

cop corner

with Jeff Blair • www.policesoftball.com

Bring Ur Real Skilz



Policesoftball.Com welcomed the Spring season by hosting the first annual Easton Bring Ur Real Skilz tournament and it was unquestionably a huge success. Earlier this year USSSA SoCal regional director Armando Acosta contacted Policesoftball.Com and presented the idea of a provided bat tournament. Armando offered to supply all the bats for the tournament and provide the most lucrative prize package on the cop softball circuit. Some team would

go home with a dozen brand new 2009 model Easton Helmer bats. It didn't end there. Armando also inked Easton major players Brett Helmer and Brian Wegman to come out and be part of the event. Policesoftball.Com jumped at the opportunity and sealed the deal.

The venue was the brand new Big League Dreams facility in West Covina (Los Angeles area). The fields were in mint condition and boasted replicas of Dodger, Angel, Tiger, Wrigley, Fenway and Yankee stadiums. The format was simple. Every field would have a 26, 27 & 28 oz. Easton Stealth+ bat provided and those were the only bats allowed. These were all stock bats supplied by Armando Acosta and Easton Sports. On this weekend there would be no complaining about juiced, loaded or "special" bats. Teams would have to literally bring their real skills and for some teams it would prove to be sweet justice from the finger pointers and naysayers.

Part of the weekend festivities included Brett Helmer and Brian Wegman putting on a power hitting exhibition that could only be described as awesome. The duo launched missile after missile onto the hillside behind the fields. They were routinely hitting the ball over 100' farther than any of the longest bombs hit in the tournament and they were using the exact same bats and balls. Impressive to say the least! These guys are so down to earth that after they hit, they grabbed their gloves and shagged balls while the rest of the "regular guys" hit.



Robbie Rosas West Coast Aftershock

Typically a one-day tournament would only draw local teams, but this event was so anticipated that it drew 24 teams including non-regional teams such as the Ohio Lawmen, Sin City Las Vegas, and several from Northern California. The level of competition was extremely high as this event featured three previous World Series champions, Ohio Lawmen '05, Cal-Quake '06, and my team, the SoCal Alliance '07.

In bracket play the Cal-Quake, West Coast Aftershock, Hard-Cor, San Diego Force, SoCal Alliance and the Ohio Lawmen all



Donny Meyer - New York Metro

earned top seeds and advanced to the single elimination A-Flight playoffs. LAPD Blue, Santa Cruz Combo, LAPD Lawmen, Sacramento Police Softball, State Razed and the Cal-Syndicate advanced to the A-Flight playoffs as #2 seeds. In the first round of the playoffs Cal-Syndicate eliminated the LAPD Lawmen, Hard-Cor defeated Santa Cruz, LAPD Blue downed State Razed and Sacramento Police Softball bested San Diego

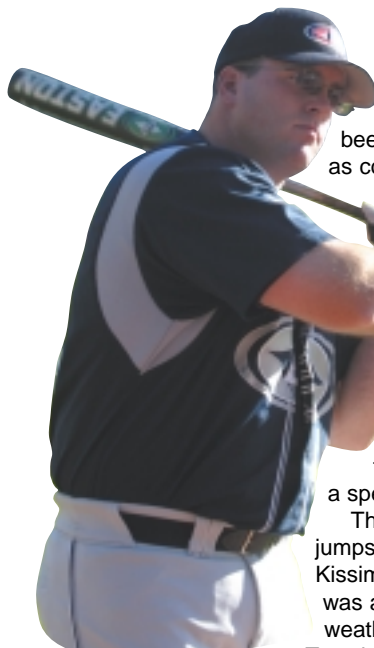


**Bring Ur Real Skilz Tournament Coordinators:
Brian Wegman, Jeff Blair, Armando Acosta and Brett Helmer**

Force. In round two the Cal-Quake eliminated Cal-Syndicate, SoCal Alliance defeated the LAPD Blue, Sac Police Softball eliminated West Coast Aftershock and in a much anticipated match-up Hard-Cor posted a solid victory over the Ohio Lawmen. In the semi-finals Cal-Quake inked a nice victory over Hard-Cor and the SoCal Alliance posted an impressive win against Sacramento Police Softball. The championship game was a matchup of two heavyweight teams who seem to play each other often. It was a see-saw battle early on but the SoCal Alliance pulled away in the end and claimed victory against the Cal-Quake. The Bring Ur Real

clearing the bases

with Brett Helmer • Sponsored by Easton



Hello Softballers,

We're smack in the middle of the 2008 season and the first half has been absolutely fantastic. This has been as competitive a season as I've ever

seen. In this edition of Clearing the Bases we take a look back at a few notable tournaments that helped kick off the season while also looking ahead to events on the horizon.

The 2008 season officially kicked off April 11-12 at the USSSA Major NIT in Arizona. Congratulations to Jean Shoppe/Easton for going undefeated and taking home the title. Look for a special year from this group.

The following weekend, the season was jumpstarted at the Hall of Fame Classic in Kissimmee, Florida. Osceola County Stadium was a great place to play – we had perfect weather the entire weekend. Teams arrived on Tuesday and Wednesday for practice with the

tournament kicking into full gear on Friday. The level of play among the 26 teams competing was amazing.

On the horizon, we have the 26th annual Dudley Tournament in Brooklyn

Center, Minnesota coming up in late June. This is considered by many to be one of the most prestigious tournaments in the game. In July, we have the 40th annual Smoky Mountain Classic in Maryville, Tennessee.

We're excited with the phenomenal turnout the Easton/Brett Helmer "Bring Ur Real Skilz" Series has garnered so far this year. Our third event of the year was held at the Big League Dreams complex in West Covina, California. This is one of my favorite places to play in the nation. We welcomed 24 teams from the Police Softball Division and had a great weekend. All 24 teams walked to the plate with Easton bats during the tournament and absolutely loved them. Our fourth event is coming up in Cincinnati on June 14-15. We expect between 60-70 teams for another great tournament.



Always a fan favorite, the Long Haul Bombers Tour has returned for another exciting season. With 10 events scheduled during the 2008 season, Brian Wegman and I look to bring home the title to Team Easton. I'm also hoping to out-hit the competitors and defend my individual crown. These are some of my favorite events of the year; it never gets old hitting for 30,000 plus fans and all of the MLB players.

In closing, by this point in the season, everyone should be finding their groove and locking up their berths for nationals. Stay strong and get ready for the big events down the stretch. Make sure your equipment is fresh and keep an eye out for Easton's fantastic new line of bats, which will be in stores this month.

Good luck to all of our Easton sponsored teams and players down the stretch!

Brett

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Skilz championship was a nice addition to the Alliance resume as they have won eight of the last ten tournaments they have participated in and have not lost a tournament since August 2007. That being said there are still several established teams, along with some up & comers* who have the fire power to win any tournament on any given day. (*Up & Comers is a teaser for a future Cop Corner article.)

In the B-Flight finals the Sacramento Razorbacks defeated the Orange County Hitmen. In most tournaments these teams would have battled it out in the A-Flight but on this day the competition was so stiff there was no margin for error in the seeding rounds. Both teams had that costly "off" game to send them into the B-Flight, but neither team

quit and their final game was hotly contested.

At the end of the day I was proud to stand next to Armando Acosta, Brett Helmer and Brian Wegman for a photo opportunity knowing that the team of Policesoftball.Com, Easton Sports, and Armando Acosta were able to put on such a successful event and introduce Bring Ur Real Skilz to the law enforcement softball circuit. Special thanks go out to Brett, Brian and Armando for their continued support!

Tournament Results:

Bring Ur Real Skilz West Covina, California: 1. SoCal Alliance/Easton/KME; 2. California Quake; 3t. A-1 Towing Hard-Cor; 3t. Sacramento Police Softball; 5t. LAPD Blue/Easton; 5t. Ohio Lawmen; 5t. Cal-Syndicate; 5t. West Coast Aftershock/Easton; Bacon Ball Las Vegas, Nevada: 1. SoCal Alliance/Easton/KME; 2. New York Metro; 3. California Quake; 4. A-1 Towing Hard-Cor; 5t. Sin City Combo; 5t. LAPD Blue/Easton; 7t. Motor City Blues-Detroit; 7t. Direct Impact.



Nate Baez - SoCal Alliance/Easton



Gabe Rodriguez - LAPD Blue/Easton