



2025 Opening Night is June 7th...!

The Stratford Brakettes and Junior Brakettes will open the 2025 season against each other on June 7th with a 6:00 pm doubleheader at Frank DeLuca Hall of Fame Field. Once again, all Brakettes games will be live video webcast on www.brakettes.com. Children are always admitted FREE... See you then!

2024 Brakettes Softball: The Year in Review

The Stratford Brakettes closed out their 2024 season with a 27-3 record and a runner-up finish in the 16th Annual Women's Major Softball (WMS) National Championship. Persistent rain cut the title game short with the Brakettes trailing the defending champion Central Jersey Lightning, 3-0. The Lightning also defeated the Brakettes 4-1 the day before in the Winner's Bracket semifinals.



2024 Stratford Brakettes

The Stratford Brakettes also advanced to the Championship of the Arlan Schwoyer Honorary Tourney in Lyons, PA on June 23rd. The Brakettes spun off four straight wins in two days against teams from Pennsylvania and Maryland to reach the final, but Team Virginia Mizuno captured the title with a hard-fought, 2-1 win. The decision served as Stratford's only loss prior to the WMS.

2024 Season Accolades

Kaitlyn Flood and Katie Sciglimpaglia were the heart of the Brakettes offense, and both played all 30 games. The pair battled for the 2024 Brakettes batting title until WMS final, with Kaitlyn's strong finish giving her the crown with a .427 mark.

Flood also launched four home runs (tied for team-high), while leading the Brakettes with 39 runs and 41 hits. Sciglimpaglia closed the campaign with a .414 avg., three HRs, and a team-leading 33 RBI. Lindsay Hoag batted .415 for the season with five doubles, two triples, a homer and 17 RBI.

Kylie Bulinski shared the home run crown with Flood and Sam Rogers with four apiece. Bulinski batted .348 with two doubles and 17 RBI, plus a team-high 15 BBs. Chelsea Villar batted .397 with three doubles, three triples, one HR, and 17 RBI.

Anna Gedacht led the Brakettes pitching staff with a 12-0 record. She struck out 75 and posted a 1.61 ERA. Kat Gallant finished 7-1 with a 1.08 ERA and struck out a whopping 121 batters in 65 innings.



2024 Junior Brakettes

The Junior Brakettes played well at the WMS before being eliminated on Sunday with an 8-2 loss to the Stratford Brakettes. The Juniors finished the tournament with a 2-2 record and in fourth place.

Molly Lennon led the Junior Brakettes with three home runs, 17 RBI, and 20 runs scored. She also roped four doubles and a triple, while batting .373.

Jill Guilfoyle posted a .562 mark with 29 hits, along with 15 RBI, 12 runs, and a team-high six doubles.

Lucia Ceccarelli's 32 hits led the Juniors, while posting four doubles, 15 RBI, and 12 runs. Morgan Tainter batted .364 with 14 RBI and 10 runs.

Emily Rerick led the Juniors' pitching staff with a 5-3 mark, while striking out 38. Lauren Wasikowski led the team with 45 K's in 36 innings pitched.

2024 WMS Awards

Brakettes pitchers Kat Gallant and Sophia DiCocco made the WMS All-Tourney Team, as did Chelsea Villar (OF), Kaitlyn Flood (UT) and Katie Sciglimpaglia (UT). Sciglimpaglia also won the Allyson Rioux Award for Best Defensive Player of the WMS, while Villar won the Diane Schumacher Batting Champion Award with a .529 average.

Jackie Pengel took home the 2024 Danni Kemp Sportsmanship Award for her comeback season, following a serious medical event the previous fall.

Four Juniors also captured WMS All-Tournament selections: Morgan Tainter (C), Jill Guilfoyle (1B), Molly Lennon (3B), and Lucia Ceccarelli (OF).

WMS Dates Set for 2025

The 17th Annual Women's Major Softball National Championship will be held July 31st - August 3rd. The Brakettes hope to capture their 13th WMS title and first since 2022. The Central Jersey Lightning will vie for a third straight crown, while Stripes & Strikes (PA) will return in hopes of claiming their first title. Stripes & Strikes finished second in 2022 and 2023 and were third in 2024. The Juniors will also enter a strong team in the 2025 WMS, with a solid core returning from last season. The Mid-Hudson Mustangs (NY) and several CT teams will return for the 2025 WMS. See you July 31st!!!

Offseason Notes: Hall of Fame Honors Abound

The 2024 Brakettes season ended in August, but the accolades deservingly continued for five former Brakettes and two beloved staff members last fall.

Former Brakette Kate Bowen and Brakette Staff Members Kathy and Harlan Gage were inducted into the Connecticut Scholastic & Collegiate Softball Hall of Fame on September 15th.

Kate Bowen, recently named head coach at SCSU, played for the Brakettes from 2011-2013. Kate starred at Newtown H.S. and Manhattan College. Bowen won three WMS titles with the Brakettes, batting .345, with six home runs and 104 RBI.

Kathy and Harlan Gage were inducted in the Hall of Fame's Honorary Category for their devoted work with the Brakettes and beyond. Kathy has served as the Brakettes photographer and player liaison since 2006. Kathy's work was pivotal in organizing the 2011 and 2016 Brakettes Reunions. Harlan created and launched the Brakettes' website (www.brakettes.com) in 2001 and has served as the webmaster for the club ever since. Harlan also oversees the Brakettes Archives and has run the websites for all WMS Tournaments since 2009.

Former Brakettes Kathy Arendsen and Barbara Clark were both inducted into the USA Softball of Connecticut Hall of Fame on October 19th.

Kathy Arendsen is the third-winningest pitcher in Brakettes history with a 337-26 record. Kathy threw 79 no-hitters, 42 perfect games, with 4,308 strikeouts. She was a 13-time ASA All-American in her Raybestos/Hi-Ho Brakettes career (1978-1992), winning nine ASA National titles and two ISF World titles. Arendsen was inducted into the National ASA Hall of Fame in 1996 and (ISF) International Softball Federation Hall of Fame in 2003.

Catcher Barbara Clark played for the Raybestos Brakettes from 1970 through 1978 and helped win an unprecedented eight straight ASA National Titles (1971-1978). Clark caught ASA National Hall of Famers Joan Joyce, Donna Lopiano, Barbara Reinalda and Kathy Arendsen with the Brakettes.

Former Stratford Brakettes Rachele Fico and Tatum Buckley were inducted into the Masuk High School (Monroe, CT) Athletic Hall of Fame October 10th.

Rachele Fico played for the Stratford Brakettes from 2008-2012 and posted a nearly untouchable 94-1 record in five seasons, leading the squad to three WMS Crowns and the 2012 FCI tournament title in Nevada. Fico was undefeated against amateur teams with the Brakettes, with the only loss coming in 2012 against the pro Akron Racers, who later selected Rachele #1 overall in the 2013 National Pro Fastpitch (NPF) Draft.

Tatum Buckley posted a 28-2 record in the circle over four seasons, while also starring in the middle infield. Tatum posted a career .357 batting average with 16 HRs and 99 RBI from 2014-2017 and was a vital part of three Brakettes' WMS title teams.

In Memoriam

The Brakettes would like to honor several members of our softball family that we lost since last season, including two long-time Brakettes super fans.

After Raybestos dropped the sponsorship of the men's fastpitch Cardinals in 1979, George Franklin stepped up to run the six-time ASA National Champs. Franklin sponsored the Cardinals from 1980 through 1984, after years with the Melrose (MA) Mets. Under his leadership, the Franklin Cardinals won the 1983 Men's ASA National title. George died on December 11th at 82.

Brakettes super fan Faith Buchino lived just behind home plate at Raybestos Memorial Field with her husband John and daughter, Michelina. The Buchinos were regulars during the Brakettes' glory days, and Faith continued to support the team until her passing on December 16th. As an Adopt-A Brakettes sponsor, Faith threw out the first pitch before a Brakettes game each year up until 2023, and every player loved her dearly.

Joyce Alber was a devoted Brakettes fan for over 50 years, alongside late husband Carl Alber. Joyce left us on January 29th at the age of 91. The Albers volunteered countless hours with Stratford Softball Tournaments, Inc. (SSTI), the group that brought ASA Nationals back to Stratford in the 1990's.

Brakettes Museum Update

The Brakettes staff have formed a Brakettes Museum Committee with help from Tom Chiappetta (Fairfield County Sports Hall of Fame & Youth Foundation), Ken Bruno (former Raybestos Cardinal/head of Bridgeport Boys and Girls Club), Bill O'Brien (Stratford Veterans Museum).

While fundraising for a permanent structure is ongoing, DeLuca Field will serve as a living museum on game days, with displays around the stadium. For more info on the Brakettes Museum and Connecticut Softball Hall of Fame, go to: <https://brakettes.com/museum.html>
The Stratford Brakettes are a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, and all donations are fully tax-deductible.

To donate to the Brakettes Museum Fund...

Checks can be made out to:

Brakettes Museum
185 Lordship Road
Stratford, CT 06615

Pay with **venmo** @Brakettes-Inc