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Collage of Teams and Divisions at the 2023 Tournament of Championships.

San Antonio Senior Softball League Celebrates 36th Anniversary with 2023 Kickoff

By Nic Francois

The San Antonio Senior Softball League (SASSL) celebrated its 36th anniversary with their annual Awards Banquet on Jan. 14. The event officially kicked off the 2023 season for the senior league.

2023 is sure to be big year for SASSL with 55 teams and about 1,000 players in the spring league this year, according to SASSL Chief Executive Officer Pete Peterson.

Overall, 288 people attended the large event with "a very enjoyable evening with a catered meal, open bar and live music." The league also inducted two members into its Hall of Fame.



Banquet Attendees Celebrate SASSL's 36th Anniversary

"We inducted two more people into our SASSL Hall of Fame, Lonnie Springs (posthumously, photo below) and Richard Gaona," according to Peterson. Springs was a player and coach for Team Texas 65s and Gaona took over as coach of the same team shortly after Springs death.

The Elite of the Elite Teams Play in the 2023 Tournament of Championships

By Donna McGuire

Two days of special events followed by three days of tournament ball culminated with 26 teams winning titles 2023 Tournament of Championships.

Only champions are invited to play in this crown jewel of SSUSA events.

The TOC also features a hitting clinic, skills competitions, an All-Star game, and a free reception. The nine-in with the American team (photo below) hanging on for a 22-20 victory over a late-charging National team.



To cap off the tournament, all players on championship teams earn free, high-quality Jostens rings. Some tee personalize rings with a team logo. For example, the 50+ women's team Kryptonite of Florida (photo below) has puzzle pieces. Their rings will have a puzzle piece in the center.



Eighty-eight teams from 26 states and Canada participated in the tournament Feb. 3-5 at four parks in Polk County, Florida. Teams gained entry by winning the SSUSA World Championships or another TOC-qualifying tournament during the 2022 season.

For complete coverage of the 2023 T.O.C., look for the 2023 Spring edition of Senior Softball News Magazine.

Results:

Women: Kryptonite 50+ of Florida grabbed a 5-4 championship game victory after a seventh-inning rally by Florida. Washington came up short. Both teams won crowns and free rings as the top finishers in their respective age divisions. Softball of Maryland finished third in the eight-team bracket. In addition, Arizona Dream Team won the Women's 40/50+ Platinum.

Men's 40/50+ Platinum: Suncoast/Adidas 50+ Major Plus of Florida averaged 30 runs in its three bracket games. The four-team division. It defeated Homer Lovers 40s of Ontario, Canada, in the title game 23-1. As the top-finishing team, Lovers also won a first-place trophy and free rings. Extreme of Maryland, the only team to defeat Suncoast, placed second.



Afterward, League President Bill Altman said a few words about the group's efforts to work with the city and improvement projects at local fields.

Altman is also the founder of the league, which was established in 1987 after the city hosted the first Senior Olympics.

If you are a senior softball player in the San Antonio, Austin, Corpus Christi, or surrounding areas, or you know someone who would be interested, please visit SASSL's website at: <https://www.sassl.org/home>.



Delightful couple dance as live music plays at SASSL's 2023 Kickoff Event

Mark Ayres' Horrific Accident

Senior Softball USA is sad to report that one of our players, Mark Ayres, has experienced a debilitating accident.

While at home, one of his pistols discharged unexpectedly and the fragmenting bullet caused extensive damage to his leg and foot to the point where he may never be able to play softball again, according to one of his coaches and sponsors, Russ McDuffie, who informed Senior Softball of the incident.

Both Mark and Russ play on Michael's Automotive Group, 60s AAA out of Mountlake Terrace, Wash. Mark has been with the team through his 50s and 55s.

Mark has played with SSUSA since 2019 playing on many Washington and Oregon teams, including Calhoun/Michael's Toyota 50 AAA and Vancouver Connection 50 AAA.

"Mark is a selfless ballplayer that loves the game. I am sure many in the senior softball circuit around the country know Mark and would like to be informed about this accident," Russ adds.

Mark's family and team are asking for good wishes and good thoughts during this hard time for his family, friends and teammates.

If you would like to help Mark and his family, please reach out to Russ McDuffie at: threes33@gmail.com or 206-947-3433.

Men's 40+ AAA: Rough Ryders of Maryland (photo below) went 5-1 and won the four-team division with a 2-1 victory over Smokin' Aces/Post #327 of Virginia. GTR of Oregon, the only team to defeat Rough Ryders, finished



Men's 50/55+ Platinum: The Suncoast/Adidas 55+ Major Plus team (photo below) completed an unbeaten tournament championship game victory over Yeager's/AC/Max Batz. Both are Florida teams. As the top-finishing 50+ Major bracket, Max Batz also claimed a crown and free rings. Chi-Town Ballers of Illinois won three elimination games addition, Homer Lovers of Ontario, Canada, won the 55+ Major title.



Photo by James English of MSC Photography

Men's 50+ AAA: Fat Chops/4 Season of Massachusetts (photo below) entered bracket play 0-2 and seeded: Didn't matter. Fat Chops strung together 15-13, 24-22 and 20-16 victories to reach the finals. Big Hurt Softball/VA edged Fat Chops 16-15 in the first title game, but Fat Chops prevailed 9-7 in the second to win the crown. Magi finished third.



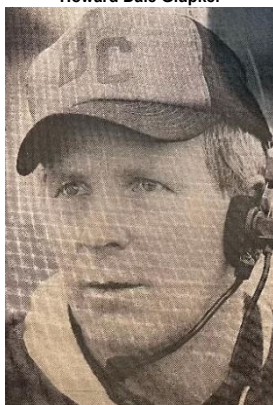
Men's 55+ AAA: K.C. Elite of Missouri (photo below) capped a 6-0 tournament with a 15-10 title game victory over Phantoms of California. Top Gun's only losses were to K.C. Elite. Infoquest.com of Pennsylvania finished third in



Mark Ayres

Obituaries: January 2023

Howard Dale Glupker



Howard Glupker, 81, of Jenison, Mich., died on Oct. 26.

Mr. Glupker was truly passionate about senior softball, having played from 2002 until 2021.

"He was an accomplished and active athlete who was still playing slow pitch softball at age 81," according to his online obituary. "He had a determined love of the game, but more importantly had a heart for the relationship with the athletes, many who said they would run through a wall for Coach Glupker."

Sports remained all throughout his life. After serving in the Army, he became a teacher at Bryon Center High School where he was also the athletics director.

Thomas N. Delmont



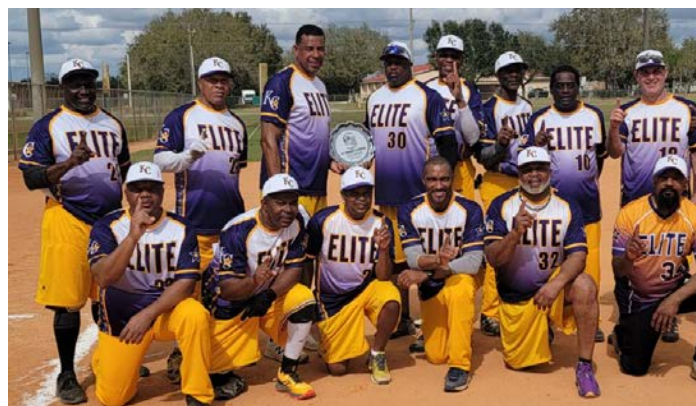
Thomas Delmont, 82, of White Bear Lake, Minn., died on Dec. 29 due to heart failure.

Many Minnesota-based senior softball teams, senior leagues and organizations will remember Mr. Delmont. Born and raised in the Land of 10,000 Lakes, many knew him.

After service in the Army as a medic in San Antonio, Thomas went back to Minnesota and had several, far-ranging jobs as a barber shop owner, head of an employment agency, even a car sales manager before retiring as the owner of a flooring company. But his true passion was sports.

"He loved to watch football, baseball and tennis, as well as playing softball and tennis well into his mid- 60s, culminating as a shortstop on a men's softball senior league National Championship team in the early 2000s," according to his online obituary.

In SSUSA tournament play, Mr. Delmont was associated with the Minnesota Masters 65s team.



Men's 55+ AA: Manifest of Texas (photo below) swept Longshoremen of Virginia 22-6 and 7-0 in a best-of-th



Men's 60+ Major: Also in a best-of-three format, the Bandits of Ontario, Canada (photo below), rallied for 21 after losing the first game of the series 13-11 to Arizona Old School.



Men's 60+ AAA: The fourth-seeded BJM Bomb Squad of Indiana (photo below) went 4-0 in bracket play, cap win over the Northwest Yeahoos of Washington. The Ockers Company of New York finished third.



Men's 60+ AA: Third-seeded Club Tilt/Haus of Colorado (photo below) needed two championship games to After losing the first title game 24-18, it defeated second-seeded Arizona Blaze 15-13 in the second game. Full 1 had knocked off the top seed earlier in bracket play, finished third.

John S. Nutterfield



John Nutterfield, 66, of Pleasanton, Calif., died on Jan. 4.

He had a long history with SSUSA, playing since 2008 with several Bay Area teams in California. People in the Sacramento SSUSA Headquarters knew him too.

"John projected a true sense of happiness when I would see him at a tournament," said SSUSA Executive Director Fran Dowell. "After many years of friendship, I am truly sad to lose a great friend to the sport.

"As an avid sports fan and fitness enthusiast since childhood, John was dedicated to being an athlete," according to his online obituary. "Throughout the years, baseball and softball remained his No.1 passion."

Despite earning a degree in criminology, he worked at the Chevron Corp. for almost two decades before becoming a Berkeley police officer for almost another two decades.

John as played with the JU Entertainment 50s, Avenue Towing 50s, Nor Cal Warriors 50s, Old Giants 60s, and East Bay Oldies 60s, all in California.

Ronald Douglas Riedasch



Ron Riedasch, 80, of Seattle, died on Jan. 5.

Mr. Riedasch played with SSUSA for a little over a decade, from 2009 to 2019. "He remained active and fit playing senior competitive softball in the Associated Softball League Palm Desert (Calif.), Puget Sound Softball League (Wash.), and Senior Softball USA (national leagues) from the time of his retirement until his head injury in 2019," according to his online obituary.

Before playing senior softball, Ron served in the Coast Guard and after worked his way up at Boeing in defense, electronics, and operations.

Before retiring from senior softball, he played with Scrap Iron 65 Classics, Runner Blue 65s, and W.E. Ruth Realty 75.

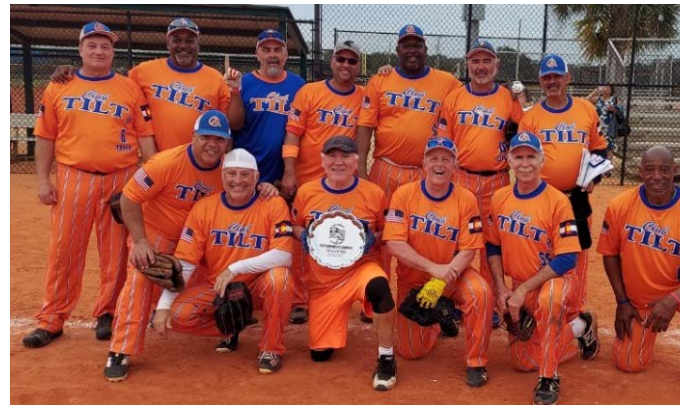
Oscar (OJ) Johnson



Oscar (OJ) Johnson, 79, of Houston, died on Jan. 9.

As a long-time senior softball player, Mr. Johnson started with SSUSA in 1999 and last played in July of 2022.

"OJ last played Day League ball a few years ago and not only was he a very good player, but also a great person," according to an email release from the Harris County Senior Softball League.



Men's 65+ Gold: Top-seeded and unbeaten Via Citrus of Florida won the overall bracket and the Major division. Components/Bomb Squad of Michigan 13-6 then rattled off wins of 19-10, 18-12, 21-14, 16-14 and 17-10 for the finished second while Hudson Valley Cyclones of New York took third.



Men's 65+ AA: Bat Attitude of Utah took the long route to winning the five-team division. It lost its first bracket game to Components/Bomb Squad of Michigan 13-6 then rattled off wins of 19-10, 18-12, 21-14, 16-14 and 17-10 for the finished second while Hudson Valley Cyclones of New York took third.

Men's 70+ AAA: The Florida Mustangs (photo below) capped an unbeaten tournament by sweeping JAG-Oldies 20-9 and 12-10 in a best-of-three bracket.



Men's 70+ AA: Top-seeded Doc Martens/Ropes of Michigan (photo below) won the three-team bracket with a 13-6 win over the Chicago Hitmen. The New Mexico Boomers finished third.

OJ played on the Senior Aces 55s and 60s, Oops 60s, STILL 70s (where he was also manager), and LOTA 80s.



Men's 75+ Platinum: Venom of Florida (photo below), a Major Plus team, notched a 20-5 title game victory over Construction, a Major division team, from Texas. Both earned championships and free rings. Midwest Express of three-team bracket.



Men's 75+ AAA: Northern Virginia Force (photo below) swept the Long Island Jaguars of New York 20-11 in a format.



Men's 80+ Gold: Bucs & Bulls of Florida (photo below) lost the first title game 15-10 but won the second 18-10 to claim the four-team division. The Syracuse Cyclones of New York finished third. In addition, Florida received the Major Plus crown.



Men's 85+ Gold: Center 4 Sight of Florida ([top photo below](#)) claimed the Major division title while Main Street ([photo below](#)) earned the AAA division title. Team Rehabilitation of Minnesota finished third in the three-team bracket.



All photo, unless stated otherwise, were taken by Clover Tiedeken or SSUSA Director

Notice: For those who did not have a chance to buy a 2023 T.O.C. tournament shirt may do so by call our office shirt, shipping \$15-20. **Hoodies are sold out.** Please note sizes are limited and first-come, first-served. **We are**



Senior Softball – 2023 TOC
Tournament Jersey



Senior Softball – 2023 TOC
Tournament Hoodie

Nurse in Audience Saves Player's Life at the 2023 Proton Sports Top Gun

By Donna McGuire

Numbers tell the story of the Proton Sports Top Gun Winter Classic that concluded Jan. 22 in Bullhead City, Arizona.

Teams entered: 53

Champions crowned: 14

Lives saved: One.

Naturally, that last number is the most important.

Fortunately for Jim Bade, a nurse and an AED were nearby when Bade collapsed near his team's dugout during the game at Rotary Park. Bade, who plays for Top Gun Warriors 60 Major team, split the back of his head open when he fell while walking off the field.

Worse, he wasn't breathing and had no pulse.

Amy Handy, a nurse whose husband plays for Vegas Hui 55+ AAA, quickly started cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Soon arrived with the AED machine, cut off Bade's shirt and applied the shock pads.

One shock brought Bade's heart back into rhythm. He resumed breathing. Gradually, he regained consciousness. When paramedics arrived, he was sitting up and talking.

As he was being taken away on the ambulance gurney, he gave a thumbs up to Smith.

"Thank you," Bade said.

Smith credited Handy for her quick response.

"She did a fantastic job," he said. "That was a big plus."

Doctors dismissed Bade from the hospital after only a couple days, Smith said.

The six-day tournament played through a wide mix of weather, starting with overnight rain that delayed some the tournament. Cold temperatures and wind arrived next. Gorgeous temperatures and warm sunshine bathed the days.

Results:

50/55+ Platinum: Scrap Iron Havoc of Colorado ([photo below](#)) earned the 50+ Major championship by finish in the six-team bracket. KB/Westcoast Elite of Arizona took the Major Plus title. Arizona Heat finished third.



50+ AAA: Team SMS of Nevada won the four-team division with a 20-13 championship victory over Savon o Elite of Washington finished third.

55+ AAA: Vegas Hui of Nevada ([photo below](#)) nudged Fossil Fuel 55 of California 13-12 for the title of the th Hammertime 55s of Arizona finished third.



60+ Platinum: Top Gun Warriors of California grabbed the title with a 28-24 win over runner-up Vegas Elite. finished third in the three-team bracket.

60+ Silver: Weekend Warriors 60s of California beat TUC Hammertime of Arizona 20-8 in the finale of the ei went to 99 Problems of Arizona.

65+ AAA: Sin City Mob of Nevada ([photo below](#)) won the seven-team bracket with a 22-17 title game victory California. Scrap Iron Peak of Colorado finished third.



70/75+ Platinum: Ryan's Way of Utah ([photo below](#)) defeated Sidewinders 75 of Arizona 15-8 in the champi of California finished third in the three-team bracket.



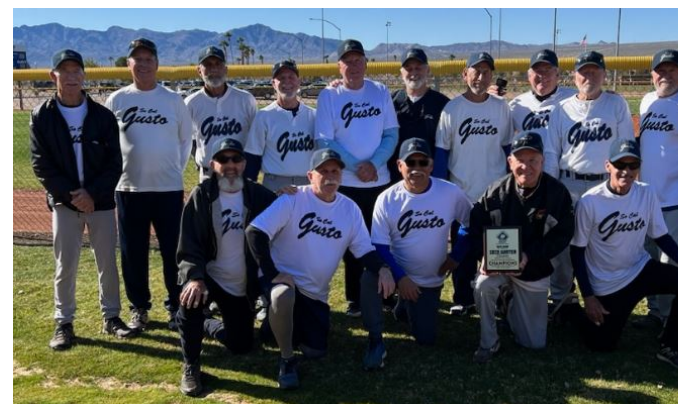
70+ AAA: It took two tense title bouts to determine a champion. Results Realty of Nevada (photo below) lost rebounded to win the second 15-14. Sidewinders/Rattlers of Arizona took second in the four-team bracket. Fam third.



65/70+ AA: Majestic 65 of California (photo below) defeated Top Gun Olde Dawgs 18-13 to win the three-team Diamonds of Colorado finished third.



75+ Major: SoCal Gusto (photo below) defeated Tharaldson's of Nevada 19-14 and 19-13 in a best-of-three



75+ AAA: Al's Sport Shop of California (photo below) won the five-team bracket with a 15-6 championship game. SoCal Warriors finished third.



80/85+ Major: Top Gun Blue Angels ([photo below](#)) capped an undefeated tournament with a 20-18 title game of Arizona. Top Gun 80 Gold finished third in the three-team bracket.



80+ AAA: Git-R-Done of California defeated IES of Nevada 15-3 and 20-11 in a best-of-three format.



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