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Fifth Annual 2026 90s Game Breaks Tie; Both Teams Had Two Wins from Previous Years



The first two sessions of the 2026 World Championships saw 349 teams compete and hosted several special events, including the 5th annual 90s Game and Hall of Fame inductions with military Color Guard.

Fifth Annual 2026 90s Game Breaks Tie; Both Teams Had Two Wins from Previous Years



Both the East (red jerseys) and West (blue jerseys) 90s teams won two 90s games in the past four years. The 2026 West 90s Team broke the tie, winning the fifth annual event at the 2026 World Championships.

By Donna McGuire
Softball News Report

A buzz of anticipation rolled through crowded stadium seats as Art Barnes of Littlestown, Pa., stepped into the batter's box on a recent sunny morning in Las Vegas.

Though Barnes' hat and shirt both read "90s," his swing looked like it belonged to someone much

Only One Team Wins Triple Grand Slam in First Session of 2026 Vegas Worlds



Suncoast 55s of Florida was one of 12 teams in the Men's 55+ Major Plus division. They won the USA National Game, but took second place, just short of a Triple Grand Slam. Photo by Clover Schultz.

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younger. Maybe someone 80. Or 75 even.

These days, it's hard to tell with senior softball players. They keep playing not only because they love the game and the team camaraderie, but because it helps keep them young.



Camaraderie and friendship amongst the 90s players goes beyond the barrier of East vs. West.

"I am one lucky dude to be here and playing ball at my age," Carroll Shook, 90, of Wenatchee, Wash., said shortly before the fifth-annual 90s game started at the Big League Dreams complex during the Senior Softball-USA World Championships. "It means a lot to me. It's a special game."

Shook played for the blue-clad West team while lead-off hitter Barnes played for the red-uniformed East team. Some 88- and 89-year-olds helped fill out the rosters, but 16 of the players turn 90 or older this year. The oldest two? Their birth year was 97 years ago, when Herbert Hoover occupied the White House.

Before the game, East player Roland Johnson of New Berlin, Wis., joked about writing his obituary.

"I am waiting to get there (heaven) to play with all the ballplayers waiting on me," he said. "We are going to have a great team."

During his game-opening at-bat, Barnes singled sharply to left field. The crowd roared.

In the field, 12 fielders reacted. Teams are allowed five outfielders and five infielders, plus a pitcher and catcher. The extra players help reduce gaps between fielders, who have played so long they have forgotten what it was like to be spry.

Men's 55+ and 60+ teams launched the 2026 Senior Softball-USA's World Championships in Las Vegas with close-game fireworks, a Triple Grand Slam title and the crowning of eight division champions.

In addition, 12 Eastern and Western national teams clashed at Las Vegas-area ballparks to determine six USA National Championships.

"This first session of 55+ and 60+ Men's divisions saw a surge in the 60+ AAA division, with 44 teams, and the 55+ AAA division with 40 teams coming from throughout America and Canada," said Terry Hennessy, Senior Softball USA's chief executive officer.

Escape Fire/Ancell of Minnesota captured the coveted Triple Grand Slam title in the 30-team 55+ Major division. To earn the special award, a team must first win an Eastern or Western national championship. Then it must win the USA Championship game in Las Vegas before also winning the division. The larger the bracket, the more difficult the feat.

In this case, Escape had never won Worlds let alone played for a Triple Grand Slam. Plus, on championship Sunday, the Minnesotans had to play four in a row in the Nevada heat.

Carrying 19 players helped, co-manager Dave Irvin said.

"It was a fantastic journey for our guys," he said. "The key was having a long roster of well-balanced players."

The top four hitters compiled a .786 on-base average while the bottom three hitters led the team in home runs, Irvin said.

When the final fly ball settled into the glove of a nervous right fielder, Escape's players mobbed each other as if they'd just won the World Series.

"We had guys in tears before we reached the dogpile," Irvin said. "We just stood around pinching ourselves for the next hour. We couldn't believe it happened."

Overall, Session One's 174 teams played more than 550 games over four days across 28 diamonds starting Sept. 17. Sunny days bathed them daily with temperatures climbing near 100 degrees.



The Men's 55+ AAA and 60+ AAA divisions had the largest number of teams, with 44 and 40, respectively. Photo by Clover Schultz.

Close games abounded in the 60+ Major division, where one run decided one-third of the 78 pool and bracket games played. That included 17 walk-off victories in the bottom of the final inning.

One run also decided a quarter of all 60+ AAA games.

Division winners earned trophies, free Josten's rings and berths to the 2027 Tournament of Champions. They also grabbed bragging rights as a champion in the world's largest slow-pitch tournament, with 650 teams playing this year across four sessions.

If a ball rolls between outfielders, it soon becomes a ground-rule double.

Organizers set the outfield co-ed line as the home-run line. Any player who could launch a ball past the line earned a homer without needing to run the bases. The rules also allowed courtesy runners from home for players unable to reach first base on their own.



90s West players in the dugout, waiting for their next swing.

In the first inning, each team batted every player on the team. The East opened with three runs.

The West responded with fireworks. Single. Home run. Home run. Home run. Single. Single. Single. One out. Double. Two outs. And so on.

It looked like a team of Hank Aarons when it really was 88-year-old Billy Poe of California, 88-year-old Ronnie Guest of Arizona and 92-year-old Ray Newman of California hitting those bombs.



Ronnie Guest was also inducted into the National Senior Softball Hall of Fame this year.

Later in the game, the West turned an 8-4-3 double play.

“This should be mandatory attendance for all the lazy 50- and 60-year-olds out there,” a fan quipped from behind the home plate backstop.

After one inning, the West led 10-3. At game’s end, the score read 18-6.

That didn’t really matter.

“I thank the Lord that I can still do these things,” said the East team’s Roger Schroder, one of the 10

Session One results:

Men's 55+ Major Plus: Third-seeded BPA Sports of Pennsylvania (player photographed below) raced through a 12-team bracket in unstoppable fashion, winning every game by at least 15 runs. Including seeding games, BPA went 6-0 while bashing 41 homers. It held opponents to an average of 10 runs a game while putting up an average of 26. Top-seeded Suncoast 55s of Florida finished second after winning three elimination games. Fifth-seeded MC Improvements of Wisconsin captured third. FattBoyz 55 of California took fourth. **USA National Champion game**: Suncoast 37, Gold Nation Hustle of California 22.



Photo by Clover Schultz.

Men's 55+ Major: Top-seeded Escape Fire/Ancell of Minnesota (photo below) captured the Triple Grand Slam by winning the USA Championship game before also winning the overall 30-team bracket — but the final step took two extra games. Runner-up and seventh-seeded NOP Softball of Oklahoma edged Escape 21-20 in the winner’s bracket final, which sent previously unbeaten Escape into the elimination bracket. Escape defeated the third-place NW Jokers of Washington 16-12 to earn a rematch with NOP. After Escape won the first title game 22-18, neither team could pull away in the if-needed championship game, which Escape won 25-22 to finish 8-1 overall. Escobar Body Shop of Texas finished fourth in the 15-team division. **USA National Champion game:** Escape Fire/Ancell of Minnesota 29, L.A.F. of California 11.



Men's 55+ AAA: This 40-team division split into two pods before the final four unbeaten teams and eight elimination-bracket teams came together Sunday at Big League Dreams Softball Complex. Midwest Storm/Onyx/S&C Sports of Illinois started as the 11th seed in the American Pod before reeling off six consecutive victories, capped by a 19-13 championship triumph over Lokahi of Arizona, which was the American Pod’s 12th seed. Lokahi lost twice on championship Sunday to Midwest Storm, which went 7-1 overall and never trailed in the title game. Cryowrx 55 of Oregon, which started as the National Pod’s eighth seed, placed third. The National Pod’s 10th seed, Running Late 55s of Arizona, captured fourth. **USA National Champion game:** 805's 55s of California 30 (photo below, white USA jerseys), Maryland Classics 29 (photo below, red jerseys).

players who suited up for the small-town state champion Indiana basketball team featured in the movie, “Hoosiers.”

Guest called playing in the 90s game “a milestone.”

Relatives of some players agreed, such as the 15 or so people who came from out-of-state to cheer Ray Newman. All wore shirts with pictures of him playing while younger. Much younger.



Ray Newman of California.

“It was wonderful to see all these guys out here,” said Clint Johnson of San Diego, one of Newman’s nephews.

In a post-game ceremony, each player received a medal. Managers named their most valuable players. And SSUSA awarded both teams the Steve Simmons Memorial Sportsmanship Award for being such trailblazers.

“They inspire players who are younger to continue to play,” said Terry Hennessy, Senior Softball USA’s chief executive officer. “Plus, a lot of these players were instrumental in growing the sport when they were young.”





West 90s Team (left) and East 90s Team (right).



Men's 55+ AA: Seeded fifth of seven teams, WA Hard KnoX of Washington (photo below) won its bracket games 19-18, 19-9, 24-23 and 19-15 to capture the division. Top-seeded Longshoremen 55 of Virginia lost twice to Hard KnoX and finished second. Third-seeded Synergy of Indiana placed third. The fourth-seeded Friars 671-Team 55 of Guam took fourth. **USA National Champion game:** Longshoremen 28, WTP/Short Porch of Washington 14.



Men's 60+ Major Plus: Sixth-seeded County Heating & Air of California (photo below) averaged 33 runs per game, exploded for 28 in one unlimited-run inning alone, and double dipped top-seeded Dudley Lightning 60s of Missouri 28-15 and 30-23 in the title games. The finale had to be called after five innings after the Arroyo Grande Softball Complex lights went out. County Heating finished 6-2 overall. Dudley went unbeaten until the championship games. The fifth-seeded Minnesota Merchants 60 took third in the seven-team division. Seventh-seeded Tough Monkey/Onyx/Elite of California nabbed fourth. USA National Champions: Hawaii Five-O (no game).



Men's 60+ Major: Unbeaten and third-seeded RockNLegends 9/ Short Porch of Texas (photo lower left) prevented the top-seeded Top Gun Warriors of California from earning a Triple Grand Slam by slamming the door 23-22 in a see-saw title game. RockNLegends held opponents to 16 or fewer runs five times while racking up seven victories during its championship run. The Top Gun Warriors lost only twice — both times to RockNLegends. Sixth-seeded Pacific Enterprises of Washington started bracket play 3-0 before finishing third in the 24-team division. Eleventh-seeded E&E Metal Fab Inc/Jerich Company of Pennsylvania won six consecutive elimination games before finishing fourth. **USA National Champion game:** Top Gun Warriors 16 (photo lower right), Sullivan Contracting of Pennsylvania 7.





Men's 60+ AAA: This 44-team division split into National and America pods before the final 12 teams came together on championship Sunday. The Warriors 60, a California team that started as the second seed in the National Pod, defeated its opponents 12-7, 23-8, 21-19, 25-18, 18-16 and 19-15 to claim top honors. Wicked Slice Pizza of Connecticut started as the top seed in the American Pod and finished second after losing twice to Warriors. Top Gun Fury/ Written in Red of California won six elimination games to finish third. Caffe Versuvios/Nasti Softball of Florida won three elimination games to finish fourth. **USA National Champion game:** Sacramento Flash 27 (photo below), Wicked Slice Pizza of Connecticut 17.



Men's 60+ AA: Eighth-seeded So Cal Riptide 60 of California (photo below) won its first three bracket games before losing the winner's bracket final 30-16 to eventual runner-up Pelley Stix of Ontario, Canada. Riptide defeated the third-place team Spin Tees of Washington 24-21 before double dipping Pelley Stix in a pair of one-run thrillers, 21-20 and 22-21. In the first game, Riptide gave up seven runs in the bottom of the seventh before securing the final out. In the second game, Riptide scored seven runs in the seventh for a walk-off championship victory. Boys of Summerlin of Nevada finished fourth in the 10-team division.



Session Two Special Events at 2026 Worlds Highlight the Longevity of Playing Softball



The 90s Division as a whole, was awarded the 2026 Sportsmanship Award. Team managers, Dick Anderson (left, East team) and Red Simmons (right, West team) accept the awards. Photo by Clover Schultz.

By Donna McGuire
Softball News Report

When the elder statesmen of senior softball arrived for Session Two of the SSUSA World Championships, they proved just how many decades that dedicated athletes can continue to enjoy the game.

The two oldest players were born in 1929, the year the Great Depression began with Herbert Hoover occupying the White House. Yes, they turn 97 this year.

The youngest players were born in 1961, eight years before a human stepped foot on the moon. John F. Kennedy was president. They turn 65 this year.

“The oldest teams playing also made up the largest of the four sessions of the World Championships,” said Terry Hennessy, Senior Softball USA’s chief executive officer. “We were blown away by the inspiring 90s game, the six Hall of Fame inductions, and the growth of the 80+ and 85+ division, with 23 teams.”

Hall of Fame inductions and the annual 90s game both took place on opening day, Sept. 21, of the four-day session.



Hall of Fame inductees, presenters, SSUSA staff and audience watch the National and Senior Softball USA Hall of Fame inductions at Big League Dreams, Las Vegas. Photo by Clover Schultz.

Two Pioneer players, James Sims, 87, of Houston Texas and Ronnie Guest,88, of Sun City, Arizona, were inducted into the National Senior Softball Hall of Fame.

Three people and the Scrap Iron Softball Club were inducted into the Senior Softball USA National Hall of Fame.



John Parisi (right), President of the Scrap Iron Senior Softball Club, accepting the assocation's Senior Softball USA Hall of Fame aware, presented by SSUSA CEO, Terry Hennessy. Photo by Clover Schultz.

Steve Hillman of Santa Rosa, California was inducted as a player, Peter Takos, 81, of Naples, Florida was inducted as a Sponsor and Mark Jackson of Polk County, Florida was inducted for Lifetime Achievement. Daryl Idler, who was unable to attend the ceremony, was elected in the Player category and will be inducted at a later time.



Steve Hillman (right) of California accepting his Senior Softball USA Hall of Fame Award, presented by SSUSA's CEO, Terry Hennessy. Photo by Clover Schultz.

With smaller brackets than what younger teams usually face, six Session Two teams secured Triple Grand Slam titles during play across the Las Vegas area.

In each case, a team had to win the Eastern or Western national championship before winning the USA National Champion title at Vegas and then winning its World Championship bracket.

World Champions earned trophies, free Josten’s rings and berths to the 2027 Tournament of Champions in Polk County, Fla. Triple Grand Slam champions also received free shoes.



The manager registration reception gave session two managers a chance to check their rosters and offered sessoin two players a chance to see the newest senior softball equipment from multiple vendors. Photo by Clover Schultz.

Results:

Fifth-annual 90s game: West 18, East 6. Players and fans alike cherished the special event. For more about the 2026 90s Game, please see the story in the left column. (Photo below. The 90s West team has blue jerseys, and the East team as red).



Photo by Clover Schultz.

Men's 65+ Major Plus: Triple Grand Slam winner Cal Energy 65 of California (photo below) survived a 28-27 scare in its first bracket game by scoring four times in the final inning for a walk-off win over Samuri. Cal Energy's victory margin grew in each game afterward, capped by a 23-12 championship victory over fourth-seeded Texas Crush Sixty Fives. Texas Crush won three elimination games to reach the finals. Third-seeded TRT of Florida finished third in the eight-team division. Minnesota Merchants 65 took fourth. **USA National Championship game:** Cal Energy 30, The Bank of Delaware 27.



Men's 65+ Major: Triple Grand Slam winner Dirty Birds 65s of California (photo below) went 7-0 overall, including a 15-6 championship victory over third-seeded Avalanche 65s of Michigan. Four of Dirty Birds' five bracket victories were by double-digits. Second-seeded Action Auto Parts 65s of Rhode Island took third. Matney Legends of Texas placed fourth in the 18-team division. **USA National Championship game:** Dirty Birds 30, Action Auto Parks 20.



Men's 65+ AAA: Fourth-seeded Chelu of Oregon (first photo below, pink and blue jerseys) bolted past Albuquerque Asphalt Softball Club (first photo below, red jerseys) in the title game for a 19-4 triumph and 7-0 overall record. Four of Chelu's bracket wins came by double-digits. Third-seeded Top Gun Stars 65s of California won four elimination games to finish third in the 24-team division. Sixth-seeded Scrap Iron Heavy Metal of Colorado placed fourth. **USA National Championship game:** Team Riporti (second photo below) of New Jersey 22, SportStan/Islanders of California 15.





Men's 65+ AA: Sixth-seeded Sin City OutKasts of Nevada (photo below) capped a 6-1 tournament with a 15-13 championship victory over Antiques of Iowa City, which rallied with four seventh-inning each before falling short. The Antiques won three elimination games to reach the title bout. Fifth-seeded Ranalls Realty 65 of Arizona placed third in the 11-team division. Third-seeded Bomb City Buzzards of Texas won four elimination games before finishing fourth. **USA National Champions:** SoCal Riptide (no game).



Men's 70+ Major Plus: Triple Grand Slam champions Hollis Appraisals 70s of Florida (photo below) capped a 6-0 tournament with a 24-18 championship victory over second-seeded NorthWest Stampede of Oregon. R&R 70s of California took third in the three-team division. **USA National Championship game:** Hollis Appraisals 70s of Florida 29, NorthWest Stampede of Oregon 28.



Men's 70+ Major: Fourth-seeded Agway Steelers of Ontario, Canada, won bracket games 25-12, 22-21, 25-15, 25-17 and 14-13 to capture the 16-team division. Agway edged 14th-seeded Samurai 70 of California in the title game by holding Samurai to one run in the bottom of the unlimited-run inning after scoring twice in the top of the inning. Top-seeded Cal Energy 70 of California took third. The Minnesota River Bats captured fourth. **USA National Championship game:** Cal Energy 30 (photo below), Promotion/PHX Tube of New Jersey 17.



Men's 70+ AAA: Top-seeded Triple Grand Slam winner Prime 70s of Illinois (photo below) proved powerful in this 25-team division. Its 7-0 recorded included winning the USA National Championship and going unbeaten in five bracket games, including a 18-5 triumph over the runner-up Dayton Legends in the title game. Dayton, which started as the fourth seed, finished 7-2 overall but was held scoreless in four innings in the title game. Second-seeded Supreme Athletics 70s of Nevada captured third place. Twelfth-

seeded East/West Aircraft Pilots of Idaho finished fourth. **USA National Championship game:** Prime 15, Supreme Athletics of Nevada 9.



Men's 70+ AA: Third-seeded East-West Aircraft Sales 70 of Idaho (photo below, white jerseys) won both of its seeding games and all five of its bracket games, including an 18-14 title triumph over the fifth-seeded Northwest Lightning 70s of Washington (photo below, blue jerseys). East-West gradually built a lead early and went up by nine runs after four innings. Sixth-seeded Los Vatos Viejos 70 II of Arizona captured third place. Scrap Iron Diamonds 70 of Colorado finished fourth in the 20-team division. USA National Champions: Past Our Prime (no game).



Men's 75+ Major Plus: A longtime rivalry ended with a whimper when runner-up Venom 75s of Florida forfeited the championship game to Omen 75 of California (photo below) due to injuries and a sick player. Omen had earned the upper hand by defeating Enviro-Vac Marauders of Ontario, Canada, 15-9 in its first bracket game and by subduing Venom 21-11 in its second bracket game. Animals 75s of California finished third. Enviro-Vac took fourth in the four-team division. **USA National Championship game:** Venom 19, Omen 18.



Men's 75+ Major: Second-seeded R&R 75s of California (photo below) won two lopsided bracket games and two close bracket games, including a 23-19 championship victory over fifth-seeded Texas Express 75s. That earned R&R the Triple Grand Slam title. Top-seeded Ancient 75s of Arizona nabbed third place. KC Kids 75s of Missouri finished fourth in the nine-team division. **USA National Champions:** R&R 75s (no game).



Men's 75+ AAA: Fifth-seeded Team Ryan of Washington (photo below) double dipped the 10th-seeded Sidewinders 75s of Arizona 19-16 and 26-21 in the title games after losing by one run to the same team in the winner's bracket finale. Team Ryan finished 7-1 overall. Eighth-seeded No Guts, No Glory placed third, with a resume that included four inside-the-park grand slams. Third-seeded Warriors 75 of Hawaii nabbed fourth in the 14-team division. **USA National Champions:** Yogi's Boys 75 of New Jersey (no game).



Men's 75+ AA: The third-seeded Scrap Iron Stampede 75 of Colorado (photo below) started 1-2 in seeding games but owned bracket play, where it went 3-0. Stampede defeated Twin Peaks Desert Heat 75 of Nevada 29-28 in the title game by scoring twice in the bottom of the unlimited-run inning. The top-seeded OKC Outlaws 75s of Oklahoma finished third. Northwest Sage of Washington took fourth in the four-team division.



Men's 80+ Major Plus: Playing a best-of-three format, Omen 80 of California swept defending champion Maverick Construction 80s of Texas 15-12 and 21-19. Omen led the entire second game. As the Western National and USA National champions, the bracket victory also earned Omen the Triple Grand Slam title.

Men's 80+ Major: After an 0-2 start in seeding games, the fourth-seeded Tennessee Thumpers compiled a 5-1 record in bracket play — including 21-4 and 20-11 championship victories over the third-seeded Sidewinders 80s of Arizona. Valley Fog of

California finished third. The second-seeded Minnesota Masters 80s finished fourth in the five-team division. USA National Champions: Valley Fog (no game).

Men's 80+ AAA: This seven-team division played a full round robin format, with the San Antonio Legends of Texas coming out on top. The Legends went 5-1, including a 15-12 triumph over runner-up ZIA 80s of New Mexico on the final day. Three teams finished 4-2, with ZIA earning second place under tie-breaker rules. KC Kids/Bale Chevrolet of Missouri took third. Fourth went to 80 Ho'oikaika of Hawaii.

Men's 85+ Major Plus: Playing a best-of-three format, Omen 85 of California subdued defending 85+ Major champion Center For Sight of Florida 20-5 and 20-5. They also met in the the USA National Championship game, which Center For Sight (photo below) won 14-13.



Men's 85+ Gold: These three teams played a round robin to set up a single-elimination bracket. The top-seeded Major team Top Gun Blue Angels 85 of California edged runner-up Team Rehab 85 of Minnesota 21-20 in the championship game. Midwest Driving School Antiques of Kansas finished third. **USA National Champions:** Top Gun Blue Angels received the 85+ Major title while Team Rehab got the AAA title. Neither had an opponent for a USA game.

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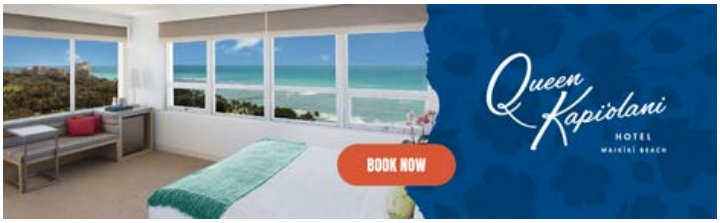

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