

Feb. 27, 2025 - In This Issue:

Teams as Far as Minnesota and Utah Win at the 2025 Top Gun Winter Classic

.....
 Launching No-Harm Pre-Tournament Bat Checks

.....
 Obituaries: February 2025



Bullhead City's Rotary Park, home of Senior Softball USA's Top Gun Winter Classic, is located right on the Colorado River with beautiful views of the desert landscape and Nevada's Laughlin, the regions entertainment capital.

Launching No-Harm Pre-Tournament Bat Checks

Softball News Report

Bat Pre-Testing:

SSUSA is establishing no harm, no foul bat pre-testing before major tournaments. Bat pre-testing will be done the day before each session and will be announced in the informational emails to players for those tournaments.

SSUSA will also offer no-harm, no foul bat pretests in its Sacramento office from Noon to 1 pm on Wednesdays, beginning this week.

Bats not passing these pre-tests will be marked illegal and given back to players with instructions not to use the bat in the tournament or SSUSA play. There will be no other penalty for pre-tested bats that fail.

Bat Testing:

Teams as Far as Minnesota and Utah Win at the 2025 Top Gun Winter Classic

**By Donna McGuire
 Softball News Report**

Six teams showcased tournament excellence by completing undefeated runs through pool and bracket play at Senior Softball USA's Top Gun Winter Classic in Bullhead City, Ariz.

Those six winners accounted for nearly half the championships earned during the 44-team event Feb. 4-8 at Bullhead City Rotary Park.



Bullhead City's Rotary Park is also home to a mile of beaches, fishing, a dog park, football, pickleball, tennis, volleyball and more.

"The teams in all divisions were very competitive," said Tournament Director Jerry Smith, who cited the two 60+ AAA championship games between California teams

During tournaments, teams will be randomly selected and every bat in each player's bat bag will be tested.

Older bats failing the field test will be marked illegal for play and returned to players. Newer bats that fail will be sent to Sacramento for a re-test. Players refusing to release their bats for testing are suspended for life. Newer bats failing the retest will be sent to the manufacturer or our lab to be tested to ensure they were not altered (rolled or shaved). Players whose bats are found to be altered will be suspended for 10 years.

We do this to get rid of cheating – and to provide a fair game for everyone. We strongly recommend buying bats from known sources and for players to stay away from any websites – and there are many – that offer to get their bats “game-ready.” Players are responsible for the bats they bring to the tournament. If they aren't sure, they should leave them at home.

To learn more about SSUSA's bat testing initiatives, please click the link below:

https://seniorsoftball.com/multimedia/2024_winter_magazine_-_covering_the_bases_column.pdf

To learn more about SSUSA's bat policies and which bats are considered legal, please click the link below:

<https://seniorsoftball.com/?page=36>

Obituaries: February 2025

Gary Grimes



Gary Wayne Grimes, 74, of Topeka, Kan., died on Jan. 10,

Weakened Warriors and Top Gun Fury as among the tournament's most exciting.

“The first game was a good one,” Smith said. “The Warriors were down a couple of runs in the seventh (inning) and won 20-16.”

The excitement intensified when Top Gun Fury came from about five runs down to win the if-needed championship game 14-13 on a walk-off base hit, Smith said.

SpamTown Sliders of Minnesota also caught Smith's attention. After going winless in 2024, the 40+ AAA Sliders never lost this year in a bracket that included two 50+ Major teams.

Teams from nine states participated in the five-day tournament. They enjoyed beautiful weather with high temperatures in the 70s all week, Smith said.

Results:

Men's 40-50+ Gold: The top-seeded 40+ AAA team SpamTown Sliders of Minnesota ([photo below](#)) went 4-0 and defeated Avalon Meat Candy 50+ Major of Nevada 26-18 for the championship. Rightline 50+ of Washington finished third in the three-team division.



Men's 50/55/60+ Gold: The top-seeded 60+ Major Plus team Sommerville Softball of California ([photo below](#)) capped a 5-0 tournament with a 23-12 title game victory over Team SMS, a 50+ AAA team from Nevada. Third place in the four-team bracket went to 805's 55+ of California.



Men's 50/55/60+ Silver: The top-seeded Top Gun Warriors ([photo below](#)) 60+ Major team compiled a 4-0 record, capped by a 28-16 championship victory over Savon 55+ AAA of Utah. Team 307 of Wyoming finished third in the three-team division.

2025.

Gary joined Senior Softball USA tournament in 2010 and continued playing late in the 2024 season, until his unexpected passing.

Outside of his long career as an architect, one of his top passions was sports. "Gary spent countless hours attending football and basketball games," according to his online obituary. "The Wildcats, [a local high school varsity football team,] brought both immense joy and occasional frustration to his life, while also creating countless cherished memories with his family."

In addition to senior softball, Gary also played senior basketball and volleyball. He was also involved in the expansion of Kansas State University's football stadium through his architect firm.

Besides sports and architecture, Gary also enjoyed working in his garden/yard, riding his Harley, watching Jeopardy and, most importantly, time with family.

"Gary was currently serving as the president of the 70th Infantry Division, a position close to his heart, inspired by his father's service in the Army during World War II," his obituary states.

Gary will be remembered for playing with Mid-America Legends (formerly: Mokan Silver Sluggers) 60s (MO) and Not Dead Yet 70s (KS).

Brad Hillard



Bradley Hillard, 70, of Sacramento died on Nov. 27, 2024, due to a heart attack.

Brad's life was surrounded by sports, bringing numerous sports companies and sport industries to the capital of California during his



Men's 60+ AAA: After losing the first championship game 20-16, Top Gun Fury of California (photo below) rallied to edge Weakened Warriors of California 14-13 in the second title game. KSS/Taco Bell of Arizona finished third in the three-team bracket.



Men's 60+ AA: The Drifters of Nevada lost its first three tournament games before going on a three-game victory streak, including 28-11 and 17-8 championship victories over top-seeded Fresno Mayhem of California. The second-seeded Boys of Summerlin of Nevada finished third in the three-team division.

Men's 65+ AAA: The second-seeded Top Gun Stars of California (photo below) capped a 5-0 tournament with a 20-17 title game victory over fifth-seeded Sin City OutKasts of Nevada. New Beginnings Softball of Nevada finished third in the five-team division.



time with the Sacramento Sports Commission and Sacramento Convention and Visitors Bureau.

As the former Chief of Sports and Entertainment Officer of the Sacramento Sports Commission, Brad was key in supporting and sponsoring Senior Softball USA's Sacramento Tournaments, including the Western National Championships and Northern California State Championships.

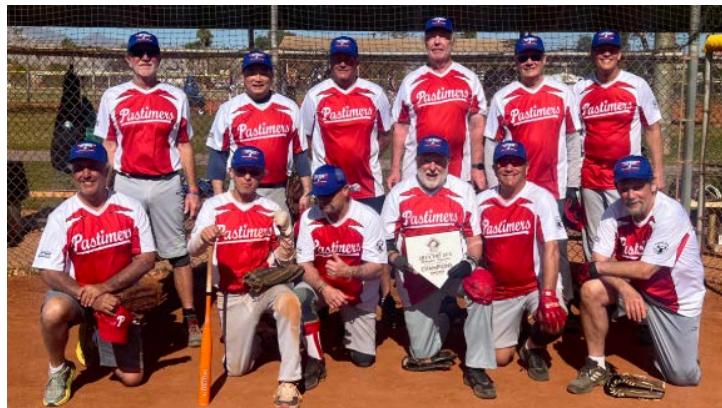
"Brad was instrumental in helping forge an alliance with Placer Valley Tourism, Explore Elk Grove and the Sacramento Sports Commission, which brought the Western National Championships to the Sacramento area," said Terry Hennessy, SSUSA's chief executive officer. "His ability to address challenges with grace, humor and wisdom made him a treasure to work with for many years building Senior Softball in the Sacramento area."

"A passionate sports fan, Brad was a loyal supporter of the Sacramento Kings, San Francisco Giants, San Francisco 49ers and the California Golden Bears," according to his online obituary.

Outside of sports and work, he enjoyed traveling with his wife, Londa, outdoor activities such as fishing, skiing and backpacking, and was a major rock and roll fan.

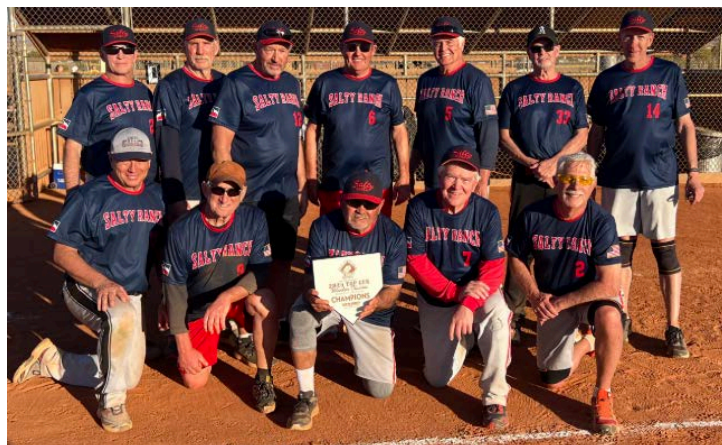
Brad will best be remembered for supporting his community through his work and passion for sports and adventure.

Men's 65+ AA: The third-seeded Pastimers of Washington (photo below) lost only one tournament game enroute to defeating top-seeded Lights Out of California 16-9 in the title game of this three-team bracket. Los Vatos Viejos of Arizona finished third.



Men's 70+ Major: Second-seeded Ryan's Way of Utah went 5-0, including a thrilling 16-15 championship victory over top-seeded Steel Etc of Montana. Rannalls Realty of Arizona finished third in the three-team division.

Men's 70+ AAA: Top-seeded Salty Ranch of Utah (photo below) lost the first title game 22-17 but rebounded to capture the finale 16-1 over second-seeded Top Gun Old Dawgs of California. Third-seeded Cut Loose of California earned third place in the five-team division.



Men's 70+ AA: Playing a best-of-three format, Twin Peaks Desert Heat of Nevada needed all three games to extinguish Lights Out of California 12-11, 20-23 and 17-14.

Men's 75+ AAA: Top-seeded Cut Loose of California (photo below) took the long route to the title. After losing its first bracket game, Cut Loose won four in a row, including 21-19 and 21-15 championship victories over fourth-seeded Triple Play of California. Twin Peaks Family of Nevada finished third in the four-team division.

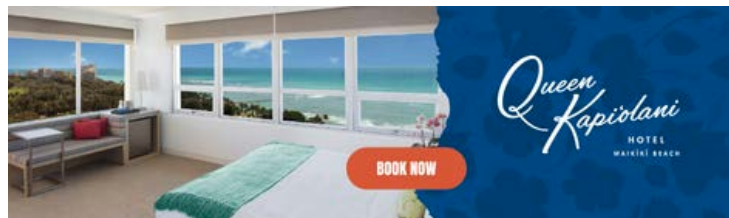


Men's 75/80+ Silver: The top-seeded 75+ Top Gun Olde Dawgs of California ([photo below](#)) compiled a 5-0 record, including two one-run victories, and defeated third-seeded 80+ Balance of Nature of Utah 27-15 for the title of the four-team division. Git-R-Done of California finished third.



Men's 80+ Platinum: Playing a best-of-three format, the Sidewinders of Arizona swept Top Gun Gold of California 24-21 and 16-8 to finish 3-1 overall.

Stay At SSUSAs Official Hawaiian Resort Hotel



Contact Information:
Senior Softball USA
9823 Old Winery Place, Suite 12
916-326-5303
info@seniorsoftball.com