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- Jason Bolden
- Josh Carlile
- Dan Stecken

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UPCOMING EVENTS

ICA Softball Hall of Fame Induction and Recognition Banquet

February 21, 2016 @12:00pm-3:00pm

Tickets \$20- meal included

Please RSVP to Greg Easter - geaster51@yahoo.com

Illinois Coaches Association

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

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ICA Website is Live

The Illinois Softball Coaches Association is comprised of both current and former IHSA softball coaches who volunteer their time. The goal for the website is to make it very user friendly, and to have used as a resource by coaches for coaches!

Some of the new features on the site include, "Looking for Games" section, "Games of the Week" section, Live Feed (Scores, Stats, Pictures and Information) section.

If coaches have any open dates in their schedules, please register on the forum, and post it. If coaches do not wish to post, dates can also be emailed to jbalden@icasoftball.com and

they will be posted. Please include the date, time, level, location, and contact info.

The site will be streaming games of the week through the Periscope app via Twitter.



Our organization is hoping that coaches and players will follow us on twitter [@ica_softball](#).

The Live Feed Section will pull scores and tweets via twitter if you use the hashtag [#icasoftball](#). Please let athletic directors, or team managers know if they would like score reports, pictures, or stats to go the Live Feed section on the site.

Apply [#icasoftball](#) in a twitter post, and it will show up in the Live Feed!

We still have the 1A - 4A Polls, Hall of Fame coaches, Sectional Coaches of the Year, and All-State players.

Please check out the site! The ICA is here to help coaches and players in any way we can!

ICA Softball Hall of Fame Induction



State Champions and Runners Up Comment on Last Season



Marengo's Jessica Turner, left, and Veronica Ruelius celebrate after taking a 3-0 lead on June 9, 2015.

Several coaches sent information answering the following questions about 2015 spring season.

1. Provide a short run down of big in-season wins that propelled your team to its postseason success.
2. What are some decisive moments in the post-season up to the state championship game?
3. What was "special" about this team?
4. Give a brief experience you have had as a head coach.
5. Who are the "special senior send-offs"

on your 2014 team?

6. What are some highlights from the end of the season or the state title game?

Four coaches responded with their input on the season. Below are highlights from each response.

- Dwain Nance— Marengo Community HS
- Stephanie Ramsey— Washington High School
- Matt Baalman— Calhoun High School
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Marengo Community High School

Dwain Nance

"We started the season really well and only had a few let downs throughout the season. I thought beating Glenbard South for the first time in school history was huge for us. It was a monkey off our back. Coach Fonda does an excellent job over there at GBS."

"In the super-sectional, we did a nice job of getting three runs off a really good pitcher in

Wauconda's Wedl. We put the ball into play that 6th inning. It was looking as if we were going to get no hit. Our kids kept battling."

"Our team was close and we were drama free. The girls got along very well. We had great leadership on the team. We had depth as well. This team wanted to be good and worked hard from day 1."

"This was my 9th year at MCHS. We have a great pro-

gram that starts in the recreation league. Our program is synchronized from ages 5 on up to HS."

"Our state title game was an excellent game between two very good teams. Both teams competed to the end. Washington limited us on offense when we had chances to score. Washington was the better team and deserves the state championship. We are very proud of our 2nd place finish as it takes a lot of time, hard work, commitment and luck to reach the state championship game."

Washington High School

Stephanie Ramsey

"Our last game before our postseason run was against Mt.Zion where we had a big come from behind victory against a great team. We were behind and hit a two run home run with two strikes and two outs that led us to win the

game. It was a confidence builder for our team that proved we were able to come from behind. It also showed we never give up until the last out is made because anything is possible!"

"We played Peotone for our

game to go to the State Finals and were down by 2 runs. We hit a home run that hit the scoreboard in the bottom of the 8th inning for a walk off victory. It was the most unbelievable game to be part of and experience such a special moment. The never say die attitude kept us alive and gave us our first state birth since 1991. Throughout our



June 13, 2015 - East Peoria, IL - Marengo's Jessica Turner and Washington base runner Lexie Carlsten tangle up a play at home during their IHSA state softball title game showdown. The run by Carlsten scored and was the game winner for the Lady Panthers. (Photo: PhotoNews Media/Clark Brooks)

post season run we earned the nickname the "cardiac kids" as we were always going extra innings."

"One thing that made our team special was all 20 girls had a role and knew what their role was on the team. Every night we stepped out on the field we had a new "hero" and it was amazing to see everyone participate in every win we accomplished. The team chemistry we had was something very special and these girls will forever remember those moments together."

"The experience itself goes by so fast and the best advice I received was to step back and enjoy the ride. It was an amazing experience and I

was so thankful for my team, coaching staff, administration, fans, and our entire community for their support! We couldn't do it without everyone being a part of all our special moments and experiencing the ride with us."

"Our community support was unbelievable as we had a parade back into town after we won the State Championship and were able to ride on top of a fire truck. Seeing everyone there from our community makes you so grateful for the continued support throughout our season. We also had a special recognition celebration at the high school where our seniors were able to speak and thank all our fans for being on this journey with us."

"The state title game had a tremendous atmosphere and the sea of orange we were able to see across the stands rooting for us was a sight we will never forget. Being able to play in that game was an amazing experience. It was one of our post season games we actually finished in 7 innings instead of going extras and it seemed like time froze until we finally made the last out. The rush of everyone running out of the dugout as state champions on the field for the first time in school history is something we will cherish forever. The award ceremony following the game allowed me to thank all my players individually as I put their 1st place medal around their neck. As a coach I feel extremely blessed and grateful for the opportunity they gave me and couldn't be more proud of them!"

Calhoun High School

Matt Baalman

"I believe it was a loss that propelled us thru post season. We had a 2-4 loss to Alton Marquette where all 4 of there runs were unearned. At that point we moved a lot of players to different positions to compliment our dominant pitcher. Once we could defend small ball our season became very successful."

"Grace Baalman only allowed 3 hits in the 1st 6 games of postseason. Our bats were hot at the right time of the year."

"We lost a lot of seniors off the 2014 Team. This team fought hard all year long to accomplish their success. The basketball team finished second in State ,plus I gave them the 1st week of practice off to give them a much needed break. Once we started practice they were short practices the 1st half of season and once we headed down the final stretch we extended our practice times to better

prepare us for the postseason. Softball is most our kids third sport of the school year and can easily get fatigued by the end of softball. This Team did a good job sticking to our Season goal of peaking when it counts!"

"This was my third year as Head Coach , I was the assistant coach for two years prior. I have been coaching kids for a lot of years and been around some of the most competitive softball in the country with my girls."

"Becca Oswald was the lone senior on our team but she was also our team mom (leader). She was one of the best lead-off hitters in the area but it was her leadership that we will miss most."

"Coaching has been very enjoyable experience. I truly believe that the girls I have coached taught me more than I could ever teach them in life. "

"Grace Baalman stole the highlights with 18Ks and belted two

Homeruns. Becca Oswald scored 2-runs on Grace's four RBI's"



Grace Baalman delivers a pitch in the state championship game Saturday against Somonauk. Baalman led Calhoun to a 4-1 victory. (Michael Weaver/Calhoun News-Herald) June 9, 2015