



Girls with Balls: The Chicago Women's Dodgeball League

By GayWebMonkey.com

Chicago, IL - In Junior high school it was the opportunity for anyone to be able to pick up the rubber ball and beam the crap out of the class bully. But for the Chicago dodgeball league, the game has transcended the junior high school yard and become a place where sports loving women from all over the area can meet, enjoy great camaraderie and play one of the most fun and amusing games ever.

The sport has been around since the late 1800's. Typical recess fodder in elementary and junior high schools, it even has something of a professional sport following.

Although there are many variations of the sport, the object of the game is relatively simple. Don't get hit by the ball and knock your opponent out.

Inspired by the hit film *Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story*, the sport had a resurgence and became popular among adults. The film, which stars Vince Vaughn, Ben Stiller and Rip Taylor, took a comical look into the lives of professional dodgeball players.

With wide spread interest growing, a National dodgeball league was formed and teams from all across the world began coming to the World Championships held in Las Vegas. Although it seems somewhat humorous, the event is no laughing matter as the teams face off against each other in a relentless competition that has gained a huge fan following.

Last year, a Chicago-based all women's group of flag football players came up with the idea to start a lesbian league in the to fill the time when away from the football field.

Samatha Hamilton, who is one of the four co-founders of the league, told the *Windy City Times*, "We just thought it would be a fun sport. We knew it'd be fun to hit a lesbian and get away with it."

In their first year out, they had over 100 women sign up to play, and 13 competitive teams were created in a best of five format to decide the ultimate champions.

The league is part of the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association, which is currently the largest not-for-profit gay and lesbian sports organization in the Midwest. According to their website, they offer recreational and competitive level play in a variety of athletic leagues throughout the year.

Headed up by President Marcia Hill, the CMSA celebrated it's 30th anniversary this year, and Hill, who joined the organization in 1982, has amassed great success in many areas of sports for gay athletes including soccer, softball, volleyball, tennis, and now dodgeball.

"The key has been that there are so many people who have the passion and dedication to promote gay sports," Hill explained to the *Windy City Times*.

Hill has not only been instrumental at establishing new organizations, she has lent her support by participating in and refereeing different events. She even helped recruit new players for this season of dodgeball.

The CMSA leagues are open to all persons who wish to play, regardless of sexual orientation, gender or gender identity, and the dodgeball division has added rounds for men and mixed play along with the women.

"We're just looking at this as a way to have fun, hopefully meet new people and just have something different—something that everyone can play," Hamilton explained to the *Times*. "We're starting small, but hoping it is something that takes off and that we can [go national]."

Editor's Note: The CMSA Women's Dodgeball Playoffs are scheduled for Friday, March 7th. Visit www.ChicagoMSA.com for more information.

Written By Dylan Vox

Story brought to us by GaySports.com