

Women's olympic softball

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Women's softball escalated quickly after originating from baseball, an all male Olympic sport. Growing involvement helped it spread throughout the world, and reaching a new height with its' addition into the 1996 Summer Olympic Games. Heads of the American and Japanese Softball Associations helped to create such a popular sport, loved by women across the nations. After the removal of softball from the Olympics after the 2008 games, the push for its' return has been stronger than ever.

With years of experience behind them, college athletes are eagerly hoping for the revival of softball before their careers come to an end. Olympic level baseball and softball were some of the sports removed from the Summer games after 2008. Softball was deemed “ too big and too expensive”, requiring Olympic sized fields, maintenance, and ample equipment. A 1965 rule, stating that for a sport to be considered an Olympic event, it must be played in at least eleven different countries. The Olympic Committee voted following the 2008 Summer Games, discontinuing softball by one vote because of cost and lack of participation.

This had been the first in sixty-nine years that an event had been removed from the program, with polo being removed in 1936. Baseball and softball became the only two events dropped from the next Summer games in 2012. The discontinuation of softball as an event created an urgency for players to make the national team by 2008, otherwise, not having the chance to compete. Thirteen nations competed between 1996 and 2008, the United States coming out on top with gold each time, with Japan following closely behind. These two countries dominated the softball world throughout Atlanta, Sydney, Athens, and Beijing.

Although no longer an Olympic game, there continues to be a national team. This team travels and competes as it normally would, just not included in the Olympics. College all stars play alongside seasoned professionals against countries around the world, showing their true passion for the sport. A retired collegiate All-American pitcher, Jennie Finch, uses her fame to promote the reinstallation of softball to the 2020 Olympics through her brand, “ Dream and Believe”. Standing at a towering six feet tall and throwing a blazing seventy mile per hour fastball, Finch led the Arizona Wildcats to a Women’s College World Series victory, as well as several medals for the United States. Looking ahead, the Olympic Board and the International Baseball and Softball federations are working in tandem to reinstate the sports for the 2020 Olympic Summer Games.

From trending onTwitterto being shared acrossFacebook, girls across the nation are dreaming for the return of a widely loved sport for women. To some, the return of softball to the Olympics could be like the fresh start of a new at bat. Females ranging from all ages are eager to see their favorite players take their place on the field once again.

The ongoing promotion of softball across the nation scatters the thoughts of striking out and keeping the passion instilled in players all over the world.