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### **USSSA Pride Announce the Signing of Natasha Watley**

Kissimmee, Fla. - The USSSA Florida Pride, a member of the Women's National Professional Fastpitch League (NPF), announced today that they have signed former Olympic Gold (2004) and Silver (2008) medalist Natasha Watley as a new addition to the Pride's 2010 roster.

She will be joining fellow Team USA members Jessica Mendoza and Lauren Lappin, also recent signees to the Pride for the 2010 season. The three are welcome additions to a team which already features former Olympians and Team USA members Monica Abbott, Kelly Kretschman, and Caitlin Lowe, as well as recently signed Katie Burkhart, formerly of Arizona State University and the NPF's Philadelphia Force.

During the 2004 Olympics, Watley assisted the USA Softball Team to their third consecutive gold medal in Athens by breaking the Olympic record for stolen bases and was third on the team with a .400 batting average, with 9 hits and 10 RBI. During the 2008 Olympics, Watley brought home a silver medal after hitting .321 in the leadoff position with two home runs and six RBI. Internationally, Watley is a two-time Pan-American Gold Medalist (2003 & 2007), two time World Champion (2002 & 2006), and three time World Cup Champion (2006, 2007, & 2009).

Watley is a current member of Team Toyota in the Japan Softball League, continuing an international career she began in 2009. Watley joins the USSSA Pride as a continuation of her NPF career. She was a member of the Philadelphia Force during the 2006 season and prior to that was a member of the New York/New Jersey Juggernaut in 2005.

"I'm so excited to be continuing my professional career with the USSSA Pride," said Watley. "I'm looking forward to an exciting season and the chance to compete with and against some talented athletes"

Not only is Watley a committed and talented athlete, she has taken her success and translated it into an opportunity to help others in her community through the development of the Natasha Watley Foundation. Established to create opportunities for girls in underserved communities to learn and play the game of softball, the NWF uses the medium of sport to inspire young women to reach their full potential while fostering character development and awareness of social issues that affect women. The NWF focuses on several key concepts including confidence development, women's health,

social issues, and what the foundation refers to as the “4 Points of the Diamond,” core values as defined by the NWF of discipline, dedication, dignity, and duty.

"It has been a blessing starting my non-profit," said Watley. "Now I have the platform to share my experiences as well as provide opportunities to young women who may not have the resources"

The Pride's 2010 season will kick off June 9<sup>th</sup> in Lubbock, Tex. when the team faces the Chicago Bandits at the stadium of the Texas Tech Red Raiders. The opening game is scheduled to begin at 7:05 p.m. local time. For more information on the Pride, visit [www.usssapride.com](http://www.usssapride.com).

USSSA is headquartered in Kissimmee, Fla. Offering over 13 primary sports programs, including baseball, slow pitch and fastpitch softball and basketball, USSSA has over 3.7 million participants nationwide and is recognized as the nation's largest multi-sport athletic association.

National Pro Fastpitch is headquartered in Nashville, TN. The League, created to give elite female fastpitch players the opportunity to pursue a professional career in their chosen sport, has operated since 1997 under the names of Women's Pro Fastpitch (WPF) and Women's Pro Softball League (WPSL).

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