

Greetings WESA! Our 36<sup>th</sup> Season has come to an end. I hope your experience in our League was friendly and fun and that you found the League well organized.

Much of our League's success comes from great business relationships with our Diamond, Gold and Silver sponsors. Be sure to continue to support them all winter long. Your WESA athlete card is permanent and the more you use it, the more exposure our League gets in the LGBT community. This creates a win-win situation for our business partners and our members!

I want to thank the Commission for their dedication to our League and its mission. Together we were able to field a great product on the diamond and on the social scene. On behalf of the entire Commission, I want to express my gratitude to all the Coaches, who take on a part time spring and summer job. Coaching volunteers are essential for WESA every year and we value their efforts and passion for our sport and League.

As always, the League faced numerous challenges throughout the fall and winter: sponsorship fundraising, membership recruitment, and field allocations to name a few. Good planning and decision-making resulted in a successful season of 15 teams and 193 games. Our biggest challenge the last few years has been the lack of growth in the C division.

To do nothing about this challenge will lead us down the path to a single mixed division. This would not be new to WESA instead it would be old. Twice in our past there have been periods when the League operated as one division. Our history tells us that this is less than ideal. Grouping like skilled players into divisions creates a game experience that is more balanced and more enjoyable for the participants. This is why in 2003 the League created the C and D divisions. This format has proven to be a great success.

The intent ever since 2003 was to connect the divisions with a conveyor belt. Novice members could enter the league in the D division, here they could learn and develop their softball skills. Once they had sufficiently developed, members could then move to the C division where they would experience a more high-caliber game and continue to enhance their skills and increase their consistency. But for all intents and purposes, this conveyor belt is broken. Despite becoming developed players, many members for a variety of reasons, have not made the move to the C division.

The result has been that the D division is ever-growing year after year and is now bursting at the seams with 15 players per team and a wait list of new players wanting to become part of our League. In 2004 the D division was less skilled, less developed, and less competitive than it is today. Over the years as novice players have matured, and other talented players have joined, the D division has become a real engine for producing good softball players.

I've spent the last season talking with a group of 12 to 15 D members who possess a skill set and passion for softball that make them ideal candidates for the C division. I've had the pleasure of coaching and watching them play over the last few years and I know they

are ready and willing for this exciting challenge. The key to their future development is linked to competition with and against more consistently skilled players and teams. With this member movement, I'm confident that next year the C division will be newer, larger, fresher, and continue to offer a high-caliber game experience. For this to be a success, it requires all of our participation. New C members will rise to these challenges and our current C membership will support, guide and mentor these new players.

As always, the Commission looks for feedback and dialogue with the membership on any issue. We know that our members discuss our League and pose questions. We also know that the membership often pose such questions to each other, without raising these questions to the Commission. Personally, I like having an open dialogue with members. I love to talk softball and discuss the options the League has and why it makes the decisions it does. I love to solicit feedback and share ideas. You can contact me all year long via email at [Commissioner@WESA.net](mailto:Commissioner@WESA.net). In addition, you can find valuable information on our website at [wesa.net](http://wesa.net). Please be sure to keep your online WESA profile up to date with your email and mobile number. Necessary information is communicated via email all year long including next season's registration information and process.

I hope to see a good turnout for our Annual General Meeting being held at Numbers on Tuesday October 7<sup>th</sup>, 7:00PM. More information can be found on our [website](#).

The new Commission will be getting to work immediately following our Annual General Meeting and we will be planning a Winter Social, this will give the membership a chance to mix and mingle during the grey winter months when softball isn't possible.

Best wishes to everyone for an off-season full of joy.

Together in Pride,  
Darcy Simpson  
League Commissioner