

## **Documents for the Record**

Energy and Commerce Committee

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

1. Griffith – Competitor League No SafeSport Ad
2. Griffith - Colorado No Safe Sport Advertisement
3. Duncan – NYT Article, *An American Paralympian Says He Was Sexually Abused by a Teammate*



## USA Fastpitch Town Hall Q&A

### QUESTION



### ANSWER

Q1. Why was there such a mad dash to get registrations completed on the new site, especially considering USA Fastpitch is a separate entity and the logos/names were so close, it was confusing ?

There is always a large push to get your registrations completed by Nik and Caitlan. These open in September and really should be completed before the season starts, but that's often not the case and we are always flagging folks down to complete it. If we are understanding your question, it's alluding to the idea that you were mislead. Up until Nik's retirement on February 6th, we were still USA Softball. Everything was branded as such, we were still sanctioning with them and flying their banner. You WERE registering with USA Softball at that time. We informed you when that changed. We already talked about how we were sorry regarding our timing for informing you of the change. We didn't get it out soon enough to keep you informed.

In terms of the website changes as discussed early in the meeting, USA Softball National office are the ones who decided to shut down the old tournament sites. The migration to a new site would have happened regardless who the Commissioner was and Nik's decision to retire. The old tournament website doesn't work any longer, feel free to check it out. It takes you to a landing page for tourney machine, the link to view older tournaments breaks when you click on it, and not all states will have their website there due to deciding on other platforms as well. There are about 7 other associations currently using RegisterPlay.

Q2. How do we get background checks for our coaches, before their was a link, we paid, and received confirmation when they were complete? Safesport isn't necessary for registration any longer with USA Fastpitch?

Any way you choose. You can use an existing background check for your job, from another organization, or you can complete one from any service provider. There are several online providers to complete these.

Q3. What will the time limits be?

That's correct, we no longer require SafeSport or ACE. We highly recommend them and will continue reporting to them as necessary. You all should continue reporting to them as well. Please remember that if you expect criminal activity of any kind, go to the cops.

Business as usual and we're the only one that offer this, 1:25 finish the inning. Depending on how early in the spring and the whether the fields have lights, we'll go 1:15 finish the inning, but that's standard procedure early spring.



3. **Roster for that tournament** - (Rosters must be entered online by 5pm the Friday before your tournament or turn in a paper roster at checkin. Click here for paper roster:



4. **SAFESPORT IS NOT REQUIRED FOR DIAMOND CLASSIC EVENTS.**

Special playing requests will be considered but not guaranteed

- Request \_\_\_\_\_ time registration
- Game time requests only
- Game times are posted around 1PM on Thursday prior to the tournament
- ALL TEAMS SHOULD HAVE A COPY OF EACH PLAYERS' BIRTH CERTIFICATE IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST BY TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR. FAILURE TO SHOW PROOF OF AGE UPON REQUEST WILL RESULT IN PLAYER TO BE EJECTED FROM TOURNAMENT AND GAME FORFEITURE.

## 2023/2024 TEAM FEES



If you purchased a team package prior to 8/31/23, those fees will be good through 11/30/23



# *An American Paralympian Says He Was Sexually Abused by a Teammate*

Parker Egbert, 19, said in a lawsuit that he was repeatedly assaulted by a fellow swimmer at the Tokyo Paralympics and a training center in Colorado.



By Jenny Vrentas

Nov. 14, 2022

An American Paralympic swimmer accused a teammate of sexually abusing him while training and competing for the national team, according to a lawsuit filed in federal court in Colorado, bringing new scrutiny to both the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee and the U.S. Center for SafeSport, a nonprofit organization created to address allegations of sexual abuse of athletes in Olympic sports.

Parker Egbert, a 19-year-old with autism and an intellectual disability, said in a complaint filed on Friday that he was violently and repeatedly raped by Robert Griswold, a two-time Paralympic gold medalist, during the Tokyo Paralympics in 2021 and at the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Training Center in Colorado Springs.

Egbert, who is named in his lawsuit and in a statement from his lawyers, is also suing the U.S.O.P.C. and SafeSport for negligence, claiming they failed to protect him from Griswold, who had been the subject of a previous complaint of misconduct to SafeSport in 2020. Griswold, who has cerebral palsy, had unsupervised access to Egbert as his roommate in the Olympic Village and was assigned by the U.S.O.P.C. to be Egbert's "supervisor" in Tokyo, the suit says.

"This case is a horrific tragedy, where a young man who defied all odds to become a world-class Paralympic swimmer had his life utterly shattered by rape and abuse when he was paired with a team member who was a violent sexual predator," the

complaint reads.

Griswold, 25, did not respond to a message seeking comment. In a statement, the U.S.O.P.C. said that the accusations of sexual abuse in Egbert's lawsuit are "extremely concerning" and that, in response, it placed two staff members on administrative leave and terminated several contractors working with U.S. Paralympics Swimming, which the U.S.O.P.C. manages.

"We're also continuing our investigation of the allegations to help us determine the facts," the U.S.O.P.C. said, referring to Friday's suit, "and we are committed to taking appropriate action."

SafeSport's public disciplinary database indicated that Griswold has been temporarily suspended for allegations of misconduct, prohibiting him from practicing or competing at any event or facility under the U.S.O.P.C. or a national sports governing body while he is being investigated by SafeSport. The temporary ban came on Aug. 23, two days after Egbert's lawsuit says he told his parents that Griswold had sexually abused him.

A spokesperson for SafeSport said the organization does not comment on open investigations.

Egbert's lawsuit comes amid increased criticism of the U.S.O.P.C. and sports governing bodies for failing to keep athletes safe. Last year, hundreds of former gymnasts who were sexually abused by Lawrence G. Nassar, the former physician for the American gymnastics team, reached a \$380 million settlement with the U.S.O.P.C. and U.S.A. Gymnastics. Given this recent history, one of Egbert's lawyers, Frank Salzano, called it "unfathomable" that this happened under the U.S.O.P.C.'s watch.

Egbert has the mental capacity of a 5-year-old, according to court filings, and began swimming as an adolescent as a form of therapy. He was a standout high school swimmer in South Carolina and performed well enough at the June 2021 U.S. Paralympic trials to earn a spot on the national team.

During the trials, according to the lawsuit, Griswold began “purposely and maliciously” grooming Egbert, who was vulnerable because of his intellectual disability and physical limitations. Griswold began sexually assaulting Egbert in Tokyo and continued after Egbert moved into the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Training Center in January 2022, the suit says.

The complaint also says that Egbert’s parents were rebuffed when they raised concerns with the U.S.O.P.C. throughout 2022 about changes in their son’s behavior while living at the training center: He lost weight, had uncontrollable bowel movements and no longer wanted to take showers. He also wrote a story about a group of friends who defeated “Hurricane Robert.” Egbert told his parents that this represented Griswold, who he said been verbally and physically abusive toward him.

On Aug. 21, Egbert told his parents that Griswold had sexually abused him and said that Griswold told him he would get in trouble if he told anyone, the suit says.

A U.S.O.P.C. spokesperson said the organization learned of the accusations of sexual abuse against Griswold from Egbert’s mother that same day, called police and SafeSport, immediately removed Griswold from the training center, and suspended him from the national team. A public information officer for the Colorado Springs Police Department confirmed there is an open investigation related to the claims in Egbert’s lawsuit.

The specific details of the prior complaint made against Griswold are not fully known. In September 2020, Griswold was listed in SafeSport’s disciplinary database as having temporary restrictions for allegations of misconduct, which could cover a range of degrees of physical, emotional or sexual abuse. One month later, SafeSport confirmed Griswold’s eligibility to compete at the Paralympic Games, the U.S.O.P.C. said.

The Egberts declined an interview request through their lawyers. According to the lawsuit, Parker Egbert is continuing to deal with the aftermath of the assaults and no longer feels safe training with or competing for the U.S.O.P.C.

“Now, swimming, the thing that gave him so much joy, is a source of terror,” said Elizabeth A. Kramer, another of Egbert’s lawyers. “We hope to get him some measure of justice for the nightmare he is enduring.”

**Jenny Vrentas** is a sports reporter, working on enterprise and investigations. Prior to joining The Times she was a senior writer at Sports Illustrated, covering the N.F.L. [More about Jenny Vrentas](#)

A version of this article appears in print on , Section B, Page 9 of the New York edition with the headline: U.S. Paralympian Says a Teammate Sexually Abused Him