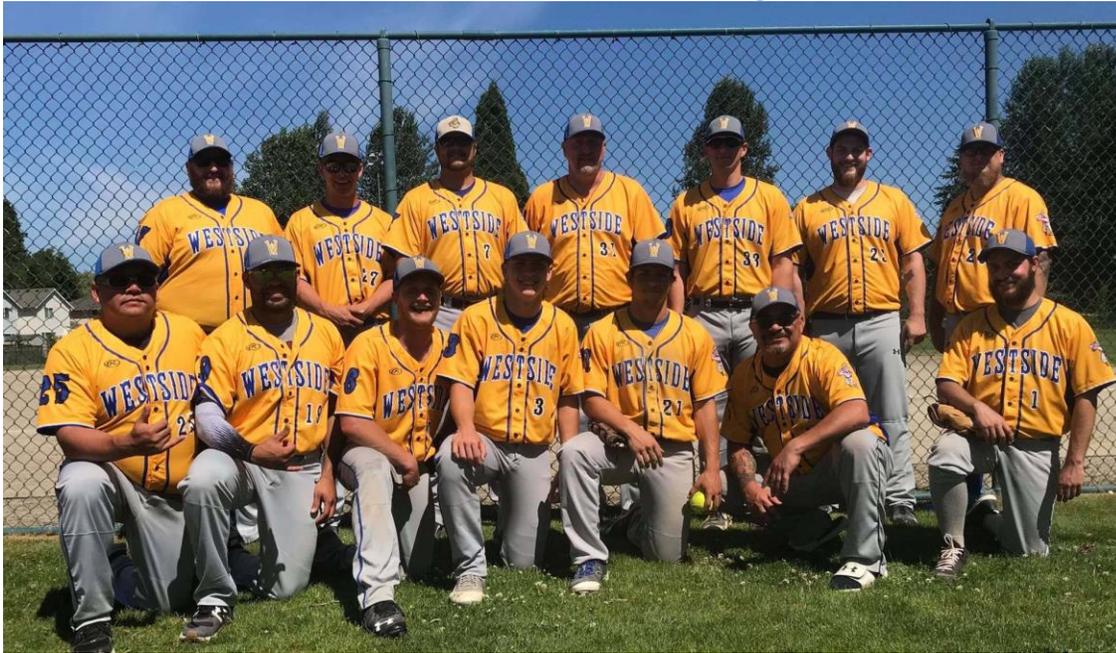


Local Softball: Hub City Fastpitch League Seeks Players of All Levels

BY [MATT BAIDE](#) · JUNE 25, 2019

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By The Chronicle

If you're looking for a competitive sport to play this summer, the Hub City Fastpitch league is looking for new members to join a competitive game for anyone interested in playing.

League Director Jeff Hannan operates the Hub City Fastpitch League, which is a unique league because most of the other leagues in the state have died off.

"I just started my own team last year, from scratch. Recruiting guys and my year two goal is to get a league. We actually have about 14 experienced league type pitchers in our area, so there's no reason we shouldn't have a league," Hannan said. "Yakima doesn't have a league anymore, Spokane, it's just dying off because there's no pitching. We have the guys, guys that we can teach, so it's about recruiting new guys. My passion for the game was the start of it and getting the

support from the other guys in our area, and they're all on board, so that's kind of how it came about. We need to do this or else the game's going to go away."



Hannan said he was exposed to fastpitch when he was 18 and has been developing the craft ever since. He recounted about the 70s and 80s when there were teams in Longview, Olympia and Shelton when the sport was thriving.

"The leagues have even gone away. Breaking down the numbers, Centralia was a good fit. You can't get a field in Olympia and the cost is more, and we want to bring Longview back in and try and build something for them because Portland doesn't even have a league either," Hannan said. "Now we're just starting from there, going to be kind of informal, but we'll build from there and see how many people we can entice to play a better game."

There is slowpitch offered in Lewis County as well, but Hannan notes this league is more competitive, and while it is about fun, players will be challenged in this league.

"It's a competitive thing. I personally don't even understand slowpitch, I've never played it. Why you would have four outfielders or home runs become outs is bizarre to me. A home run should be a reward," Hannan said. "It's a challenge. You're going to get out seven out of 10 times if you're a good hitter. I like the challenge just like pitching is a challenge to get the hitters out. Young people, I think, a lot of them, if they don't move on in baseball, that's all they have is slowpitch and beer league. We're not a beer league, we're competitive, but we are friendly. We play gentlemen's rules and we're more about people than the results per se."

Hannan believes the decrease in men's fastpitch participation has to do with the lack of pitching and the cost. The Hub City Fastpitch League has three Hall of Famers who take the circle in games.

The league currently has four teams, including the Lacey As, the Salty Dogs out of Centralia, the Westside Jacks out of Olympia and Lower Columbia Fastpitch.

Never played fastpitch before? No problem, as Hannan notes the league is open to all skill levels.

"It's a vast majority on the spectrum. My attitude is you don't turn anybody away," Hannan said. "I had a new guy last year, had never played any form of baseball, and year two, he's turning into a heck of a player and he's just a great guy. That's the kind of people we want. People are going to gravitate to the game because of people and being able to compete."

Hannan notes that players interested in participating should try to bring their own glove and cleats, metal or non-metal, if they have them. The league is a wood bat league. Women are welcome to play as well, but they can use metal bats.

"We'll try to get you in there and see what people think of it. I don't have to play, my goal is to bring more people out and also that will help our travel team," Hannan said. "We have two travel teams that play weekend tournaments, so it keeps us sharp, plus a bigger pool of players to pull from because some weekends it gets tough when people have weddings or graduations or family stuff going on. It will expose more players to the game."

The league is also hosting the Westside Classic tournament on July 13 and 14 at Fort Borst Park and hopes to host the state tournament on Aug. 3 and 4 in Centralia.

Anyone interested in playing can show up at Fort Borst Park at 6:30 p.m. to get in the game. For more information, contact Hannan at jeffhannan31@yahoo.com or at 360-918-1725.