



# CITY OF KENNER

## PRESS RELEASE

**MICHAEL SIGUR**  
ACTING MAYOR

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## FIRST TRAVEL BALL TOURNAMENT SET TO BEGIN SATURDAY AT BUTCH DUHE

**Kenner, LA.** – The first travel ball tournament at the newly created Butch Duhe Sports Academy will be held Saturday and Sunday and features 37 teams from throughout the New Orleans area and beyond, Kenner Recreation Director Ken Marroccoli announced on Friday.

The baseball tournament is put on by the United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA) and includes 7-year-old, 8-year-old, 9-year-old and 11-year-old teams, said Dave Fielding, Kenner's liaison with the USSSA, a national organization that puts on tournaments in more than 11 sports throughout the country.

"This is a major organization in the state of Louisiana and they have been looking for a facility between Chalmette and Hammond, where they hold a number of tournaments," Fielding said. "This is certainly a win-win situation for Kenner and for USSSA."

The decision to change the designation of Butch Duhe came in the face of dwindling participation that left the facility with little activity most of the year. In 2015, only 43 young people registered for sports leagues offered year-round at Butch Duhe.

Acting Mayor Michael Sigur said the decision was a tough one because some families didn't want to take the city's offer to switch to any other playground in the city.

"This certainly validates our decision with such a significant tournament at Butch Duhe less than a month after the vote to make it a sports academy," Sigur said. "It will be good to have activity at the playground, and residents are invited to head to the playground and enjoy some competitive youth baseball."

Fielding said USSSA officials are excited about the Butch Duhe location, and have indicated they would be interested in putting on two to three tournaments a month, and perhaps even use the playground for practices as well.

"If this weekend works out OK, and I'm sure it will, I think that is exactly what you are going to see," Fielding said.

"It is exciting to see that our vision for the future of Butch Duhe is already coming to fruition," said Kenner Councilman Dominick Impastato, part of the committee that investigated other recreation programs

throughout the state – in light of the drastic drop in participation - and came up with the sports academy proposal for Butch Duhe.

“Change can be very difficult, but it is rewarding to see that it appears we made the right decision at the right time for recreation in the city of Kenner,” he said.

The tournament begins at 8 a.m. on Saturday with each team guaranteed two games. The single-elimination phase of the tournament begins at 8 a.m. on Sunday, Fielding said.

For more information on USSSA, go to [www.ussa.com](http://www.ussa.com).

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