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Tournament Director Jerry Smith (center) hands out awards in Hemet to the Men's 40+ Major division champions and finalists (GENESIS/ONYX/GB and 40 Cal Assault, respectively), in a tournament dominated by California teams.

Obituaries - June-July 2025

Dennis Karas



Dennis Daniel Karas, 77, of Green Bay, WI., died peacefully in his sleep on May 21.

Dennis, who was active in several sports and enjoyed senior softball, played with Senior Softball USA from 2022 to 2024 with Oshkosh Ambassadors 75s (WI).

"He enjoyed playing, coaching, and managing softball teams in Sturgeon Bay, Forestville, Algoma, Casco, Luxemburg, Kewaunee, Tisch Mills, Whitelaw, and Green Bay," according to his online obituary.

He also enjoyed playing in bowling leagues, fishing, hunting, traveling,

Heated Competition Defines the 2025 Southern California State Championships

**By Donna McGuire
Softball News Report**

California teams captured 18 of the 19 championships decided during the SSUSA Southern California State Championships that concluded June 22.

Git-R-Done from Arizona prevented a clean sweep by besting three California opponents to claim the Men's 75/80+ Gold division title.

Eleven women's teams and 58 men's teams competed in the six-day tournament played at Diamond Valley Lake Sports Complex in Hemet and at the West Covina Sportsplex in West Covina.



Diamond Valley Sports Park is located near Diamond Valley Lake, south of Hemet.

and playing cards.

After graduating from Northeastern Wisconsin Technical College with a degree in Civil Technology, he served in the Army and was stationed in Germany during the late 1960s and early 70s. After the military, he worked a long career with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

Besides sports and work, he was active in his local church and school board, supporting his daughter with sports and volunteering with 4-H, a youth organization meant to empower youth of all different backgrounds.

Billy Joe Bryant



Billy Joe "BJ" Bryant, 84, of Fuquay-Varina, NC., died on June 20.

BJ started umpiring with Senior Softball USA in the late 2000s, when the Eastern Nationals moved to Raleigh, the current home of the SSUSA Atlantic Coast Championships. Later, he became a SSUSA Umpire-In-Chief in the region, before retiring in 2022.

According to his online obituary, "he enjoyed playing and coaching softball, and began attending umpire classes in the early 1970s." This was after serving in the Army and while he started a business moving mobile homes across North Carolina, eventually owning an RV park.

"He worked and served as Umpire-in-Chief at many tournaments in the area and even in state, regional, and national tournaments, including the World Special Olympic Games in 1999," according to the obituary. In 2001, he was inducted into the

Older teams playing in the first session battled oppressive temperatures that reached the high 90s, Tournament Director Jerry Smith said.

"All the games were pretty competitive for the first session," said Smith, who noted that injuries kept the West Coast All Stars from playing the "if needed" championship game against winner No Guts No Glory in the five-team 70/75+ Gold division.

Teams playing in the second session enjoyed cooler weather in the middle 80s, Smith said. Close games again abounded.

"We had a very exciting championship game in the 50+ AAA division between Viejos and Top Gun G-Force," Smith said. "With two outs and the winning run on first, a G-Force batter hit a shot to right center. A Viejos outfielder running at full speed made a diving catch. To me, that was my No. 1 play of all time to watch. He made that catch laying out in the air, and it ended the game."

Results (all teams from California unless noted otherwise):

Women's 40+ Major: Playing a best-of-three format, YAS (photo below) recovered from a 22-11 defeat in the first game to sweep the next two 28-12 and 18-7 over Pro Moves. YAS finished 5-1 overall.



Women's 40+ AAA: Third-seeded Girl's On Top (G.O.T.) lost its first bracket game then reeled off four consecutive victories, including 18-13 and 10-9 championship-game wins over fourth-seeded Rogue Prime. N1SA finished third in the four-team division.

Women's 50+ Major: Second-seeded Cash Out 50s went unbeaten in bracket play with the title game being the closest, 11-10, over top-seeded GBA (both teams photographed below). Third-seeded Straight Pride 50s finished third in the three-team division.



Women's 50/55+ Gold: Playing a best-of-three format, the 55+ Major team SWI/Rueblur (photo below) swept I'd Hit That, winning the finale 12-8.

North Carolina Softball Hall of Fame.

“BJ was such an important part of our tournaments in Raleigh,” said Fran Dowell, executive director of SSUSA. “He would bring the best umpires to us and always stay on site to make sure all ran perfect. He was a kind and gentle soul whose friendship I treasured and knowledge I learned from,” she added.

“The walking rule book,” is what Ron Daniel called BJ. Ron is a central East Coast umpire and current Atlantic Coast Championships umpire-in-chief.

BJ was “a caring man that had such an influence on so many umpires. BJ was a legend, was respected by everyone, never heard a bad word about BJ. He touched so many lives and made them better. The softball world has lost an incredible man,” added Ron.



Men's 40+ Masters Major: Top-seeded GENESIS/ONYX/BG (photo below) averaged 26 runs a game and capped a 5-0 tournament with a 24-9 championship game victory over third-seeded 40 Cal Assault. Fourth-seeded Team Amaya finished third in the five-team division.



Men's 50+ Major Plus: Playing a best-of-three format, Fattboyz/Front Row needed all three games to subdue Stadium 22-14, 31-34 and 23-12.



Men's 50+ Major: Top Gun Renegades (photo below) swept the Kings 22-21 and 24-14 in a best-of-three series.



Men's 50+ AAA: Second-seeded Viejos So Cal (photo below) lost its first bracket game then won five in a row, including both title games against top-seeded Top Gun G-Force, 22-13 and 23-20. Third-seeded Itznot took third in the five-team division.



Men's 55+ Major: Playing a best-of-three format, Top Gun Diamonds (photo below) swept L.A.F. 22-15 and 17-16 to finish 4-1 overall.



Men's 55+ AAA: Second-seeded So Cal Guys 55 (photo below) averaged 21 runs a game enroute to a 6-0 record and 20-5 championship game victory over fifth-seeded Top Gun Storm. Sixth-seeded Fossil Fuel 55 captured third in the eight-team bracket, the tournament's largest.



Men's 60+ Major: Undefeated in six games, the top-seeded Top Gun Warriors ([photo below](#)) nipped third-seeded Custom Truck of Nevada 23-21 in the championship game. Fourth-seeded Team Rawlings captured third in the four-team division.



Men's 60+ AAA: Top-seeded SoCal Kamikaze/BFAD 60s ([photo below](#)) capped a 5-0 tournament with a 20-14 title-game victory over second-seeded SoCal Rookies. The fourth-seeded Weekened Warriors 60s nabbed third in the seven-team division.



Men's 60+ AA: Unbeaten against AA competition, the top-seeded Advil Knights ([photo below](#)) knocked off the second-seeded So Cal Riptide 17-12 to win the three-team division. Kamikaze 60 finished third.



Men's 65+ Major: Second-seeded Samurai 65 ([photo below](#)) won its bracket games 17-12, 22-13 and 20-5, with the finale coming against third-seeded Vegas Elite/ Vault of Nevada. The top-seeded SW Bandits finished third in the three-team bracket.



Men's 65+ Silver: The top-seeded Top Gun Stars ([photo below](#)) lost its first bracket game by five runs before earning a five-game win streak, including 18-9 and 11-7 championship game victories over the third-seeded Weakened Warriors 65s. Fourth-seeded The Lost Boys nabbed third in the five-team division.



Men's 70+ Major: Third-seeded Samurai 70 ([photo below](#)) edged top-seeded Top Gun Strike Force 19-18 for the title of the three-team division. Majestic 70 finished third.



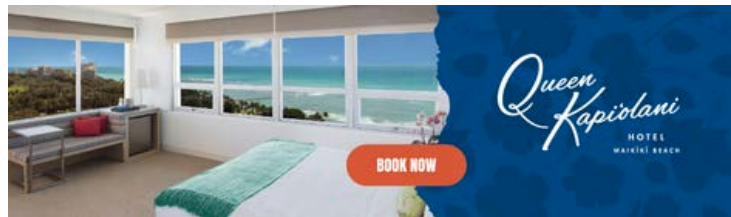
Men's 70/75+ Gold: The top two seeds played three times in the bracket, with eventual champion No Guts, No Glory ([photo below](#)) winning the final two games 17-14 and 7-0. Hampered by injuries, the top-seeded West Coast All Stars forfeited the "if needed" title game. Fourth-seeded Top Gun Over The Edge finished third in the five-team bracket.



Men's 75/80+ Gold: Top-seeded Git-R-Done 75, a AAA team from Arizona (photo below), capped a 6-0 tournament with a 13-8 title-game victory over second-seeded Top Gun 80 Gold. The third-seeded So Cal Warriors 75s finished third in the four-team bracket.



Stay At SSUSAs Official Hawaiian Resort Hotel



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