



Oakdale Heat softball players work hard to chase and achieve their dreams

OAKDALE HEAT SECURES VETERAN HEAD COACHES

The Oakdale Heat fast pitch softball organization has had a tremendous year, and what started a couple of years ago as a single team comprised of local girls playing at tournaments close to home here in the Central Valley, has grown into a highly competitive organization hosting 10u, 12u, and 14u teams that travel outside the valley and state to go head-to-head with incredibly talented girls. In this undertaking to both encourage and meet this growth, the Heat has worked hard to secure coaches for each of these teams, and are pleased to announce that this season, Steve Drewrey will coach the 10u team, Kelly and Mike Olson will coach the 12u team, and Kevin Bricker will coach the 14u team.

As the 10u head coach, Steve Drewrey brings with him many years coaching experience. For over 20 years, Drewrey has coached and developed some of this area's top players. Specializing in pitching, Drewrey has helped many of his students achieve their goal of becoming a collegiate athlete. He has coached players on local high school teams, including members of the Oakdale High 2005, 2006, 2013 and 2014 squads, and Johansen High 2010. His travel ball experience (10u-18u Gold) includes many trips to national events in ASA, Triple Crown and PGF.

Kelly and Mike Olson will take charge of the 12u program. Long on experience as a softball player and coach, Kelly played at University of the Pacific, a Division I school, and in her sophomore season, played in the College World Series. She then transitioned into coaching, and in the past 15 years has coached 12u, 16u, and 18u gold level teams with many trips to National events. Olson spent many years with the California Grapettes during this time. Kelly and husband Mike also coached at Oakdale High School at both the junior varsity and varsity levels.

Kevin Bricker will be the head coach for the 14u team. For over 28 years, Bricker has been a competitor and team owner in the professional motorcycle racing industry. With success at winning several championships, he understands competition, hard work and dedication. In the past two years, he has changed gears and put his focus into competitive travel softball.

“With every tournament, every win, every loss, and every effort in between these past two years, the Oakdale Heat has become more and more competitive, and their winning percentage suggests they are on the right track,” Bricker said.

Recognizing that this is about more than just the game of softball and really an effort to make these young girls college and career ready by building a foundation needed to be successful in life, the goals of the Heat and its coaches are to recognize and empower the players, inspire them to work hard to achieve their goals, continually practice to improve their skillset, and encourage them to play every game to the best of their ability.

Bricker added that the Oakdale Heat would like to thank the community for its support, including Oakdale High School, Larry Loger, Steve Drewrey, Kelly Olson, Paul Hackbarth, and Mike Bye for all of their efforts and assistance.

“A special thanks also goes out to all the high school and college softball players that have made time to lend a hand, work with the girls, and be positive role models for them,” Bricker said. “I believe these top level coaches joining our program shows we are doing things the right way. We have a lot of great kids that live in Oakdale that play on teams all across the valley. Our goal is bring those kids back to Oakdale to play on top teams with great coaches right here in our hometown. We invite everyone to come out and see what we are all about.”