



## The 411 from the Fast Club

### Fastpitch in the news!

<https://www.mlb.com/news/usa-softball-stand-beside-her-tour-nyc>

Check out the USA Softball team partnership with Major League Baseball. Softball is back at the Olympics for the first time since 2008.

### Softball season is well underway for area colleges.

Go see a game. The Badgers are fun to watch, the stadium is beautiful and it's inexpensive to get in to see a game. <https://uwbadgers.com/sports/softball/schedule> This is a great idea for a team trip for the Extreme Travel program. 14U Bougie has a good time at these games. It's fun to watch the teams warm up, the constant hustle, intensity and teamwork are outstanding. FYI April 17-19<sup>th</sup> the Badgers take on Northwestern University where former Oshkosh North State Champion Sydney Supple pitches.

#### Other close by college softball schedules:

<https://athletics.uwsp.edu/sports/softball/schedule/2019>

<https://www.uwoshkoshtitans.com/sports/sball/2019-20/schedule>

<https://www.sabreathletics.com/sports/sball/2019-20/schedule>

<https://greenbayphoenix.com/sports/softball>

#### Oshkosh West Softball schedule:

<https://www.foxvalleyassociation.org/public/genie/240/school/10/page/1051/>

Edit	1	03-27-20	Fri	Game	Varsity	4:30pm 8:30pm	NC	Oshkos h West	West De Pere	Oshkosh West High School West Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Edit	2	04-07-20	Tue	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Oshkosh West	Appleton West	Oshkosh West High School West Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	3	04-09-20	Thu	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Kimberly	Oshkosh West	Sunset Park	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	4	04-14-20	Tue	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Oshkosh West	Kaukauna	Oshkosh West High School West Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	5	04-16-20	Thu	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Oshkosh West	Neenah	Oshkosh West High School West Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	6	04-20-20	Mon	Game	Varsity	4:30pm 8:30pm	NC	Oshkosh West	Beaver Dam	Oshkosh West High School West Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	7	04-21-20	Tue	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Fond du Lac	Oshkosh West	Fond Du Lac High School	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	8	04-23-20	Thu	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Oshkosh West	Appleton East	Oshkosh West High School West Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	9	04-24-20	Fri	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Appleton North	Oshkosh West	Appleton North High School	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	10	04-25-20	Sat	Game	Varsity	12:00pm 4:00pm	NC	Oshkosh West	Gladstone	Oshkosh West High School West Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	11	04-25-20	Sat	Game	Varsity	2:30pm 6:30pm	NC	Oshkosh West	Gladstone	Oshkosh West High School West Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	12	04-28-20	Tue	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Oshkosh West	Oshkosh North	Oshkosh West High School West Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	13	04-30-20	Thu	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Hortonville	Oshkosh West	Otto Miller Park	<input type="checkbox"/>

Edit	14	05-01-20	Fri	Game	Varsity	5:00pm	C	Appleton West	Oshkosh West	Nienhaus Sports Complex	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	15	05-05-20	Tue	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Oshkosh West	Kimberly	Oshkosh West High School West Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	16	05-07-20	Thu	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Kaukauna	Oshkosh West	Kaukauna High School	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	17	05-08-20	Fri	Game	Varsity	4:30pm 6:00pm	C	Neenah	Oshkosh West	Neenah High School	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	18	05-12-20	Tue	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Oshkosh West	Fond du Lac	Oshkosh West High School West Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	19	05-14-20	Thu	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Appleton East	Oshkosh West	Appleton East High School	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	20	05-15-20	Fri	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Oshkosh West	Appleton North	Oshkosh West High School West Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	21	05-16-20	Sat	Triangular	Varsity	10:00am 4:00pm	NC	Oak Creek	Oshkosh West Verona Area	Oak Creek East Middle School	View <input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	22	05-19-20	Tue	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Oshkosh North	Oshkosh West	Oshkosh North High School	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	23	05-21-20	Thu	Game	Varsity	4:30pm	C	Oshkosh West	Hortonville	Oshkosh West High School West Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	24	05-23-20	Sat	Game	Varsity	10:30am 2:30pm	NC	Oshkosh West	Waterford	Oshkosh West High School West Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>
Edit	25	05-23-20	Sat	Game	Varsity	12:15pm 4:15pm	NC	Oshkosh West	Waterford	Oshkosh West High School West Softball	<input type="checkbox"/>

Follow Oshkosh North Softball here:

<https://www.foxvalleyassociation.org/public/genie/240/school/9/date/2020-04-01/view/week/>

**Oshkosh Lourdes Schedule:**

- 4/2 @ Wega
- 4/3 vs. New Holstein
- 4/4 @ Montello Invitational
- 4/6 @ Randolph
- 4/7 vs. Ripon
- 4/20 @ Wayland
- 4/23 vs. Wayland
- 4/28 @ Oakfield
- 4/30 vs. Oakfield
- 5/2 @ Crivitz Tournament
- 5/5 vs. Husty/Dodgeland
- 5/7 @ Husty/Dodgeland
- 5/11 vs. Horicon
- 5/12 @ Iola
- 5/14 @ Horicon
- 5/16 vs. St. Mary Catholic
- 5/18 vs. Omro

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Here is an excellent article submitted by Coach Tom. “A pretty neat article by a young woman named Jordan Patterson. Long, but worth reading for both parents and girls.”

# The Game Knows

MAY 30, 2016 / [THEGAMEKNOWS](#)

“The Game knows.” Throughout my career as a college softball player at Alabama, I heard that statement hundreds of times. From teammates, from coaches, and even from family. There was always a part of me that wanted to believe it—that the Game really *did* know. That it saw all the extra work I put in. That it appreciated my genuine happiness for the teammates who played over me. That it sensed just how badly I wanted to succeed. And because of that, my time would eventually come.

Throughout my career, I worked hard. Very hard. I tried to do things the right way and be a good teammate. And yet, things never really clicked for me on the field. So yes, “the Game knows” was a nice idea to cling to, but it didn’t really ring true for me at the time. Looking back now, I truly believe that the Game really *does* know. You can’t fool it. It sees your heart. It knows who deserves to be rewarded, and it will do so accordingly. Here’s why I’m now a believer:

I arrived on The University of Alabama’s campus in the fall of 2010, making the ten minute drive from my parents’ house down the road. This was what I had dreamt of for as long as I could remember: to wear the script A on my chest. I was excited, nervous, and full of hope. My classmates quickly became my best friends. I was working my butt off in the weight room, coming to practice early, staying late, and loving every minute of it.

I was a catcher, and there were two junior catchers on the team at the time. They both taught me so much, and I loved getting to learn from them. I didn’t play much at all during those first two years—a few pinch hit opportunities here and there. The two of them handled almost all of the catching responsibilities. I missed being on the field every day, but I knew what I signed up for when I decided to play at Alabama. I knew that catching time would be limited in the first two years. It didn’t matter to me. I just wanted to win. I figured that I would spend those first two years learning, getting stronger, and improving all aspects of my game. By junior year, I would be ready to lead the infield, ready to manage the pitchers, and ready to get the job done at the plate.

I have never worked as hard as I did during those two years. I improved, but not as much as I hoped that I would. Even though I didn’t play much, I stayed the course. I tried to be a great teammate and contribute every way that I could from the bench. We ended up winning the national championship my sophomore year, and it was the most rewarding experience of my life.

Coming off of the national championship, I was more determined than ever. We had two catchers coming back—myself and a sophomore. I knew that both of us would be given opportunities to prove ourselves early on, and I was going to give it everything that I had. I had played the role of supportive teammate for two years and really took pride in that. It’s so important. Every team needs role-players who take pride in their job on the bench. But now, I wanted to be on the field more than ever. The Game knew, right? It had seen all of the hard work over the past two years.

It knew my heart. In the back of my mind, that little phrase gave me hope that it was finally my time.

I'm not exactly sure when, but I remember getting a call from my assistant coach the summer before my junior year. She said that they were adding a transfer to my class. I wasn't sure who it was or what position she played, but I had full trust in our coaches and knew that they would not bring anyone into our family that didn't belong there.

A couple of weeks later, I got a text from my head coach, Patrick Murphy. It said: "Molly Fichtner is going to be a part of our family! Here is her number. Please reach out to her and make her feel welcome." I excitedly went online and read the article about Molly's transfer, and my heart immediately sunk. Molly had played shortstop at her old school, but the press release said that she would probably be working at catcher. I can't explain the feeling that came over me, but I remember thinking that this was going to change everything. It was such a selfish reaction, and it is the moment that I am most ashamed of from my four years at Bama.

Well, it did change everything. Molly arrived on campus that fall and I immediately knew that she was special. She fit in perfectly with our team and quickly became one of my best friends. On the field, she was stellar. She swung a great bat and consistently threw baserunners out stealing. She beat me out, plain and simple.

That year was a roller coaster of emotions. I was so happy that Molly had ended up at Bama. She belonged on the big stage. She was one of the best people I had ever met, with a heart bigger than her home state of Texas. On the other hand, I was heartbroken. While no spots in the lineup are ever set in stone, and I kept working hard, I simply knew that my next two years were going to be much like my first two. If coaches read this, they will probably cringe at that statement. You never want your players to give up on themselves. If I were a coach, I would preach to all of my non-starters that they are never stuck in that role. There is always something you can do to get better, and you shouldn't ever stop trying.

However, looking back, I think that there was a reason that I got the feeling that I was going to remain a role-player. When I began to accept that my job as an upperclassman was going to be leading from the bench, I was able to truly commit to it. I kept working hard, still came early and stayed late, but my motivations for doing so began to change. Instead of being motivated by the desire for personal success, I was motivated by the desire for team success. I needed to work as hard as I could so

that I could demand that others do the same. I needed to keep getting better at blocking and framing so that the other catchers were pushed to get better. While I had always been a team player on the surface, I had finally morphed into a team player at heart.

There were still times during those two years that were hard. As an athlete, you always want to be on the field. It's something that's inside of you—a burning desire that doesn't just go away. Tears fell on occasion. It didn't happen often, but sometimes I would get incredibly frustrated and wonder why it just never clicked for me on the field, even though I tried so hard and cared so deeply.

Now, I wouldn't trade those moments of sadness and frustration for anything. You know what? That's life. Sometimes, you are going to put every ounce of your being into something, and it's not going to work out exactly the way you wanted it to. Get over it. No, I never became a starter. But I did have the best experience of my life. It gave me my best friends and my favorite memories. I learned lessons that I never would have learned otherwise. When I walked off the field for the last time, I had no regrets. I was truly thankful to the Game for everything it gave me, and I didn't expect anything else from it. I had experienced so much team success at Bama, and that truly was enough for me. Little did I know, I would get the biggest personal reward of all two years later.

I chose to go to law school after I got done playing, and wanted to find a job at a law firm for after graduation. Most firms hire law students the summer after their second year of school, with the intention of extending a full-time offer after the summer is over if everything goes well. When it came time to start applying for summer jobs at law firms, I knew that Washington, D.C. was my top choice for cities. However, D.C. firms don't typically recruit students from Alabama. I reached out to a family friend who is a partner at one of the big firms in D.C. and asked her if she knew of any smaller firms that might be a good fit. She offered to set me up with another partner at her firm who "knew a lot about the D.C. market."

I ended up meeting this other partner for breakfast, intending to get some advice on how I should go about applying to smaller D.C. firms that might be willing to interview a student from Alabama who was not at the top of her class. Turns out, this man was in charge of all of the hiring for the big law firm.

Well, lucky for me, he happened to Google my name before meeting me for breakfast. When he did, he found an ESPN article and a Tuscaloosa News article that were both written about me during my senior year. The articles basically told the story that I've been telling you here: that I was a hard worker and always tried to be a good teammate. The partner brought it up at breakfast, saying that those are the qualities he looks for when hiring law students and that it's not often that he has tangible proof that someone possesses them. He then proceeded to ask me if I was opposed to interviewing with his firm. For once in my life, I was speechless. I actually thought he was joking at first.

The firm flew me back up to D.C. the next week. I had five 30 minute interviews with different attorneys. My last interview was with an attorney on the recruiting committee, so it was important that this one went well. He was a big sports fan, so we immediately started talking about softball. He asked me if I had played much, and I truthfully answered no. I never know how people are going to react to that, but he asked me what I learned from the bench.

There is not a single interview question in the world that is more suited for me than that one. I proceeded to explain to him for over 30 minutes precisely what I learned from being a role-player throughout my four years at Bama, rather than a starter. Resiliency. Selflessness. How to take pride in your role, whatever it may be. What it really means to put the team first. I walked out of his office knowing that it was the best I had ever done in an interview.

Two days later, the hiring partner called and offered me a job. I spent the summer working at the firm in D.C. I was surrounded by former Supreme Court clerks, attorneys at the very top of their fields, and genuinely wonderful people. At the end of the summer, I received a full-time job offer, which I will begin after I graduate and take the bar exam.

On paper, I had no business being there. Yet, there I was. All because I chose to keep working hard even though I wasn't seeing the results that I wanted. My coaches and teammates noticed. A reporter chose to care about a story that almost no one else would. And then, of all things, someone Google'd me. You can't tell me that the Game doesn't know.

So, to any players out there struggling with being a role-player: keep working hard. Keep putting the team above yourself. Keep trusting your coaches. Believe me, I



know that it hurts at times. But the Game sees you, and it *will* reward you. It won't always be in the way that you wanted or pictured it, though. Sometimes the reward will come years later, in a way that will have a much greater impact on the course of your life than getting more playing time ever will. And I wouldn't have it any other way.



Fast Club League Registration for 2020 is NOW OPEN!

[WWW.OSHKOSHFASTCLUB.COM](http://WWW.OSHKOSHFASTCLUB.COM)

Click on the "League" tab and then click "CONTINUE" in green towards the bottom.

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Oshkosh West Coach Tim Kohl is offering youth camps again this year through the YMCA. Let's fill the Oshkosh West Gyms! This year boys and girls will have separate camps. The Oshkosh West Varsity players will be helping with the camps. This is a GREAT opportunity to dust off the gloves and get some work in. This is also a great opportunity for Oshkosh Fast Club and Oshkosh Extreme Coaches to pick up skills and drills to work on with these young ladies all summer.

## It's not too late! Spring Training Camps 2020

The YMCA is once again sponsoring spring training camp for potential youth baseball/softball players. The purpose of this camp is to provide young players an opportunity to throw, field, and swing a bat during a time of the year when developing baseball skills may not be a priority. Due to the number of available gym times and the number of kids participating, the majority of the time will be spent in drills designed to get as many repetitions as possible on the basic skills during the available time. Baseball and Softball will have separate camps.

**Cost:** \$20 (Includes a camp shirt) - due on the date of camp  
(Make checks out to the YMCA)

**Location:** Oshkosh West Gym (Enter through northwest corner door 20)

Check our website and Facebook page for dates and times.

As always the club is working on securing sponsorships for 2020, please email [oshfastclub@gmail.com](mailto:oshfastclub@gmail.com) if you are interested or know of a company that could potentially help.

Extreme Travel teams are underway. Tournament schedules are on our website.

Dan Bergin

Oshkosh Fast Club

January 2020 edition