



BASES LOADED

This week's games

Division 3

CM2 @ OU2 (4, CE)

ENF @ REB (1, AR)

MK2 @ MV2 (2, IC)

PIR @ BAT (3, BA)

HAC rest

Division 4

COL @ PHX (6, MG)

DRZ @ TIG (7, TS)

HUR @ FRZ (8, PN)

RIP @ BFL (9, LA)

FAL rest

A very warm welcome

Welcome everyone to the 2016 Manchester Softball League season. A very warm welcome especially to the Urmston Rippers who join the league this year. Good luck to all of you.

The Rippers' arrival now puts us at our maximum capacity on a Tuesday night. Therefore as discussed at the Captains' meeting we will be reviewing the structure of the entire league, including looking to expand to playing three nights a week next

year. Therefore your final league position this year could well have a bearing on where and when you could be playing next year. More updates on this as the season progresses.

After this weekend's Firstball tournament, which was a great success (thanks Ian) despite the "all four seasons in one day" weather, here are some date reminders for you concerning other tournaments. The magnificent Alex Hall tournament is on 21st

May. Please look out for Mike Goff's announcements on Facebook.

Manchester Main is on July 30/31 and then we hope to be hosting the M62 Corridor

challenge on September 10th featuring representative teams from Leeds and Sefton as well as ourselves.

I hope you all have a great season.

Dave Dean, League Head

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New website launched

MSL has a new-look website, www.manchester-softball.co.uk (include the hyphen) thanks to a £2,000 spend, agreed by the Captains at the end of last season. The website has been developed by Fun-place2bDigital along with a huge amount of time and effort by Jan Bradley, MSL Recruitment officer.

Many features of the old website are still there, but the whole site has a new design and a refreshing new look, and boasts some new features. In particular, we look forward to launching as the season progresses

integrated fixtures and standings pages. There is capacity for a range of team and player stats—perhaps something for the future.

The website features the MSL twitter feed for [@mslsoftball](https://twitter.com/mslsoftball) and there are links to the MSL Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/manchestersoftballeague> (no hyphen) as well as the BSF and BSUK websites.

A few will miss the old forum, which has now been replaced by dedicated Facebook groups. One is for umpires and rules buffs,

and can be accessed at <http://tinyurl.com/MSLumpires> for the discussion of umpiring and rules issues in MSL and the wider softball community. Another is for Manchester teams who need to find a Manchester-based player for a league game, or for tournaments, as well as Manchester players looking to pick up a game or tournament That group can be accessed at <http://tinyurl.com/MSL-PlayersWanted> (the hyphen is part of the URL).

We welcome your feedback on the new website.

GB call-up for Kris, Sherry, Manny ... and Kellie

CONGRATULATIONS to the Lions' **Kris Hadwin** and former Thunder player **Manny Estevez-Santos** (pictured) who are Manchester's latest recruits to the GB softball squad. They join **Sherry Kenyon** of the Outlaws, who was selected last year, as well as other already established GB players.

The selection followed two weekends of trials held in February here in Manchester—further recognition of our growing status nation-

ally—and in March at Marlow.

In other GB-related news, our own **Kellie Whitaker** has taken over the role of Team Manager. She told *Bases Loaded* "I am very excited and grateful for the oppor-

tunity I've been given. I look forward to the 2016 season and to watching the squad develop and grow and continue to succeed as they have done in previous years!"

Our best wishes go to all MSL players who are involved in the GB squad. They will be vying for roster spots in various competitions, including the new ISF World Cup Championships to take place in Florida this autumn.



Danny Gunn becomes BSF Hall of Famer

GREENSOX and GB star, and serial winner of our home run trophy, Danny Gunn was inducted into the BSF Hall of Fame at the 2016 BSF AGM held here in Manchester this February.

Danny's citation reads as follows:

Danny started playing softball in 1999 with a work-based team in Manchester, the GUS Growlers, who won Division 2 in his first season. He went to GB tryouts that autumn and failed to make the grade, but this made him even more determined to improve and he made the squad in 2000.

Since then, as work has taken him round the country, Danny has played with league teams in Manchester, London and Leeds, and with a number of weekend tournament teams.

Danny also met his wife through softball, and they have two children, Sophie (3) and Henry (1) who have already started hitting a softball off a tee in the garden!

Danny has played every position in co-ed and single-sex slowpitch softball except pitcher, and has exceptional skill as a hitter, able to hit line drives with power to all parts of the field. Once he gets on a

roll, there is almost no stopping him, and he has excelled as a leadoff hitter for GB over the years, helping the team win four European Championships and a gold medal at the Slowpitch World Cup in 2002.

His achievements in domestic softball include six Division 1 titles in the Manchester Softball League and two in Leeds, several B Nationals titles with Greensox, seven National Championships (six with Chromies and one with Stingrays), multiple gold medals at the



Men's Slowpitch Nationals with the Manchester Hogs and a large number of other major tournament wins.

In addition, Danny has collected one gold medal and two silver medals with Chromies in the European Slowpitch Cup.

It was Alex Hall who first introduced Danny to softball in Manchester, and since Alex finally lost her fight with cancer, the Manchester softball community has raised over £500,000 for Christies for Cancer Hospital, where Alex was treated over a number of years. Danny is proud to have been involved in this effort.

He is also proud of the lifelong friends he has made through the sport, both in this country and around the world.

Danny's future softball ambitions include regaining the European Slowpitch Cup this year with Chromies, still playing the sport (at a lower level) when Sophie and Henry are ready to join the Manchester Softball League and coaching to help softball continue to grow and develop.

The first individuals were inducted into the BSF Hall of Fame in 2007, and the list now comprises 48 players, administrators and coaches.

Danny is the first Manchester player to be inducted, and only the second MSL inductee after former League Head Harry Somers was cited in the administrators' section in 2014.

Come on you blus ... three new umpires qualify

THREE new umpires obtained their BASU qualifications at a course held earlier this month at Parrswood School. At the same course, four of our existing umpires underwent the mandatory four-yearly requalification. All seven achieved very good passes. The new umpires are Matt Ross, Ian Ferguson-Smith and Guillermo Gomez.

All umpires that have attended and passed the BASU course can earn £20 per game for umpiring MSL games on a Tuesday or Wednesday. They can also pick up good money umpiring at tournaments. But even if you are not available to umpire, attending an umpiring course helps you to gain a better knowledge of the game which many umpires have said makes them a better player.

This year the league has just enough umpires to cover games on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. In addition there are resting teams every week, including one Division 2 team every Wednesday; so it is hoped that every resting team will provide at least one umpire. (In other

leagues, providing umpires is a mandatory requirement.) Of course, not all qualified umpires will be available every week, so we hope that experienced players, even if not BASU qualified, will—literally—step up to the plate. It would be a thrill to be able to stand up at the end-of-season AGM and say all games had neutral umpires this year.



It is hoped that we will provide some umpire training/rules clinics during the season, if there is the demand, for players who want to understand the game better, and are ready to umpire if called upon to do so. Below the BASU qualification, we also have a lesser MASU qualification, with which umpires can still earn money from umpiring, at a slightly lower rate. So we would encourage anyone

who has thought of giving umpiring a go to do so. It may seem daunting at first, but new teams are forgiving and experienced teams are helpful to new umpires. If you are interested send an email to umpiring@manchester-softball.co.uk.

Jeremy Fothergill, Umpire-in-Chief

Iron Mike is sick

AS some of you will know Iron Mike (*pictured*), the batting cage installed by the Outlaws at the Hough End Police Club, has been having some trouble.

The power supply from Hough End has gone down and the estimate to get it fixed is a whopping £10,000. This is because they believe the cabling from the building to the box is damaged somewhere and will have to be dug up. So they won't be doing that. This means it is unfortunately not available to hire.

By the middle of May the manager at Hough End is

hoping to get an external power supply sorted close to the bowling green that we should be able to piggy back from.

Until then the only option is using a generator, which we do have, but it's a lot more hassle and really only worth it where groups of people want to practice for an hour or longer. So if you are such a group then get in touch. Otherwise please be patient until we can sort out alternative power arrangements.

Rolf Herbert (Outlaws)



News from the Captains' meeting

The usual pre-season Captains' meeting was held at Hough End on April 6th, and was well attended, with 28 of the 33 teams represented.

Chairman Dave Dean reported on the recent BSF meeting. Among other items, he reported that BSF have looked into enhanced insurance cover and concluded that it doesn't give us what we want, so is not worth it. In other news, he announced that at the end of the season, on Saturday 10th September to be precise, we will be hosting an "M62" tournament with teams from Sefton and Leeds leagues, format to be announced. Some readers will remember that we used to have a regular War of the Roses tournament against Leeds, with a rather splendid silver rosebowl (whereabouts now unknown, last seen heading east) as the prize.

Among the important announcements by other Exec members was the Treasurer Tyler Lappage's confirmation that on-line was the preferred method for paying weekly match fees, and that there would be a £5 service charge for teams paying by cheque, cash, or beads and mirrors.

There was an important discussion of league structure. With the rapid growth of the league, it is now almost inevitable that next season we will expand to five divisions, and to a further playing night, most likely Thursday (unless an additional venue can be found). Importantly, this means that promotion and relegation between Divisions 3 and 4 may be a little less than straightforward. The champions are guaranteed promotion, and the bottom team will certainly be relegated, but it is likely that Division 3 will be reduced in size next season, and more than the usual two teams may be "relegated". Final league positions will determine a pecking order, but the cut-off line may not be known

until next spring.

There have been no changes of playing rules this season, though captains were reminded of a clarification of the guest rule if playing one-short: the automatic out should be *before* the guest in the batting line-up to allow a late-arriving rostered player to join in. Talking of guest rules, there was a lively debate as Jerry Seabridge introduced a motion from the floor under AOB to drastically revise the guest rules. His first proposal, to allow only one guest playing "down" was comfortably beaten; but a revised proposal to limit teams to two such guests got a fair degree of support, the proposal being thrown out by the narrow

margin of 15-12. It was agreed that it was too short notice for teams to accommodate such a change for this season, but there was general support for some change eventually, so this is an issue which will be considered further during the season, perhaps in these pages, and discussed at the end-of-season meeting.

The meeting ended with a further bit of AOB, with a proposal to do away with the League's rule allowing promoted teams to be "excused" promotion. Noting that relegated teams changing nights had no such get-out clause, and the fact that some recently excused teams had gone on to win their division comfortably the following season, the change was agreed by a resounding 24-2 vote.



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Next week's games

Division 1

Dodgers @ Greensox (2) Last meeting 29 July 2015, their 50th meeting. Greensox won 17-4, and lead 39-11 in all meetings.

Lions @ Thunder (4) Last meeting 12 August 2015, Lions won 19-18 in 8 innings, and lead 11½-4½.

Mavericks @ Camels (3) Last meeting 1 May 2013, Mavs won 19-4 (6 innings) and lead 10-1.

Mutineers @ Outlaws (9) Last meeting 29 May 2013, Outlaws won 23-4 and lead 5-2.

Division 2

Bullfrogs @ Sharks (8) First ever meeting.

Lightning @ Mayhem (6) Only previous meeting 26 June 2013, Lightning won 14-8.

Storm @ Meerkats (5) Last meeting 31 July 2013, Meerkats won 9-7 and lead 5-2.

Speeders rest

Division 3

Bats @ Moorkats (6) First ever meeting.

Hackers @ Enforcers (9) Last meeting 12 August 2014, Enforcers won 25-13 to lead 8-2.

Mavericks II @ Camels II (7) First ever meeting.

Rebels @ Pirates (8) Last meeting 18 August 2015, Pirates won 19-15 and lead 6-1.

Outlaws II rest

Division 4

Barflies @ Hurricanes (5) Last meeting 29 July 2014, Hurricanes won 15-9 and lead 2-0.

Falcons @ Drizzle (3) Only previous meeting 4 August 2015, Drizzle won 17-2 in 5 innings.

Freeze @ Colt 45s (4) Only previous meeting 14 July 2015, Colts won 12-11.

Tigers @ Rippers (2) First ever meeting.

Phoenix rest

Birthdays

Monday	Tamsin Middleton (Mavs II)
Tuesday	Anuraag Guleria (Tigers)
Friday	Tom Munro (Lightning)
Saturday	Becca Branna (Barflies), Rob Fenlon (Mutineers)
Sunday	Angela Johnston (Colt 45s)

Last year's MVPs

In the final *Review* of last season, the End-of-Season Ball special issue, a list of MVPs for each team was given. However, due to a cut & paste error, some of the names were from the 2014 list. So here is the corrected list for 2015.

Barflies	Paul Warburton	Hayley-Jane Sims
Bullfrogs	Jeremy Fothergill	Christine Hunter
Camels	Tom Atkinson	Fliiss Fagan
Camels II	Dan Jarman	Helen Rossiter
Colt 45s	Phil Cosgrove	Alicia Mangiafico
Didsbury Bats	Max Fagan	Beryl Lannin-Jones
Drizzle	Brad Hadwin	Emma Waterhouse
Enforcers	Brad Flanagan	Sian Davies
Falcons	Lee Kendrick-Walker	Grace Bennett Becky Cantrill
Greensox	Danny Gunn	Nat Leyland
Hackers	Ian Mills	Kay Carter
Hurricanes	Dave Griffiths	Jodie Munday
Jammie Dodgers	David Dyson	Amy Tanner
Lightning	Tom Monro	Alexa Martinez
Lions	Chris Fulton	Jade Shaw
Mavericks	Pete Nightingale Laurence Pearmain	Tanya Burton
Mavericks II	Andy Gardner	Nicola Brown
Mayhem	Stephen Howard	Linni Mitchell
Mayhem II	Lewis LeFevre	Jocelyn Tong
Mayhem Freeze	Paul Wolstenholme	Martine Knight
Meerkats	Sam Steele	Rachael Campbell-Cook Sonia Hine
Moorkats	Jonathan Wrigley	Siobhan O'Shaughnessy Lisa Weaver
Mutineers	Joe Grantham	Kate Williamson
Outlaws	Peter Buckley	Nancy Bennett
Outlaws II	Rolf Herbert Chris Thompson	Liz Lyon
Phoenix	Simon Ronksley	Michelle Fisher
Pirates	Shane Coyles	Mary Coyles
Sefton Sharks	Stephen Woods	Lauren Bicknell
Speeders	Nick Money	Kate Barlow
Storm	Jon Taylor	Kim Gallagher
Thunder	Luis Arrevillagas Guy Hamer	Areej Elmaazi
Tigers	Dave Eaton Michael Gaskell	Hayley McTear
Wildcats	Steve Aguirre Robert Larwence	Emma Pritchard

Statto's corner

In weeks to come, this space will be filled with boxscores and results. But at the start of the season, with everything to look forward to, we take this opportunity to offer some facts and figures, and some softball records that may, or more likely may not, be broken this year.

Among the longest-standing records, and unlikely to be broken thanks to the run-ahead rule, are the records for biggest winning margin and highest individual score, both from the **Mavericks'** 65-6 defeat of the **Bats** in May 1998. Actually both records have been equalled, the former in 2001, and the latter as recently as 2009 in the freak Outlaws-Bats game that is responsible for several records, but not surpassed.

Another long-standing record is for the closest game, in which the **Greensox** beat the **Pirates** (the Platt Field ones, not the current bunch) by the odd run in 69, back on 1st May 1996. And the highest-scoring tie predates that, as the **Bats** and **M16s** tied 37-37 in May 1995. Ties of course are usually resolved by extra innings, and it took a since unequalled three of them to separate the **Mavericks** and **Renegades**, who were the closest of rivals back in August 2000.

Defences were on top in the game with the lowest aggregate score in May 2013 when the **Outlaws** beat the **Greensox** 2-0, a relatively recent new record.

As we never fail to point out, the most played fixture in MSL is between the **Mavs** and the **Greensox**, 53 and counting, but one of the oldest rivalries in the league, between two founder members, **Bats** and **Hackers**, will see its 29th enactment this season, after a gap of five years since they last met in April 2011 in Division 2. But an even longer time has elapsed since **Camels II** and **Outlaws II** last met, back in July 2009.

Last season's final standings

	P	W	T	L	F	RS	RC	Pct	GB
Division 1									
Greensox (C)	17	16	0	1	0	329	143	.941	-
Lions	17	12	0	5	0	240	169	.706	4
Thunder	17	10	0	7	0	261	175	.588	6
Mavericks	17	7	0	10	0	189	249	.412	9
Outlaws	17	10	0	7	0	229	191	.588	-
Dodgers	17	7	0	10	0	175	197	.412	3
Mayhem (R)	17	4	0	13	0	148	263	.235	6
Meerkats (R)	17	2	0	15	0	131	315	.118	8
Division 2									
Mutineers (C)	15	11	0	4	0	250	131	.733	-
Camels (P)	15	9	0	6	0	208	204	.600	2
Bullfrogs	15	9	0	5	1	212	184	.600	2
Lightning	15	7	0	8	0	170	185	.467	4
Tigers	14	7	0	7	0	209	192	.500	-
Speeders	14	6	0	8	0	181	228	.429	1
Outlaws II (R)	14	2	0	11	1	158	264	.143	5
Division 3									
Storm (C)	17	15	0	2	0	317	132	.882	-
Sharks (P)	17	11	1	5	0	246	211	.676	3½
Camels II	17	10	0	7	0	227	234	.588	5
Enforcers	17	9	0	8	0	273	262	.529	6
Enforcers deducted 1 point for failing to submit team roster									
Bats	17	8	0	8	1	220	227	.471	-
Pirates	17	6	1	10	0	227	272	.382	1⅙
Mayhem II	17	5	0	12	0	210	260	.294	2
Hurricanes (R)	17	3	0	14	0	174	296	.176	4
Division 4									
Mavericks II (C)	17	17	0	0	0	347	124	1.00	-
Moorkats (P)	17	11	1	5	0	305	214	.676	5½
Hackers (P)	17	11	0	6	0	338	180	.647	6
Phoenix	17	10	0	7	0	246	231	.588	7
Drizzle	17	9	0	8	0	235	286	.529	8
Wildcats	17	8	0	9	0	229	247	.471	9
Barflies	17	7	0	10	0	243	286	.412	10
Colt 45s	17	5	1	11	0	209	270	.324	11½
Freeze	17	2	0	15	0	129	313	.118	15
Falcons	9	0	0	9	0	47	177	.000	18
Hackers offered promotion in league restructuring									