



Northwest Mountain Region 9

REGION 9 SOFTBALL HALL INDUCTS LOCAL STARS BUSHINSKI, KUNTZ; ZIEGLER (2017) AND FLOYD (2016) ALSO HONORED

Linda Bushinski and Kristi Kuntz, who went from standout high school softball players in Spokane in the mid-1980s to All-American women's major modified pitch players in the '90s, were inducted into the USA Softball Region 9 Hall of Fame on Feb. 10 in Spokane.

Their induction brings to 17 the number of Spokane men and women in the regional shrine.

After playing through the transition from slowpitch to modified pitch during their school days - Bushinski at Rogers, Kuntz at North Central after being classmates at Garry Middle School - they easily gravitated to the higher-level women's major modified played nationally and formed an instant championship partnership.

Seven times in an eight-year period (1995-2002) they led teams to top-three finishes in Amateur Softball Association national championship tournaments, including winning titles in 1998, '99 and 2002. During that span, they combined for eight first-team All-America honors, four second-teams and one third.

Bushinski earned five first-team honors, the 1999 award augmented by being named the tournament MVP while batting .700. The shortstop/outfielder also collected two second-team awards and only batted below .400 once - .397 - and four times hit .500 or above.

In 1999, she "doubled up," earning third-team All-America recognition in the Women's B Fastpitch National Championship tournament.

Kuntz collected three first-team awards, two seconds and one third, missing out in 2002 despite hitting .487 for the national champions. She led the tournament in hitting in 1998, batting .678, and hit .538 in 1996 and .444 in 1999, the '98 and '99 teams national champions. She primarily caught and played third base.



Linda Bushinski



Kristi Kuntz

They both also regularly played in women's fastpitch tournaments, earning all-star recognition. A fastpitch highlight was an appearance on a local all-star team that played an exhibition against the touring U.S. Women's Olympic team in 2008.

With women's modified and women's fastpitch nonexistent in our neighborhood, they continue to fuel their competitive drive in local adult slowpitch programs.

Kuntz was inducted into the Inland Empire Softball Hall of Fame in 2005 and both were in the initial class inducted into the Spokane Metro Softball Hall of Fame in 2013.

Vern Ziegler of Spokane, who sponsored some of the most dominant teams in men's fastpitch in the Northwest in the 1970s and '80s, was inducted into the Region 9 Hall of Fame in the Class of 2017.

His Ziegler's teams won six league championships from 1975-81, four Metro championships and finished in the top five in the Northwest Regional Tournament four consecutive years. He was inducted into the Inland Empire Softball Hall of Fame in 2009 and Ziegler's was selected the 1970s Men's Fastpitch Team of the Decade in 2013.

Tim Floyd, a four-time All-American (two first team), one-time MVP, twice a batting champion and once a home-run champion on the national stage in men's and coed major slowpitch, was inducted into the regional shrine in 2016.

In nine appearances, Floyd played on four national champions and on teams that had seven top-four finishes. In 1996, he was the batting champion and tournament MVP in leading Spaghetti Station of Spokane to a second national major coed championship in seven years.