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- Josh Carlile
- Dan Stecken

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Coach's Clinic

- January 27, 2016

- Guest Speakers
- Rachel Folden
- Carol Bruggeman



Looking for games?
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Illinois Coaches Association

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New Coaches tackle the season!

James Kowzan—Herrin

James Kowzan is happy with how the 2016 season has started. Each player has stepped up to contribute this year. His players work hard and he feels blessed with the opportunity to work in the Herrin community. With only having 4 seniors he will have several returning next year as well.

Kowzan has experience as a player and a coach. He has an extensive background in baseball, however had the opportunity to play 10 years of Men's fastpitch as well. He coached for 2 years at Jefferson College while teaching in Missouri. Kowzan is excited about his offence this year. Currently the team is hitting around a .400 average. He also likes the idea of having a pitching staff. This way they would not be relying on one girl every game.



Michelle Vučko—Evergreen Park

Michelle Vučko is extremely excited about her team in Evergreen Park this year. The team has set many goals and is working hard to reach the expectations they have placed on themselves. Their main goal is to finish at the top of the conference.

Vučko played softball in high school and DII for Lewis University. She also had the opportunity to play with the Beverly Bandits and travel to Germany, Prague, and Italy to play during the summers. Michelle is eager for her team to reach its potential. Her team is hitting the ball well and they have a good balance of speed, power, and contact hitters that will help them to be successful this season.



Zachary Myers—Peotone

Zachary feels that his first season is off to a good start. They are working to focus on small ball style of play, and to use speed to create problems for their defense. His team has a goal of winning Regionals and Sectionals this year.

Myers has experience playing college baseball. He was brought to the program because of his knowledge of the game as well as being able to run a program. He has learned how much faster the game of softball is in comparison.

Excited for the post season, Myers relies on his senior pitching and the fact that his players realize how crucial each run is.



Will Capie—Carterville

Will Capie is happy about the start of his season. His two assistant coaches have helped his transition as a head coach. He has upperclassmen that lead by example, making his job seem easier. His team does not pick the typical goals. They are working to improve each day. Capie comes to Carterville with 2 years of college baseball experience. He also was an assistant softball coach prior to being a head coach. He has taught his team to take pride in their base running this year. They work on this daily as well as fly ball reads, secondary reads, and take offs.

As the year has progressed Capie has realized that you can't stress over things you cannot control. "if our games are getting rained out, most likely, so is everyone else's."



ICA Welcomes Carol Bruggeman and Rachel Folden

The ICA will welcome Rachel Folden and Carol Bruggeman as they present at the January 2016 Coach's Clinic.

Rachel Folden is a former professional softball player in the NPF (National Pro Fastpitch). Folden retired after the 2012 season, after 5 years in the NPF. Folden played for two professional teams, the Carolina Diamonds in 2012, and the Chicago Bandits from 2008-2012. She finished her career ranked 2nd all time in NPF history in home runs (41), 3rd in RBI (122), 6th in walks (101), and T-8th in doubles (28).

In 2012, Folden's final season, she age (.389), the league leader in slugging percentage (.630), and (42), 3rd in home runs (8), and 8th finished 2nd in overall MVP voting, Player of the Year.

Prior to her stint at Carolina, Folden seasons, where she was a 3-time All 2011 Offensive Player of the Year, leader in home runs). Folden also dits in 2008 and 2011.

Folden was drafted out of Marshall shall, Folden was a 4-time NFCA Freshman of the Year, a 2-time a 4-time NFCA All-Region Per-Career records in batting average (.405), hits (266), home runs (58), RBI (196), total bases (505), and walks (143). She is also 2nd all-time at MU in runs scored (169), and doubles (63). She is also the career leader in C-USA in batting average (.405) and slugging percentage (.811).



finished 2nd in the NPF in batting average (.507), OPS (1.137), 5th in the league in hits in the league in RBI (25). Folden also as well as 2nd in voting for Offensive

played for the Chicago Bandits for 4 -NPF catcher, 2008 Rookie of the Year, and 2011 Home Run Champion (league won 2 NPF championships with the Ban-

University in Huntington, WV. At Mar-Division I All-American, the 2005 MAC Conference USA Player of the Year, and former.

Folden currently holds Marshall Career records in batting average (.405), hits (266), home runs (58), RBI (196), total bases (505), and walks (143). She is also 2nd all-time at MU in runs scored (169), and doubles (63). She is also the career leader in C-USA in batting average (.405) and slugging percentage (.811).

Recently, Folden was an Assistant Coach in charge of pitching, catching, and outfield at Valparaiso University in Valparaiso, IN. While at Valpo, she helped the team to its best season in program history. Valpo had numerous all-conference performers and one of the lowest ERA's in team history in Folden's two years of tenure.

Prior to coaching at Valparaiso, Folden was a graduate assistant coach at Holy Names University in Oakland, CA. In her one year at HNU, Folden helped the team to a Cal-Pac championship in only its second year of existence. HNU also had the Cal-Pac Pitcher of the Year, Player of the Year, Rookie of the Year, and Coaching Staff of the Year during Folden's tenure.

Folden was also the head coach at Encinal High School in Alameda, CA in 2009. She helped turn a program around that previously finished with a total of 4 wins. She guided an Encinal team that finished fourth in the Bay Shore League with 15 wins, 9 of those coming during league play.

Rachel Folden is originally from Azusa, CA and currently resides and trains in Valparaiso, IN, where she gives individual and team fastpitch instruction, hosts numerous camps and clinics, and provides analysis and college recruiting information for young women of all ages. She graduated from Diamond Bar High School in Diamond Bar, CA where she had a standout career and had her jersey retired. Folden graduated from Marshall University with a bachelor's degree in History, where she was also an Academic All-American and was on the Dean's List each semester.

Carol Bruggeman, a long time NCAA Division I coach at Michigan, Purdue and Louisville, began her duties as the NFCA's Associate Executive Director on September 1, 2014. Bruggeman represents the NFCA as the Division I staff liaison, while undertaking various roles with coaching education, recruiting issues, special projects and as a national speaker, clinician and educator.

Bruggeman is certainly no stranger to the Association having been an active member for 25 years while unselfishly serving the NFCA in numerous capacities. Included are a four-year term as president and stints as both the past-president and fourth vice president on the NFCA's Board of Directors, as the board's Division I Representative and as a featured instructor at numerous National Fastpitch Coaches College courses throughout the country. Over September 12-13, 2014, in Lexington, Ky., Bruggeman will again lend her expertise to the NFCC by serving on the staff of Course 406: Coaching Dynamic Team Practices.



She has also been a featured speaker at more than 125 national softball clinics and professional business organizations. In 2013, she wrote a chapter entitled "Understanding Today's Player" for the NFCA book, *The Softball Coaches Bible, Volume 2*, and co-wrote a chapter entitled "Warm-up Drills for Softball" included in *The Softball Drill Book*, which was published in 2007. In 2002, Bruggeman penned a chapter entitled "Competing with Class" for the NFCA publication, *The Softball Coaches Bible*. She served as the color analyst for Fox Sports Chicago's television coverage of the 2002 Big Ten softball tournament. Bruggeman also co-produced Level 1 and Level 2 instructional DVDs on softball specific athlete development and has also produced instructional DVDs on base running and defense. In July 2011, Bruggeman traveled to Australia as head coach of the college team that won a gold medal with USA-Athletes International. She also traveled to the Czech Republic in 2009 in the same role.

In nine years at Louisville, Bruggeman helped build the Cardinal program into a perennial national contender. During her tenure at UofL, the Cards picked up three BIG EAST Conference titles, an American Athletic Conference crown and secured nine straight NCAA Tournament berths, while boasting almost 60 combined all-conference selections, 17 NFCA All-Region inclusions, eight NFCA All-Americans and three conference player or pitcher of the year honorees.

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During her coaching career, Bruggeman has been a part of over 700 victories, reaching that impressive personal milestone back on March 23, 2013, with a 4-1 triumph over Indiana. In 2012, she played an integral role in guiding a Louisville squad that won a school-record 55 games on the way to BIG EAST regular-season and tournament crowns and a top-10 national ranking.

Bruggeman came to Louisville from Purdue, where she started the Boilermaker softball program and served as head coach from 1994 to 2005. She guided the team to a 21-17-1 inaugural campaign in 1994, posting the best first-year record in Big Ten Conference history. Her squads posted 30 or more victories in nine of her last 10 seasons at Purdue. With Bruggeman at the helm, Purdue had 23 All-Big Ten selections, 24 NFCA All-Mideast Region Selections and one NFCA First Team All-American.

Prior to working at Purdue, Bruggeman was an assistant coach at Michigan from 1989 to 1993. During that time, the Wolverines won back-to-back Big Ten championships in 1992 and 1993. Michigan earned NCAA tournament bids both years, marking the first postseason trips in program history.

Bruggeman began her coaching career as a graduate assistant at her alma mater Iowa. As a player for the Hawkeyes, she earned All-Big Ten and All-Mideast Region honors as an infielder. She was also an Academic All-American, a three-time Academic All-Big Ten selection and received Iowa's Athletic Academic Medal of Honor. In 1997, she was inducted into the Iowa Softball Association Hall of Fame.

A native of Charter Oak, Iowa, Bruggeman received her bachelor's degree in accounting and business from Iowa in 1987 and continued her education at Iowa, earning a master's in athletic administration and coaching in 1990.