

AAF Member's Choice Best Bat for 2008

April 2008
Compiled by Stacie Mahoe
www.AllAboutFastpitch.com

You **ARE** allowed to freely give away, redistribute, and forward this report to anyone you feel may benefit from it. Coaches and parents ARE allowed to print out as many copies as they would like to give away to their team, players, other coaches, other parents, or anyone else who could use the information contained within this report.

Hitting is always the fun, exciting part of the game of softball. Fans like to see big hits. Players often look forward to their chance to hit the ball, especially at the younger ages. In addition to that, the bat technology nowadays is so different from what it was 10-15 years ago making the game even more explosive and fun to watch. I only wish I could have used some of the bats available today when I was playing! But that's a bit off topic, so I'll move on. Big hits are exciting and everyone wants to BE the one who gets the big hits. Of course what bat a player uses is going to have an affect on how she hits.

This being said, I constantly get e-mails that go something like this...

"What bat should I get my 12 year old daughter?"

Uh...I don't know. First of all one 12-year-old is not like all others. My daughter is going to be 12 this year and she's only about 4 ½ feet tall and weight about 60lbs. Yet she plays with girls who are bigger than I am even though they are the same age. So, how can you recommend the best bat for "a 12 year old girl?" The short and long of it is, you can't. Even if I had ALL the information – her height, her weight, how long she's played, what type of hitter she is, where she bats in the lineup, etc, etc, etc I STILL don't know what feels RIGHT in her hands, what FEELS best to her.

So when people ask me, "What bat should I use?"

My response is always, "**Whichever one gives you the most confidence in the box - period.**"

Really, that matters more than anything else. You can have the bat with the highest tested "pop" rating ever, but if it just "feels wrong" in your hands and you aren't comfortable with it in the box, chances are it won't work for you. On the flip side, you can have an "average" bat, but if that's the one that feels right, that feels good when you swing, that fits your hands just right (grip is also another thing that players have preferences on), that makes you feel like you can hit ANYTHING when you step into the box with it in your hands....THAT is the bat you should use. Aside from physically being able to hit a moving ball with your moving bat, confidence in the box is so super crucial to being successful at the plate. Using a bat that gives you that confidence (no matter what the reasoning may be behind it), is more important than what kind of bat it is.

That being said, when I'm bat shopping, like you are, I'm often starting from "ground zero," (meaning I have no particular manufacturer preference). I usually have no thought one way or another on which bat I want to buy for the upcoming season. What I find useful though, is hearing what everyone else is raving about. I want to know what bat other players and coaches are using and liking a lot. I'm still not going to buy the bat sight unseen. But those suggestions and recommendations give me a narrowed down list of bats to consider for my purchase.

Once I have that targeted list, I always try to actually swing (if not hit with) the bats on the list. I want to know what it feels like to swing the bat. Some bats just feel better than others. Ideally, I get to at least hit soft toss with the different ones I'm considering so that I know what contact feels like. If you can actually use the bats you're considering in a hitting situation (off a live pitcher) that's even better. Like I said, some bats just feel better or more right than others. You don't want one that just doesn't feel good in your hands. So the more you get to "test" the better.

Basically what we're doing in this bat report is giving you that "targeted" list of bats that players and coaches around the country are using and liking.

I debated on how to share the information with you. Should I list the questions I asked in my poll and then share all the answers for each question before sharing the next question? You'd think that style would be the most straight forward, but the thing is, there were a number of responses that came in that weren't in the format of simply answering the questions that were asked. Some people gave additional "background information" to support their opinions and I thought all of that would be of use to you. So what I decided to do what just let you read exactly how the responses came in to the questions that were asked about Which Bat is Best for 2008.

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

Before we get started with the responses, here are the questions that were sent out to www.AllAboutFastpitch.com members.

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?

What do you love about this bat?

Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)

Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?

*quick note: at the end of the report, I also give you my thoughts and tell you which bats I picked up for this 2008 season.

Okay - Without further ado, here are the responses I received.

~~~~~

Stacie,

We are a u14 team that also competes at u16 as well. The bat of choice is the Rocketech. We also use the Easton Stealth and Synergy. It is in accordance with which pitcher and the speed of that pitcher as to which bat we use.

Rick Roberts

~~~~~

Hi Stacie -

My bat for the 08 season is the Easton CXN 880 alloy(?) 22.5 oz. I like the sweet spot, plus the way it feels when swinging at the pitches. Gives a nice feel on the outside pitches, and also the feel of control and power on the inside stuff. This year I'm playing 10u, plus "B" league.

Thanks for writing about the game and helping us young players with ideas on how to develop our skills.

Patrice

~~~~~

Rocketech

How the ball reacts off the bat

Would not buy Worth

Synergy

12u

Miranda, Alpine CA

~~~~~

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?

Miken fastpitch softball bat

What do you love about this bat?

The way the ball pops off the bat

Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)

i hear the rip-it is a really bad bat i don't think i would ever get it

Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?

i would try to get an older version of the bat they are often cheaper

What age group are you involved with?

16 under

Nicole Oralnad Park IL.

~~~~~

Sammy Jo, Age 14, Best Bat Catalyst (Blue) 33/23, Checking out 2008 Demarini Phenix as a 2nd.

~~~~~

Rockettech, My daughter Loves this bat. It has great pop and loves the loaded end.

tamara

~~~~~

I'll be using an Easton STEALTH Comp 34" 27oz 2006 model

I got this bat toward the end of the season last year for Nationals. Mine has a slight end load which I like the feel of. I may use it for awhile as I was told all the Easton's are all now balance weighted. It has pretty good pop.

Haven't had the opportunity to test drive to many but I haven't hit with one lately I would not use.

The DEMARINI F3, having had an F2 several years ago or a Rawlings

Adult open for league play and the Over 45 and 50 for Nationals

Lionel from Tulsa, Oklahoma

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

*What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?*

Easton Synergy 2007

*What do you love about this bat?*

feels great when you hit it

*Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)*

Rocketech- too heavy, I bunt alot and it is hard to bunt with it

*Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?*

I like the stealth, but it's expensive too

*What age group are you involved with?*

sophomore in high school, starting to play 16U this spring with my travel team

Katie- Charlotte, North Carolina

~~~~~

What bat is your favorite bat of the 2008 season?

The 2007 Louisville Slugger TPS catalyst x-1 composite

What do you love about this bat?

I love how the ball pops off the bat when you hit.

Is there a bat that you would never buy?

The bat that I would never buy is any aluminum bat. The reason being is because anytime you swing the bat your hands will hurt.

Is there a bat that you would want but couldn't afford?

I would want the mayhem.

What age are you with?

I am with the 14 and under age group.

Kimberlee Canton Ohio

~~~~~

We will be using a -10 Synergy CNT. This is the first year we will be using it, but in previous years we've played against it and the ball seems to fly off! In the past, I would not have even considered an Easton, but they seem to have improved their technology where the barrel doesn't dent or ding as much.

My name is Chrissy and I am a high school softball coach from McLeansboro, IL (Hamilton Co)...Go Foxes!

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

*What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?*

Easton Stealth-yellow

*What do you love about this bat?*

With other bats it would take a while before I got used to it but with the Stealth, it only took a couple of half hour batting sessions before I was completely comfortable. The first time I swung it in a game I hit the ball around 200 feet or so.

*Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)*

I won't buy aluminum bats because I live in Nebraska and in the winter and early spring it is very cold and I had an aluminum bat break because of the cold. I know now that your not supposed to leave your bats where they can get cold, but ever since then I have used composite bats only!

*Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?*

Nope. We find the bats on ebay for much cheaper.

*What age group are you involved with?*

16U and 18U

~~~~~

Coach Cesar in El Paso, TX best bet is the -10 Easton Synergy series. Plenty of pop, one piece construction for long life, easy break-in, all weather use. For economy minds any of the catalyst found on fleabay! thanks Good Luck!!

~~~~~

Easton Synergy (not the extended model). It's been a favorite bat for several years - proven durability, good pop, relatively large sweet spot, good balance for most players - overall good value.

~~~~~

Our girls use an assortment of bats but the Rocket Tech seemed to be the bat most players would like to have.

If you do not need the latest, you can get some great deals on bats that are a year or two old on E-Bay.

Lonnie Smith
Lakeland Softball

~~~~~

*What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?*

Catalyst

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

*What do you love about this bat?*

Great balance and big sweet spot

*Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)*

Anderson....too hot and don't like them with my daughter being a pitcher

*Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?*

no

*What age group are you involved with?*

U18 but daughter is U16

Scott

Chicago Area, IL

~~~~~

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?

Anderson Rocketech

What do you love about this bat?

Ball comes off the bat fast and hard.

Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)

Not at this time

Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?

No

What age group are you involved with?

14&U

Please share your first name and location so I can include this with your response.

Dave, Enola, Pa.

~~~~~

Renaë Vennel

Manager

14U PS Inferno

Atlanta, GA

Best bat for 2008 is the Easton Stealth Composite CNT # SCN6B. Just as expensive as the rest, but absolutely the best feel with a -10 drop. Not top heavy like the Anderson Rocketech. Absolutely the best buy for the money at this price range. Can knock the stitches off the ball!!

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

The new 2008 Synergy, GREAT BAT - even balanced swing feels great, and the ball reacts amazing off of the barrell.

Sydney from TN  
14u

~~~~~

Catalyst 31" 19 oz.
It gives good bat speed and length for 12U players
Most bats work--cannot think of a bat I would not buy but cost can equate to quality
There is a Louisville Composite at about 60% the cost of the Catalyst. It's decent but
have seen them break
I coach 12U
Bob- Jacksonville, FL (we play year-round)

~~~~~

*What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?*  
anderson rocket tech

*What do you love about this bat?*  
grip, the way the ball travels off the bat

*Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)*  
worth

*Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?*  
Easton Stealth

*What age group are you involved with?*  
11 year olds

Taylor-spencer, NC

~~~~~

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?
Synergy

What do you love about this bat?
Sweetspot/Durability

Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)
Catalyst/ Louisville Slugger, Durability most/Performance

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?

Used Synergy

What age group are you involved with?

14u Fastpitch

Brian Barnes, Michigan

~~~~~

*What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?*

My favorite would either be the 2008 Anderson Rocketech or the 2008 Miken Halo.

*What do you love about this bat?*

These bats have the balls jumping off of them when you make contact.

*Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?*

My second choice would have to be a Miken M-Pulse or an older version of the Anderson Rocketech.

*What age group are you involved with?*

High School Varsity Fastpitch (ages 12-18)

Joe

Carthage, MS

~~~~~

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?

TPS Catalyst 31/21

What do you love about this bat?

Just feels right. The ball comes off the bat and flies.

Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)

Mizuno Jennie Finch -11 Fastpitch Softball Bat. Was listed as a \$130 bat and performed like a \$20 bat.

What age group are you involved with?

U12

Mandi - Bellevue, WA

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

The bats my team likes the best are the Easton Stealth and the Miken. The ball really seems to jump off both of them really well. One of my players who used the Stealth last year set our school record w/ 7 homeruns (all well over 220 ft.)

The bat we didn't like as well was the Worth Mayhem. I thought it was weighted funny. Maybe that's just me being weird. I have also heard from some of the coaches that the TPS Catalyst broke on them. But the one we used was fine, but not just as good as the other two that I mentioned.

Let me know if you need any other info.

Marc Marshall
Ohio

~~~~~

*What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?*  
Easton CNT Stealth Comp

*What do you love about this bat?*  
Great Sweet Spot very consistent, good pop

*What age group are you involved with?*  
12U

Kerry - Charlotte, NC

~~~~~

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?
Red slammer bat.

What do you love about this bat?
Just like my old one.

Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?
My old red slammer bat.

14u rec team
Tiffanie Montesano, WA

~~~~~

Stacie,  
We have three players in our family and over the past 6-7 years have tried most of the "hot" bats on the market. Without question, the Rip-It Elite Fastpitch bats have proven themselves the best bat by far, for us.

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

Consistently outperforms the other comparably priced bats and functioned very well last fall in 54-55 degree weather.

We have three in the family, 33" -10 balanced for my 14U daughter, 33" -9 endloaded for my 16U daughter and 33" -9 balanced for my 18U daughter. All three girls play competitively 8 months a year and have shown marked improvement in control and placement as well as distance when needed.

The bats allow the girls to take advantage of their individual hitting skills and styles. Fortunately, the regional rep for Rip-It, Jeff Franquet ([www.ripitjeff.com](http://www.ripitjeff.com)) lives nearby so we were able to demo a number of weights and lengths in a controlled environment before settling on the three we have.

The first one we purchased has several thousand hits on it and still has that "just broken in" pop.

Sounds like our family and others around our league in South Jersey are in love with the bat....absolutely right!!!

Regards, Steve W  
Southern New Jersey

~~~~~

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?
Rocketech

What do you love about this bat?
Great action off bat

What age group are you involved with?
3rd - 12th grade

Jeff H., Unionville, PA

~~~~~

2008 Rocketech  
big pop adds distance and heat on the ball

~~~~~

Stacie

We have had good luck with the Catalyst - (yellow) 21/31 although it is 2 years old and seems to be doing ok I have a feeling it is starting to loose its pop and the fact that a yellow bat is not being made by catalyst anymore, the main reason I like it is because my daughter likes it and the ball just pops off the bat, she is 11 and plays in the 12U age

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

bracket now, we live in the Kansas City mo. area, my vote for the bat I wouldn't buy is the rocket tech - it is end loaded and it only fits some girls swings and when the ball hits it, it sounds dead or broken. looking forward to your report on the bats we will be looking for a new bat after this season.

Thanks,
Mark

~~~~~

*What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?*

Easton Stealth -10

*What do you love about this bat?*

Pop and solid

*Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)*

Easton Synergy Extended, Louisville Slugger Zephyr – Both of these are equally bad.

*Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?*

Easton Synergy -10

*What age group are you involved with?*

12U

Tori – Longview, WA

~~~~~

Glenn, Forest Park High School in Indiana , The Easton Stealth is the choice for us

~~~~~

*What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?*

Both of my daughters have been using Anderson Rocketech bats for the past two seasons, and we swear by them.

*What do you love about this bat?*

The bat absolutely JUMPS off the bat upon contact. And with the end-weighted design, the bat nearly swings itself.

*Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)*

Not really... I support all the decisions my players make regarding their equipment, since only they know what's truly "right" for them.

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

*Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?*

hmmm... tough question. Again, I'd have to recommend whatever bat is the best "fit" for each player. Every girl is different, and every family's financial situation is different.

*What age groups are you involved with?*

I've served as President of a rec league for the past three years, so I've been involved with players ranging from age 7-18. I also coach my oldest daughter's 18&U Travel team, and serve as assistant coach for my youngest daughter's 16&U rec team.

Bill Keohane  
Pottstown, PA

~~~~~

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?

Easton Stealth 32/22

Easton Stealth 33" Also the rocket tech fp 33 " although 2007/2008 models have been toned down . Once broken in they have the same punch. Stealth models give most bang for the buck and very durable longer life than other simular bats.

Tim

~~~~~

Anderson Rockettech. No doubt about it, lively, endloaded and pretty durable. The jump off of this bat is the best of any I have used, Synergy, DeMarini, Worth bats, and Miken OKC.

Bek Costa

~~~~~

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?

Anderson

What do you love about this bat?

The sound it makes when the ball comes off the bat

Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)

Nike, they just don't hit the ball hard enough.

Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?

Cost is defiantly a factor and that why I have a cheap bat

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

What age group are you involved with?

16U

Kristina, Florida

~~~~~

*What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?*

Anderson Rocket tech

*What do you love about this bat?*

Quality, less vibration, and bounce off of the bat. It lasts a long time!!!

*Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?*

Any of the Demarini's with half and half technology.

*What age groups are you involved with?*

12-16

Phillip from Florida

~~~~~

My favorite bat is the new 32/22 white and purple Stealth.

I like that it helps me hit the ball further (when using right mechanics).

I would NOT buy the Rocket-tech (red and blue) because the load is not right for me, and I do not hit well with it.

My more economical choice for a bat is a 32/22 silver Synergy.

I am involved in 14 and under.

Alyssa, Maryland

~~~~~

Hi, our choice is still the 2005 catalyst [yellow bat], 34/24 great balance and terrific for the girl who is a line drive hitter.....this bat seems to never run out of power as long as you rotate each time you hit! Dcs

~~~~~

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?

Stealth

What do you love about this bat?

Super Sweet spot, good grip

Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)

Rocket Tech (sp) chipping paint problem still not fixed. Gets flat spots too easily

What age group are you involved with?

14U

Lisa, Indiana
Stacie,

I coach California Dreamin', a 16u age group team, although we play more 18u tournaments these days. Bats is the one subject that is nearest and dearest to the hearts of our entire team, including parents. Let me start by saying we've tried just about everything on the market including Easton Synergy and Stealth Comp, Miken Halo, Demarini Phoenix and Evo, Rocket Tech and Catalyst. All of these were 2007/08 models. My primary concern as the hitting coach is that a girl swings a bat that doesn't alter her swing by virtue of its weight or weight distribution. As you would guess, I'm okay with our stronger girls swinging end-loaded or heavier bats, and I typically direct our smaller/younger girls to bats that are more even. So, with the preamble out of the way, let me say that all but 4 girls on the team swing Easton Stealth Comps, all of the minus 10 variety. The four that don't swing the Stealth swing DeMarini Phoenix -10 (2 girls), Easton Synergy -10 and a Catalyst.

The problem I have with a straight up recommendation of the Stealth involves the additional fact that our team has broken 4 in the last year. The failure is always at the same place, under the connection piece, and manifests itself at a "click" when you flex or wiggle the bat in your hands, and the click means you are DONE, the next flush contact will result in your two piece bat being truly a two piece bat with the handle in the batters' hands and the barrel heading toward the outfield. Easton has been good about honoring the warranty on the bats, but all bat warranties cover one replacement bat, which in the case of Easton has "Replacement Bat" etched on the handle and can't be returned. So when you break the replacement, you need to buy the next one.

The reason practically the entire team hits with the Stealth in spite of this issue (including my daughter) is the bat is superior to everything else out there. That is also why we own almost everything else out there; my effort to replace the Stealth with a more durable bat. Life is full of compromises, and so is bat selection.

Here are my assessments:

Miken Halo - Even balance, excellent pop once broken in except for the last 2 inches of the barrel which feel as though made of wood.

Demarini Phoenix - The triple wall -10 is a very good bat, very durable and just a tad more end loaded than the Stealths. I would put this bat in the hands of every girl that currently swings a Rocket Tech and have her benefit from increased bat control. I prefer this bat to the -9 Stealth. We have not tried the -8 Quadwall Demarini yet. The girls like this bat a lot.

Catalyst - Nice bat, basically a composite RocketTech. End loaded and I've seen a few split lengthwise down the barrel. Genreally, they still prefer the Demarini or -9 Stealth.

RocketTech - If she can swing it, a broken-in RT is a monster bat. If she can't handle the end-load and/or doesn't have solid plate discipline and good technique, I'll get her out with off speed stuff all day long...

Easton Synergy - Very good bat. Just a touch less end loaded than the Stealth, and as a result a touch less pop. For a smallish girl, there is no better choice in my mind. UCLA swings it for a reason, and that reason may be durability over the Stealth.

Easton Stealth Comp - Performance wise the best bat we've come across, but be prepared to carry an extra at all times as they break without warning at any point in their lives. My daughter carries three, one that is past it's prime as an emergency spare (the only 2007 model on the team that's still unbroken), one game bat (but it's cracking), and one that will be the next game bat and is currently used for soft toss and live pitching to break it in.

We have not used the Mayhem or Mizuno, so I have no comment on those.

Sorry for the length, but it is a very good question.

Coach Tim
California Dreamin'
Girls Fastpitch Softball Club

~~~~~

Hi Stacie.

I'm a coach/dad of a 16U and 12U girls fastpitch team in Texas. My favorite bat is the one that is a combination of comfort performance (result... confidence) for my individual player along with a respectable amount of quality. That leaves a pretty broad category, and it should... There are a lot of great bats out there under several great brands.

For instance, we have players on each squad that are pure power hitters. These are girls usually above average strength and size. For these girls, we're usually looking at an end-weighted bat of good to better than average quality. For the power hitters, they need to have a lot of confidence that the bat will do its job as long as they do theirs (see it, use their proper mechanics..., and hit it).

For our non-power hitters, we use more balanced weight bats. Most of these are composites as they seem to provide more consistent power when they do need it, along with the lighter weight and large sweet spots these girls need for control of their hits. More hot base hits or controlled placement of slaps for those starting to learn it.

You may want specific brands and models, and I could mention a few. However, I think that if a person focuses first on proper mechanics and vision for the player to make consistent solid contact, that the bat only enhances a good hitter versus creating one.

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

So as long as someone looks at the proper length, weight, and weight distribution for their player's size and hitting style, there are multiple quality bats out there.

A couple of our favorite brands are in our dugout are: Rocketech, Louisville Slugger, and Miken. Our power hitters seem to like the Rocketech and Miken, and our other girls have several different models of Louisville Slugger bats. There are other good ones in our dug out, but our girls' favorites fall under these three more than others.

Hope that helps.

Coach Tom, in Texas

~~~~~

Tom

Easton Stealth CNT

16U

~~~~~

Im involved with girls ages 6-14. As far as bats Ill stick to girls 10 and up. I bought my daughter an Easton Havoc and it's the most popular bat on the regular season team as well as the all star team. Many girls had more expensive bats and still chose the Havoc. I think when you balance price and quality this bat cant be beat!

I am a 10u coach from Kenosha, WI. I think if I could pick a 1st choice bat for my daughter it would be the new Easton Stealth composite bat. I worry so much about if she will be able to "get our money out of it". Can a 10u girl swing the bat quick enough to get the bat handle to flex or am I better off spending less money for a decent bat in the \$100.00-\$150.00 range. I have also heard positive feedback from the Demarini Phoenix. But again I struggle with spending the money on a 10 year old girl.

Kevin

~~~~~

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?

Easton Stealth

What do you love about this bat?

Large sweet spot and balance

Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?

Easton Synergy

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

What age group are you involved with?
12U

Chad in Arkansas

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?
ANDERSON ROCKET TECH

What do you love about this bat?
LARGE SWEET SPOT, JUMP OFF THE BAT

Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)
MY DAUGHTERS HAVE USED THE LISA FERNANDES, MEDUSSA, ROCKET TECH, AND REBEL
THEY REALLY HAVE NO COPMLAINTS ABOUT ANY OF THEM.

Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?
THE REBEL BY EASTON, IT IS A GOOD MID RANGE BAT OR THE MEDUSSA, USUALLY ON EBAY FOR SUPER CHEAP!

What age groups are you involved with?
10U,12U

~~~~~

I've always liked Demarini and the bat I would choose is the 2008 DEMARINI DXPNX PHENIX. I see a lot of 2008 EASTON SCN8B SYNERGY

Demarini Medusa would be my second choice

I'm involved with 14U

Frank - MA.

~~~~~

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?
Catalyst- Louisville Slugger

What do you love about this bat?
Great pop

Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)
Right now probably the Stealth because I have seen to many break in half.

12U

Vince, Louisville, KY

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

Our favorite bat for the 2008 season is the Easton Stealth. We love the pop of the ball coming off of the bat, a sound almost identical to hitting the ball with a wooden bat. The catalyst is popular with our girls, but not as popular as the Stealth. There is no specific name brand bat that I would absolutely not buy, but I do strongly recommend composite bats. When the girls connect, they want it to fly. A more economic choice for 2008 is the Synergy. This provides a very similar pop, a bigger drop (-11.5) and costs about \$100 less. We own this bat as well. Our organization will carry 14u and 16u teams during 2008.

Aloha and Mahalo!

Bill
Odyssey 14u - Eastern PA

~~~~~

Best Bat: Worth Mayhem  
Worst Bat: Any Miken- They always snap  
CT Charmers 18 Gold  
Bridget

~~~~~

My favorite softball bat is the Miken E-Flex Ultra- 29 ounce.

I have a feeling that this bat hates softballs. Mine always crushes the ball so it sleeps at my bed-side.

Worth also produced some awesome bats, unfortunately they are not ASA approved and therefore banished in our senior league.

Rudy from Aruba.

~~~~~

Favorite bat is probably the new Miken. Love the POP!

Bat that I wouldn't buy- Aluminum.

Second choice for a bat, Last years new Synergy (e-bay).

I am involved with Baseball 7-8 and fastpitch 9-10 (little league and travel).

Jason - Galesburg, Michigan

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

I like the Louisville Slugger Zephyr. Great light weight bat. Huge drop for a low cost.

I fell prey to the Anderson Internet craze & my 9 year old cracked it. Great reaction to the ball but high price + poor durability = Major Disappointment.

~~~~~

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?

Rocket tech

What do you love about this bat?

Balls really pop with this bat. However the player needs to be able handle this weight.

Fastpitch 10 u

Mike

~~~~~

Michelle's(my Daughter - 12U) answers are below(Sorry, we had a little fun with this as we are not experience enough to answer most).

*What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?*

Answer: It hasn't been found yet.

*What do you love about this bat?*

Answer: It's relentless desire to go with the outside pitch, and it's uncanny ability to always perfectly deaden my bunts just right, and always stay on course thru the strike zone. ^\_^.

*Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)*

Answer: Yes, nothing over \$150.00. After batting .750 last year with a \$30.00 bat, I wonder.

*Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?*

Answer: Don't know, but hope I will see lot's of good advice from this survey

*What age group are you involved with?*

Answer: 12 U

Michelle, Anderson Township Ohio

My daughter loves the Stealth Bat. They make the bat lighter and the impact and most of the bat are phenomenal. During an ISA Eastern Championship tournament last year, my daughter hit a ball I believe would be around 288 feet. The umpire told me he had never seen a ball explode off of a bat and go that far. It is a compliment to my daughter as well as the bat. This bat cost around \$350 locally here in SC.

My name is Tom Dryman and my daughters name is Tessa. She was only 14 when she hit this ball. If we can slow down her reaction time and her show a little patience at the plate, maybe there would be a future for her. Who knows? It is whatever she wants. I just want the best for her and if softball could allow her to go to wonderful academic institution, then that would be wonderful.

Sincerely,

A patient dad for a beautiful and wonderful daughter

Tom Dryman aka Tessa's dad.

~~~~~

I'm responding for my daughter, Samantha Mau, who is a second year 14U player from Oakdale, MN (a suburb of St. Paul).

Favorite Bat:

Her bat for this season is a Miken NRG 33" -10.

What she loves about the bat:

It's got plenty of pop, a slender handle, comfortable grip, looks cool, and Miken is a Minnesota company (this is more my thing than hers).

Absolutely not buy:

Louisville - she doesn't like the feel of the bat in her hands - feels clunky.

Bat she ideally wanted:

She would have gotten the newest Miken Halo if we'd been willing to spend that much. The Miken NRG was brand new, but last year's model and so we paid about \$100 less than what the Halo would have been.

Other bat comments:

I saw a Easton Stealth fly apart at a batting cage this winter. It came apart where the barrel and the handle come together. A fastpitch coach who was there said he had heard of this happening with other two-piece Easton bats. This could have been extremely dangerous if it had happened on the field.

Also, one girl on my daughter's team had an Anderson Rocket-Tech that dented the barrel after a hit. I've heard since that other people have had denting problems with that bat.

For anyone looking for a used bat for younger girls, the Easton Synergy's are very well made.

Chris

~~~~~

My daughter is 11 and is just starting to play ASA. We haven't entered the real world of bats yet. Not sure what is good and what isn't. She uses an Easton bat, but I'm not sure of the exact name. The cost of the bat was around \$90.00 on sale from about \$130.00. She is tall 5'4 and strong. Any suggestions on a bat would be great. We are on a budget though.....

*What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?*

Have heard a lot of good comments on the 2008 Rocket Tech, may purchase one before Summer season.

*What do you love about this bat?*

My daughter used the 2005 and 2007 Rocket Tech last year, and liked them. I have heard that the 2008 is comparable to the 2004, as far as performance.

*Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)*

The Stealth and Catalyst bats from last year had some problems with them breaking. Actually seen a Stealth break into 2 pieces during a HS game. So I would be a little apprehensive about those two bats. My HS team used the 2006 Catalyst with no problems, and the girls really liked it, so it may have just been a problem they had in 2007.

*Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?*

No matter what bat you are buying, it's probably going to cost close to, or over \$100. Most high end bats are in the \$200-\$300 range. Personally, I would try to hold off and purchase the bat that my daughter felt most comfortable, and confident with. It may cost a little more to begin with, but more than likely, by the end of the season, the cheaper bat will be history, and you'll be buying the high end bat anyway.

*What age group are you involved with?*

16U

I'm hearing a lot of talk about composite bats, and how, after they are broke in, they don't meet the bat safety standards that are set. Have also heard they are telling manufacturers to stop production of composite bats by June of 2008, until they can prove that the bats will maintain the proper bat safety standards. Has anyone else heard anything?

Shayne  
Ohio

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

My daughter swings the 2007 30" 21 oz Easton Stealth. Should of bought the 30/20 but it has worked out very good. 4 other girls bought Stealths afterwards.

Great POP!!

10U last year moved up to 12A this Fall.

Jason - Hillsboro OR.

~~~~~

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?
Rocket Tech 2008

What do you love about this bat?
Its swing is smooth
End load helps the ball project

Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?
Worth seems to hold up and is very reasonable

What age group are you involved with?
14-16

Jan in Missouri

~~~~~

My choice in a bat would be the Anderson Rocket 2007 model.

I like the pop that this bat has.

I am a coach for a 12U team

Robert out of Troy, IL

~~~~~

What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?
Easton Stealth composite – really like the SCN6B Stealth's

What do you love about this bat?
Once broke in they have more pop than others out there and sizes fit my daughters swing better than other brands

AAF Members Choice: *Best Bat for 2008*

Is there a bat that you would absolutely NOT buy? (any specific reason why?)

Not composite they can keep it – NIKE bats are horrible

Sometimes cost is a factor and you can't afford the bat you really "want" - is there a second more economical choice you'd go with instead?

If you want a good one you have to pay the price, shop around on EBay and other websites before you purchase

What age groups are you involved with?

10 /12 / 14 under

Matt from Oklahoma

~~~~~

*What bat is your favorite for the 2008 season?*

Rocket Tech / Easton Composite

*What do you love about this bat?*

A lot of pop

12U - Anthony

~~~~~

I coach the U14 Muscatine Maniacs from Muscatine, Iowa. My whole team uses the Anderson Rocket Tech. We really like the weight at the end of the bat and we have found the performance to be better than any other bat we have used. It has helped us win three consecutive state titles and a runner up at "A" Northern Nationals.

Steve H

~~~~~

Junior Haddock

Here is my take on the whole bat thing, If you are a hitter it does not matter the bat, I believe it is a big money making scam. Those that can not hit will not hit with a \$300.00 bat, am I right? I coach at both the travel level as well as High School so I have seem a lot of money wasted on gimmicks, what are your thoughts?

Thanks for the opportunity and your knowledge

Jay

Philadelphia Pennsylvania

## Stacie's Thoughts

As far as the last response goes, I more or less gave my thoughts on that at the beginning of the report.

I do have a note to add though. This year, my daughter is playing 12U. Up to this point I hadn't spent more than \$40 on a bat for her. But halfway through this season, my husband says to me, "Go buy your daughter a 'good' bat." Why? Well, because she'd been hitting the ball fine, but it just didn't have the same "sting" as it could with a "good" bat. On top of that she's smaller than just about every other 12U player, so she needs whatever "help" she can get.

After he said that, I went bat shopping. The only bat on the island I could find that was "good" but still her size was a Rocket Tech (the new blue one with the red sleeve). Now I'm not that big a Rocket Tech fan. They just don't "feel right" in my hands. But I saw her swing it and it looked okay. I swung one my size and it felt okay. Still not my preference, but hey, the bat wasn't for me. So, I bit the bullet and bought a bat I never thought I would buy, a Rocket Tech. Her first game with that bat she hit the ball quite a bit farther than she had all season, so for us, it was worth it. Plus, she really loves the bat and is taking good care of it which is what matters more than my own personal preference.

I am looking to buy another bat her size though. Right now it's between the light blue Catalyst (last years) or the black and purple Easton Stealth (-9). I like the feel of the Stealth, but my reservation is the high likelihood of it breaking. I've seen two break within the past week. Both have only been used for this season so far. I'm not sure I want to deal with getting a bat replaced. I'm looking at the light blue Catalyst vs this year's Catalyst (orange, -10) because I've seen about 3 of this year's Catalysts break this season too. So I'm still trying to finalize my decision. Do I get another -9 since that's what her Rocket Tech is already? Do I take that chance on the Stealth? Or do I just get the light blue Catalyst which is a little lighter and something different for her to use in case she faces a pitcher were the Rocket Tech is "too much bat" for her? I like the pop off the Stealth better, but it's just a matter of whether I want to take a chance or play it safe.

As far as the bat that I decided to get for the high school team I coach, I got the Catalyst -9 (orange one). I love it, but it took a while to break in. It's definitely not a bat you buy in the middle of the season hoping to use it the next game you have.

That's about it for my thoughts....happy bat shopping!