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SSUSA announces on-field bat testing policy. Bats were tested for the policy at the 2024 Tournament of Champions, January in Polk County, Florida.

**Obituaries: April 2024**

**Softball News Report**

**Robert G. Tschida**



Robert "Bob" Tschida, 87, of St. Paul, Minn. died on Feb. 15, peacefully.

Longtime St. Paul player, Bob was a member of several long-standing Minnesota senior teams for over two decades with Senior Softball USA.

Bob lived his whole life in St. Paul and after serving in the Army, he worked for 35 years at Excel Energy before retiring in the late 1990s, according to his online obituary.

"Bob was known to many as a coach and teammate," states his

**SSUSA Announces Field Bat Test Standard**

**Softball News Report**

The Sports Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) Senior Bat Committee, NTS (the official certification lab of SSUSA) and Senior Softball USA (SSUSA) have been working together on a joint project to establish an on-field senior bat testing limit. The result for Senior Softball is a 140-pound compression minimum for on-field testing.

This is NOT a new standard for approving senior bats. This is a field compression test to identify bats deemed too hot for senior play.

Bats testing less than 140 pounds in the field test will not be allowed. Bats that are cracked will not be allowed.

SSUSA will be acquiring bat testers and begin testing bats as soon as the testers arrive. The testers will be distributed as we acquire them, much like we distribute defibrillators (AEDs) to SSUSA tournaments today.

The purpose of the on-field test is to ensure an even playing field and address the use of bats that have been altered to improve performance.

Senior Softball USA would especially like to thank the SFIA, senior bat manufacturers and the NTS lab for their help and support in establishing this on-field test.

**Altered bat suspensions & team penalty:**

If a player refuses to immediately surrender a bat suspected of being altered to enhance performance, the player will be suspended for life. If the player voluntarily surrenders a bat found to be altered to enhance performance, the player will be suspended for 10 years. If the player refuses to surrender the bat, or if the bat is found to be altered,

obituary. "His coaching included: hockey at St. Luke's, Highland area, and Central area; baseball at IHM, North End Legion and for the past 25 years at Highland Catholic grade school... He played baseball and softball for more than 40 years. He played on many senior softball championship teams and was on the Senior Olympic team winning a gold medal."

Bob was also honored by the Minnesota Twins and the Hot Stove league of America as an Honored Old Timer. In his spare time, he enjoyed attending sporting events, coffee with his St. Paul friends, family and telling stories and jokes.

"I played with Bob for more than 20 years, we earned lots of national championships with the teams Coffee Cup 60, Minnesota/Miken 65s and Jimmy's Minnesota Gold 75s," remembered Dick Anderson, a long-time Minnesota Hall of Fame player and manager. "His quick reactions covered 3rd base with ease and even when he wasn't playing senior softball competitively, he always joined us in league play."

Bob will also be remembered playing with Team Rehabilitation 85s (MN), Minnesota Masters 80s, and MN Legends 80s.

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### **Ron Danoski**



Ron Danoski, 75, of Oconto, Wisc. and Arizona, died on Feb. 19.

Ron is remembered by the Senior Softball USA office as a longtime, well-liked player, starting with SSUSA in the early 2000s.

Ron has been playing softball since he was 16 years old. Originally living in Arizona, Ron is remembered by players and teammates from the West Coast to the north-central United States. He was inducted into the Wisconsin and Illinois USSSA Hall of Fame in 1994 and 2007,

the team will forfeit all previously earned current season Tournament of Champions bids and is declared ineligible to participate in the current season SSUSA World Championships and Tournament of Champions.

## **New Batter Box Rule and 85+ Home Run Showcase the 2024 Southwest Champs**



**Top Gun Blue Angels (in the field) play Scrap Iron 85 Legends in the Men's 85+ Major division's championship game at the 2024 Southwest Championships.**

### **By Donna McGuire Softball News Report**

Californians dominated many championship games as 218 teams from 15 states battled for boasting rights during Senior Softball USA's Southwest Championships in Las Vegas.

Overall, 30 teams captured berths to the 2025 Tournament of Champions by winning their divisions during games played April 9-14 at six ballparks in Las Vegas and Henderson, Nev.

Nineteen of the champs hailed from California. The others came from Arizona, Washington, Nevada, Oregon, Texas and Missouri.

Nine teams completed undefeated runs through pool and bracket play.

"Anytime 200-plus senior teams gather to play, there is excitement, a chance to compete in large divisions – and see old friends," said Terry Hennessy, SSUSA's chief executive officer. "The Southwest was no exception. Perhaps the most amazing hit came in the oldest division, when 92-year-old Ron McElroy [\[\(photo below\)\]](#) hit a home run in the 85 Major-Plus championship game for Top Gun!"

respectively, and into the National Senior Softball Hall of Fame in 2011.

“Ron was such a spirited player,” said Fran Dowell, Executive Director of SSUSA. “Each time I saw him he had a smile from ear to ear and was so looking forward to playing. He will be greatly missed.”

Ron has played with Arizona Industrial Supply 55s, Chicago Classics (Red) 50s, GSF 60s (AZ), Greco/AZ Hitmen 60s, Full Circle 65s (CA), Elite 70s LVSSA (NV) and Handeland Flooring 70s (WI).

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### Joseph Bruno



Joseph Bruno, 83, of Burbank, Calif., died on March 31.

Joe started senior softball with Senior Softball USA in the early 2000s, playing with many Southern California teams in his two-decade history.

Joe played softball from an early age and continued it during his time in the Navy, according to his online obituary. “Born to play softball, from his days in the Navy playing underhand fast pitch to his last home run. He was born to be a champion on and off the field.”

He will be remembered for playing with Palm Spring Diamonds 65s, El Paseo Bank 70s, Sons of Pitches 70s and Lighthouse 75s, all of California.

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### Robert McDonald



**Ron McElroy, 92, of the Top Gun Blue Angels 85 (CA), is the oldest player at the 2024 Southwest Championships in Las Vegas.**

With the new season now several months old, players seem to have adjusted to the 2024 batter’s box rule, said Tournament Director Tim McElroy. Stepping out the front of the box when contacting the pitched ball no longer is an out as long as the batter’s rear foot is not completely in front of the strike mat’s front edge.

“After years of hearing complaints about the ‘out of the box’ call, there was a pretty easy transition to the new rule,” McElroy said. “Players seemed to adapt pretty quickly.”

The overall quality of umpiring also received high marks, McElroy added.

“Players and umpires won’t always agree on judgment calls, and yes – umps do occasionally botch a playing rule,” he said. “I feel that the gap between our best and worst umpires has really closed in the past few seasons. As a group, we’re more consistent from one diamond to the next.”

### Results:

**Women’s 40+ Masters Major:** The second-seeded Firestarter Oldies of Washington ([photo below](#)) lost their first bracket game by one run then reeled off six consecutive victories, including 20-10 and 13-12 championship wins over fourth-seeded Not Today of Nevada. Tharaldson Softball of Nevada captured third place in the eight-team bracket.



**Photo by Lora Flewelling**

**Women’s 40+ Masters Silver:** Top-seeded TST, a AAA team from California, capped a 6-0 tournament with a 21-16 championship victory over second-seeded Custom Truck of Nevada. Fifth-seeded Blue Crush of California finished third in the 10-team bracket.

**Women’s 50+ Major:** Third-seeded Cash Out 50s of California finished 4-1 by edging top-seeded Old School of California 11-10 in the title game. Old School won three elimination games to reach the title contest. Fourth-seeded Stix With Impact of California finished third in the five-team division.

Robert William "Bill" McDonald Jr., 90, died of Montgomery, Tex. died on April 19.

Bill had a long history of playing sports and started with Senior Softball USA over two decades ago.

He began playing sports in high school and continued in the U.S. Army and into his 80s. "He was recruited for the U.S. Olympic track team, but, as the story goes, he missed the plane and was unable to compete," according to his online obituary.

"Bill played in several international tournaments, including the first tournaments to launch senior softball in Japan in the early 2000s," said Terry Hennessy, SSUSA's chief executive officer. "Bill was a big power-hitting Texan with an even bigger heart... and a great teammate."

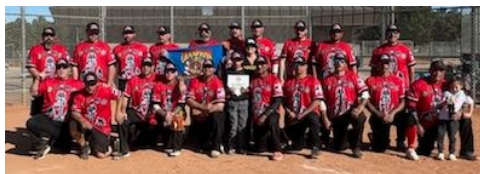
He was also a man of many talents and hats, as he worked in the oil and engineering fields while owning several businesses his life, including a furniture store, transportation company and asphalt/paving company. He was very active in local livestock shows and rodeos, volunteering much of his time and served as a city councilman for Deer Park, Tex. When not working or volunteering, Bill enjoyed barbeque and often participated in local cook-offs.

Bill will be remembered for attending international tournaments in Australia, Austria, Europe, Holland, Japan, and New Zealand; as well as Texas teams: Renegades 70, Houston Golden Eagles 70, and Local Deer Park Team.

**Women's 50+ AAA:** Fourth-seeded OnFire/Afoa Insurance of California (photo below) capped a 5-1 tournament with a 22-16 title game victory over third-seeded West Coast United of California 22-16. Top-seeded Takin' Chances of California finished third in the six-team division.



**Men's 40+ Masters Major Plus:** In a thriller of a finish, second-seeded Johnny Blaze/Easton/Miken/Worth of California (photo below) double dipped top-seeded JK Inc./Proton of California 28-27 and 29-27 for the title of the six-team bracket. Fifth-seeded Legend Sports of Nevada won three elimination games and finished third.



**Men's 40+ Major:** Unbeaten in its six games, second-seeded Cheap Suits/Republic Realty of California (photo below) defeated fifth-seeded Granddaddy Softball/GS Sports of Nevada 29-24 for the championship. Ninth-seeded The Krew of California took third in the 14-team bracket.



**Men's 50/55+ Major Plus:** Second-seeded JK Inc/Miken/Easton/Worth, a 55+ Major Plus team from California, went 4-1 overall and defeated the third-seeded 55+ Arizona Heat team 25-10 for the title of the three-team division. Stadium of California finished third.

**Men's 50+ Major:** The seventh-seeded Asylum Ballers of California (photo below) recovered from a 0-2 start in pool play to go unbeaten in the bracket, including two double-digit wins. The Ballers defeated L.A.F. 50 of California 25-17 in the title game of the seven-team bracket. C.B.C. of California finished third.



**Men's 50+ AAA:** Seventh-seeded Rancid of California went 6-1 overall and won the title with a 19-7 triumph over top-seeded Simply Aloha of California. Third-seeded Viejos So Cal finished third in the 15-team division.

**Men's 55+ Major:** Top-seeded ShowTime So Cal capped a 5-0 tourney with a 27-25 championship victory over fourth-seeded Scrap Iron Thunder of Colorado. Third-seeded JMJ Construction of California placed third in the six-team bracket.

**Men's 50/55+ Silver:** Second-seeded Kamikaze, a 55+ AAA team from California, (photo below), double-dipped eighth-seeded Lokahi of Arizona 18-8 and 14-13 for the title and a 6-2 overall record. Eleventh-seeded Running Late nabbed third place in the 12-team division.



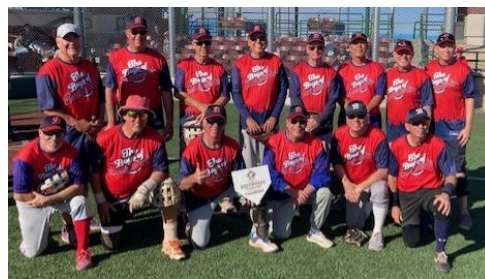
**Men's 60+ Major Plus:** Playing a best-of-three format, undefeated Somerville Softball of California (photo below) swept Sonoma County Crush of California 30-9 and 30-8.



**Men's 60+ Major:** Ninth-seeded Arizona Old School, which went 6-2 overall, lost the first championship game 23-20 but captured the high-scoring second game 36-34 over fourth-seeded Hawaii Five-O, which won six consecutive elimination games before losing the finale. Seventh-seeded Express 60s of California finished third in the 16-team division.

**Men's 60+ AAA:** The third-seeded Timeless Owls of Arizona capped a 7-0 tournament with a 20-16 title game victory over the 16<sup>th</sup>-seeded Silver Stars of California, which knocked off the top seed early in bracket play and later won three elimination games to reach the finale. Fifth-seeded KSS/Taco Bell of Arizona finished third in the 17-team division.

**Men's 60+ AA:** The top-seeded Boys of Summerlin of Nevada. (photo below), which went 5-1 overall, lost the first championship game 13-12 before winning the second 19-13 over fifth-seeded Cut Loose 60s of California. Third place in the six-team division went to the third-seeded Drifters 60s of Nevada.



**Men's 65+ Major Plus:** Undeclared in six games, Cal Energy (photo below) defeated Samurai 65 of California 26-11 for the title of the three-team division. Xcelerated/Demolition

of California finished third.



**Men's 65+ Major:** NorthWest Stampede of Oregon went 5-1 overall and captured the four-team division with a 14-8 championship victory over the third-seeded California Scorpions. Scrap Iron/Rocky Mountain Thunder finished third in the four-team bracket.

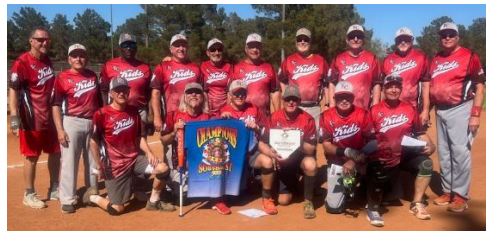
**Men's 65+ AAA:** The top two seeds in this 13-team bracket vied for the crown, with second-seeded Sin City Mob of Nevada capturing the "if needed" title game 18-2 after losing the first championship game 21-11 to Marc-Taylor Inc (MTI) of Arizona. The 10<sup>th</sup>-seeded Hustlers of California took third.

**Men's 65+ AA:** Undefeated and top-seeded Lights Out 65 of California edged the third-seeded Scrap Iron 65s Rockies of Colorado 12-11 in the finale. Fifth-seeded New Beginnings Softball 65s of California finished third in the five-team division.

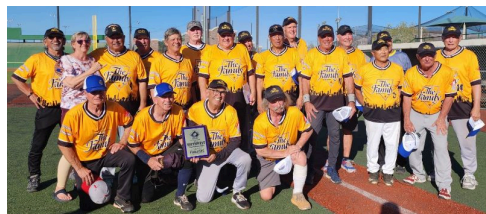
**Men's 70+ Major Plus:** Playing a best-of-three format, Timberworks/Suncoast of California (photo below) needed all three games to dispatch Top Gun Over The Edge of California 20-5, 15-18 and 24-15.



**Men's 70+ Major:** The sixth-seeded KC Kids 70s (photo below) won all five of their bracket games, including two by one run, and capped their 6-1 tournament with an 8-5 title triumph over the eighth-seeded Arizona Scorpions. The second-seeded Bulldogs of Oregon nabbed third in the 12-team division.



**Men's 70+ AAA:** The third-seeded Spokane Grey Sox of Washington finished 9-1 overall while double dipping the second-seeded Family of Nevada (photo below) 18-13 and 23-7 for the title. Family was the only team to defeat the Grey Sox. Fifth-seeded Excessive Force of California captured third in the 14-team division.



**Men's 70+ AA:** The top-seeded Los Vatos Viejos 70 II of Arizona capped a 5-0 tournament with an 18-9 championship victory over the fourth-seeded Duke City Dynamite

of New Mexico. The second-seeded Scrap Iron Diamonds of Colorado finished third in the five-team division.

**Men's 75+ Major Plus:** Playing a best-of-three format, undefeated Omen 75 of California swept 75 Scrap Iron Diamonds 18-7 and 18-4 for the title.

**Men's 75+ Major:** Second-seeded R&R 75s of California capped a 6-0 tournament with an 18-3 title game victory over seventh-seeded Last Call 75, a Nevada team that won four elimination games to reach the championship. Fifth-seeded Al's Sports Shop of California took third in the seven-team division.

**Men's 75+ AAA:** The second-seeded So Cal Warriors capped a 6-0 tournament with an 11-5 championship victory over fourth-seeded Git-R-Done 75 of California. Top-seeded Triple Play of California finished third in the seven-team division.

**Men's 80+ Major Plus:** Playing nine games in three days, second-seeded Maverick Construction of Texas ([photo below](#)) double dipped Omen 80 of California 11-6 and 14-5 for the title and a 7-2 overall record. Scrap Iron 80 of Colorado took third in the three-team division.



**Men's 75/80+ Gold:** The top-seeded Sidewinders 80s of Arizona finished 5-1 and defeated Ho'oikaika of Hawaii 16-5 for the title. Top Gun 80 Gold finished third in the four-team division.

**Men's 80+ AAA:** Playing a best-of-three format, Git-R-Done of California ([photo below](#)) swept the IES 80 Coyotes of Nevada 19-12 and 19-18 and finished 4-1 overall.



**Men's 85+ Major:** Playing a best-of-three format, Top Gun Blue Angels 85 of California swept the Scrap Iron 85 Legends in two close games, 16-14 and 23-22, for the title and a 4-1 overall record.

## Record 60 Teams Compete at 2024 Tidewater Classic



**Neptune Statue on the Virginia Beach Boardwalk**

**By Donna McGuire  
Softball News Report**

Thanks to a strong turnout of men's 40+ Masters teams, the SSUSA Tidewater Classic drew a record 60 teams to Virginia Beach, Virginia, this year.

Nearly a third of the teams played in either the 40+ AAA or the 40+ Platinum divisions. Though winners of both those divisions finished unbeaten, very few other teams pulled off that feat.

Overall, teams from 10 states gathered at the Princess Anne Athletic Complex for the five-day event, which concluded April 7. Champions hailed from Pennsylvania, North Carolina, New York, Illinois and Delaware.

Participants battled not only each other but also the elements.

"Four solid days of heavy wind made for some interesting play," Tournament Director Tim McElroy said. "No fly ball was routine."

Eleven teams earned berths to the 2025 Tournament of Champions in Polk County, Florida, by winning their divisions.

**Results:**

**Men's 40+ Masters Platinum:** Fifth-seeded Detwiler Roofing/Treedem NE, a Major team from Pennsylvania, capped a 7-0 tournament with a 24-18 title game victory over third-seeded Bob Johnson/Roc Nation of New York. Sixth-seeded HDI/Rapid Fire of Virginia won five elimination games – including three by one run each -- to place third in the 14-team division, the tournament's largest.

**Men's 40+ Masters AAA:** Top-seeded Sarafis Painting & Construction of Pennsylvania capped a 5-0 tournament with a 24-16 championship victory over third-seeded F3 40s of Virginia. Fourth-seeded Y'All Next of Maryland took third in the five-team division.

**Men's 50+ AAA:** Second-seeded Racehorse Tavern/Old Skool/GTS Sports of Pennsylvania finished 5-1 and avenged a pool game loss to top-seeded BACKSIDE of Virginia with a 14-10 title game triumph. Potomac Sports of West Virginia finished third in the four-team division.



**Men's 50/55+ Platinum:** Fifth-seeded Half Century, a 50+ Major team from North Carolina, defeated second-seeded Deluxe Bakery/Phoenix Tube of New Jersey 20-12 in the title game to finish 5-1 overall. Fourth-seeded Excel Masonry/Red Athlete of Virginia won three elimination games to finish third in the seven-team bracket.

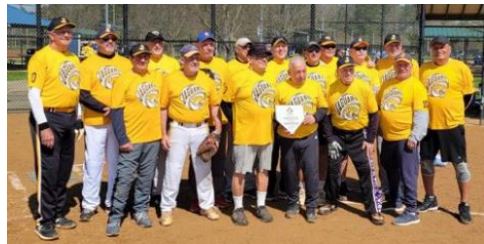
**Men's 55+ Major:** In the tournament's closest championship game, fourth-seeded Bob Johnson/Rizzo's of New York edged sixth-seeded BACKSIDE of Virginia 20-19 to finish 5-1 overall. Seventh-seeded East Coast Excavation of Virginia finished third in the nine-team division.

**Men's 55/60+ Silver:** Top-seeded Team Illinois, a 60+ AAA team, lost the first title game 16-11 but won the second 22-18 over sixth-seeded Longshoremen 55 of Virginia. DHF Contractors 60s of Virginia took third in the six-team bracket.

**Men's 60+ Major:** Fourth-seeded Carolina Legends 60 of North Carolina lost the first title game 19-17 but won the second 13-9 over top-seeded Diamondblade of Maryland. Estes/Rheem of Virginia finished third in the five-team division.

**Men's 65/70+ Gold:** Fourth-seeded Hudson Valley Cyclones lost their first bracket game then won four in a row, including 21-17 and 7-0 championship games over Northern Virginia Force 70s, which also won a TOC berth as the top-finishing 70+ Major team. Northern Virginia Force 65s finished third in the four-team bracket.

**Men's 70+ AAA:** Playing a best-of-three format, the Long Island Jaguars 70s White team ([photo below](#)) swept the Syracuse Cyclones of New York 15-13 and 13-6.



**Men's 70/75+ Gold:** Robinson's Furniture/OTX of Delaware finished 5-0 and earned a 70+ AA berth to the TOC by defeating the Long Island Jaguars 75s 21-17 in the title game of the three-team division. Northern Virginia Force 75 placed third.

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