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Press Release

## National Softball league to be set up in Britain

**April 6 - A new national softball league is to be set up in Britain this summer in an effort to try to help the sport regain its place in the Olympics for 2016, it was announced today.**

The new 15-team competition, which has secured sponsorship from Covee, the European softball equipment supplier, will be played over three tournaments starting in June, including the Windsor Tournament, the largest of its kind in Europe with 52 teams in a range of different formats.

All 15 teams will also compete in the Premier Nationals tournament being held in Reading this summer with the winners going on to represent the Britain in the European Championships next year.

Roger Grooms, the organiser of the League, said, "A lot of sports have been affected by the recession recently and the enthusiasm to get this competition going underlines how popular softball is in the UK."

Teams will include the Nottingham Arrows, London Legends, Manchester Marvals, Windsor Knights and Solent Mariners.

Grooms said: "Manchester, East Midlands, and Solent are putting in league composite teams as they see this as an excellent opportunity to develop younger players onto the adult scene and we have even allowed an Irish team, Munster, to take part, because they are keen to pit their wits against the best the UK has to offer.

"Softball has come on leaps and bounds in recent years and the support we have had to organise the National Softball League has been fantastic."

Softball is making major efforts to get back into the Olympic programme after being controversially cut from London 2012 by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) at its Session in Copenhagen nearly four years ago.

This latest development is designed to help the sport shed its image as being one played just in North America.

Don Porter, the president of the International Softball Federation (ISF), said, "Softball is continuing to become more and more professional and I am delighted that the UK softball scene is thriving so much.

"I understand that the organisers are planning to use the competition to get more involved in the community.

"Reaching out to young people and women in particular is something that is at the heart of the BackSoftball campaign for Olympic reinstatement."

Softball is one of seven sports hoping to gain election for 2016 when the IOC votes on it at its Session in Copenhagen in October.

The others are baseball, golf, karate, roller sports, rugby sevens and squash.

More details on the new League are available from [www.nationalsoftballleague.co.uk](http://www.nationalsoftballleague.co.uk).