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**ASA/USA Softball Announces 2010 Athletes of the Year**

**OKLAHOMA CITY** — The Amateur Softball Association (ASA) of America announced today that shortstop Natasha Watley (Irvine, Calif.) and outfielder Johnny McCraw (Lake Wylie, S.C.) have been selected as the USA Softball 2010 Female and Male Athlete of the Year. Third baseman Lauren Chamberlain (Trabuco Canyon, Calif.) has also been selected as the Athlete of the Year from the Junior Women's National Team program.

Watley helped the USA Softball Women's National Team program regain the No. 1 ranking in the World as they beat Japan to capture the ISF Women's Softball World Championship. She hit an outstanding .542 at the Worlds, earning the starting shortstop position in all nine games. She was perfect at the shortstop position as well as on the base paths, going 3-for-3 in stolen bases.

"It's such an honor being named the USA Softball Women's National Team Player of the year. Last year was a great year for the USA National Team as we brought the gold back home to the USA winning the World Championship," said Watley. "There is no greater feeling than that. I am very proud of what we were able to accomplish in 2010."

Her accomplishments did not stop there, as she led the team at the KFC World Cup of Softball with a .565 batting average with a team-high seven runs scored and 13 hits. She was also 4-for-4 in stolen bases. The United States again defeated Japan in the title game, a 5-1 victory. For her accomplishments at the World Cup, Watley earned July United States Olympic Committee Athlete of the Month honors.

McCraw is a repeat member of the USA Softball Men's Slow Pitch National Team having earned a spot on the roster for the 2009 and 2010 seasons. For summer 2010, he was a perfect 14-for-14 at the plate with 14 RBI.

"I want to take this time to personally thank ASA/USA Softball for honoring me with this award. I am not only honored to accept this but I am extremely humbled, especially to be the first recipient for slow pitch. I have been training harder than I ever have to keep up with the new athletes, but I never expected to be recognized with such an award," said McCraw. "I want to thank everyone for their continuous support, and I want to thank God for giving me the opportunity to wear USA on my uniform. He has blessed me with the ability to play and to stay healthy and to continue to play and touch the lives of people I come in contact with every day. Thank you again, this is truly an honor."

In the 2010, the Border Battle game between Canada and the United States, aired live from Oklahoma City on ESPN, McCraw went 6-for-6, including a double and three home runs, with six RBI and six runs scored for Team USA. In left field, he accounted for two Canadian outs.

In preparation for the Border Battle, which Team USA lost 30-29, McCraw with 3-for-3 with four RBI and four runs scored in Team USA's 33-18 win over All-Star Pluming. Team USA also beat the Fence Brokers 28-19 with McCraw going 5-for-5 with four RBI and four runs scored. He also recorded three outs while playing in left field.

Chamberlain, a member of the 2010-11 USA Softball Junior Women's National Team, was an integral part of Team USA's 9-0 run at the III Pan American Championships (18-Under) in Bogota, Colombia, which qualified the team for the ISF IX Jr. Women's World Championship (19-and-under) later this year in Cape Town, South Africa. She played in each of the nine games, starting eight times at third base. In her first game wearing the Red, White and Blue, she hit a home run, laying the groundwork for an outstanding offensive performance in the tournament.

She went 16 for 25 (.640) at the plate with 11 runs scored and 13 RBI. With her 11 extra base hits (seven doubles, two triples and two home runs), she accumulated a slugging percentage of 1.320, by far the highest in Bogota. She went a perfect 6 for 6 in stolen bases, tying Hallie Wilson (North Tustin, Calif.) for second most on the team.

"I feel so blessed to receive this honor and to wear USA across my chest," Chamberlain said. "I am representing my country playing the sport I love and I'm so grateful to have been given this opportunity. I have so much pride putting on my jersey and playing with some of the best athletes in the country. Softball has given me so many great experiences and I can't wait to see where it takes me next."

Chamberlain is a senior at El Toro High School in Lake Forest, Calif. She has committed to play next season at Oklahoma, ranked No. 6 in the pre-season ESPN.com/USA Softball Collegiate Top 25 Poll released earlier this month.

#### **About ASA**

The Amateur Softball Association, founded in 1933, is the National Governing Body of softball in the United States and a member of the United States Olympic Committee. The ASA has become one of the nation's largest sports organizations and now sanctions competition in every state through a network of 76 local associations. The ASA has grown from a few hundred teams in the early days to over 210,000 teams today, representing a membership of more than three million. For more information on the ASA, visit <http://www.asasoftball.com/>.

#### **About USA Softball**

USA Softball is the brand created, operated and owned by the ASA that links the USA Men's, Women's, Junior Boys' and Junior Girls' National Team programs together. USA Softball is responsible for training, equipping and promoting these four National Teams to compete in international and domestic competitions. The USA Softball Women's National Team is one of the only two women's sports involved in the Olympic movement to capture three consecutive gold medals at the Olympic Games since 1996. The U.S. women have also won nine World Championship titles including the last seven consecutive as well as claimed four World Cup of Softball titles. For more information about USA Softball, please visit <http://www.usasoftball.com/>.

Holly Krivokapich  
Assistant Director of Marketing and Communications  
ASA/USA Softball  
405-425-3431  
[www.asasoftball.com](http://www.asasoftball.com)  
[www.usasoftball.com](http://www.usasoftball.com)