

Denny Hocking Named USA Baseball 18U National Team Manager

Hocking will lead Team USA at this summer's WBSC U-18 Baseball World Cup in Bradenton and Sarasota, Florida

CARY, NC, USA, January 20, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- USA Baseball today named Denny Hocking the manager of the 2022 18U National Team. Hocking will lead Team USA as it competes for the program's fifth world championship since 2012 at the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) U-18 Baseball World Cup 2021 in Bradenton and Sarasota, Florida. The U-18 World Cup is scheduled for September 9-18 after being postponed in 2021 due to the pandemic.

Hocking will join MLB Network's Hot Stove program co-hosted by Matt Vasgersian and Harold Reynolds this Friday, January 21, at 9:00 a.m. ET to discuss the 18U National Team program, its identification process, the World Cup, and more.

"We could not be more excited to have Denny Hocking leading the 18U National Team as we strive to win a world championship on our home soil this year," 18U National Team General Manager Ashley Bratcher said. "Denny brings a wealth of experience and knowledge from all levels of the game



Denny Hocking to manage Team USA in U-18 Baseball World Cup



USA Baseball 18U National Team

that will prove invaluable to the program and its athletes. We are confident that his passion, character, and leadership will guide Team USA to incredible success in 2022, and we look forward to getting started.”

“I am extremely honored and blessed to have such an incredible opportunity to manage this year’s 18U National Team,” said Hocking. “Being trusted with the responsibility to lead these young men on American soil as we compete for a gold medal is something I cherish and value as an opportunity of a lifetime. I was overwhelmed by the talent level on the field in 2021 and we think this year has the potential to exceed that, so I am excited to get started as we prepare to bring home another world championship.”

Hocking will make his Team USA managerial debut in 2022 with the 18U National Team, bringing 13 years of major league playing experience to the role. He was a 52nd round draft pick in the 1989 MLB Draft by the Minnesota Twins, where he spent 11 of his 13 professional seasons. Hocking made his big-league debut in 1993 and played in 84 games over his first four seasons with the Twins before getting his first extended playing time in 1997, appearing in 115 games and batting .257. He was a staple with the Twins for the following six seasons, recording his best showing in 2000 when he batted .298 with four home runs and a career-high 47 RBIs. He then spent time with the Colorado Rockies before playing his final professional season with the Kansas City Royals in 2005. Throughout his career, Hocking served as a utility player, playing every position besides catcher and pitcher.

Following his playing career, Hocking spent time as an analyst and reporter for MLB.com and Fox Sports Radio before turning his attention to coaching. He began his career as the hitting coach for the Single-A Frederick Keys in 2010 before joining the Double-A Bowie Baysox in 2012. Hocking made his professional managerial debut in 2014, leading the Los Angeles Angels' then-Class-A Advanced affiliate Inland Empire 66ers to the second round of the California League playoffs. He has also been a minor league infield coordinator and had three more stints as a minor league manager over the course of his career, most recently with the Single-A Modesto Nuts.

In 2021, Hocking served as a manager at the Prospect Development Pipeline (PDP) League and the 18U National Team Trials. Under his guidance, Team Navy led the PDP League in batting average over the six-game tournament. He then guided the Stars to a 3-1 series victory over the Stripes at the 2021 18U Trials. The squad’s offense outscored the Stripes 17-9 over four games while the pitching staff tallied a 1.86 ERA and 40 strikeouts.

The 2022 PDP League will once again serve as the primary identification event for the 18U National Team Trials. The PDP League is an invitation-based development and assessment opportunity for high school players eligible for the following year’s MLB Draft. It provides athletes with an unprecedented amateur experience, including competitive gameplay, player development sessions, educational seminars, and other programming to prepare players for a professional baseball career. The 2022 PDP League is scheduled to take place June 29-July 6 at

the USA Baseball National Training Complex in Cary, North Carolina.

18U National Team Trials will take place August 29-September 2 in Florida. The final 20-man 18U National Team roster will be announced following Trials and the team will remain in Florida for training from September 3-8 before taking part in the WBSC U-18 Baseball World Cup. The U-18 Baseball World Cup will be hosted by the U.S. for the first time since 1995 in Bradenton and Sarasota, Florida, from September 9-18.

From 2011-2018, the 18U National Team program won eight consecutive international tournament titles, including winning four straight WBSC U-18 Baseball World Cups in 2012, 2013, 2015, and 2017. Currently the U.S. and Cuba are the only two countries to win four consecutive world championship titles at the U-18 level. In total, the program has won eight world championships. Most recently, the stars and stripes earned the silver medal at the 2019 WBSC U-18 Baseball World Cup in Gijang, South Korea before the 2021 squad went 5-1-1 in a seven-game friendship series against Canada.

The rest of the 2022 18U National Team staff, as well as more information about the 2022 18U National Team schedule, will be announced at a later date.

For the most up-to-date information on the 18U National Team, be sure to follow @USABaseball18U and @USABaseball on Twitter.

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