



# 2014 Mid-Season Report

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In the police softball circuit there seems to be two distinct seasons every year. The beginning of the calendar year is loaded with early spring tournaments that tend to draw teams out of hibernation.

These are the tournaments that create a buzz because teams are unveiling new players, new uniforms and establishing themselves in the national rankings.

Come summer there is a lull that creates a “dog days of summer” vibe. The excitement of the new season has passed and teams seem to let off the gas and coast for a bit. Then come mid-late summer the second season kicks off as

teams scramble to prepare for the World Series (early October). As I type this article things are beginning to slow down so I will take a moment to reflect back on what has, to date, been yet another banner year in the cop circuit.

Generally speaking, the number of tournaments are increasing but the number of teams attending tournaments are decreasing. It is simply a case of the supply exceeding the demand. Instead of a few well-attended tournaments the circuit now has numerous lesser-attended events. Due to finances teams are traveling less and staying local to play at the smaller one-day tournaments. Some strongly believe this is to the detriment of the circuit, whereas others like the ability to stay close to home. Whatever the case, good or bad, it is simply the way the circuit has evolved over the last decade.

Performance-wise, three teams in the East Conference have separated themselves from the pack. The hottest team in the nation right now is the NYPD Blues who are in the midst of a 20-game winning streak with three tournament championships in a row: Virginia Beach/East Conference Championships, New York Blues tournament and the National Championships in Cincinnati, Ohio. About the only team that can consistently hang with the Blues are the 3N2/D2E Lawmen who I featured in the last edition of the Cop Corner. 3N2/D2E had been sitting atop the totem pole for the past two years but the surge by the NYPD

**Top: Jimmy Gnew - NYPD Blues;**  
**Middle: Buddy Lundy - SoCal Alliance;**  
**Bottom: Donnie Sutton - DEA Combo.**



Blues has pushed them down a notch. 3N2/D2E certainly wants a crack at the Blues in Vegas come October in order to reclaim their status as "top dogs." The third team in the elite group is the Shamrock Enforcers based out of New Jersey. The Shamrocks have been one of the most active teams in the nation and have consistently cracked the top 3 in every tournament to date.

Over in the West Conference two teams have stood out, the SoCal Alliance and DEA Combo. The DEA Combo came charging out of the gates by defeating the Alliance in the first tournament of the year. Just as it seemed there would be a changing of the guard, the Alliance rallied back and dominated two big tournaments: Sin City Madness and the West Conference Championships in Chino Hills, California. The Alliance is in the gun sights of nearly every team in the nation as they are back-to-back defending World Champions. No team has ever won the World Series twice, except the Alliance who have done it four times. That said, the West Conference is loaded with teams who have the capability to take down the big dogs (Alliance and DEA Combo). Former World Champions HardCor (NorCal) are having a strong season and the new kids on the block Battle Born (Las Vegas) are gaining national notoriety. The biggest shock was the announcement that Sin City Combo had folded. Sin City was formerly ranked number one in the West Conference and were among the most consistent teams in the nation. Their abrupt break-up caught everyone off guard. There are rumblings of a Sin City reunion at the World Series but several of their former players have defected to other teams so it is unlikely this will happen.

From a World Series tournament director point of view my biggest challenge will be to determine which teams will play in the Majors (upper) Division and Gold (lower) Division. The Gold Division is the largest division and it was designed for the teams that routinely get trounced by the Majors teams. The sport has evolved and the Gold Division talent level has risen. It is not uncommon to find Gold Division teams defeating



**Top: Anthony Buonadonna and Brian Beauchamp - Chicago; bottom left: Chris Horn - LAPD Lawmen; right: Ray Stieber - Battle Born.**

Majors teams on an increasing basis. Some of the top Gold Division teams this season have been the defending Gold World Champions, Chicago Metro, along with Stanislaus (NorCal), OH50, Mid-Atlantic/DeMarini, North Florida Showdown, LAPD Lawmen and Louisville Metro to name a few.

Currently the Hall of Fame committee is pouring over nominations for the 2014 Police Softball Hall of Fame. Those names along with the annual Player of the Year awards will be announced in the weeks before the World Series. Check back for the next installment of the Cop Corner to find out who will be inducted into the Hall of Fame and who will walk away with the Player of the Year honors.

