



## **"Traditional" Softball Ad World Series Will Add 16" Softball for Its 26th Annual Phoenix Tournament**

At least 50 teams and nearly 600 coed, men's and women's players representing 18 or more U.S., Canadian, and UK markets will compete at The Advertising Softball World Series this October 18-22 in Phoenix. And a new competitive level of play will make its debut at this year's 26th annual round-robin competition:

Either 16" softball "exhibitions" or a featured 16" tournament will be included in this year's round-robin event.

"Most of our Chicago-based teams grew up playing with a 16-inch ball (games are played with a larger softer ball, wooden bats, and players don't wear gloves), and over the years, we've staged an occasional exhibition to introduce the game to our traditional 12' audience," says Advertising Softball World Series founder and commissioner Michael Meiches. "However, we've discovered there is a growing 16" playing audience in greater Phoenix, and promoting a tournament within a tournament or an exhibition would be a good fit. In fact, our 'tournament within a tournament' could be an ideal lead-in in for Avnet's 6th Annual 16" B2B Championships that will be played in Tempe, November 1.

Avnet Tournament Director Al Maag adds: "Chicago is the birthplace of softball and 16" softball is the style played for generations. I have seen the game grow in Arizona and California the past few years, because players know the game is not home run derby and more similar to a well played baseball game. I think the time is right for the 16" game to expand outside of the Midwest and what better place than in one of the most visible international softball tournaments in the history of the sport. Once we plant the flag this year, my guess is we will have even more players/teams join in each year and not just the ones who played the sport before."

The Advertising Softball World Series, created in 1983 for the advertising and media industry, is the longest running sporting event in the United States targeted to the general business community. All teams are guaranteed 10-12 games, compete for division, city, and regional titles over the four-day event, and the overall theme is to play ball by day and gather nightly at organized theme dinner parties. The upscale Arizona Grand Resort serves as 2008 tournament headquarters. In addition to the anticipated 250-game schedule, off-field

networking highlights include elaborate dinner buffets, daily newsletters, welcome bags filled with sponsor merchandise for all players, poolside beer gardens, a Jersey Trading Market, Skills Competition, and a gala Awards banquet

Equally important are the business and social aspects surrounding this softball tournament vacation. Corporate partners in attendance participate in event branding and networking opportunities and receive yearlong exposure via the tournament's multiple promotional communication vehicles. Examples include the interactive website (<http://www.adworldseries.com>) featuring individual team photo galleries; a 300-page glossy, full color program featuring amusing sponsor ads and player editorial; an electronic Team & Player Marketing Guide plus a fully produced "Tournament Documentary" film which becomes the highlight of the Awards banquet each year.

This is a unique event to say the least. With 42 player introductions that have led to marriage and the thousands of business contacts that have forged corporate relationships, the lifetime of friendships that have evolved into invaluable business and personal opportunities are the true "heart" of this event. The softball titles are important, but what people take home is the network of "friends" that lead to strong, lasting friendships.

Watch five minutes of the tournament DVD (<http://www.adworldseries.com/NEW/2007video.html>) and you will "feel" how the bonding and networking of The Advertising Softball World Series is unsurpassed by any other business or professional sporting event.

According to tournament director Meiches: " We could not be happier to have Al Maag's support and experience helping us organize 16" softball in our program. He is the co-founder of the Chicago 16" Softball Hall of Fame (<http://www.16inchsoftballhof.com>) and will be writing a new chapter in the sport's history."

All tournament games will be played at the new Big League Dreams complex, in the Town of the Gilbert, and in the City of Mesa beginning Sunday, October 19.

For additional tournament details, visit <http://www.adworldseries.com> for a most unusual event website and team photo gallery. For a copy of the unique Ad Softball World Series souvenir Tournament Program, contact: [Michael@adworldseries.com](mailto:Michael@adworldseries.com)

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