

*Sept. 20, 2024 - In This Issue:*

Largest Softball Tourney in North America Kicks Off With 600 Games in the 2024 World Champs

A Close 2nd Annual Celebrity Game Ends with All-Stars Win Over Veteran Team



2024 World Championships Kicks Off with session 1 teams (Men's 55-60+) with the second annual Celebrity vs. Louisville Warriors and captivated audiences.

**A Close 2nd Annual Celebrity Game Ends with All-Stars Win Over Veteran Team**



**Louisville Slugger Warriors, a team of wounded veterans, poses with the Sin City All-Stars, a team of local Vegas celebrities and former MLB players at the 2024 World Championships.**

**By Donna McGuire  
Softball News Report**

Towering home runs, scorched line drives, and athletic double plays dazzled fans who watched a hotly contested Sin City All-Stars vs Louisville Slugger Warriors game during the Senior Softball-USA World Championships in Las Vegas.

**Largest Softball Tourney in North America Kicks Off With 600 Games in the 2024 World Champs**

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Three Triple Grand Slam winners, six undefeated teams and a successful run through the entire 60+ AA elimination bracket highlighted the opening session of the Senior Softball-USA World Championships.

The four-day session, which started Sept. 12, drew 184 teams in the 55+ and 60+ age groups. Their schedule involved nearly 600 games spread across eight Las Vegas-area ball parks.



“The first, and largest, of the four sessions of the World Championships went off with a raft of exciting games, a great celebrity game (please see the side bar story) and milder-than-normal temperatures,” said Terry Hennessy, SSUSA’s chief executive officer. “For the fifth year, the Worlds is the largest softball tournament of any kind in North America — and we would like to thank all of the teams competing here.”



**The Honor Guard from North Las Vegas' Rancho High School performed in the opening ceremony of the 2024 Celebrity Game vs. Warriors Game.**

The two teams combined for 58 hits, including 24 home runs, during an extra-inning battle won 29-27 by the All-Star squad Sept. 14 at Big League Dreams softball complex.



The Warriors — a team of military veterans, active service personnel and former collegiate baseball player amputees — travel the country playing ball. They have played for years at SSUSA events, including the Tournament of Champions. Some of their players lost limbs while serving their country, but they have adapted so well with prosthetics that they play lights out.



**The Louisville Slugger Warriors won last year's inaugural Celebrity Game, 22-11 over the 2023 All-Star team.**

"None of us like to lose," said pitcher Leonard Anderson, a retired U.S. Air Force veteran from Texas who used a specially adapted lacrosse stick head attached to his left arm in place of a glove. "We will not take a play off."

Neither team could pull away from the other in this second-annual affair. The score was tied 5-5 after two innings, 12-12 after four innings and 27-27 after seven innings. Even the final out came on a hard-hit ball.



**Vendors showcase their newest equipment and apparel to players and managers at the 2024 Worlds' manager registration/receptions.**

Overall, 650 teams registered to play in the 2024 Worlds. They represent 41 states and three Canadian provinces In addition to Germany, Panama and Guam. Play continues through Sept. 29.

First-session Triple Grand Slam titles were earned by Harford Financial Group of Maryland in 55+ AA, Sommerville Softball of California in 60+ Major Plus, and North Valley Seniors of California in 60+ AAA. Winning a Triple Grand Slam title requires success across multiple events. Team first must win their divisions at the Eastern or Western National Championships. Those winners play each other during pool play at Worlds for the USA National Championship. If the National Champion also wins its Worlds bracket, it earns the Triple Grand Slam.



**Tri-State Kings of Alaska won the 2024 Sportsmanship Award for always encouraging a positive spirit on the field.**

Undefeated World champions were crowned in all four 55+ divisions and in two of the 60+ divisions.

The longest route to a title occurred in the 15-team 60+ AA division, where the OKC Angels lost their first bracket game then won nine in a row, including five the final day, to capture the title and free Jostens championship rings for all players.

The Angels shook off that first bracket loss by deciding to simply win every inning, one game at a time, said second baseman David Baker, who caught the championship game's final out. It helped, he said, that they had 16 players to share the load.

"We decided to set small manageable goals and see where it took us," Baker said.



**Justin Jones, currently a volunteer assistant coach to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas' baseball team, is also a former MLB player with the Oakland Athletics.**

Afterward, the two teams gathered for handshake, photographs and awards.

"First and foremost, it is an honor for all of us to get to play against you guys...to share a field with you, to be competitive with you," Sean Farnham, an ESPN analyst who played basketball for the UCLA Bruins, told the Warriors after the game. "You are true heroes."

Former Major Leaguers Jose Canseco and twin brother Ozzie Canseco headlined the celebrity team. Their teammates included All-American softball pitcher Amie Stewart, former NBA player Evric Gray, and several former collegiate baseball players.

**2024 Celebrity Game Roster**

**Sin City All Stars**

2024 World Championships - Las Vegas  
September 14, 1pm at Big League Dreams

**Manager:**

**Kevin Higgins:** Kevin is a former MLB player with the San Diego Padres. For the past 14 years, he's coached baseball at University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) and College of Southern Nevada. 15 players he has coached went on to sign with the professionals, including Bryce Harper and Bryson Stott of the Philadelphia Phillies.



**Players:**

**Jose Canseco:** MLB American League's Rookie of the Year in 1986 and the first player to hit 40 home runs and steal 40 bases in a single season. Jose was named MVP in 1988 and was one of the best baseball players of the late 80s to the early 2000s. He is a two-time World Series champion with the Oakland Athletics (1989) and the New York Yankees (2000).



**Ozzie Canseco:** Twin brother of Jose Canseco and MLB player. From 1990 to 1993, he played with the Oakland Athletics and the St. Louis Cardinals. Outside of the MLB, he was the hitting and pitching coach of the Yuma Scorpions and manager of the Edinburg Roadrunners of the independent North American League. He also played briefly with the Kintetsu Buffaloes, a Japanese baseball team.



**Tam & Kim Pinegar:** Also known as the Dueling Pianists, they are the leading lounge act in Las Vegas and voted best Las Vegas lounge act by LV Weekly Magazine. They commonly play at Harrah's Las Vegas on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays at 9pm. They will also serve as base coaches for the teams.



**Sean Farnham:** Sports analyst who covers college basketball for ESPN and former basketball player for the UCLA Bruins. After the Bruins, he became the youngest assistant college basketball coach in the nation at Pepperdine University. Before ESPN, he covered college sports for CBS Sports Network and Fox Sports West. During his career, he's won many broadcast Emmys for covering college and major league games.



**Results:**

Men's 55+ Major Plus: Third-seeded J.K. Inc./Miken/Worth of California (photo lower left) capped a 6-0 tournament with a 31-16 title game triumph over sixth-seeded Arizona Heat, the team it defeated 27-14 in its first bracket game. Arizona Heat dispatched six elimination bracket opponents to earn a rematch before falling. USA National Champions BPA/Miken/Worth of Pennsylvania finished third while eighth-seeded 50 Degrees of Missouri took fourth in the nine-team division. USA National Game: BPA/Miken/Worth 23 (photo lower right), Pacific Reign/DeMarini of Oregon 7.



Men's 55+ Major: Third-seeded ShowTime So Cal (photo lower left) won all eight of its games, including a 26-11 title game triumph over 22nd seed The Firm of Texas, which won five elimination games to reach the finals of the 34-team division. PowerHouse of Texas finished third while PRS Softball of Michigan took fourth. USA National Game: Mitchells 55 of Florida (photo lower right) defeated L.A.F. of California 16-12.



Men's 55+ AAA: Seeded third in a 43-team division, unbeaten NOP Softball of Oklahoma (photo below) notched four walk-off victories, including a 25-24 thriller in the title game against USA National Champion Supreme Athletics Outlaws of California. PCS/Lumberjacks of Minnesota placed third while 805's of California took fourth. USA champion: Supreme Athletics Outlaws.



Men's 55+ AA: Top-seeded Harford Financial Group of Maryland (photo below) defeated two AAA teams in pool play before besting all AA competition to win the three-team bracket and the Triple Grand Slam. Harford scored one run in the bottom of the seventh to edge Detroit Pride of Michigan 19-18 in the title game. Longshoremen of Virginia finished third. USA champion: Harford Financial Group.

**Amie Stewart:** One of only two All-American softball pitchers from UNLV, as a former coach, she led UNLV to the Women's College World Series in 1995. She herself was inducted into the UNLV Athletic Hall of Fame in 2012. After playing professionally, she started a non-profit travel team, the California Rebels. She's also a teacher and varsity coach at Bellflower High School in California.



**Eric Gray:** Former UNLV Runnin' Rebels basketball player who played 10+ years with the NBA and international leagues, specifically for the New Jersey Nets and professionally in Europe. After retiring from the professionals, he became the head basketball coach at Summit Academy High School in Bluffdale, Utah.



**Derrick Williams:** Returning for another Celebrity Game against the Warriors, Derrick is a former professional softball player who lives in Las Vegas. His son, Ederian, finished an excellent career for UNLV's baseball team last year, as a four-year starter.



**Tom 'Wags' Wagner:** Retired Metro Police Sergeant with 25 years of service and a passion for sports and the Las Vegas community. He is credited for developing Nevada's Amber Alert program to assist and find missing children. He also sits on the boards of Southern Nevada Sports Hall of Fame, UNLV Football Foundation, UNLV Baseball Club, Little League, and the Super Bowl Host Committee Ambassador program. Wag's son, Tyler, is a former Milwaukee Brewers MLB pitcher.



**Justin Jones:** Former MLB player with the Oakland Athletics. As a college player on UNLV's Hustlin' Rebels, he led the team to the NCAA Tournament in 2014 after winning the Mountain West Regular Season Championship title. He was also selected to the Mountain West All-Conference team twice in 2013 and 2017. Justin currently serves as the Rebel's volunteer assistant coach.



**Austin Kryszczuk:** Former 4-year starter for the UNLV's Hustlin' Rebels. Before college, he led the Mountain Ridge Little League to the US Championship in the 2014 Little League World Series. Newly graduated from college, he is peaking the interest of several professional MLB teams.

**Dale Eeles:** Former Chairman and Executive Director of the Southern Nevada Sports Hall of Fame and former part-time professor at the UNLV. He is also a longtime supporter of Senior Softball USA World Championships in Las Vegas. Besides softball,



Dale enjoys skiing, water skiing, golf and in his youth, played football, basketball and baseball.

**Kevin Kruger:** In 2007, he led the UNLV Runnin' Rebels basketball team to the Sweet 16 which is the NCAA's Regional Semifinals. After college, he played with the NBA's development league, in Utah Flash and Los Angeles D-Fenders teams. He is currently the head basketball coach at UNLV.



Men's 60+ Major Plus: Top-seeded Sommersville Softball of California (photo below) went 6-0, including a 24-18 championship win over third-seeded Top Dawgs of Florida. That earned Sommersville the coveted Triple Grand Slam title after also having won a Western National Championship. It had no opponent for a USA title game. Second-seeded Texas Crush placed third, and fourth-seeded Dudley Lightning finished four in the four-team division. USA champion: Sommersville.



Men's 60+ Major: BTI of California capped a 8-0 tournament with a 22-17 championship victory over top-seeded and USA National Champion Ohio Elite. Both teams had been undefeated until clashing in the winner's bracket finals. Second-seeded Sonoma Co. Crush of California finished third in the 35-team bracket. Thirteenth-seeded Washington Legends finished fourth. USA National Game: Ohio Elite (photo below) defeated Sonoma Co. Crush 20-11.



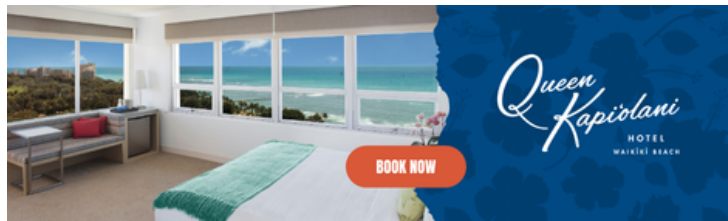
Men's 60+ AAA: North Valley Seniors of California (photos below) nabbed a Triple Grand Slam title by defeating BJM Bomb Squad of Indiana in the USA National Championship game before winning all six of its bracket games. The title did not come easily, however. KC Elite of Missouri, which trailed most of the game, took a 24-21 lead going into the bottom of the seventh inning before North Valley earned a walk-off victory. KC Stampede of Missouri finished third in the 41-team division. Turn 2 Electric of North Carolina finished fourth. USA National Game: North Valley Seniors 28, BJM Bomb Squad 18.



Men's 60+ AA: The seventh-seeded OKC Angels lost their first bracket game then won nine in a row, including a 13-9 and 15-8 sweep of eighth-seeded Pelley Stix of Ontario, Canada, in the title games. The 11th seed, Club Tilt/Haus of Colorado, finished third. Fourth-seeded So Cal Riptide took fourth in the 15-team division. USA champion: Tri City Legends/D-bats of Washington.

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## Stay At SSUSAs Official Hawaiian Resort Hotel



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