

COP CORNER

With Jeff Blair



The Fashion Police

You should be receiving this issue of Softball Magazine right around the beginning of April. In the spirit of April Fool's Day, I wanted to have some fun with the article this month.

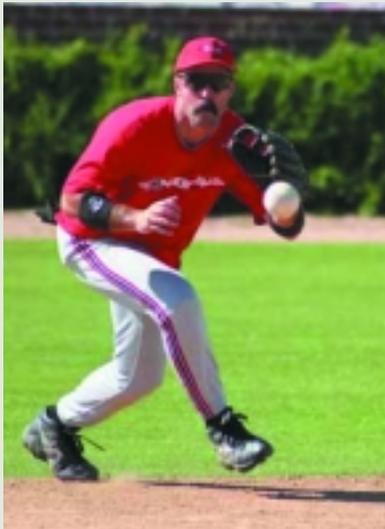
I decided to take a satirical look at some current fashion trends in

the law enforcement circuit.

I have determined that most of these looks are either regionally based or age specific. The gentlemen depicted in the photographs are not professional models (not that you even remotely considered they were.)

These gentlemen capture the look of "what's hot now with cop softball fashion trends. Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to introduce to you the Fashion Police!

Standard Cop Look: This is the base-line look of a police officer. This guy flat out looks like a cop. Check out that moustache...I think you might be required by law to be a cop in order to grow one like that. The Oakley blade style sunglasses have replaced the Ray Ban aviator glasses as the cop's choice on the West Coast. There might still be some troopers in the Deep South still sporting the aviator glasses, but Oakley is now the top dog in most places. Behind those shades is a thousand yard stare



shared by most veteran street cops. This look is beneficial on the softball field because it intimidates umpires.

Fashion accessory item of choice: Duty weapon in bat bag.

Model: Keith Benjamin, short-stop for the DEA Combo, 2006 All-Star and All-National Team member who is best known for his Lenny Dykstra nails style of play on the field.



Hip-Hop Look: This look is very popular in the civilian circuit in Southern California. If you go to civilian tournaments anywhere in Southern California you will see dozens of gentlemen sporting this look. This has become the official SoCal uniform for many teams. This look had not spread into cop softball until our model, LAPD Blue infielder Nate Baez, introduced us to it two years ago. Someone sporting this look will typically wear: Hat with a bill so flat you could survey land with it (mandatory) and slightly tilted to one side (optional); Baggy shirt with Dickies brand extra long shorts (mandatory); Ankle length socks with trail running or turf shoes (mandatory) and often times those shoes will be white in color (optional). I don't care where you are in the nation, if you see a guy dressed like this step up to the plate you need to immediately be on guard for the punchin' judy shot to right field.



In SoCal it is called the "ca-ca" shot. When executed correctly it is almost impossible to defend. In the photo, Nate is not only modeling the look, he is also showcasing the "ca-ca" swing. **Fashion accessory item of choice:** Cell phone attached to bat bag (usually going off every 5 minutes).

The Soprano Look: This look is predominately displayed in the North East by Italian players who have vowels at the end of their last names. These guys typically refer to a judge as, "hizzona," and if they disagree with you they might tell you to, "fuhgeddaboutit." Crime victims in these regions are never murdered, they are "whacked."

As you can see, sleeves are completely optional. The neck chain and chest hair are mandatory. Our model for this look is James Roucchio (notice the vowel), third-basemen for the NYPD Blues, 2006 All-Star and All-National Team member who is best known for his shut down defense at the hot corner and sick power at the plate.

The Good-ole-Boy Look: This is rapidly becoming one of the more popular looks in tournament softball, and it has now spread into the cop ranks. I first saw this look showcased by teams from the Mid-West. From a fashion sense, gentlemen sporting this look tend to match from head to toe.

A typical ensemble would include the multi-stripped baseball pants (mandato-

ry), matching cleats or turfs, wrist band (worn at the elbow of course) and a hat with a rolled bill.

Fashion accessory items of choice: Can of chewing tobacco and lifted 4x4 truck with hound dog tethered to the bed liner.

Model: Rob Menke, shortstop for the Ohio Lawmen, 2006 All-Star and All-National Team who is quickly becoming recognized as one of the top players in cop softball.



The Retro Look: This look is all but dead except in cop softball where it is alive and well thanks to the likes of gentlemen such as our model, Carl "Hollywood" Gaskins, the player/coach for the Concord Combo.

To understand the significance of this look you must first understand what it was like to live in the '80's. In the '80's, bands like Whitesnake and Bon Jovi ruled the airwaves. Women had big hair, and some men had even bigger hair. Tight clothing was mandatory. Check out Hollywood's shorts, they are so tight you can count the change in his pocket! Hair must be perfect. You will never and I repeat NEVER see a retro-looker wearing a hat as it could mess up the coif. **Fashion accessory items to include:** Hairbrush in back pocket, pager on belt, and SPF #2 tanning lotion.

Our model Hollywood Gaskins is best known giving 100% effort to defeat you on the field, but win or lose, he will be the first shake your hand and buy you a beer after the game (just don't touch his hair).

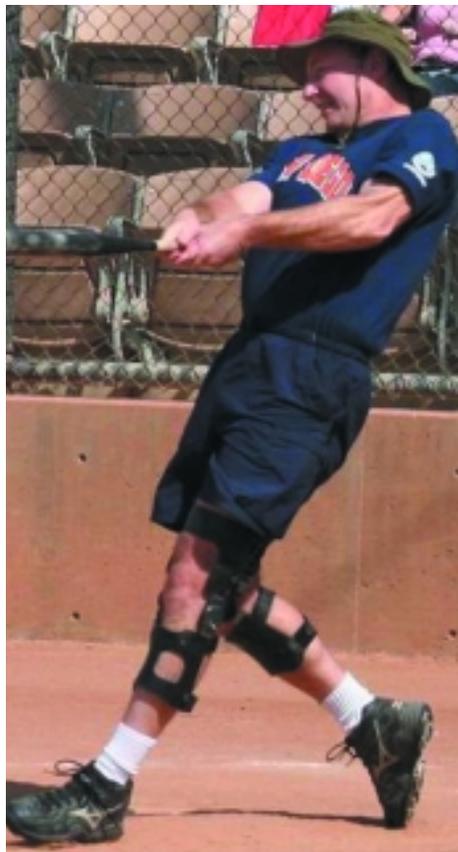


Veteran Look: Veteran cops have a very unique look. They are more concerned with substance over style. At work, veteran cops typically prefer well-worn old style leather gun belts over the high tech nylon models that are popular with younger officers. You won't find a veteran cop lugging around one of those fancy expandable batons either. They stick to good ole' second growth hickory billy-clubs. And let's not even get into the topic of those flashy earpiece radios, because hand held pac-sets (walkie-talkies) work just fine!

Those same veteran cops have a unique look on the softball field too. In their minds, those turf shoes are for jogging, not softball. Ball players wear cleats! Veteran players could do without those flashy multi-stripped pants but instead prefer the standard polyester coaching shorts. Floppy fishing hats or old-fashion trucker hats (before they became popular again) are a staple in the veteran's softball wardrobe. Although many of the old-timers have succumbed to bat technology and swing a composite, they still tote around their old 36 ounce Tennessee Thumper aluminum bat just in case. But, don't underestimate these veterans because they can still rake the ball. While the youngsters are swinging for the fences and blasting 350' solo shots (or popping up), the veterans are surgically dissecting defenses and placing balls through holes invisible to the rookie eye.

Fashion accessories: Knee braces, pictures of grandchildren in bat bag, Tylenol and horse liniment.

Model: Ken Dyke, retired Captain from the Chula Vista, California, Police Department. Ken is best known for being a key player on the famed San Diego Gray softball team.



DEA Kickoff Results
Chino Hills, California
February 24/25 • 30
teams

1. SoCal Alliance/Easton
2. LAPD Blue/Easton
- 3t. CDC
Hardcore/Xcelerate
Fitness
- 3t. DEA Combo/Easton
- 5t. Central Valley Kings
- 5t. Cal-Quake
- 5t. El Dorado Cartel/3056
- 5t. RSO Red