



## Local Softball Teams Headed to World Series

By [Windy City Media Group](#)

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Chicago, IL - Six local softball teams have earned the right to represent Chicago at the annual 2008 NAGAAA Gay Softball World Series, being played Aug. 22-30 in Seattle.

The Northwest Quest, as this year's event has been dubbed, features about 1,000 players from across the and Canada.

Chicago last hosted the event in 1984 and has only had four national championship teams ever, although three have claimed the honor this decade—with the Jackhammer Heat in the D Division winning it most recently in 2006.

"The World Series is all about the pomp and pageantry," said Shawn Albritton, 33, who lives in Rogers Park and is one of only five known Chicagoans who have twice won the championship in the annual event. ( The others are Mike Gaudreau, Rick Curneal, Lori Condie and Mike Gurley. )

"There are guys who have been playing gay softball for 20 years or more, and this is their ultimate goal: to win the World Series. I consider myself very blessed to have won it twice.

"The level of play is top-notch. These teams are serious, very serious. You're playing the best of the best."

Albritton plays right field and catcher for the Spin Wildcats, and is one of about 95 local players hitting the Northwest Quest.

"I hope that three of our six teams going will return with a [ championship ] trophy; that would be nice. But I'm very proud of the six teams nonetheless," Albritton said.

The Spin Wildcats and Pepitone's qualified for the Gay World Series through a one-day tournament of three C-Division CMSA teams interested in heading west, held June 15.

"Our B teams are very strong. The C teams are extremely experienced. The D teams are new to the World Series," Albritton said. "I think all six teams should do very well."

So why has Chicago won so few softball championships over the years?

"I'd like to use the excuse that we're a cold-weather city, whereas some teams get to play year-round," Albritton said. "But, we've won three championships in this decade, which truly speaks to the fact that we're finally developing our players better. "CMSA has worked very hard to try to develop new players, and I think it shows."

The games start Tues., Aug. 26, with pool play. The double-elimination tournament starts on Thursday. Teams are eliminated starting on Friday. Teams are guaranteed to play five games, but might need 10 or 20 to win the championship.

"If you make it to Saturday, it's pretty special," said Albritton, who has played in the World Series five times. "The championship games are extraordinary. Everyone is cheering and supporting you; it's amazing."

Here is a list of the 2008 Gay World Series men's teams representing the Chicago Metropolitan Sports Association ( CMSA ) :

### B Division:

—Spin Cougars ( manager: Chris Vernald; top players: Bob Chada, Larry O'Rourke and Mark Febonio )

—Chicago Dragons ( manager: Frank Kisner; top players: Gil Minor, Dave Wagner and Phil Runions )

### C Division:

- Spin Wildcats ( manager: Shawn Albritton; top players: Matt Levin, John Marc Alban, Anthony Miceli and Doug Malm )
- Pepitone's ( manager: Joe Cappelletti; top players: Danny Tag, Chuck Jacobson, Jeff Milio and Randy Detert )

D Division:

- Kilo Kai Chargers ( manager: Brian Kupersmit; top players: Scott Quinn, Marcus Han and Jen Runions )
- Broadway Cellar Crush ( manager: Rodrigo Carillo; top players: Joe Wirtz, Don Renner and Steve Hamlin )

The women's teams that will compete are:

Mic's Girls, B Division

Chicago Crush, C Division

Raw Energy, C Division

See [Series2008.org](http://Series2008.org) for more info.

*Written by Ross Forman*

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