

HWSA Photo Gallery



Thanks Promised Land Dairy and Molly the Cow!



East Cobb Complex (above) in Marietta, GA and Fleming Stadium (right) in Wilson, NC are just two of the four fine baseball fields where HWSA hosts their Regional Tournaments.

HWSA relies on outside sponsorships from faithful businesses like Chick-fil-A, Promised Land Dairy, and Infinity Insurance Company.

Our other Regional Tournaments sites are located in the Fort Worth, TX area as well as in Memphis, TN.

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2004 World Series CHAMPIONS

Atlanta Barons Blue



2004 HOMESCHOOL WORLD SERIES CHAMPIONS

The 2004 Homeschool World Series was held in Pensacola, FL. Pensacola Junior College in cooperation with the City of Pensacola greatly assisted HWSA in procuring first class playing fields.

HWSA Builds Beyond High School Opportunities

Homeschool sports organizations like HWSA in conjunction with quality sports programs like the Greater Gwinnett Christian Barons are providing talented homeschool athletes with opportunities to further their athletic “career” beyond high school. Bobby Bennett, pitcher and 2004 graduate of the GGC Barons – Blue team, is just one homeschool athlete that can testify to this.



Bobby Bennett
Atlanta, GA GGC Barons
2004 GRADUATE

Bobby began playing baseball for the Barons as a freshman in the year 2001. Disciplined, bi-weekly conditioning, afternoon baseball games (approximately 30+ games per season), and a tri-weekly academic focus balanced Bobby’s approach to school and sports. These promoted an overall attitude and synchronized actions of academic and athletic excellence in Bobby. The “flexibility of homeschooling”, quotes John Bennett, Bobby’s father, helped to groom him for a quick transition to “a college atmosphere” that Bobby actually finds “easier than his homeschool schedule.”

Three goals focused Bobby’s attention and effort as a high school student. Bobby aimed to 1) play for a staff of Christian coaches, 2) play at a Division One school, and 3) once signed, earn a 2nd position besides pitcher.

What once were Bobby’s ambitions now has become his reality as he was scouted on multiple occasions during his regular season games and agreed to an early signing with DI - Georgia State University in the fall of 2003.

Bobby’s goals as well as the challenges he faced in HWSA tournament ball also helped to develop his pitching game. Facing other competitive homeschool teams in the Homeschool World Series and being challenged by “better players”, according to Bobby, enhanced his game. Two of Bobby’s most challenging pitching memories were during the 2002 HWSA Championship game in San Antonio, TX against the Houston, TX HCYA Eagles and the 2004 HWSA Championship game in Pensacola, FL against the Dallas, TX HSAA Angels. The challenges met in HWSA tournaments helped boost the competition level for Bobby, making his transition to college level baseball “not as big of a jump.”

FACT:

In just five years of operation, the Homeschool World Series Association (HWSA) has produced 16 alumni players that have continued their baseball or softball “career” playing college ball. Some of these players have received either full or partial baseball scholarships to various colleges and even universities in the continental U.S. *Note: Some schools listed below do not offer athletic scholarships.*

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BEYOND BASEBALL>*

HWSA ALUMNI Athletes

| Name | Homeschool Team | Year Graduated | College Playing For | Scholarships |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|--|--|
| Bobby Bennett | Atlanta, GA GGC Barons | 2004 | Georgia State University | Full baseball and academic scholarship |
| Paul Kill | Atlanta, GA GGC Barons | 1999 | Truett-McConnell Junior College & North Georgia College & State University | Partial baseball scholarship |
| Rick Kill | Atlanta, GA GGC Barons | 2001 | Truett-McConnell Junior College | Partial baseball scholarship |
| Brett Myers | Atlanta, GA GGC Barons | 2001 | Berry College | Baseball scholarship |
| Megan Brown | Atlanta, GA GGC Lady Barons | 2003 | Florida Southern College | Full athletic scholarship |
| Allison Paul | Atlanta, GA GGC Lady Barons | 2004 | Columbus State University | Hope Academic and partial athletic scholarship |
| Matthew Betsill | Atlanta South, GA Christian Knights | 2002 | Furman University | Baseball, Furman Tradition, and academic |
| Wyn Bush | Atlanta South, GA Christian Knights | 2003 | Atlanta Christian College | |
| Matthew Morris | Atlanta South, GA Christian Knights | 2004 | Atlanta Christian College | |
| Joel Hartman | Bradenton, FL Manatee HEAT | 2002 | Southeastern College Lakeland, FL | |
| Jeff Hendricks | Dallas, TX HSAA Angels | 2001 | Gordon College | |
| Matt Zappasodi | Houston, TX HCYA Eagles | 2002 | Bethel College, Indiana | Partial baseball and partial academic |
| David Abel | Huntsville, AL CCA Falcons | 2003 | University of Alabama in Huntsville | |
| Ben Atkins | Huntsville, AL CCA Falcons | 2002 | Belhaven College | |
| Jeremiah Johnson | Huntsville, AL CCA Falcons | 2003 | Tennessee Temple | |
| Emily O’Byrne | Wichita, KS Lady Warriors | 2004 | Southwestern Christian University Bethany, OK | |

HWSA Tourneys Give Purpose to Homeschool Players

Homeschoolers face many challenges by definition of being “home schooled.” Although opportunities for them are becoming more widely available, still there is room for improvement. Opportunities vary from state to state and even city to city depending on the laws and statutes of each area.

The arena of homeschool sports has developed greatly in the past 10 to 15 years. We are seeing more homeschool sports programs emerge and grow due to a large market of homeschool families that find sports as a constructive outlet for their children. Opportunities provided by the Homeschool World Series Association (HWSA) have advanced homeschool baseball and softball to the national level.

Many homeschool baseball and softball seasons actually culminate with HWSA Regional Tournaments and Homeschool World Series. Comments from various coaches and players in previous years have expressed support of HWSA scheduling Regional Tournaments later in their season. Players who fall out in the Regional Tournament and do not advance to the Homeschool World Series tend to lack motivation to play heartily throughout the remainder of their regular season games.

Todd Dickson, Coach of the Augusta, GA CSRA Crusaders, considers HWSA tournaments analogous with an end-of-the year report card in school. According to him, playing a regular season of homeschool ball and not being able to participate in an HWSA Regional Tournament (and hopefully the Homeschool World Series) is like “going to school and not getting the report card.”

With continued support of our vision to upgrade the quality of opportunities for homeschool baseball and softball athletes in the U.S., HWSA will be able to serve homeschool families and teams for many years to come. Giving purpose to homeschool players as they develop their spiritual, mental, and physical selves will help these players face the ready challenges met not just in home school, but also in life.

...playing a regular season of homeschool ball and not being able to participate in an HWSA Regional Tournament is like “going to school and not getting the report card.”

Homeschool Athletes Develop Character through Baseball Disappointments

The Bradenton, FL Manatee HEAT has been an HWSA League Member since 2002, and has grown through disappointments. The HEAT is a homeschool team led by Christian leaders, but not all its players are distinctly Christian.

In 2004 the HEAT made a critical leadership decision in selecting a godly head coach, Barry Batson, who is the founder of both Athletes in Christ and Florida Baseball for Christ, which is a non-profit organization and branching ministry of AIC. Visit FBC at <http://www.baseballforchrist.org/>! Under the consistent “teaching, directing, and caring” of Coach Batson, the HEAT has been able to face recent baseball disappointments, and even has developed Christian character through them.

For the first time in Florida history, the Manatee HEAT was recognized as the first homeschool team to be able to participate in the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) during the 2004 baseball season. The HEAT was on fire as they traveled to Atlanta, GA for the HWSA Regional Tournament that would kick off their season before district play.

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CHARACTER>*

Faith in God Fostered through Fund-raising

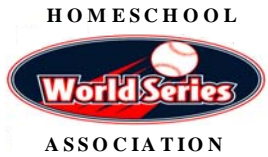
Nineteen hours, a 15-passenger van, and just fifty dollars more is what it took for the Wichita, KS Lady Warriors to be able to attend the Homeschool World Series. Lady Warriors Assistant Coach, Alecia O’Byrne, shares about “God’s faithfulness in providing funds” for them to experience the Florida Homeschool World Series tournament event.

Coach O’Byrne openly admits that her team has gone into the 2003 and 2004 Homeschool World Series “knowing” they were “going to get beat.” Nevertheless, their coaching staff was committed to raising funds to be able to participate in what they view as an “end of the year wrap-up” for the girls on their team.

Although the Lady Warriors had hours and weeks of hard work ahead of them, the Lady Warriors coaching staff used fund-raising as a means to teach their girls the value of dependence on prayer coupled with hard work.

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FAITH THROUGH FUND-RAISING>*

HWSA NewsFLASH



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FAITH THROUGH FUND-RAISING>

The Lady Warriors pursued sponsorships from Sam’s Club as well as organized multiple car washes to raise Homeschool World Series funds.

Now down to just one more weekend before the Series, the Lady Warriors still lacked \$250 to go to Florida. It was the last 15 minutes of their car wash and \$50 more is what the girls needed to raise. Kneeling in prayer, the Lady Warriors supplicated, if it is the “Lord’s will”, please send more cars to meet this need.

The prospect of raising \$50 more looked grim considering they were averaging about \$10 per car. Moments later another car came and gave \$10. The girls lacked \$40 and time was almost up. Nevertheless, before the dismissal bell rang, a van showed up. The pleased owner gave \$20 for the job well done, leaving them \$20 short of the necessary funds. Just then the unexpected happened and the generous man in the passenger seat graciously gave the Lady Warriors \$30 for no obvious reason.

The Lady Warriors were on their way to Florida! Not only had God answered their prayers, but He had provided in only the way that God can do. His promise in Ephesians 3:20 that he is “able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us” was fulfilled for the Lady Warriors as they trusted in Him to provide for their needs.

Coach O’Byrne says the Lady Warriors “went by faith” to the Homeschool World Series, not by funds. It was only after they deliberately stepped out in faith that God provided the funds for them to attend. God used fund-raising for Florida to teach several young lady softball players that “God cares about the things that are important to us.”

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CHARACTER>

Sad news greeted the HEAT as they returned home from Atlanta. Not only were they one run shy of advancing to the Homeschool World Series, but their promising season of district play in the FHSAA as homeschoolers under “private umbrellas” had ended before it had even started. News that the HEAT had not fulfilled the requirement to register players individually with the county’s home education department, a stipulation of which they were unaware, “disqualified [the HEAT] before district play”, making them ineligible to play baseball. For the HEAT, their baseball season “abruptly ended” in April 2004.

Character developed in the players of the Manatee HEAT through these disappointments. Deep bonds were cultivated between the players as they learned to “walk the walk” instead of just “talk the talk” during the season of “disappointments” that they were in. Eternal fruit resulted from the efforts of the Manatee HEAT leadership to point the players to Christ when two players, David Bell and Juan Leyva, made the life-changing decision to trust Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of their lives.

Beverly Hartman, Athletic Director of the HEAT, also adds that the players that have been a part of HWSA tournaments have been “deeply challenged” by the “difference: they have seen “in their homeschool friends” when compared to their “other friends.” The difference is so evident that even the unbelieving parents that have participated in HWSA tournaments can see it as well.

God is using even disappointments to build godly character in his people and to draw the unsaved into a relationship with Him. HWSA is thankful for the opportunity to offer opportunities to homeschool families that have eternal value.

<continued from page 1:
BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL>

Bobby, now currently into his fall baseball training, will play as a true freshman pitcher this coming baseball season beginning in February 2005 and ending in May. He continues his daily 7:30 am conditioning workouts, academic schedule, and afternoon practices. He will also work toward his third goal of developing his skills and hopefully earning a second position as GSU first baseman.

Still a loyal supporter of HWSA, Bobby plans on attending the 2005 Homeschool World Series as an alumni supporter. Some of Bobby’s favorite homeschool baseball memories include the “Sunday morning worship services with Joel Goddard”, the “homey atmosphere” of HWSA’s “Gathering”, “fun traveling” to HWSA tournaments, and also the “nice facilities” that Bobby was able to play at. Bobby closes with the thought that **HWSA tournaments are “good for families and teams” alike.**

Wichita, KS Lady Warriors

