



Liberty Softball Chronology

1971

Lynchburg Baptist College was founded by Dr. Jerry Falwell, pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church.

1972

Lynchburg Baptist gained affiliation with the National Christian Collegiate Athletic Association.

1975

Lynchburg Baptist College was renamed Liberty Baptist College with the school colors changing from green and gold to red, white and blue. The Flames joined the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics as an associate member.

1979

Liberty fielded its first softball team, coached by Duke Barnes. The team finished the season with an 8-10 record.

1980

Liberty joined the NCAA at the Division II level as an associate member. Barbara Dearing was named Liberty Baptist College's second softball coach.

1981

Liberty joined the NCAA at the Division II level and became eligible for NAIA postseason competition. Liberty posted an 18-16 record, the first winning season in the softball program's history.

1984

Liberty dropped its NAIA membership and became eligible for NCAA Division II postseason participation. Liberty posted its first 20-win season, as the team finished with a 28-12 record.

1985

Liberty Baptist College became Liberty University.

May 1985

Mike Goad was named Liberty University's third softball coach.

1986

Liberty finished the year with the program's first 30-win season, as the team posted a 30-13 record. At year's end, Liberty University disbanded the softball program.

September 1, 1988

All of Liberty's athletic programs moved to the NCAA Division I level.

July 1, 1991

Liberty became an official member of the Big South Conference.

April 1993

Liberty reinstated the Lady Flames softball program. Paul Wetmore was named Liberty's fourth softball coach.

March 4, 1994

Liberty played its first game at the Liberty Softball Field. The Lady Flames hosted George Mason, marking the program's first game in eight years.

April 1994

Pitcher Susan (Rhodes) Naylor was invited to tryouts for the 1996 U.S. Olympic softball team.

April 1995

Alycia Stevens became the first Lady Flame to be selected to the Big South all-conference first team. Paula Smith became the first Lady Flame to be selected to a Big South's all-tournament team.

May 1996

Stacy Radulovich was selected the Big South Co-Rookie of the Year. Paul Wetmore was named Big South Co-Coach of the Year. Wetmore was also selected as the VaSID Coach of the Year.

May 1997

Paul Wetmore received the VaSID Coach of the Year honor for the second-consecutive year. Shannon Tanski was selected VaSID Player of the Year. Libi Cook and Tanski also became the first Lady Flames to receive ECAC honors as Tanski was selected to the All-Star first team and Cook was selected to the second team. Sonja Keith was named to the GTE/CoSIDA Academic District III All-American team.

May 1998

Liberty played in the championship game of the Big South Conference Tournament for the first time, losing, 2-1, to Coastal Carolina. Katie Phillips was selected as the Big South Tournament Co-MVP. Stacy Radulovich was selected VaSID Player of the Year. Paul Wetmore received his third-consecutive VaSID Coach of the Year award. Sonja Keith and Radulovich were named to the GTE/CoSIDA Academic District III All-American team.

May 1999

The Lady Flames finished the season with a 41-25 record, marking the program's first-ever 40-win season. Head Coach Paul Wetmore was honored as Big South Coach of the Year after leading his squad to an 11-3 record and a share of the conference's regular-season championship. Sonja Keith received her third-consecutive selection to the GTE/CoSIDA Academic District III All-American team.

May 2000

The Lady Flames finished the conference season with a 9-1 record, winning their second straight regular season title. The team entered the tournament as the No. 1 seed for the first time in school history. Liberty made a clean sweep of the regular season awards as Meredith Hollyfield was named Big South Player of the Year, while Cheryl Wyrick was named Co-Rookie of the Year and Paul Wetmore was named Co-Coach of the Year. The Lady Flames made their second-ever Big South Tournament championship game appearance, but dropped consecutive extra-inning games to champions Coastal Carolina. Hollyfield was also honored as the VaSID Player of the Year and was named to the Louisville Slugger Southeast all-region second team.

September 2000

Liberty finished eighth in the nation in the NFCA/Disney's Wide World of Sports Complex All-Academic Division I team as the squad accumulated a collective 3.326 GPA during the 1999-2000 season.

May 12, 2002

Liberty won its first-ever Big South Softball Championship as the fifth-seeded Lady Flames posted four-consecutive upset victories, including a 1-0 victory over host Winthrop in the championship game. Ali Thompson was named tournament MVP after posting two victories and a save in the tournament.

May 16, 2002

Liberty made its first-ever appearance at an NCAA Regional Championship as they faced UCLA, the nation's top-ranked team at the time, losing to the Bruins, 3-0, in the first game of the double-elimination event. Later that evening, Liberty fell to UMBC, 7-1, and was eliminated from the NCAA Regional.

May 8, 2003

Ali Thompson became the first player in school history to surpass the 200-strikeout mark in a season as she recorded her 200th strikeout against Texas A&M Corpus Christi in the first game of the 2003 Big South Softball Championship. Thompson finished the year with a school-record 218 strikeouts.

May 2004

Amanda Maska became the second player in school history to be named Big South Player of the Year. Later on the during the month, Maska became the fourth player in school history to be named VaSID Player of the Year, while also being named to the Louisville Slugger Southeast all-region second team.

March 15, 2005

Liberty defeated No. 25 Texas A&M Corpus Christi in Rock Hill, S.C., to mark the program's first-ever win against a nationally-ranked opponent.

May 2005

Jessica Moore became the third player in school history to be named Big South Player of the Year, while later in the month, Moore was named to the Louisville Slugger all-Southeast region second team. Moore finished the season with a then-school-record 18 home runs which ranked seventh in the nation in home runs per game.

January 24, 2006

Jessica Moore was named the 2006 Big South Preseason Player of the Year, becoming the first Lady Flame to earn conference preseason Player of the Year honors.

May 5, 2006

Liberty swept No. 24 Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Va., 6-5 and 3-0, marking the program's first-ever doubleheader sweep over a nationally-ranked opponent.

May 2006

The Lady Flames finished the season with a 41-23 record, tying the 1999 squad for the most wins in a season and setting a new mark for season winning percentage (.641).

June 7, 2006

Jessica Moore, who finished the season ranked second in the nation in runs scored, was named VaSID Player of the Year to become the fifth player in school history to garner the award. Head Coach Paul Wetmore was named VaSID Coach of the Year, marking the fourth time he has been named the Commonwealth's best coach.

January 25, 2007

Jessica Moore was named the Big South Preseason Player of the Year for the second-consecutive year.

March 16, 2007

Liberty shut out No. 10 Baylor, 4-0, at the Bank of Hawaii Invitational in Honolulu, Hawaii, marking the program's first-ever win against a Top 10 nationally ranked opponent.

March 24, 2007

Liberty shutout No. 6 Michigan, the 2005 NCAA national champions, 2-0, at the Women4Women Invitational in Louisville, Ky., marking the highest-ranked opponent the program has defeated and third highest in athletics department history.

May 9, 2007

Jessica Moore was named the Big South Player of the Year, becoming the first player in program history to garner the honor twice during a career.

May 15, 2007

Liberty University Founder and Chancellor Dr. Jerry Falwell went home to be with the Lord, as he passed away at the age of 73. Seven days later, a funeral service was held at Thomas Road Baptist Church with 10 Liberty University student-athletes serving as honorary pallbearers, reflecting on Dr. Falwell's love for athletics.

June 3, 2007

Liberty softball received its first All-American when Jessica Moore was voted to the Easton Sports All-America second team.

June 7, 2007

Jessica Moore was named the VaSID Player of the Year, becoming the first player in program history to garner the honor twice during a career.

April 4, 2008

Liberty defeated Big South foe Birmingham-Southern, giving head coach Paul Wetmore his 400th career victory. By reaching the mark, Wetmore became the 89th coach in NCAA softball history to reach 400 career victories.

May 7, 2008

Ashley Williams was named to the Big South second-team all-conference team for the fourth consecutive season, making the catcher/designated player the first student-athlete in program history to garner all-conference honors four straight years.

May 12, 2010

Tiffani Smith became the first Lady Flame in history to be named the Big South Pitcher of the Year, while Kat Johnson became the third Liberty player in history to earn Big South Freshman of the Year honors (she was the co-freshman of the year along with Coastal Carolina's Jazmin Daigle).

May 20, 2010

Tiffani Smith earned Louisville Slugger NFCA All-Region second team honors, the first Liberty pitcher to do so.

April 20, 2011

The Lady Flames defeated Norfolk State, 7-1, earning Head Coach Paul Wetmore his 500th career win. Coach Wetmore became the first Liberty coach in any sport with 500 triumphs and third Big South softball coach all-time with 500 wins.

May 11, 2011

Junior second baseman Kelly Strickland earned Big South Co-Player of the Year, splitting the award with Radford's Nichole Beall. Strickland became the fourth Liberty softball player to be named Big South Player of the Year.

May 14, 2011

Liberty claimed its second Big South Championship, downing Radford, 3-1, on a nationally-televised (ESPNU) broadcast. The Lady Flames posted four straight wins to claim the championship. Senior pitcher Tiffani Smith was named tournament MVP, pitching a no-hitter against Winthrop in the semifinal and posting a 2-0 record.

May 20, 2011

Senior Ashley Bensinger and junior Kelly Strickland were both named to the Louisville Slugger/NFCA Division I All-Region second team.

May 20-21, 2011

The Lady Flames competed in their second NCAA Regional Tournament all-time, drawing the difficult Knoxville Regional with three top-20 programs (Tennessee, Georgia Tech, Oklahoma State). Liberty fell to No. 5 Tennessee, 8-0, in the opening game before dropping a tight, 4-3 contest to No. 19 Georgia Tech.

June 8, 2011

Kelly Strickland named to Easton Fastpitch All-America third-team, becoming the second softball player in program history to earn All-America honors.

May 9-10, 2013

Sixth-seeded Liberty upsets No. 3 seed Longwood, 5-3, to open the 2013 Big South Softball Championship. That win served as the final win in the 20-year coaching career of Head Coach Paul Wetmore. Coach Wetmore retired with 547 career victories, the most by any coach in Liberty athletics department history. He led the team to a pair of Big South Softball Championships and NCAA Regional appearances (2002 and 2011) and Big South regular-season titles in 1999, 2000 and 2007. A three-time Big South Coach of the Year (1996, 1999 and 2000), he was named VaSID State Coach of the Year in 1996, 1997, 1998 and 2006.

May 16, 2013

Junior Katie Zavodny was named to the 2013 NFCA Division I All-Region first team, while classmate Sammi Shivock was voted to the All-Region second team.

July 17, 2013

Dot Richardson, two-time Olympic softball gold medalist for Team USA, was named the fifth head coach in the history of the Liberty softball program. One of the most decorated collegiate, national and international players in softball history, she helped Team USA win Olympic gold in 1996 and Sydney in 2000. Internationally, she helped her team win fine Pan American Game gold medals and four World Championship gold medals. Collegiately, she was a five-time All-American, with one year at Western Illinois and three years at UCLA. Among many honors, she was named the 1980's NCAA Player of the Decade.

April 24, 2014

Liberty splits a home doubleheader with ETSU, the last home games ever played at Liberty Softball Field. The Lady Flames finished with a 206-178 all-time record at the facility.

May 22, 2014

Junior second baseman Megan Robinson was voted to the Capital One Academic All-America third team, becoming the first Academic All-American in program history. She held a 4.0 GPA throughout her time at Liberty, was earned Big South All-Conference first team honors in 2014.

June 4, 2014

Liberty placed six players on the Big South All-Decade Softball teams. Pitcher Katie Phillips, along with catcher Shannon Tanski and outfielder Stacy Radulovich, were voted to the 1990-99 All-Decade Team. The Lady Flames were represented by infielders Meredith Hollyfield and Jessica Moore, along with catcher Amanda Maska, on the 2000-09 squad.

March 19, 2015

The Lady Flames downed Rider, 9-2, in the first-ever game at the brand-new 1,000-seat Liberty Softball Stadium. The new stadium features an artificial turf outfield and synthetic dirt infield. Additional amenities include, home, visitor and umpires' locker rooms, home and visiting radio booths, a TV booth, a large press box, video board, expansive athletic training room, team meeting room, situation room and indoor batting cages.

April 3, 2015

Liberty officially dedicates its new facility prior to the Lady Flames' doubleheader against Presbyterian. A pregame ceremony took place, as former Liberty Head Coach Paul Wetmore provided the invocation. Liberty President Jerry Falwell, along with current Head Coach Dot Richardson, threw out the ceremonial first pitches. Becki Falwell and Liberty Director of Athletics Jeff Barber were also a part of the ceremony. The highlight of the pre-game ceremony was the announcement of naming rights of the field, which is called Kamphuis Field at Liberty Softball Stadium. Dwayne Kamphuis, a financial supporter of Liberty and the softball program, is a legendary fast pitch softball player.

May 6, 2015

Alexia Taylor was voted Big South Freshman of the Year, the fourth Liberty player all-time to earn Big South Rookie/Freshman of the Year. Senior Megan Robinson was named Big South Scholar-Athlete of the Year, the first Lady Flame all-time to win the honor.

May 8, 2015

Liberty finishes its season with a 29-30 overall record, an 18-win improvement over the 2014 season. It marked the biggest win improvement by any NCAA Division I softball program from 2014 to 2015.

May 19, 2015

Senior second baseman Megan Robinson was named to the 2015 Capital One Academic All-America Division I Softball first team. She became the sixth Liberty student-athlete, department-wide, to earn multiple Academic All-America honors, and first Liberty softball player to earn first team Academic All-America.

April 30, 2016

Liberty finished off a sweep of Gardner-Webb, boosting its Big South record to 16-8. The Lady Flames earned the No. 3 seed for the Big South Softball Championship, and broke the previous program record of 13 conference wins.