

The UCSD baseball team has been invited to mainland China from December 11 to 25, and will play with five Chinese teams during their visit

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The University of California, San Diego varsity baseball team will be the first U.S. baseball team ever to play in the People's Republic of China (Mainland), it was announced today (Wednesday, October 27) by Judith M. Sweet, director of intercollegiate athletics at UCSD.

The team will be in China for fourteen days, December 11 to 25, and will play against five Chinese teams in cities throughout the country.

In announcing the trip at a news conference at UCSD, Sweet said the team was seeking community support to help pay for the trip. She said that parents and others have already pledged close to \$15,000 to cover expenses but that another \$20,000 is needed.

"We would hate to have to pass up this opportunity for the team and the university," Sweet said. She said that the team must raise the remaining money to cover the cost of the trip very quickly in order to firm its commitment with the Chinese authorities.

The UCSD team is making the historic trip after receiving an official invitation from the Baseball Association of the People's Republic of China, the official sports arm of the government. According to Sweet, the invitation marks the beginning of a new emphasis on the part of the Chinese government which is seeking increased competition in amateur sports.

Joining Sweet in making the announcement and representing the Chinese government was Liu Feng Zeng, manager of the CAAC (Civil Aviation Administration of China), the official government airline which will fly the baseball team to China.

Others attending the press conference were San Diego County Supervisor Roger Hedgecock; David Marinoff, president of ExperSport, Inc., the American travel company which is handling arrangements for the trip; Nancy Wu, vice president of the Travis Pacific Corporation, the company which is handling arrangements in China; Lyle Yates, UCSD baseball coach; several members of the baseball team and other university officials.

The UCSD baseball team, known as the Tritons, posted its most successful season last year placing second in NAIA District III Southern Division play.

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