

Ray Petty wanted me to reach out to you about Wheelchair Sports in schools and Universities. My name is John Teegarden and I've been involved in adaptive athletics for the last 10 years. Playing basketball and softball. During this time I've had the opportunity to recruit several players and have seen first hand the difference these sports makes in there lives. Instead of sitting on the sidelines watching others play they are in the game and often times playing at a very high level. I have also been blessed to be selected to the National Wheelchair Softball Associations first ever Team USA and we'll be competing in Japan this Summer.

I'm sure you'll be hearing a lot about Wheelchair Basketball so I'm going to tell you about Wheelchair Softball.

- The National Wheelchair Softball Association (NWSA) was created 40 years ago to help people with mobility impairments participate in America's favorite pastime, softball.
- Today there are nearly 30 adult teams and growing worldwide including one right here in Kansas City
- Several teams have sought and found allegiance and sponsorship with their Major League Baseball (MLB) team counterparts, such as the Boston Red Sox, Chicago Cubs, Minnesota Twins, New York Mets, and Tampa Bay Rays. All wear official MLB logos and uniforms and compete with pride under their respective professional team's logo. Kansas City would like to form such and allegiance with the Royals.
- Many of these 30 teams have adaptive fields to practice on. Here in our area we have one of these ball fields in Topeka where the Kansas City Diamond has been practicing the last several years.
- The city of Kansas City, Missouri is also building an adaptive field that is scheduled to be complete in 2017
- There are also 8 -10 junior teams and growing

Having the schools and universities more involved will not only help grow the sport but give more people the opportunity to get involved in adaptive athletics. And that opportunity makes a huge difference in their lives.

Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

John Teegarden
Recreation Council of Greater Kansas City
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