

## Bridenstine joins Iowa Women's Softball League

Written by Jim Ecker

Tuesday, 25 April 2017 05:23 - Last Updated Thursday, 27 April 2017 12:06

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Audra Bridenstine, another talented member of the top-ranked Kirkwood softball team, has joined the new Iowa Women's Softball League that will begin next month.

Bridenstine, a shortstop from West Liberty High School, is the ninth player from Kirkwood to join the new program. She joins Taylor Nearad, Maddie Hansen, Lexi Kinnaird, Morgan Frost, Lexi Ferrari, DoniRae Mayhew, Monika Bevans and Morgan Kublik from Coach Joe Yegge's talented team.

Bridenstine is hitting .400 with two home runs and 33 RBIs for the Eagles. She has also solidified the left side of the infield after becoming the starting shortstop in mid-season.

Two former college softball players also have joined the program. Jessica Nearad, who played at Solon High School and the University of Dubuque, and Bethany Koskamp, who played at Kennedy High School and Central College, have accepted invitations to play.

[\(CLICK HERE TO REGISTER\)](#)

Jessica Nearad is the older sister of Taylor Nearad, who was honored as the Junior College National Player of the Year last season. Jessica Nearad hit .377 during the 2011 season at Dubuque and twice was named to the all-conference team in the Iowa Conference.

Koskamp earned five varsity letters during her career with the Kennedy Cougars. She served as a team captain at Central College and was named the Most Inspirational Player for the Dutch.

There are now 43 players in the Iowa Women's Softball League. The goal is to have at least 48 players and 12 per team.

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The Iowa Women's Softball League has been formed by the Metro Sports Report as the only summer collegiate fast-pitch softball league in Iowa.

All told, 21 different colleges have at least one player in the league. The list includes Kirkwood, UNI, Coe, Mount Mercy, Luther, Wartburg, Waldorf, Illinois State, Indian Hills, Loras, South Dakota State, Upper Iowa, DMACC, Western Illinois, Southeastern Community College, Indiana State, Ellsworth, Webster, Western Kentucky, Dubuque and Central.

Kirkwood has the most players in the program with nine. There are five players from UNI and four from Coe.

In addition, the 43 players hail from 32 different high schools. Solon leads the way with five former Spartans in the program and Kennedy has four graduates in the league.

The season will consist of 10 doubleheaders on Sunday afternoons, beginning on Sunday, May 28 and running through Sunday, July 30. All of the games will be played at Kirkwood Community College and Coe College in Cedar Rapids, beginning at 2 p.m. each day.

Here are the 43 players who have joined so far:

1. Erin Kuba, Indian Hills (CR Jefferson)
2. Peyton Baskerville, Mount Mercy (CR Kennedy)
3. Tianna Drahm, Northern Iowa (CR Kennedy)
4. Lexi Kinnaird, Kirkwood (Clear Creek Amana)
5. Maddy Ryan, Coe (Linn-Mar)
6. Mallory McArtor, Coe (Mid-Prairie)
7. Taylor Nearad, Kirkwood (Solon)
8. Bria Lenten, Loras (CR Washington)
9. Tawny Menster, Mount Mercy (Anamosa)
10. Maddie Hansen, Kirkwood (CR Jefferson)
11. Megan Bonnett, Luther (IC Regina)
12. Morgan Frost, Kirkwood (Don Bosco)
13. Taylor Kurtz, Waldorf (Mid-Prairie)

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14. Haley Jones, Coe (Waterloo West)
15. Morgan Goedken, Wartburg (IC Regina)
16. Alyssa Wiebel, Illinois State (Benton)
17. Monika Bevans, Kirkwood (Solon)
18. Ali Herdliska, South Dakota State (Solon)
19. Erin Drahozal, Upper Iowa (Xavier)
20. Emily Ira, Western Illinois (Solon)
21. Sydney Robertson, DMACC (Vinton-Shellsburg)
22. Lexi Ferrari, Kirkwood (Alleman Catholic)
23. DoniRae Mayhew, Kirkwood (Bettendorf)
24. Morgan Christner, Illinois State (New London)
25. Paige Timmerman, Luther (CR Kennedy)
26. Megan Kublik, Kirkwood (Wilton)
27. Morgan Smith, Southeastern CC (Davenport North)
28. Gabi Carter, Indiana State (Kirkwood/CR Prairie)
29. Taylor Bell, Waldorf (Madrid)
30. Brittney Roby, UNI (DMACC/Twin Cedars)
31. Brooke Craig, UNI (Waterloo Columbus)
32. Abbie Young, Ellsworth (AGWSR)
33. Hannah Onken, Wartburg (Greene County)
34. Kasiah Ehresman, Coe (Lynnville-Sully)
35. Bradi Yost, Ellsworth (Aplington-Parkersburg)
36. Jaclyn Spencer, UNI (Waterloo West)
37. Chelsea Thornley, Webster University (Clinton, Mo.)
38. Adara Opiola, UNI (Iowa City West)
39. Marissa Promes, Indian Hills (Greene County)
40. Kelsey Aikey, Western Kentucky (Waverly-Shell Rock)
41. Audra Bridenstine, Kirkwood (West Liberty)
42. Jessica Nearad, ex-Dubuque (Solon)
43. Bethany Koskamp, ex-Central (Kennedy)

Anyone interested in joining the league is strongly encouraged to register now and reserve a spot, even if they have not finalized their plans for this summer. The \$100 player fee will be refunded if they are unable to play, with no questions asked.

The entire registration process can be handled on-line. Simply click on the link to the registration form that appears with this story.

The Metro Sports Report hopes all players will attend all the games, but the company will certainly understand if a player needs to miss a few games due to a job commitment, family

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function, vacation or any other reason.

The league will use a continuous batting order with free defensive substitution, to make sure the playing time is as equal as possible for everyone.

Please contact Metro Sports Report president Jim Ecker for more information at [Jim.Ecker@MetroSportsReport.com](mailto:Jim.Ecker@MetroSportsReport.com) or by calling (319) 390-4236.

Scholarships are available. All anyone has to do is ask.