team is co-captained by veteran wiffers Dave Capobianco and Kenny Rodgers Jr. Cap first played for a national championship back in 2005 at the Fast Plastic national championship tournament and is still going strong 15 years later. After a brief hiatus from the sport, this Maryland wiffler returned in 2018 playing alongside his two teenage children in MAW. For the past three years, Cap has been one of the better players in Mid Atlantic and easily one of the most respected. Although nearly twenty years his junior, Kenny Rodgers has nearly as much Wiffle® experience as his teammate. Kenny's uncanny ability to hit a Wiffle®Ball has led teammates to compare him to a video game create-a-player. He owes much of his success to the fact that he was practically raised in the sport as the son of star New York wiffler Kenny "Moonlight" Rodgers.

Capobianco will surely see some time on the rubber and the other three members of Sueño - Ryan Foley, Ray Lutick, and Dave Wegrzyn - are candidates to pitch as well. Foley - a veteran of the GSWL Massachusetts scene - brings significant big game and national experience with him. He does not have many recent fast pitch innings on his arm, which could also work in his favor. Wegrzyn's status for the tournament is somewhat tentative but if he is active, he brings another big game-tested power arm to Sueño. Lutick is a bulldog on the rubber. He is not afraid to go right after hitters and has enough stamina to pitch three or more games without a significant dip in stuff.

Sueño's roster may seem random, it is one of the more well-rounded and deeper rosters in the entire tournament. Barring a tough draw or some no-shows, it is difficult to envision Sueño bowing out before Sunday or even before the final 16. The best-case scenario is they make it through the first day with two or three of their pitchers having not thrown and Rodgers' bat heating up. In such a scenario, they are going to be a tough team to eliminate.

USUAL SUSPECTS NEW YORK

2010 Golden Stick Wiffle®Ball League National Champions | 2011 Golden Stick Wiffle®Ball League national runners up

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Dan Lanigan (c) – RHP/RHB – Age 36 – New York
2007 Fast Plastic national championship runner up; 2013 Goldenstick Wiffle®Ball League fast pitch national runner up

Scott Alford – RHB – Age 35 – New Jersey

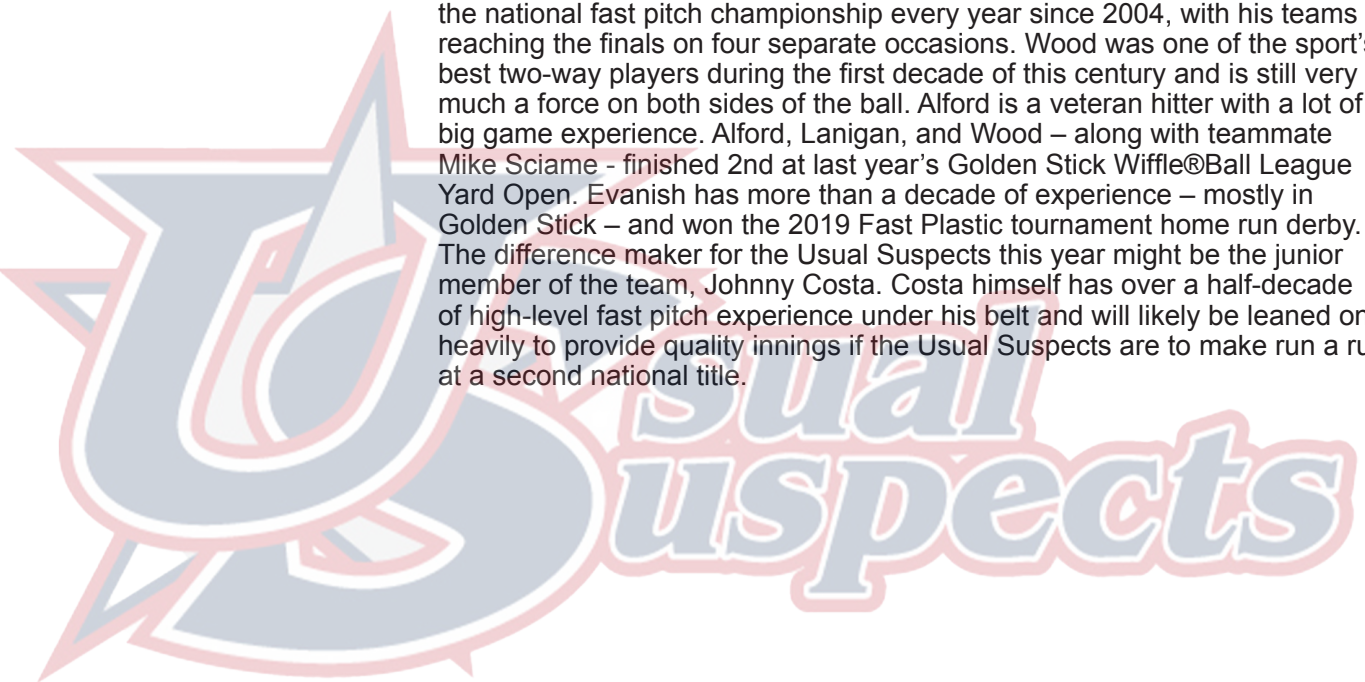
Johnny Costa – RHP/RHB – Age 24 – New Jersey
2015 Palisades WBL Champion; 2020 Mid Atlantic Winter Classic MVP

Joe Evanish - LHP/LHB - Age 35 - New York

Ryan Wood – RHP/RHB – Age 35 – New York
2003, 2005, 2006 & 2007 Wiffle Up! World Series champion; 2007 Fast Plastic national championship runner up

At the 2011 Golden Stick Wiffle®Ball fast pitch national championship in Boston, the Usual Suspects found themselves on the brink of a possible dynasty. Had they managed to push a run across the plate before Doom's Brian DiNapoli ended the tournament with an 8th inning walk-off home run, the Usual Suspects would have joined the exclusive club of back-to-back fast pitch national champions. With all members of the team still well within the prime age range for wiffers and with one of the sport's top players over the prior decade - Ryan Wood - in tow, a third straight championship the following year was not out the question. It was not to be however, and shortly thereafter, the Usual Suspects were done as a going concern in fast pitch Wiffle®Ball for several years. The 2010 champs re-emerged in the fast pitch scene in 2018, playing in the Fast Plastic national championship in each of the last two years.

A decade after their first national title, the Usual Suspects will look for that elusive second title this October in Pennsylvania. Three members of the Usual Suspects 2020 roster – Scott Alford, Dan Lanigan, and Ryan Wood – were on that 2010 championship team and form the core of this year's club. Lanigan is a national championship tournament veteran and has played in the national fast pitch championship every year since 2004, with his teams reaching the finals on four separate occasions. Wood was one of the sport's best two-way players during the first decade of this century and is still very much a force on both sides of the ball. Alford is a veteran hitter with a lot of big game experience. Alford, Lanigan, and Wood – along with teammate Mike Sciamie - finished 2nd at last year's Golden Stick Wiffle®Ball League Yard Open. Evanish has more than a decade of experience – mostly in Golden Stick – and won the 2019 Fast Plastic tournament home run derby. The difference maker for the Usual Suspects this year might be the junior member of the team, Johnny Costa. Costa himself has over a half-decade of high-level fast pitch experience under his belt and will likely be leaned on heavily to provide quality innings if the Usual Suspects are to make run a run at a second national title.



**WAVES
CANNONSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA**

2018 NWLA Tournament Champions

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Jacob Davey (c) – LHB/RHP – Age 21 – Pennsylvania

Austin Berger – RHP/RHB – Age 22 – Pennsylvania

Brice Clark – LHP/LHB – Age 28 – West Virginia

Steve Keelon – RHB/RHP – Age 20 – Pennsylvania

Nate Morris – RHB – Age 22 – Pennsylvania

To say the Wiff is Life League Waves were underdogs at the 2018 NWLA Tournament is an understatement. The group from Canonsburg, PA struggled in their 2017 NWLA Tournament debut, falling out of the main tournament early, with only a victory in a truncated consolation bracket salvaging an otherwise forgettable tournament. Things started off equally dire for the Waves at the 2018 tournament. They went to a draw in their opening contest and then dropped their next two pool play games. Things looked bleak, but the Waves never lacked for confidence. Those loses ended up being the only two loses they would experience that weekend. After pool play, the Waves went on a run through the double elimination bracket going 5-0 to become arguably the most unlikely NWLA Tournament champions in the history of that event.

The key to their success back then was Austin Berger's ability to pound the zone with quality strikes and the team's fearlessness on the base paths. They made a bid to go back-to-back at the NWLA Tournament, but ultimately finished in 5th place in 2019. In 2018, the Waves made their Mid Atlantic tournament debut and were a regular presence at MAW events in 2020. With one of the key attributes to their 2018 success – that unrelentingly aggressive base running – neutralized in a non-base running environment, the Waves have had their ups and downs in MAW.

Berger has steadily developed from a one-note pitcher to a multi-dimensional one and held talented offenses in check all season long in MAW. He was equally as good in his home league, which added a fast pitch component for the first time this past summer. The Waves' offense has a ton of potential – Jake Davey is a quality hitter trying to find consistency outside of the NWLA Tournament, Steve Keelon has quietly turned himself into a solid batter, and Nate Morris never gets cheated – but has been up and down in Mid Atlantic, leading to more than a couple of tough luck losses for Berger this past season. The Waves offense is such that it wouldn't be surprising if they put up some runs and got on a roll nor would it be a shock if they struggled to get men on base all tournament long.

The team will get a potential big boost on both sides of the ball with the addition of Brice Clark. The current face of West Virginia Wiffle®Ball, Brice seemed to turn a corner this year on the carpet. The hard throwing southpaw finally found consistent command in both MAW and WILL. He will also enter the tournament hot, as his best outings of the year in MAW came in August and September. Brice swings a powerful bat and was a little more consistent offensively down the stretch in MAW as well. Pairing Clark with Berger gives the Waves two sneakily good pitchers and if they can find a way to consistently get men on base, they could go on another Cinderella run.

**WAY TOO BEAUTIFUL
NEW JERSEY**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Adam Milsted (c) – RHP/RHB – Age 31 – New Jersey

Ian Crosby – RHP/RHB – Age 30 – New Jersey

Chris Scipione – RHP/RHB – Age 28 – New Jersey

Way Too Beautiful have been a staple of the northeast tournament scene for close to a decade. No tournament is too big, too obscure, or too small for the New Jersey squad who self-deprecatingly refers to themselves as “the best 2nd place team in the world” due to their penchant for runner up finishes. The club does have more than a dozen tournament titles to their name, including in fast pitch tournaments like the long-running Brooklawn Reunion tournament in 2015 and the 60-team Kat Hall Memorial tournament last Labor Day weekend.

For the 2020 United Wiffle®Ball tournament, Way Too Beautiful’s two principal players will be joined by a former Goldenstick Wiffle®Ball League Pennsylvania region standout. Adam Milsted is the heart-and-soul of Way Too Beautiful and has the most recent fast pitch experience on W2B. He has competed as a member of the York Yaks and Juggernauts in MAW from 2018 through 2020, in addition to competing in standalone fast pitch tournaments as a member of Way Too Beautiful. Crosby is a veteran with a lot of wiffleball over experience under his belt. The x-factors for Way Too Beautiful might be Scipione, who are making his returns to high level fast pitch Wiffle®Ball after several years away. As a member of State of Mind in 2013, Scipione finished second at the 2013 Goldenstick Wiffle®Ball national championship in Savannah, Georgia. “Skip” got a warm-up in at the Mid Atlantic Draft Tournament in September. He looked like his old self, picking up a win and cheering himself on in his inimitable manner.



**WHIPPETS WIFFLE CLUB
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Peter Mocabee (c) – RHP/LHB – Age 41 – California

Randy Dalbey – RHP/RHB – Age 36 – Arizona
2003 Fast Plastic National Champion

Dan Foster – RHP/RHB – Age 30 – Illinois

Pete Taynton – RHP/RHB – Age 42 – California

As a longtime Wiffle®Ball team captain, Peter Mocabee has put together (more than) his fair share of interesting and competitive teams over the years. The SoCal Wiffle®Ball mainstay has cycled through many of California's more prolific players and captained contending Golden Stick teams like the Gunslingers (Fast) and Swingmen (Yard) in the first half of the 2010's. For the 2020 United Wiffle®Ball National Championship, Mocabee has taken his current squad - Whippets Wiffle Club - and made them over with a few key additions.

The key to the Whippets' tournament likely lies with Randy Dalbey. The longtime member of the Arizona Vipers figures to be both the Whippets' top pitcher and best all-around player. As he approaches the 20-year mark as a competitive wiffler, Dalbey still has explosive stuff and the ability to go multiple games during a tournament without a significant drop off in production. A tall and slender right-hander with a smooth motion, Randy gets right on top of hitters which allows his already quality stuff to play up even more. This is not the first time that Mocabee has recruited Dalbey for a national championship team. Randy was a member of the 2012 Gunslingers at the GSWL Fast Pitch Open.

Pete Taynton is another veteran with national tournament experience, who could see some time on the carpet this October. In a large tournament without many walk-over teams, Taynton could be a one-game, big moment option for Mocabee. He also might be of the more overlooked quality hitters going into the tournament - a byproduct of being an almost exclusive West Coast player in a tournament where a vast majority of the teams reside out east. Taynton is a quality, veteran hitter whose bat could prove to be a difference maker.

For the 4th spot on the Whippets, Mocabee ventured away from the West entirely - but stayed within the realm of former teammates - to snag Illinois wiffler Dan Foster. Bestowed with the title of "Chicago's top player" prior to the 2014 GSWL Fast Pitch Open, Foster made his name as a member of the Quad City Wiffers in the GSWL Midwest region in 2013. Foster is a two-way player and he accumulated some video game-like offensive statistics in the offensively minded 2013 GSWL Midwest region. He was also that region's best pitcher in 2013. For Foster - like many others - his success in this tournament will be determined how the layoff impacts him, either positively or negatively. It has been five years since Foster last played nationally (alongside Mocabee as the two drafted members of the Bandits) in the 2015 GSWL fast pitch national championship draft tournament. If the time off means a fresh arm and little rust, that could mean potentially big things for both Foster and the Whippets.

In any event, Mocabee has put together another intriguing squad that could quietly make some noise on Saturday and into Sunday. This is a team that has a few pitching options and a true veteran leader in Dalbey, which makes it easy to imagine them quietly and confidently playing themselves into Sunday and beyond.

**WHISKEY DUCKS
CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Jason Rendon (c) – Age 46 – Texas

Rudy Trevino – Age 26 - Texas

Jae-R Rendon – Age 27 - Texas

Jason Silva – Age 33 - Texas

James Weaver – Age 50 - Texas

The Whiskey Ducks will look to make an immediate splash in the fast pitch competitive Wiffle®Ball world by taking on some of the best the sport has to offer this October! The quintet from Corpus Christi, Texas are relative newcomers to the game and are currently competing in the first year of the South Texas Wiffle®Ball league. The team – which is captained by Jason Rendon – has a softball background. Despite their relative inexperience, the Ducks are a confident bunch and ready for the competition that may await them in Pennsylvania. There are more than a few examples of newer teams seemingly coming out of nowhere to make a run at major or national tournaments. The Whiskey Ducks hope to add their name to that list this fall.

The Ducks did make a couple of splashes over the summer. First, they came out of the play-in game to take the 5-team South Texas Wiffle®Ball League championship. Then in September, the Ducks entered bracket play of the Cedar Park Wiffle®Ball medium pitch/yellow bat tournament as the 6th seed and made a run to the finals, ultimately coming up just short to the Wise Guys by a score of 1-0.

**WIFFAHOLICS
NEW YORK**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Matt Ventimiglia (c) – RHP/LHB – Age 33 – New York

Troy Parks – RHP/RHB – Age 32 – Massachusetts

Ryan Patnode – RHP/RHB – Age 33 – New York

Rob Sutton – RHP/RHB – Age 32 – Massachusetts

When local York team Baez Auto had to unfortunately withdraw from the 2020 National Championship Tournament in August, nobody was happier than the Wiffaholics. The first team on the waiting list, the Wiffaholics scooped spot up the suddenly available final spot. It is should be noted, however, that the Wiffaholics are far from a normal “replacement” team. At four veterans deep – each one having plenty left in the tank as well – the Wiffaholics could very easily make the leap from out-of-the-tournament to Sunday afternoon competitor.

Team captain Matt Ventimiglia has a Yard National Championship to his name, winning it all in 2017 with State of Mind. Ventimiglia is an above average veteran hitter. It has been a while since he has competed in fast pitch regularly, but he is a great Yard hitter and was a solid fast pitch hitter in GSWL fast pitch for several years. There is no reason to believe his hitting style won't re-translate back to fast pitch. Patnode has more than a dozen years of top-level Wiffle® experience, competing in Fast Plastic in the latter half of the 2000's and then GSWL fast pitch in the first half of the next decade. Patnode threw clean in a time & place where few did and was successful in doing so. He threw well in GSWL Pro in 2019 and will try to improve on that at the National Championship.

Sutton also threw well in GSWL Pro last summer, tossing 10 1/3 innings of two-run ball. While he has less major tournament experience than his teammates, Sutton has the potential to be a solid #2/#3 pitching option for the Wiffaholics. Rounding out the roster is Massachusetts veteran Troy Parks. Parks is a tough out and was an integral part of the Game Over lineup in GSWL Yard this summer that won 20 of 24 games during the regular season and made a deep run at the Yard Open.

**WIFF INC.
NEW YORK**

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Anthony Didio (c) – RHP/RHB – Age 32 – Colorado
2015 Palisades WBL Champion

Sean Handahl – RHP/RHB – Age 29 – Connecticut
2014 GSWL Fast Pitch National Champion

Rob Hoffman – RHP/RHB – Age 32 – New York

Tom Polly – RHP/RHB – Age 25 – New York

Kenny Rodgers – LHB – Age 41 – New York

The roots of Wiff Inc. reach all way back to the latter half of the 2000's, when the team competed in Fast Plastic's New York region. This year's Wiff Inc. club returns three of the core members from those early days in Anthony Didio, Kenny "Moonlight" Rodgers, and Rob Hoffman. The three veterans have not played much fast pitch either together or as individuals recently, but they will have plenty of experience to lean on in York.

Rodgers burst onto the national scene some twenty years ago as a member of legendary In the Box franchise. A lefty with a slight uppercut swing, Rodgers might be the most dangerous hitter in an all-around dangerous lineup. A move to Colorado several years back has limited Didio's recent playing time but before then he was an extremely active and productive player for many years. Didio could be a one-game pitching option at the National Championship, although most of his contributions are likely to come at the plate and in the field. [Hoffman was once one of the game's hardest throwers](#) but has also been largely inactive in fast pitch Wiffle®Ball in recent years. If he can turn back the clock for a couple of games this October, that will be a huge boon to Wiff Inc.'s chances.

To make up for the lack of pitching depth from their core, Didio added a couple of slightly younger veteran players to the mix in Sean Handahl and Tom Polly. Handahl has a national championship to his name as a member of the Blue Razrs in 2014. The tall righty towers above much of the competition and derives a lot of velocity from his lanky frame. Polly was a solid two-way player for the Dead End Kids during the first half of the prior decade in GSWL fast pitch. Both Handahl and Polly have stuck mainly to Yard over the past four years – Polly as a member of the Hammerheads and Handahl with The Enemy – and have experienced great success in that environment. The lack of recent fast pitch play from Hoffman, Polly, and Handahl could work in Wiff Inc.'s favor. "Fresh" but experienced arms are a luxury that not many teams can match. If that trio shows little signs of rust – or at least works out the kinks before it is too late – Wiff Inc. has all the pieces necessary to make a deep tournament run.

WSEM DREAM TEAM MICHIGAN

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Kyle Tomlinson (c) – RHB – Age 25 – Michigan
2014, 2015, 2017 NWLA Tournament Champion

Caden Irwin – RHP/RHB – Age 21 – Michigan
2019 WSEM Rookie of the Year

Scott Kujawa – RHP/RHB – Age 27 – Michigan
2017 NWLA Tournament Champion

Nicco Lollo – RHP/RHB – Age 25 – Michigan
2020 WSEM Most Valuable Player

Chandler Phillips – RHB/RHP – Age 25 – Michigan
2014, 2015, 2017 NWLA Tournament Champion; 2018, 2019 WSEM MVP

Wiffle in Southeast Michigan - or WSEM for short - is the most decorated league in NWLA Tournament history, having won back-to-back titles in 2014 and 2015 and a third in 2017. WSEM's three NWLA Tournament titles were almost entirely pitching driven. The 2014 squad allowed just 12 earned runs over 44 innings but put up a rather unimpressive slash line of .181/.451/.333. It was a similar story when they repeated the following year (12 earned runs in 50 innings pitch, with a slightly better .237/.439/.420 line) and the gap was even bigger in 2017 (3 earned runs in 47 innings pitched to go with a .196/.399/.337 slash line). From Stephen Farkas, Austin Bischoff and Evan Bischoff to Scott Kujawa and Travis Strojny and Nicco Lollo, WSEM has an impressive history of producing quality pitchers that have succeeded on a national level. The WSEM Dream Team comes to the United Wiffle® Ball National Championship in October hoping that pitching success will translate to a slightly different style of game.

The Dream Team's roster is in a potential state of flux at press time due to a couple of injuries. However, if the expected roster makes it, WSEM will look for Nicco Lollo and Scott Kujawa to lead them from the mound. Lollo played his third season in WSEM this past summer where he finished among league leaders in ERA, WHIP, and Batting Average Against. Nicco does not have overpowering stuff, but he pounds the strike zone and batters often struggle to square up on him. He made his NWLA Tournament debut in September. His teams saved him for Sunday and Lollo repaid their faith by blanking OCWA and pitching two solid innings against the event second place finishers. Kujawa struggled at this year's NWLA Tournament as he maintained his four-year NWLA Tournament pitching pattern of on-off-on-off.

WSEM will have two additional pitching options in Chandler Phillips and Caden Irwin. Phillips has arguably been the most consistent, upper tier pitching in WSEM during the post-Farkas era. He has been more erratic at the NWLA Tournament and used only sparingly there with his eye in innings (11) coming back in 2013 in his tournament debut and again this year. Irwin is the junior member of the team and still has plenty of room for growth, but profiles as the team's fourth pitcher.

While WSEM's offensive struggles in the NWLA Tournament are well-documented, none of those struggles can be blamed on Dream Team captain, Kyle Tomlinson. Tomlinson raked at the 2020 NWLA Tournament and left with a pretty-looking line of .273/.515/.682. His power was a key component to WSEM's 2015 and 2017 NWLA Tournament victories. He is rumored to be nursing an injury but if healthy, his ability to adjust to cut ball pitches could be the x-factor for WSEM.

**YORK YAKS
YORK, PENNSYLVANIA**

2017 Mid Atlantic Regular Season Champions

TOURNAMENT ROSTER

Jared Laird (c) – RHP/RHB – Age 35 – Pennsylvania

Jarod Bull – RHP/RHB – Age 30 – Pennsylvania
2017 MAW Rookie of the Year

Jerry Hill – LHB – Age 53 – Virginia

Dan Potter – RHP/RHB – Age 35 – Pennsylvania

Noah Silverman – RHP/RHB – Age 21 – Pennsylvania

Sure to be the local favorite at this year's tournament, the York Yaks are also the longest tenured franchise participating in this inaugural event. The original team members – childhood friends from York – competed in their own local league starting in 1998, with their first outside tournament coming at the 2002 Summer Showdown in Trenton, New Jersey. While some of the founding members branched out in different Wiffle® directions in subsequent years, the Yaks continued to be a regular fixture at Wiffle Up! tournaments through the mid-2000's. After a hiatus, the team reformed as one of the principal members of Mid Atlantic Wiffle® in 2017. The Yaks won the 2017 MAW regular season title and are a consistent threat in Mid Atlantic tournaments.

The Yaks' roster has turned over – more than once – during the past eighteen years as one might expect, but a pair of original members will be on their United Wiffle®Ball team this October. Veterans Jared Laird and Dan Potter will serve as the foundation for the team they have been apart off on and off for the past 18 years. While injuries and age have taken a toll on their arms, one or both veterans could see some time on the mound should the right match up come along. Potter is a slick fielder and a tremendous athlete. He's also proven to be a big game player offensively over the years. While his offensive numbers have ticked down over the past few years, the Yaks are counting on him to ignite their offense this October.

Jarod Bull has been a part of the Yaks' Mid Atlantic roster since that organization's inception in 2017. A tall right hander with an unassuming delivery, Bull anchored the Yaks rotation in 2017 (winning Rookie of the Year as a true competitive Wiffle®Ball newcomer) and in 2018, while showing incremental but tangible improvements each season from 2017 through 2019. This season, Bull has stepped aside as the team's ace in favor of the Yaks' newest acquisition, Noah Silverman. Since joining the Yaks two-tournaments into the 2019 Mid Atlantic season, Noah has improved rapidly and gone from under-the-radar prospect to established top tier pitcher virtually overnight. The 21-year old can carry a heavy workload, which the Yaks will need if they advance deep into the tournament.

Rounding out the roster and making his Yaks debut is Jerry Hill. A MAW player since the beginning, Hill captained the Barrel Bruisers for three years before joining the New School Risers for the 2020 Mid Atlantic season. Jerry is both a smart and athletic hitter, who has seen his batting average and slugging tick up this year while playing on the Risers. One of Hill's greatest offensive attributes is his knowledge of the strike zone, which is perhaps somewhat underutilized in a 4-2 count environment. An extra strike to work with could provide a substantial boost to his on-base and power numbers.

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PEOPLESBANK PARK

The 5,200 seat PeoplesBank Park has been home to the Atlantic League's York Revolution since the team's inaugural 2007 season. There are several aspects of the Park that pay tribute to baseball Hall of Fame member Brooks Robinson, who - at 18 years old - began his pro career as a member of the York White Roses of the Piedmont League. A statue of his likeness can be found in the Brooks Robinson Plaza at the home plate entrance to the ballpark and the stadium's official mailing address is 5 Brooks Robinson Way.

The park's signature feature is the Arch Nemesis - a 37-foot, 8-inch wall in left field. The wall is six inches taller than Fenway Park's Green Monster, making it the tallest outfield wall at a professional baseball stadium. PeoplesBank Park also has several unique seating/gathering areas including: a lawn seating area in front of the jumbo video board in left-center, the Home Run Patio in right field, and the Bullpen Balcony down the first base line.

YORK REVOLUTION

The history of professional baseball in York, Pennsylvania dates back to the latter half of the 19th century. The Roses first formed in 1884 as a member of the Keystone State Association. Minor league baseball in York - most often under the White Roses moniker - existed in some fashion in York from 1884 through 1969. White Roses alumni include All-Stars Ripper Collins, Lonny Frey, and Wilbur Wood; World Series winning manager Jack McKeon; and Hall of Fame third baseman Brooks Robinson.

A decade of work to bring professional baseball back to York finally bore fruit with the construction of a new stadium in the Arch Street neighborhood and formation of the York Revolution of the independent Atlantic League. The Revolution captured the Atlantic League championship for the first time in just their fourth season, defeating the Bridgeport Bluefish three games to none in the Atlantic League Championship Series. The Revs repeated as champs in 2011 when they defeated the Long Island Ducks three games to one. The Revolution's third championship came in 2017, when they once again defeated the Ducks in the championship series.

The Revolution played host to the Atlantic League All-Star Game in both 2011 and 2019. Harking back to the days of the White Roses and that team's friendly geographic rivalry with the Lancaster Red Roses, the Revolution and Lancaster Barnstormers (also of the Atlantic League) play eighteen or nineteen games against one another annually. The season series between the two clubs is called the "War of the Roses" and the winner of the annual series is awarded the Community Cup. Several players have gone on to reach the Major Leagues after playing with the Revolution, including Tike Redman and Ian Thomas.

SPECIAL THANKS

United Wiffle®Ball would like to thank **Chris Carbough** and the **entire York Revolution staff** for their all of their help and going above and beyond to ensure a first-class event for the players. This tournament would not have happened without Chris and the Revolution's efforts! Special thanks as well to **Jacob Davey** and the **NWLA Tournament** for generously and selflessly lending equipment for this event!

Thank you to the following individuals for their assistance:

Kevin "Babz" Babler

Jimmy Cole

Jim Dalbey

Tom Gannon

Gino Joseph

John Kotsko

Lou Levesque

Chris Sarnowski

Ben Schafer

Trent Steffes

Joey VanHoutten