

June 6, 2024 - In This Issue:

Record Number of Teams Overcome Rain at 2024 Atlantic Coast Champs

Close Games and Undefeated Teams Define 2024 Top Gun Reno Tune Up

Drew Pearson Inducted Into SSUSA Hall of Fame During Atlantic Coast Champs

Obituaries - June 2024



The Atlantic Coast Championships were played at Raleigh's Walnut Creek Softball Complex (left) while California teams Top Gun Stealth and CA Scorpions play the 65/70+ Platinum Championship game at the Top Gun Reno Tune-Up in Perris, CA.

Drew Pearson Inducted Into SSUSA Hall of Fame During Atlantic Coast Champs



Softball News Report

Raleigh, NC – At high noon on Saturday, May 18 – on the same diamond he proposed to his wife, Donna – Drew Pearson was inducted into the National Senior Softball Hall of Fame in the player category.

His Carolina A teammates held the American flag, his good friend Donnie Goodman sang the National Anthem and his family and friends gathered for the celebration.

His coach, Jack Rule, talked about Pearson's character and value to his team and Terry Hennessy, SSUSA's chief executive officer, made the keynote speech.

"Drew played on two USA teams I managed for the Pacific Rim

Record Number of Teams Overcome Rain at 2024 Atlantic Coast Champs



**By Donna McGuire
Softball News Report**

Seventy-five teams danced around wet weather when they gathered in Raleigh, N.C., for Senior Softball USA's six-day Atlantic Coast Championship in mid-May.

Mother Nature proved a strong adversary. Yet she could not defeat the Walnut Creek Softball Complex grounds crew.

"We had weather concerns all week long in Raleigh, but the staff at Walnut Creek put forth incredible efforts to get games played," Tournament Director Tim McElroy said.

Teams from 17 states participated in the largest Atlantic Coast Championship since the event moved to North Carolina in 2019. The 55+ age group alone consisted of 20 teams.

Six first-session teams and 11 second-session teams earned berths to the 2025 Tournament of Champions in Polk County, Florida, by winning their divisions. Overall, six teams finished undefeated.

Federation Championships, one in Japan in 2018 and the other in Hawaii in 2019,” said Hennessy. “He is an outstanding athlete both on defense – covering unbelievable ground in the outfield – and batting, where he hit over .800, with immense power, in both tournaments.”



Pearson has been named All Tournament, All American or MVP in 30 major tournaments since 2012. He was MVP of the USA team in both 2018 and 2019.

“Drew was an amazing ambassador to the international teams we played and has been an ardent cheerleader for his own teams,” said Hennessy. “It is that mix of strong character, exceptional skill and outstanding achievement that makes Drew Pearson an excellent addition into the National Senior Softball Hall of Fame.”

Obituaries - June 2024

Kristopher Aaron Fickling



Kristopher Fickling, 58, of Baltimore, MD, died on April 21.

Kristopher started to play Senior Softball USA tournaments in 2021, as society began re-opening after the Covid-19 pandemic.

However, his love of sports started much earlier in his life

Though the first session began as scheduled May 14, tournament directors pulled the teams off sloppy fields after the first round for safety reasons.

More than two inches of rain fell that day, but park staff had the fields ready to go Wednesday morning. The 65+ and older divisions finished the final two days under a modified format.

Mother Nature also attempted to quash weekend play, with the forecast calling for an 80 percent chance of rain. Once again, she failed.

“We made the decision to play a few extra rounds of games on Friday night,” McElroy said. “Rains did come Saturday evening, but most teams were done for the day when the washout occurred. Park staff put forth a fantastic effort overnight and had us up and going with only a short delay on Sunday.”

McElroy dubbed the park staff as the weekend MVP, with “the umpires running a close second.” Though a few umpires canceled over the forecast, the ones who worked “were fantastic,” he said.

Results:

Men’s 40+ Major Plus: After two one-run losses and a one-run victory in pool play, third-seeded Killman’s/Lewis Lawn/DeMarini of North Carolina ([photo below](#)) stormed its way through bracket play, winning 37-23, 41-31 and 28-8. In the title game, Killman’s defeated second-seeded HDI/Rapid Fire of Virginia. Suncoast Adidas 40s of Florida finished third in the three-team division.



Men’s 40+ AAA: Top-seeded Smokin Aces/American Legion Post #327 of Virginia ([photo below](#)) lost the first title game 26-14 to third-seeded Black Kings of Maryland but controlled the second 23-4 to finish 5-1 overall. Y’All Next of Maryland finished third in the three-team division.



Men’s 40/50+ Platinum: Top-seeded Suncoast/Adidas 50s of Florida won the 50+ Major Plus title by defeating the 40+ Major team Shin Biscuits/Potomac Sports of Maryland, ([photo below](#)), 25-8 in the title game of the four-team bracket. Overall in six games, Suncoast outscored its opponents 148-77. Sake, a 40+ Major team from Maryland, finished third.

according to his funeral obituary. "Kristopher was... competitive in his sports world as he continued to play in various local sports leagues in the Baltimore community."

Having grown up on the mid-Atlantic East Coast, he attended college in Texas on a soccer scholarship.

Rough Ryders 50s of Maryland, the last team Kristopher played with, stated, "Rest in peace, Kris. Love you! From your Rough Ryders family," as shared by team manager, Michael Barber.

In addition to Rough Ryders 50s (MD), Kristopher also will be remembered for playing with Aftermath 40s (MD).

Randall Lee Tompkins



Randy Tompkins, 64, of Phoenix, died on May 22.

After Randy's retirement from a 31-year career with General Motors in 2008, he joined Senior Softball USA in 2010, last playing in the 2024 Southwest Championships, April 9-14 in Las Vegas.

"Randy loved spending his time playing with the Senior Softball USA league any chance he could," according to his online obituary. "His nickname was "Tall Thunder", [as] the guy could hit home runs."

"Randy was a great teammate... he was our leading hitter, batted fourth and hit bombs for home runs usually several every tournament," remembers Gary Duede, assistant manager of Marc-Taylor Inc (MTI) 65s out of Phoenix.

In addition to senior softball, he enjoyed bowling, earning 26 perfect games in his bowling career.

Randy will be remembered for playing with numerous Arizona teams, including MTI's former title,



Men's 50+ Major: Fourth-seeded Roebell Painters/Paradise Painting/Allstate Carburetor of New York (photo below) lost the first title game 17-14 before winning the second 23-21 over third-seeded HRS/OSS Apparel/Fat Chops of Rhode Island. Second-seeded AST/QTI/CF/GPOA/PNS of Virginia took third in the four-team division.

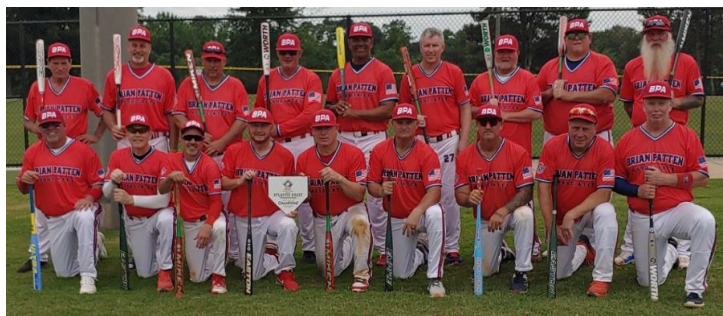


Men's 50+ AAA: Unbeaten in six games, second-seeded Broughton Pharmacy of North Carolina (photo below) dispatched fourth-seeded That 50's Show of Pennsylvania 23-20 in the championship game. Fifth-seeded FFE 50s of Maryland took third in the nine-team division.

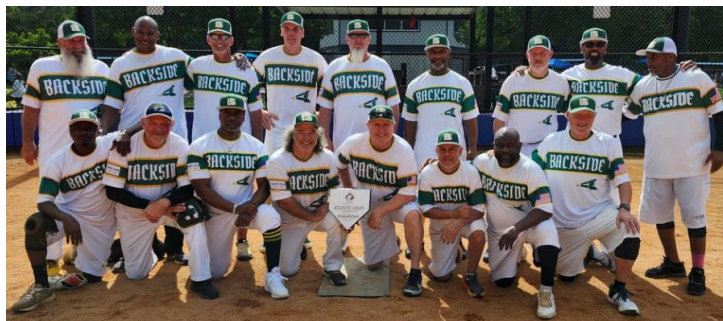


Men's 55+ Major Plus: Playing a best-of-three format, BPA/Miken/Worth/Easton of Pennsylvania (photo below) swept Excel Masonry/Red Athlete of Virginia 22-20 and 29-24 for the title and an overall 5-0 record.

CJ & S Express 60s and 65s, 99 Problems 60s, Arizona Old School 55s and 60s, Sidewinders 60s, 4 The Fallen 50s and Phoenix Bulldawgz 50s.



Men's 55+ Major: Fifth-seeded Backside of Virginia (photo below) won all four of its bracket games, capped by a 22-17 title game victory over 10th-seeded Walkoff of Maryland, which won five elimination games to reach the championship game. Second-seeded Born Free Softball of North Carolina finished third in the 10-team division.



Men's 55+ AAA: The third-seeded Georgia Renegades (photo below) double dipped the top-seeded and previously unbeaten Holy City Hitmen of South Carolina to win the title. The Renegades won the final 19-8. Sixth-seeded Alliance/Scrap Iron 55 of Colorado took third in the six-team bracket.

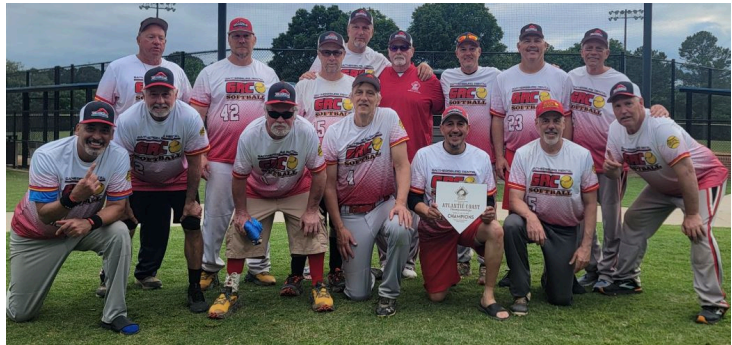


Men's 55+ AA: Playing a best-of-three format, Harford Financial Group of Maryland swept the Longshoremen of Virginia to finish as champs and 4-1 overall.

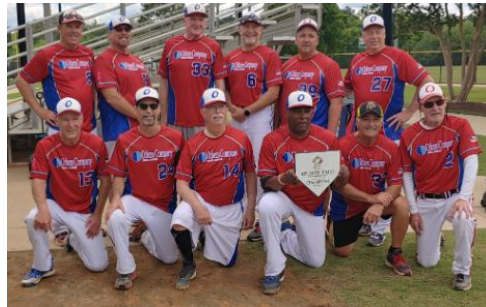
Men's 60+ Major: Third-seeded Estes/Rheem of Virginia (photo below) defeated the eighth-seeded Carolina A's of North Carolina 25-23 for the title and an overall 5-1 record. Fourth-seeded Diamondblade of Maryland won three elimination games to finish third in the eight-team bracket.



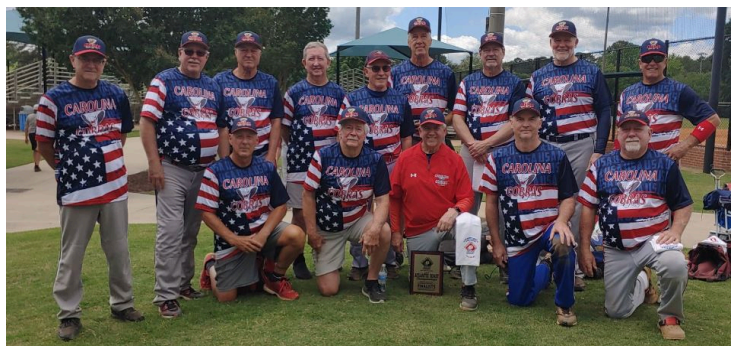
Men's 60+ AAA: Third-seeded Gaithersburg Rental/TC Backer of Maryland ([photo below](#)) lost its second bracket game by one run then won five in a row, including 17-9 and 19-9 championship game victories over fourth-seeded Raging Mummies of Florida. Seventh-seeded Alliance/Scrap Iron 60 of Colorado finished third in the eight-team division.



Men's 65+ Gold: Fourth-seeded The Ockers Company of Massachusetts ([photo below](#)) defeated second-seeded Talaga Construction 22-8 for the title and a 3-2 overall record. Bassa/Old Skool of Virginia finished third in the four-team division.



Men's 65/70+ Major Plus: Playing a best-of-three format, Ted Todd Insurance, a 65+ Major Plus team from Florida, defeated the 70+ Major Carolina Cobras of North Carolina ([photo below](#)) 21-6 and 14-11. Ted Todd finished 4-0.



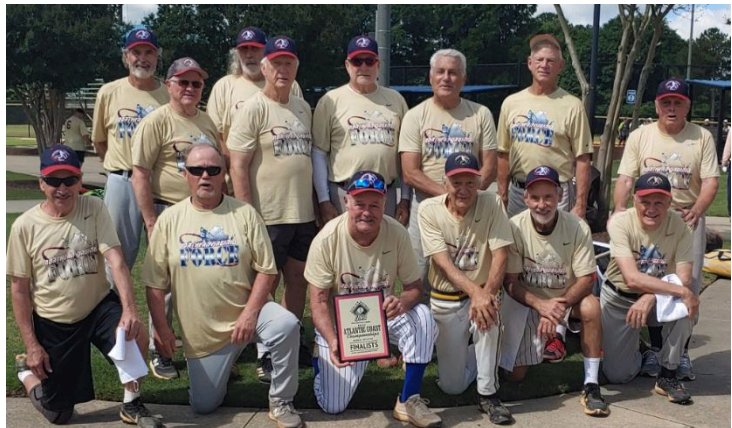
Men's 70+ AAA: Playing a best-of-three format, the Syracuse Cyclones of New York swept Simmons-Day All Stars of Maryland 15-8 and 14-8 to finish 2-2 overall.

Men's 70/75+ Platinum: Top-seeded Venom, a 75+ Major Plus team from Florida, capped a 4-0 tournament with a 11-8 championship victory over third-seeded Pill & Pill 70 of West Virginia. Northern Virginia Force 70 finished third in the three-team division.

Men's 70/75+ Silver: Playing a best-of-three format, the unbeaten 70+ AA S. Wake Shockers of North Carolina ([photo below](#)) swept HTR 75s of North Carolina 20-2 and 12-7.



Men's 75/80+ Platinum: Also in a best-of-three format, the Maverick Construction 80+ Major Plus team from Texas swept Northern Virginia Force 75s 14-11 and 22-13.



Close Games and Undefeated Teams Define 2024 Top Gun Reno Tune Up

By Nic Francois
Softball News Report

In an effort to warm-up before the 36th annual Rock 'N Reno Challenge Cup, 44 teams played in the 2024 Top Gun Reno Tune-Up, May 14-19, in sunny Perris, Calif., at Big League Dreams.



Each field at Big League Dreams complexes are modeled after MLB stadiums, as seen by the design and well-kept fields.

All teams hailed from the host state of California, ranging from Men's ages 50+ to 80+.

Six out of the 10 championship teams of the nine-division tournament went undefeated in what proved to be some very close competition.

"We had a lot of close games that some of them had to win in the 7th inning," said Jerry Smith, SSUSA tournament director.

Results:

Men's 50+ Platinum: Men's 50+ Platinum: Fifth-seeded Stadium (photo below) dominated the bracket, going undefeated for four games after initially losing both of seeding games. While 50+ Major-Plus Stadium won the bracket, the top-finishing 50 Major team — Top Gun Diamonds — earned the 50+ Major title and TOC berth. WYD, a new team, took third place of the six-team division.



Men's 50/55+ Gold: First-seeded Top Gun Renegades dominated both the brackets and seeding games, winning all 5 games to earn the 50+ AAA title. Finalists Veijos So Cal narrowly lost the championship game 19-18 after battling their way through the entire elimination bracket. SoCal Bears redeemed their last seeded bracket position to come in third in the six-team division.

Men's 55/60+ Gold: Top Gun Warriors, the six-team division's only 60+ Major team, went undefeated in both seeding games and all three bracket games to win the division. Top Gun Storm came in second losing the championship game 19-14. First-seeded Venom 55s came in third place.

Men's 60+ AAA: In the tournament's largest division of eight teams, first-seeded Top Gun Fury (photo below) went undefeated the entire division, narrowly winning the championship game against Finalists Harper Boyz, 11-10. Seventh-seeded So Cal NDY was undefeated in the brackets before losing their third bracket game to Top Gun Fury, 23-15, and their next game to Harper Boyz, 18-17.



Men's 60+ AA: The tournament's only two-team division proved interesting, as So Cal Riptide 60 ([photo below](#)) won the first of three games against NAK, 20-19, but lost the championship game, 20-17. So Cal Riptide 60 avenged themselves in the IF game to become the champions, winning 23-18.



Men's 65/70+ Platinum: In this three-team division, first-seeded California Scorpions ([photo below](#)) took the 65+ Major title by winning the championship game 16-14, against Finalists Top Gun Stealth. Top Gun Over The Edge, after going one-one in seeding games, forfeited their first bracket game against Top Gun Stealth, then lost the first elimination game 22-19 against the same team, taking third place.



Men's 65/70+ Gold: Second-seeded No Guts, No Glory, ([photo below](#)), one of two 70+ Major teams in the division, worked their way through the elimination bracket, eventually double dipping Finalists D & K Softball, 23-16 and 16-14. Last seeded So-Cal Titans 65s finished third.



Men's 70/75+ Gold: Majestic 70, one of three 70+ AAA teams of the four-team division, went undefeated in seeding and bracket play to earn their 70+ AAA title. Second-seeded Git-R-Done 70 survived the elimination bracket to become the Finalists in the championship game, which Majestic 70 (photo below) narrowly won 13-12. Last seeded SoCal Gusto lost their first bracket game, however survived their first elimination game 18-17 to finish in third.



Men's 70/75/80+ Gold: In the tournament's only full four-game round robin division, one 70+ AA, one 80+ Major, one 75+ AA and two 75+ AAA teams competed. All five teams won 2 games and lost 2 games, therefore the final standings came down to runs allowed. Git-R-Done 75, (photo below), a AAA team, came out on top as the champions and came out with the only title in the division. Lights Out 70, the AA team, finished as the Finalists and So Cal Warriors 75s, one of the two AAA 75+ teams, finished third.



Contact Information:
Senior Softball USA
9823 Old Winery Place, Suite 12

916-326-5303
info@seniorsoftball.com