



The Champion of Tournaments

TOC Honors Winners of Top Championships with Banquet, Rings, Special Events

By Joseph Ruggiero
Softball News Report

POLK COUNTY, FLA. – Players from all corners of North America filed into the Auburndale Softball Complex Feb. 4 to kick off the Senior Softball USA's Tournament of Champions. Adorned in red, yellow, blue, tan and gray uniforms, the jubilant crowd of players displayed their team names proudly - MCC, Vacar Stars,

Sacramento Buds, Florida Automated Shade.

All champions of SSUSA's National Qualifiers, they gathered here to determine who would win the crown jewel of senior softball – a division championship ring at the TOC.

The tournament featured 23 divisions and 115 teams from 26 states and Ontario, Canada.

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Photo by Jack Eberhard

Action was spirited in the 65AAA division at Auburndale.

INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE

PART 1 Planning? It's a Retirement Home Run

PART 2 Understanding Your Social Security Options

PART 3 Why the First Year of Retirement Is So Costly

PART 4 Tips on What to Do — and How to Give Back to Your Community

Opportunities Abound in Retirement

Jack Sirard
Softball News Report

One of the greatest fears that would-be retirees have, other than running out of money, is finding something to do once they leave the security of the workforce – and for good reason.

Over the past 40 years or so, they've been dutifully reporting to work on a regular basis whether it's building car at a General Motors factory

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BY THE NUMBERS

A LOOK AT WHO WE ARE

Softball Number One Sport for Boomers

By Ross McCulligan
Softball News Report

Softball began as an afterthought on a Chicago Thanksgiving Day in 1887.

Two groups of alumni from Harvard and Yale assembled at the Farragut Boat Club to hear the score of a football game between their distinguished Ivy League schools, when one of the alumni threw a bound-up boxing glove at a rival, who batted it away with a broomstick.

The first softball game ensued.

Today, 128 years later, softball is the number one

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1,507,000
softball players in the
United States are
45+.



The average age of senior softball players:

Men 67 Women 58



43,000

compete in Senior Softball USA
Tournaments and Leagues.

Slow pitch softball is the number 1 sport for 55+ and the number 2 sport for 45-54.

Source: Fitness Institute and SSUSA survey of over 5,000 individuals



52.8%
of softball participants play league softball.

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INSIDE:



SPRING WORLDS

Mesquite up to 88 Teams

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MASTERS 40 DIVISION

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SSUSA LAUNCHES ONLINE NEWS-LETTER

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News Briefing

CARL'S CORNER

By Carl Gustafson

Most Players Who Quit Give Up Way Too Soon

"I used to play softball when I was young, but I'm too old now."

I venture that every one of you has heard that before, and probably from somebody younger than you.

Of course we just laugh at the concept because we all know guys playing in their 80s.

In fact, the man who saved my life a few years ago, Larry Blankenship, is still playing six days a week and he's 91 and lives the game to the fullest.

Those who think they are too old have resigned themselves to it and that can be a curse in old age. Like the ancient Indians who decided it was a good day to die, you can't talk them out of it.

I know guys in their 40s, thus resigned, who awake one day, buy a recliner, a wide screen TV, a couple Hawaiian shirts to flop over their increasing waistline, start drinking beer and practice belching.

Unlike the old Indians who die in a couple of days, this method takes around 30 years. Of course, the older they get and the stiffer their joints and arteries, the more they believe in age demise.

It's a self-fulfilling prophesy.

Are you guilty of a similar resignation?

I'm asking about those who are resigned that they can no longer improve their game. I hear it all the time: "I used to hit .775 and the long ball, but those days are gone. It's downhill from here."

It's downhill because you are resigned to quit going uphill, which means: continuing to work on your game, seeking advice like it was gold, changing your diet, stretching, swimming, adjusting your technique, and most of all believing you can improve.

Continued on Page 5

Is 83 Old? Hugh is Just Getting Started

By Joseph Ruggiero
Softball News Report

Most men at age 83 like to look back and wax nostalgic about the good old days of their youth, but not Hugh Brotherton.

Brotherton always says that the best days are still ahead of him. Playing on the first 85+ team ever formed in the nation, Center for Sight out of Venice, Fla., Brotherton is committed to never "acting his age," nor accepting the common stereotype that retirement or getting old means sitting around twiddling his thumbs.

Instead, Brotherton enjoys life by staying active; running, swimming, going to the gym, doing yard work and playing competitive senior softball on a regular basis. Perhaps "regular basis" is too modest.

Brotherton plays at least five softball games a week, in both 50-plus and 60-plus leagues, not including his traveling teams, who have won 45

Continued on Page 5

SSUSA Director McClaskey, 67, Dies

By Joseph Ruggiero
Softball News Report

Terry McClaskey Sr., 67, of Akron, Ohio, manager of the Ohio Silverados and SSUSA Great Lakes Regional Director, died on December 28. Terry also played in the Akron Silver League.

Terry "loved softball," said Joe Ballard, manager of Ohio Silverados. "He was a great manager and coach and was incredibly dedicated to the team."

Ballard said that one of his fondest memories of Terry was when he and his wife, JoAnn, got married on the beach during the Ft. Myers' Winter Classic. Ballard explained that the whole team showed up in their uniforms, hoisting up their softball bats


Continued on Page 5



Photo Photo by Jack Eberhard

Hugh Brotherton takes a mighty cut during the TOC All Star game, in which he pitched as well.


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Increase Power With Double-Pendulum Swing

By Art Eversole

Senior Softball Contributor

In an effort to simplify the understanding of creating power at the plate, think about a subject from the science of physics... the double-pendulum.

The Webster dictionary defines a pendulum as “a body suspended from a fixed support so that it swings freely back and forth under the influence of gravity or another type of force.”

If we split the baseball swing into 1. body/ arms action and 2. hands/wrists action, we can now refer to each of the swing facets as Pendulum 1 and Pendulum 2.

We can now discuss the power swing in terms of two separate but joined pendulums. The action of body/forearms and the hands/wrists can be considered as a two-segmented action that acts much like a double-pendulum in physics.

A double-pendulum is simply two pendulums joined end-to-end in a continuous motion which is referred to as the double-pendulum effect. The double-pendulum effect has been written about extensively in other sports such as golf and tennis.

The arms extending from the hitter's shoulders with the hands holding the bat is the green triangular which is our bat carriage or pendulum No. 1 (see figure 1). This bat carriage serves as the fixed support that allows the bat to swing back and forth and transitioning to pendulum No. 2 in delivering the bat to the ball.

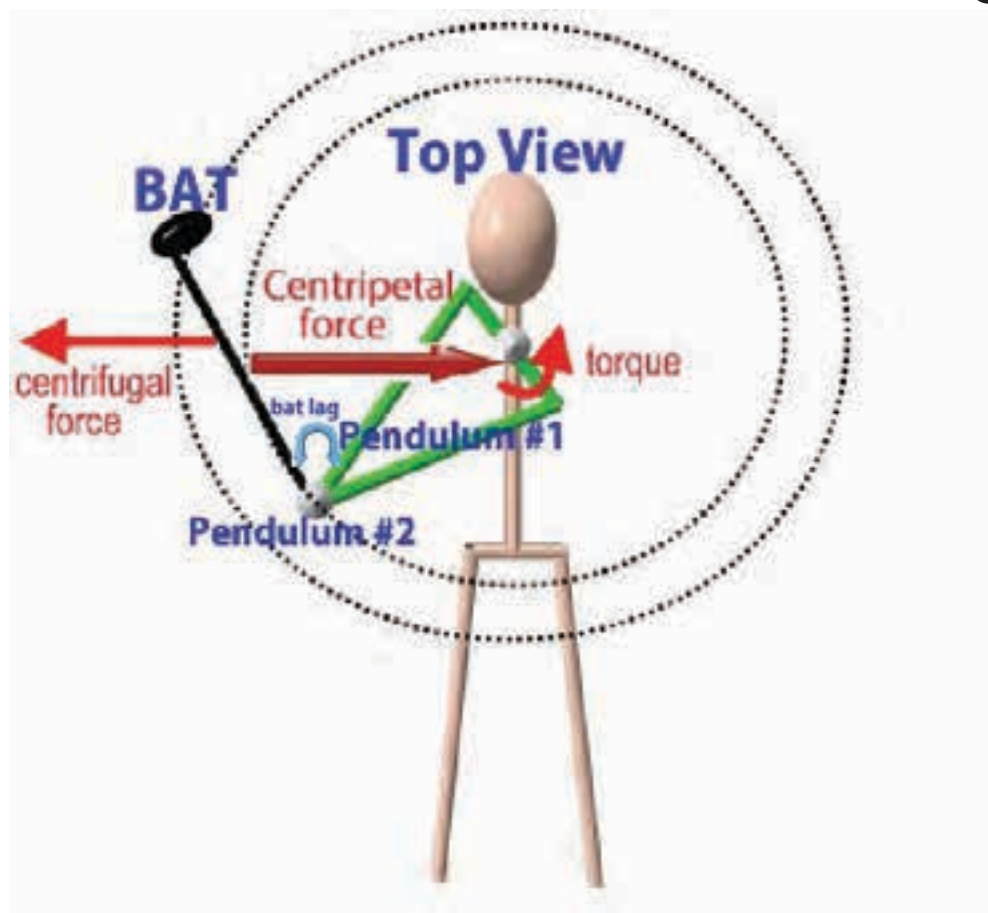
The softball swing gets its double-pendulum characteristic from first the batter's hips, shoulders, torso and arms all moving via a weight transfer in the direction of the incoming pitch which is sometimes called the first order of bat speed.

During this first stage of the swing (pendulum No. 1), the wrists will remain in a fully cocked or loaded position maintaining bat lag the whole time. The first pendulum then slows down allowing its energy build up to be transferred to the second pendulum (hands/wrists) which in turn delivers all the built up energy to the bat in striking the ball.

I don't want to get too heavy into physics terminology, but it might be helpful to look at centripetal force and centrifugal force during the double-pendulum action as those two terms are tossed about in conversations on hitting.

Centripetal force is the inward force that makes the bat follow a curved path and is always perpendicular to the velocity of the bat as it moves forward to strike the ball. By holding on tight to the bat at all times, centripetal force is working and accelerating through rotational mechanics.

On the other hand, centrifugal force is an apparent force (e.g. “not real”) and is a consequence



of centripetal force but it appears to the naked eye to be accelerating the bat-head but is not. Centrifugal force is a reactionary force to a centripetal force. A body undergoing curved motion, such as circular motion, constantly accelerates toward the axis of rotation.

If you were to actually let go of the bat with your hands while swinging, it would launch out on to the field. Since you are no longer holding on to the bat and applying centripetal inward force the bat will no longer continue to accelerate and will eventually strike the ground with zero velocity.

So, continue to always swing hard through the hitting area so as not to slow down the bat before contact.

Having a double-pendulum in your swing mechanics supports the need for bat lag in creating maximum power. Both pendulums must work in sync or the swing will break down. I contend that to be an effective hitter in the game of

senior softball the double pendulum must part of the hitter's mechanics. The important thing to collect from this article is the visual that is created using this swing technique and then implementing it into your swing (see figure 1).

You can view the double pendulum phenomena in an animation on YouTube MIT Department of Physics. Watching the video demo in the interval of 00:50 secs to the 1:05 second mark is best for our purposes.

Link: <http://video.mit.edu/watch/double-pendulum-6392/>

Happy hitting...

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Dave Dukelow, Face of Pope Transport, Dies

By Joseph Ruggiero
Softball News Reports

Lloyd David Malcolm "Duke" Dukelow, 62, of Madison, WI, a highly skilled softball player and talented manager of several softball teams including Twin City Brewers, Lums/Berghoff, Lucky's Bar & Grille, and Pope Transport died suddenly on Jan. 5.

Playing softball for over 30 years, Duke, described by friends and family as "a great listener with a contagious smile who loved to share stories and jokes," brought great joy and fun to the field.

"A true icon of Senior Softball, Duke was the ideal manager, player and gentleman. Making any day spent with him better than it would have been without," said Fran Dowell, Ex-

ecutive Director of SSUSA.

"Duke was a great guy. Not only was he a great softball player, he was a fun person to be around before and after the game. He was always nice to his teammates, opponents and umpires. A real leader who never took the game too seriously. He knew that the most important thing about softball was not winning, but the friendships built," said Steve Adams, teammate, manager and friend.

Ken Van Bogaert, of Pope Transport, like many of the managers and players who played with and against Duke, spoke highly of Duke as a man and a player, saying "Duke formed Robert Construction, now Pope Transport, about 12 years ago and was one of the most well-known senior players. He was a great player, manager

and even better person."

Players fondly remember Duke's tailgates, with Van Bogaert explaining, "He made it mandatory to tailgate at the end of each game in the parking lot and opposing players often stopped by and tipped one as Duke's invitation. It made for a very special atmosphere and created friendship and good will with all the teams, umpires and fans."

Outside of softball, Duke also coached Fitchburg soccer and baseballs teams while his sons were growing up. A mentor to younger athletes, Duke enjoyed helping athletes reach their full potential. It was not uncommon to see him cheering on many of his former players as they grew older.

An avid fisherman, Duke loved to share this passion with his family



Dave Dukelow created some excellent teams and fond memories for many players.

and friends. A 30-year tradition, he and a group of friends would travel to Canada to fish. Duke also played competitive ping pong and recently won the championship at Nakoma Golf Club where he was a member.

Duke's "true happiness came from spending time with his wife, Peggy; his sons, Brian and Adam; and his friends either at a ball diamond, cheering on the Badgers, enjoying a great steak dinner, or sipping a Korbel & Pepsi at a tailgate."

Brotherton: Secret Is Staying Positive

Continued from Page 3

national and world titles. In between this busy schedule, Brotherton makes sure to get some practice in, while also helping manage his own real estate rental company.

What's Brotherton's secret?

Staying positive and being grateful for what he's been given and "keeping the people around you happy." Brotherton admits that this last sentiment may sound selfish, but in the end, "to make people happy, to make them laugh; it helps everyone enjoy their life a little bit more."

Brotherton fell in love with baseball at an early age, but didn't rediscover his passion for the game until he started playing senior softball in his early 60s. Prior to this, Brotherton was busy helping raise 10 kids, five boys and five girls, with his wife of 61 years. In his early 20s he started a successful trucking company with only \$900 and sheer gusto. After that, he went on to invest in property and now runs his own real estate rental company.

No stranger to life's tragedies, Brotherton lost two of his sons. "Hugh Peter had a stroke and died two years

ago," he said. "Four years ago, Jim, at the age of 49, was shot and killed in a carjacking robbery." Brotherton relied heavily on his faith and the love of his wife during these difficult times, saying that some things are "in God's hands and you must move forward. You must be thankful for what you've still got." Always light-hearted, Brotherton quipped, "I'm going to see those kids one day and they're going to say, 'What took you so long?'"

Carl's Corner: It's All In Your Mind

Continued from Page 3

Before you e-mail me telling me why you can't, think about the league of blind people Bill and Susan Ruth saw who play softball by sound and timing.

How about Jerry Brooks whose left shoulder and arm quit working so he became an absolutely great hitter using only his right arm.

How about the monster slugger Clyde Phillips whose powerful hips degenerated so he tirelessly practiced and adjusted a new wrist swing that took him back to the top of his game.

In Texas, we have Jim Cary who

What does Brotherton love most about softball? "The camaraderie and the competition, but mostly the sense of unity, of community, of belonging to something."

Ask anyone about Brotherton and they will tell you that he never quits, that he pushes them to be better and to always try new things even at the age of 83. For Brotherton, the best days are always ahead of him and the past, well, "It is what it is."



Terry McClaskey was SSUSA Great Lakes Regional Director.

McClaskey: Ohio Coach, Player; Married On Field

Continued from Page 3

like a military salute, while Terry and JoAnn marched through the players onto the shores of the beach.

Terry possessed a hearty sense of humor and quick wit despite his sometimes reserved demeanor. Often dancing, horseback riding, practicing karate three times a week; Terry "always had something going on" said Ballard. He remained an avid sportsman and committed coach until the very end.

Loved by many for his generosity and willingness to lend a hand, Terry will be remembered fondly by his friends, family, and the Senior Softball community at large.

Heard in the Dugout

"The cruelest lies are often told in silence."

- Robert Louis Stevenson

—Henry Ford



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Swing Lightly Into Spring Training

In most of the country (sorry Northeast), the weather is starting to warm up so if you haven't officially begun your seasonal training, now is certainly the time.

Start off with light to moderate intensity cardiovascular exercise. The American College of Sports Medicine and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Physical Activity Guidelines state that 30 minutes of activity at least five times per week is the minimum recommended amount that adults should achieve for improved health benefits.

Break it up into three 10-minute pieces per day if necessary. No matter what you do, get in as much as you can because some is always better than none. Walking, cycling or light jogging followed by a good stretch is a great way to get moving. Mix up your approach to cardio to help keep it interesting.

Then begin to combine cardiovascular exercise with strength training of larger muscle groups two to three times per week plus some special attention to core strengthening



Stretching Limits

By Lisa Cachia

three to four times a week for a well-rounded program. If you're not sure where to begin with strength training, ask a professional for ideas.

Over the course of a few weeks, gradually increase the time and intensity of your conditioning workouts and begin adding in sport specific exercises. For example: sprint/interval running, rotational core exercises, shoulder stabilization exercises and lateral movement drills are all appropriate choices to perform better at softball. Balanced nutrition and proper hydration are also key components to your best performance so eat healthfully and drink plenty of

water on a regular basis.

Once seasonal game play begins, it's important to focus on injury prevention and optimal performance. Starting each practice and game with a dynamic warm up can do worlds of good for both. Begin warm-ups with a little walking and/or light jogging for five to 10 minutes.

Add lateral steps and/or a few jumping jacks, followed by lateral arm extensions, windmills, stationary knee lifts, half squats, straight leg kicks and lunges with trunk rotation all performed with control at approximately 30-second intervals to accumulate about 15+ minutes of warm-up time. Pitchers need to spend extra time warming up their throwing arms. And it's equally important to stay warmed up between games so take some of these actions on the sidelines as well.

When the game is over, spend a few minutes performing basic stretches to decompress the body and the mind. Breathe deeply and allow the body to relax once you're into the stretch. Quadricep, hamstring and piriformis stretches held on each side for 30 to 60 seconds can help relieve tired leg muscles. Side stretches; trunk rotation or spinal twist held for 30 to 60 seconds in each direction along with back extensor stretching can provide welcome relief to the upper body. Taking the time to stretch rests the body not only countering the physical effects of exercise but also provides the opportunity for mental relaxation.

Taking this methodical approach to training, practice and game day strategy can help to improve your overall health, prepare your body for more rigorous exertion during games and keep you feeling great on and off the field.

Please consult your physician before beginning any new exercise program.

Lisa Cachia is an ACSM Certified Personal Trainer/Group Exercise Instructor. You can contact Lisa at benefitness@comcast.net.

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2701 K St., Suite 101A
Sacramento, CA 95816
(916) 326-5303
(916) 326-5304 FAX
www.seniorsoftball.com

Publisher

W.E. Ruth

Editor

Terry Hennessy

Contributing Writers

Lisa Cachia, Jack Eberhard, Pete Davignon, Dave Dowell, Art Everole, Carl Gustafson, Beth Hamilton, Jerry Jackson, Ross McCulligan, George Moreno, Tiffany Peck, Joe Ruggiero, Susan Ruth, Jack Sirard

Internet Director

Scott Flodin

Art Director

Sue Ballenger

Marketing Manager

Fran Dowell

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Mass. VFW Manager Szymkowicz Dies

By Joseph Ruggiero
Softball News Report

Stanley D. Szymkowicz, 68, of Fall River, Mass., died on February 10 following a long battle with ocular melanoma.

Playing senior softball for 18 years, Stanley served as shortstop for several teams including VFW Tabor-Franchi, A&A Wrecking, and Nassa Flooring. Stanley also helped manage VFW Tabor-Franchi over the last two years. "He was very fair as a manager," said Saul Capirchio, best friend and teammate, and "every time he played he played well; he didn't pull any punches."

"An all-around great player," said teammate Tony Rozzero, and talented shortstop, Stanley helped Nassa Flooring win a championship at the Winter Nationals in 2006.



Stanley Szymkowicz was a decorated Vietnam Veteran.

He served in the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War and received several military honors including the Purple Heart and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry.

"Stanley was a great guy who would do anything for anybody," said Rozzero. Capirchio added that "Stanley always did favors for people. He was selfless, even when he was sick. He was a role model for others and someone I would pick to have my son emulate."



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SSUSA 40 Masters Developed From Early Vision

By Joe Lecak
Softball News Report

My fondest memories of softball are from my years playing in the 40 division in leagues and in tournaments.

When I lived in New Jersey in the 1990s, I rediscovered softball after a 15-year absence in a 40 and over league in Middlesex County. In 2003 I moved to Las Vegas and discovered a hidden gem in SSSUSA's over 40 division.

(SSUSA had begun offering a 40s Division in 2002, with Mike Clary becoming the first SSUSA 40 Masters Director and helping to set up the rules and the initial division.)

In 2004, I convinced a group of friends from New Jersey to come to Las Vegas and play in the over 40 division World Championships.

At the time there were only a handful of teams entered but we had a blast, we played a half dozen game and most importantly I met Terry Hennessy, along with Fran Dowell.

I played in two more world tournaments before switching over to the 50 division. At that time the ASA over 40 world tournament was the undisputed king with SSUSA an afterthought.

There was something about an underdog that was attractive and Terry and Fran saw the potential of growing the division. They asked Mike Williams and myself to attend the Senior Softball Summit in Phoenix in 2008 to make a presentation.

The Summit organizations were ASA, USSSA, Huntsman, ISSA, SSWS, SPA, LVSSA and SSUSA.

Mike and I attended the last two days and we were given 30 minutes on Saturday to deliver our pitch. We also met informally with most of the associations and the response back to us was uniformly the same except for SSUSA.

ASA already had the 40 division so our presentation did not interest them. The others we spoke to saw no reason to add the 40 division because we weren't seniors. We would be taking up valuable resources such as fields and ump's which were better served for their senior divisions.

Mike and I could not convince them that eventually if you're 40 something you will turn 50 and you would have a captive audience. In my opinion ASA would still be king of the 40s if they had a viable 50 and over program.

Our pitch was simple: Keep all the senior rules including bats, offer more than one tournament that did not interfere with the open-age championships because most of the 40 players had as their primary focus their open-age tournament teams, offer unlimited home runs because who doesn't love to pound the ball over a fence, require registration so they



In 2005 Old School won the SSUSA 40 Men's Masters World Championships and included Joe Lecak, third from left top row, and Mike Williams, third from left center row.

could monitor who would be entering their over-50 division to minimize the chance that a major plus talent slipped through the cracks and finally rate the 40 teams so that there weren't local pickup teams getting hammered by the well-funded teams.

Mike and I were convinced that whoever dominated the 40 division would reap the benefits as these players that turned 50 would stick with what

they were accustomed to. Terry, Fran and Dave were all ears and results proved our vision right on track. In 2002, ASA Worlds had 42 teams and SSUSA 4. By 2007, ASA had 21 teams and SSUSA attracted 14 Masters teams. By 2010, SSUSA had pulled ahead of ASA (21 teams to 10) and in 2014 SSUSA attracted 52 40 men's Masters teams to the World Masters Championships.

NorCal's McRorie, 75, Still Played in 50 League

By Joseph Ruggiero
Softball News Reports

Darrel McRorie, 75, a member of the Golden Seniors Softball Club since 1991, died on March 26. The Roseville, Calif., resident had a passion for softball that was very much alive until the very end.

Tony Sansone, president of Golden Seniors Softball Club, said that "Darrel played in just about every League offered by the club; Monday mornings, Tuesday mornings and several of the night leagues. He was still playing in Thursday night league at age 75 with 50-year-old tournament players. That tells you what kind of a ball player he was."

An all-conference baseball player while he attended college at Sacramento State, McRorie's love of the game extended into the autumn years of his life. "He played a great third base and could hit to all the fields," said Sansone.

McRorie once confided to Sansone, "I'll keep playing until I embarrass myself," a humble testimony to McRorie's commitment to the game.

McRorie was a teacher and coach in the Grant joint Union School District before he retired years ago. He also served in the Navy and retired as lieutenant commander, serving two combat tours in Vietnam.



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Opinions & Letters

Senior Softball by the Numbers

The last time we painted a statistical portrait of senior softball players Bill Clinton was president, the twin towers stood in New York City, double-wall bats were the new technology and we were still in the 20th Century.

That 1998 player survey showed remarkable similarities to the survey completed last month. A story on the results of the survey is on Page One of this edition.

Here are some comparisons over the years:

* The average age of a senior softball player in 1998 was 64. In 2015 it's 65. Average age for men and women was not broken out in 1998, but in 2015, the average was 67 for men and 58 for women.

* The average number of tournaments played per year was almost exactly the same: 7 in 1999 and 7.46 in 2015.

* The biggest change by far was Internet use. In 1998 a mere 17 percent of players used the Internet. We didn't even ask the question in 2015 because more than 98 percent of the players have e-mail addresses.

* The average annual disposable income was \$35,000 in 1998 and \$38,250 in 2015.

Some players bristled at being asked their disposable income, thinking that we may be keeping track of what individual players responded. The survey in fact was used for the overall information collected and SSUSA did not keep any records of individual responses. We are only interested in the cumulative totals.

Why?

Most important, of course is for us to know the players as well as possible so that we continue to meet their needs of those playing the sport. In addition, we use the information to update our marketing mate-



Sue Ballenger

rials so that we can attract more sponsors to the sport and promote senior softball throughout the media.

Without sponsor support, the cost of playing would skyrocket.

Thanks to all of the players who responded to the online survey we sent out in March.

Education, Check-Ups, Healthy Eating Can Keep Cancer at Bay

Cancer lies dormant in all of us.

Cancer is a living organism. Our bodies make defective cells all the time. Fortunately, our bodies are also equipped with a number of organisms that detect and keep such defective cells in check.

Statistics show that one in four of us will get cancer in our lifetime. Even if the body's mechanisms can keep cancer at bay, there are still external chemicals and viruses that can increase the chances of getting cancer. All of us have lost players to cancer.

It is hard to keep track of all the most recent diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. The field is changing at breakneck speed. This a good reason to see your doctor for regular medical

CAN-SIRS CORNER

By Pete Davignon

checkups.

CAN-Sirs is an organization formed to bring about awareness and encourage prevention among our fellow ball players. In the last five years we have carried the message with CAN-Sirs exhibition teams, brochures, an annual CAN-Sirs Benefit Softball Tournament in Elk Grove, Ca., every year in May.

We are on Facebook and now have a new and improved web site www.cancers.org. We encourage you to visit it and check out the letters,

photos, and the tournaments we intend to enter this year. Make a habit of eating healthy foods, getting plenty of exercise, and making annual visits to your doctor.

We all know about cancer but a lot of us ignore some easy ways to prevent it. Educate yourself with information about the benefits and limitations and along with your doctor so you can make an informed decision.

With age we experience reduced muscle power and elasticity. You can counter the effects with just a few easy exercises done on a regular basis. You don't have to be the one going home with an injury. Commit a little time to conditioning. On the

can-sirs.org home page is an exercise guide available for download. These exercises are specifically designed for softball conditioning by an exercise physiologist at California State University, Chico.

You will be on the field for most of the day when playing tournaments. It important that you eat and drink wisely. Your diet should be heavy on carbohydrates, with some protein. Fruits -- apples and oranges -- are good choices. Drink plenty of fluids throughout the day. A two percent loss of body water can cause your performance level to drop.

Can-Sirs is a nonprofit corp. and

Continued on next page



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Skipper Honored by Fairfax, VA, Adult Softball

Softball News Report

FAIRFAX, VA. – Brad Skipper has been enshrined in the Fairfax Adult Softball Inc. (FAS) Hall of fame for his tireless volunteer work for the organization.

FAS was voted the No. 1 amateur sports organization in Virginia and it is the largest, most established and stable adult softball program in the state.

Skipper was honored for his diligent work supporting FAS in several administrative capacities, especially his efforts to attain nonprofit status for the organization.

The FAS Hall of Fame's mission is to recognize, preserve and promote the heritage of FAS. FAS honors the contributions and accomplishments of individuals who are worthy of recognition as examples for others. Skipper's tire-

less volunteer efforts embodied the dedication FAS wished to honor.

FAS was organized in 1977 to promote the participation of adult softball in Fairfax County. FAS conducts annual fundraising efforts and makes contributions to Virginia Special Olympics Area 26 and other charitable organizations that focus on women's health issues and disabled veterans and their families.

Skipper joined FAS in 1982. He assisted in fundraising efforts to help build the Sharon Sealock Complex at Braddock Park, including the addition of restrooms at the facility. Skipper also sponsored bowling and golf outings, while personally donating and soliciting prizes for FAS's charitable fundraising efforts.

In addition to fundraising,

Skipper negotiated the first long-term umpire contract for the program and was an instrumental advocate and leader in passing the initial IRA plan for FAS employees.

Skipper chaired or was a member of various FAS committees, including Budget and Finance, Marketing, Protests, Rules and Umpires. Skipper also served as a Division President for five years.

Skipper is most proud of his three-year effort to attain nonprofit status for FAS which was achieved around November, 2014.

For more information about FAS, please visit <http://www.fairfaxadultsoftball.com/word-press/2014/>.



Brad Skipper was honored for his work in helping to build FAS, the largest sports association in Virginia.

Louisville's Adwell, 71, Won TOC

By Joseph Ruggiero
Softball News Report

David R. Adwell Sr., 71, died Nov. 6 at the Jewish Hospital in Louisville, KY. An all-around great

CAN-Sirs: Growing

Continued from Page 8

like others we exist on support and donations from individuals, teams, and leagues. CAN-Sirs has grown over the past four years and it takes more money to continue our mission. Your donation will greatly help us. Please give us some thought.

The Elk Grove CA torment will be held May 16 and 17.

This year the area Lions Clubs will be serving food at Elk Grove Regional, and Laguna parks. Again the California Girls Softball League, the Grapettes, will be providing dugout bat service.

More information is available at can-sirs.org. Email us at can-sirs@att.net. Donations may be mailed to: CAN-Sirs, Inc., 2485 Notre Dame Blvd #370-180, Chico, CA 95928

softball player, David cherished the time he spent playing ball with the Columbus Silver Sticks.

Playing with the Silver Sticks squad since 1999, Adwell served as their catcher and occasional outfielder. A solid base hitter, averaging around .500,

Adwell helped the team win several national championships and the Tournament of Champions in 2009. Adwell also played in several recreational leagues in Louisville.

"David was a great teammate. He has been around for years and it showed at the tournaments," said Jim Cabbell, manager of the Silver Sticks.

"The guy knew everybody no matter where he went and he loved to talk to everyone. He was one of the great ones and he's really going to be missed."

Adwell enjoyed playing softball almost as much as he enjoyed spoiling his six grandchildren.

He will be missed by those that worked with him, played with him and had the honor of calling him family.



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Teams Shake Off Winter in Early SSUSA Qualifiers

By Joseph Ruggiero Softball News Report

Five first-rate qualifying tournaments kicked off the year in stride. From the rolling desert hills of Southern California to the flat "Valley of the Sun" in Phoenix all the way to saltwater ports of Alabama, players met at the fields to swing their bats, dirty their cleats and hopefully deliver a championship.

Mobile National Qualifier

Most recently, the Mobile National Qualifier saw 10 teams gather at West County Mobile Park to play ball on March 28. With tasty concessions, sunny skies, and an excellent maintenance staff, teams from Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Pennsylvania and Tennessee eased in to play some solid ball.

The 60 AAA division saw T.A.G. thwart Atlanta Recycling at every turn. T.A.G. "made timely defensive plays; anytime Atlanta Recycling got something going, T.A.G.'s infield made a great play," said Tournament Director Tim McElroy. In the title game, Atlanta Recycling put up nine runs in the bottom of the seventh inning before T.A.G. put them away and held on for a 21-17 win to take the title.

Louisiana Legends and the Firm stood toe to toe throughout the tournament. Practically aping each other, in a best 2 out of 3 format, both teams earned a 19-14 win to start off. For-

ing a thrilling "If" game from start to finish, the Firm pulled out a slim 14-13 victory in eight innings to seize the division title.

"Great plays and plenty of runs were scored," in the 50 Gold division said McElroy. Coming all the way from Pittsburgh, Steel Sox City won four games in a row to face Tennessee Connection in the championship game. With an early 12-3 lead, Steel Sox City ran out of steam. Meanwhile Tennessee Connection, with a strong 20-man roster and wisely used bench, meted out 16 runs in a final 19-12 victory to snag the division title.

Midwest Opener

The Midwest Season Opener set up shop at the Carl Smith Softball Complex in Tulsa, OK on March 21, 2015 with 9 teams competing.

The 50-55 Major/50 AAA division saw MWDS dominate the field. Disposing of Oklahoma Rhinos 30-23 and Team Arkansas II 25-12, MWDS sealed up the division.

KC Renegades 60's went unbeaten in the 55/60 division to wear the crown.

Top Gun Tune Up

Sunshine and clear skies welcomed teams attending Top Gun's SSUSA Spring Worlds Tune Up in Cathedral City, Calif., March 7-8.

The stunning backdrop of Big League Dreams' replicas of famous major league parks provided stunning playing conditions.

Featuring 18 teams and several competitive match-ups, the tournament saw players and fans alike enjoying the playful atmosphere and youthful spirit of players giving it their all.

With only two teams competing in Group A, Team 1st to 20 displayed their skills overcoming Whatever to take the division title.

Group B saw six teams compete, with Doubleplay Classic going undefeated to earn the championship after a decisive 20-13 victory against Sugamele Golf coming in at a close second place.

God Sports Co. 60 nabbed the championship in Group C, despite some skilled ball play by Top Gun III. Both teams played their last game of the tournament with the same record, but God Sports triumphed 17-16.

Fielding the most competitive set of teams, Fountain Valley Outlaws squeaked out a championship in Group D.

Phoenix Spring Training

The annual Spring Training Classic in Phoenix hosted 32 teams from Arizona, California, New Mexico, Washington and as far east as Ohio March 6-8.

Held during spring training for major league baseball teams, players got the chance to not only play ball under blue skies and idyllic weather, but also to watch some of their favorite major league baseball teams gear up for the upcoming season.

Divided into eight divisions, the 50's division drew the most teams with 10, while the 40's division fielded eight teams. A huge success, the annual Spring Training Classic featured some great competition and solid play.

Blue Pill Mafia gunned down the competition in the 40 division to obtain the coveted championship.

The 50 division saw Tucson Hamertime beat out Arizona Assault 25-14 to grab the gold, while Arizona Old

School 50's beat out AZ Assault 21-18 to earn second place. Meanwhile, Arizona Old School 55's managed a 12-11 win over Santisi Bros. to seize the 55 division title.

Bucky's Casino 60's clinched the 60 AA division with 20-10 thumping of Los Vatos Viejos, and Sidewinders II snagged the 70 division title with Hooters Casino Hotel falling to second place.

Top Gun Winter Classic

With 50 teams competing over four days, SSUSA's Top Gun Winter Classic welcomed the New Year on Jan. 8 with the sweet crack of bats. Fielding very competitive teams, players were eager to get back on the softball field after the holidays, said Tournament Director Don Reddig.

Despite starting off with perfect weather, rain unfortunately shortened tournament play on the last day of the tournament. Reddig said that despite the poor weather on Sunday, "Everyone was gracious and handled the inconvenience with a smile."

The first session featured the 65-80 divisions comprised of 25 teams. Three Scrap Iron Softball teams out of Denver made the trip, playing on seven diamonds during the two-day event, but failed to earn a title.

So Cal Warriors dominated the Men's 65/70 B division featuring six teams, going undefeated to take the title.

R&R 65's also went undefeated to take the crown in the Men's 65 A division. While Git-R-Done 70 AA swept the Men's 70/75/80-AAA C division.

The second session showcased the 50-60 divisions with 25 teams competing. In the Men's 50 A division, L.A.F. earned the championship without a loss.

Git-R-Done 60's took the Men's 55/60 B division by storm, while Double Play Classic 55's dominated the Men's 55 B division to take the title.

The Men's 55/60 D division saw Sammy's Nighthawks 60's devour their competitors to seize the championship.

All Tournament Players Listed

The following All Tournament players were received after publication of the last Senior Softball News edition.

2015 WMC

MVP – Men's 75 AAA, **Harris Auction:** Marlyn Schroepfer; Men's 80 Major, **Arizona Prospectors:** Marcel Mathieu

All Tournament Selections – Men's 75 AAA, **New York Statesmen:** Dennis Leach & Bucky Wardle

2014 Winter Worlds

Men's 80 Major – **Arizona Prospectors:** Gene Boettcher, Marcel Mathieu, John Siegfried, Norm Brooks, Don Kucharek

2014 Winter Nationals

Men's 50 MajorPlus – **AMR:** Bobby Noeth, John Stuart, Kevin Birkofer, Mark Schneider

Men's 60 Major – **Metro Hitmen:** Jeff Hitt, Henry Culley, Tony Vodola, Gary Richter, Mike Menzer

Men's 60 AAA – **Steel Dawgs:** Tony Ninni, Ron Zankey, Greg Klein



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Retire: Volunteering Opens Fascinating Doors

Continued from Page 1

in Flint or serving ice cream at a Baskin-Robbins in Burbank. They've had something to do, a purpose in life, a place to go.

Once the freshness of retirement wears off and you're back home from your worldwide travels or your trips to visit all the grandkids, many are shocked to discover that they really have no plans for living the next phase of their life – retirement.

On the flip side of the retirement coin, you can find thousands of people who'll tell you that they've never been busier, that their lives are fully engaged in living out their golden years and as a result, they couldn't be happier and healthier.

That's because they either knew what they were going to do in retirement or quickly found out that they weren't going to spend their idle hours attempting to write the next great American novel.

Having been retired myself for the last eight years or so, I found that there are scores of opportunities for seniors volunteering their services to the vast array of non-profits. You only need to scan your local newspaper or consult with friends and family to discover the rewarding world of volunteerism.

Here are a few examples of what I found:

My wife and I are heavily involved in Special Olympics both as coaches and fundraisers. It's a natural step for those in Senior Softball to step onto the Special Olympic softball field because teams always need coaching help or just someone to shag balls in the outfield. And who doesn't have some extra equipment laying around that these eager Special Olympic athletes would love to own?

Many people don't realize that Special Olympics offers a full range of athletic programs on a year-round basis. In addition to softball and the well-known sports such as track and field and basketball, there's golf, where you can help out by being anything from an alternate-shot playing partner to a caddy. Or you could just drive the cart around at a tournament and help keep score.

Other sports that are offered, depending on where you live, include such things as bocce ball, swimming, soccer, floor hockey, volleyball, bowling and various snow sports. Most Senior Softball players have a world of knowledge and training in these sports and that could be invaluable to those in need of assistance.

In addition to Special Olympics, many, many communities offer other sports programs for the disabled doing everything from water skiing to Little League. Once you get involved, you'll no doubt be hooked on helping.

I've also enjoyed working with my former college, both mentoring journalism students on a



One of the most rewarding volunteer activities is coaching and helping Special Olympics athletes.

regular basis and providing some extra funds for scholarship programs. There's nothing like returning to campus to rekindle the excitement of being back at college, seeing the freshness of youth and the untapped potential in students. I know this for a fact: buy a student a meal and you've got a lifelong friend.

Of course, it doesn't stop at colleges. What school wouldn't welcome the help of a willing senior to come into the classroom to lend a hand. Sure, you'll have to get a special clearance from the district, but that shouldn't take much time and effort on your part. Some seniors who I know love

to volunteer at their grandchild's school while others think it's a better idea to give them some space and they help out at their neighborhood school.

A good friend of mine who's got 20 years on me comes out to California each year for three or four months to visit his daughter and to escape the icy Midwest winters.

Two weeks into his first visit, he quickly discovered that sitting around the house wasn't his strong suit and he knew that he needed to do something. So he drove downtown to the local food closet and volunteered his services. They immediately put him to work organizing the closet and he continued to work there each winter for the next 15 years until his health wouldn't allow him to travel.

Not only did he thoroughly enjoy volunteering two or three days a week, but he also found himself with a whole new set of friends in a new town.

Many retirees don't want to commit to any lengthy volunteer program and that's understandable. They have plans and don't want to be tied down.

That's why single-day volunteer events work well for them. For instance, any senior would be more than welcome to join a team of walkers who are working to raise money in the battle against such diseases as cancer or diabetes. Practically every town in America has these sponsored events and they're not only looking for people to walk, but to help out with registration, meals or on-course volunteers.

The lesson here is that if you're retired and need something to do, you can always find volunteer activities no matter if it's your hometown or a distant location.

Jack Sirard is a retired nationally syndicated business writer and a senior writer for Senior Softball News.

Texas Legends Coach 'Buddy' Hopper Dies

**By Joseph Ruggiero
Softball News Report**

James "Buddy" Hopper, who both played third base and later coached the Texas Legends, died on March 15 at the age of 72.

The Arlington, Tex., resident was a passionate player who joined the Texas Legends in 1998 and coached the team from 2011 to 2013.

Earning 17 national titles with Texas Legends, Buddy was known for his fierce competitive edge and "having a keen mind for the game with a memory like a steel trap" said fellow teammate and friend, Ray Kozusko. Kozusko added that Buddy possessed a magnificent arm and was a formidable

third baseman with "a strong throw to first" and a skilled defensive glove.

A skilled manager, even hotheaded at times, Kozusko noted that sometimes Buddy "would throw his clipboard in the dugout when he got frustrated," but those rare moments only revealed his strong passion for the game. Jerry Deal, also a fellow teammate and friend, echoed Kozusko, saying Buddy "put every bit of it on the ground and expected the same from all his players."

Buddy will be remembered by his teammates and friends as a man who never quit; an accomplished player, a great manager and a good friend.



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TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS



Team Texas San Antonio celebrates winning the 60 AA division, beating the Syracuse 14-9 in the finals.



From left, WWAST Manager David Van... Mike Aevermann of the Beltway Bandits... auction for the Wounded Warriors.



Scores of spectators cheered the Wounded Warriors Ambutee Softball Team to victory.

TOC: Contests Draw Hundreds



Continued from Page 1

Meeting under sunny skies, more than 100 upbeat players took to the freshly cut diamonds to hone their skills for a day of free hitting clinics before the real action began. Hitting instructors Bobby Davis, Lee Trotter and Dave Reed, some of the finest hitters in the country, were on hand to work one on one with players. The first of many worthwhile events, players still had the following events and awards to look forward to:

- * Free Skills contests with top prizes for each age division.
- * An All-Star Game featuring the top players from each team.
- * A TOC Shirt and certificate for each player.
- * A free gala banquet for all 2,100 players and their guests.

- * Free rings for division champions.

With prizes, events and awards like these, it's no secret why Senior Softball's Crown Jewel—the TOC — is the premier senior softball tournament in North America.

The first night of activities saw 51 players square up in the annual All Star game; pulling the best players from SSUSA's leading teams. The National All Stars, led by co-managers Terry Hennessey of SSUSA and Freda Jones of Virginia, did their best to thwart the efforts of the American All Stars led by Doug Robbins of SSUSA and Donnie Brooks of Alaska. After the dust settled, the red capped American All Stars displayed their dominance defeating the blue capped National All Stars 38-22.

The next day, more than 300 players ignored the rain to compete in skills competitions, including precision pitching, power hitting and running.

Cones dotted the outfields, a five-foot net loomed at the plate, the outfield v



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NEWS: POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA



Sleet and Leonard Anderson present [unclear] with the bat he won for \$7,000 in an



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CNM Wealth Management of Florida's pitcher, above, helped lead the team to its 55 Major title.

prospective batters, while players rounded the bases to prove that they possessed the nimblest feet in the country. (For a list of winners, see page 17).

Standing from afar, the packed diamonds looked like Spring Training. The players'

Please See Next Page



The Windsor Chiefs of Ontario, Canada, defeated the Sacramento Islanders in 65 AAA bracket play. Mello Financial of Florida eventually won the division.

Photos by Jack Eberhard

Tournament of Champions February, 2015 MVP Selections

Men's 40 Major:	Vik Tathe, Homer Lovers, Ontario, CN
Men's 50 Major-Plus:	Ed Starcher, Team 1 Sports/Miken, Royal Palm Beach, FL
Men's 50 Major:	Juan Acosta, Miami Power, Miami, FL
Men's 50 AAA:	Paul Biocic, Team Sonic, Merritt Island, FL
Men's 50 AA:	Neal Hebert, Lake Charles Lakers, Lake Charles, LA
Men's 55 Major:	Curt Glassman & Roger Bard, CNM Weathlh Mgmt/Snyder's Lance, Ft Lauderdale, FL
Men's 55 AAA:	Mickey Maddy, Golden Vipers, Washington, MI
Men's 55 AA:	Gary Rothenberg & Jim Monnat, Roc City 55's, Rochester, NY
Men's 60 Major-Plus:	Mark Thomas, Hollis Appraisals, Jacksonville, FL
Men's 60 Major:	Brian McLeroy, Houston Fire, Houston, TX
Men's 60 AAA:	Dale Constable, American Scaffolding, Cincinnati, OH
Men's 60 AA:	Carlos Vargas, Team Texas (SA), San Antonio, TX
Men's 65 Major-Plus:	Paul Preuit, Rose/Acline HR, and Summerfield, FL
Men's 65 Major:	Floyd Williams, Murphy's Law, Fort Myers, FL
Men's 65 AAA:	Hugh Mitchell, Mello Financial, Sebastian, FL
Men's 65 AA:	Joe Romeo, Anaconda Sports, Clifton Park, NY
Men's 70 Major-Plus:	Robert Conrad, Florida Legends, Ormond Beach, FL
Men's 70 Major:	Rod Severson, TB Financial Group, The Villages, FL
Men's 70 AAA:	Melvin Bentley, Kokopelli Eye Institute Scorpions, Prescott, AZ
Men's 70 AA:	Freddy LaFazia, Cozy Grill, North Providence, RI
Men's 75 Major:	Richard (Digger) Lines & Johnny Andrews, Joseph Chevrolet, Englewood, FL
Men's 75 AAA:	Chuck E Adams, Pfeiffer Gray Sox, Grand Rapids, MI
Men's 80 Major:	Raymond Bosetti, Florida Investment Properties, W. Palm Beach, FL
Men's 80 AAA:	Mel Schiebel, ProHealth Care, Oak Creek, WI
Men's 85 Major:	The Whole Team, Center For Sight, Venice, FL
Women's 40 Major:	Lupe Garcia, Old School 40, Torrance, CA
Women's 40 AAA:	Laura Grunert, Chill 40 Below, Colombian, MD
Women's 50:	Beverly Lovett, Dreamgirlz, Virginia Beach, VA



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TOC: 2,100 Feast at Banquet

Continued from Page 15

chatter and whoops of encouragement echoing off the fields revealed why the TOC showcases the very best of Senior Softball - you may come to win, but you play to experience camaraderie at its finest.

The great size and scope of the tournament was nowhere more evident than on Friday night when 2,100 players and their guests attended the annual gala banquet at the Sun N' Fun Facility in Lakeland. Two large airplane hangars were needed to host the formal affair and Mark Jackson, director of Polk County Sports Marketing, acted as master of ceremonies.

Over the course of the evening, each manager of the participating teams was announced and received a certificate. A raucous moment, each time a team's manager was called, teammates and players from the team's home state erupted in hoots and hollers to voice their pride and support.

Each winner of the skills competitions in their respective age division was also announced and received recognition. They were awarded shoes, fielder gloves, or a special edition TOC bat depending on the skills competition.

The highlight of the evening featured a presentation by Leonard Anderson, a team member of



Photos by Jack Eberhard

A California Kiss our Stixx batter slugs one during 40 Womens AAA action against So-Cal Toxic. Toxic won 22-13.

Wounded Warriors Amputee Softball Team. Anderson served in the U.S. Air Force and during his second tour to Afghanistan was struck with an IED rendering him as a left below the elbow and partial right hand amputee.

His personal account was both inspirational and shed light on the importance of making sure U.S. veterans receive the support needed to ensure their success when they return home. Leonard received a

sustained and well-deserved standing ovation from all attendees

In honor of the Wounded Warriors, SSUSA also held an auction during the banquet for a special edition Louisville Slugger bat with the TOC, WWAST (Wounded Warriors Amputee Softball Team) and SSUSA logo. The bat was also signed by the WWAST. Mike Aevertmann of the Beltway Bandits ended up being the lucky owner with the highest bid of \$7,000. All proceeds went to WWAST.

On Saturday night at the Auburndale Sports Complex, the WWAST faced off against the SSUSA All Stars in front of an estimated 1,000 fans strongly supporting the WWAST. In the top of the 9th inning, the SSUSA All Stars mounted an impressive 19-run rally to overcome a huge deficit, taking a 39-36 lead into the bottom of the 9th.

Roaring back, Mike Aevertmann, the lone SSUSA All-Star filling out the WWAST squad, led off with a tape-measure HR to straightaway center. Dennis Turner of Louisville Slugger, Greg Reynolds (U.S. Army/Iraq) and Leonard Anderson (U.S. Air Force/Afghanistan) then strung together consecutive singles to score one more. To the delight of the crowd, Matt Kinsey (U.S. Army/Afghanistan) launched a game-winning three-run homer to left to account for the final score of 41-39.

No less exciting, tournament play displayed the high competition present at the TOC with 41 games during bracket play determined by merely one run.

Continued on Page 18

Scrap Iron Thunder of Colorado fell to High Street Bucs of Maryland in the seeding rounds of the 55 Major division.



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OF CHAMPIONSHIPS

TOC Skill Contest Winners Announced

The Finest in Speed, Pitching and Hitting

More than three hundred players squared off in four special competitions to display their dominance at the 2015 Tournament of Champions:

Speed Contest:

Winners of the Speed Contest (fastest time around the bases) received a pair of Tanel Shoes.

Women's Division: Mona Onyemelukwe (Dreamgirlz, VA)

Men's 40/50 Division: Jimmy Nelson (Team Sonic, FL)

Men's 60 Division: Billy Williams (Beltway Bandits, VA)

Men's 70/80 Division: Ken Brown (Hill Contracting, TX)

Pitching Contest:

Winners of the Pitching Contest (most balls into a bucket at home plate) received a fielder's glove.

Women's Division: Angie Ayala-Clark (Arizona Dream Team)

Men's 40/50 Division: Tim Killan (Iowa Demons)

Men's 60 Division: Lonnie Netzel (Central Illinois Chiefs)

Men's 70/80 Division: Pete Vargas (Kokopelli Eye Institute Scorpions, AZ)

Precision Hitting Contest:

Winners of the Precision Hitting Contest (most balls hit in sequence between cones in the outfield) received an Ultra II bat.

Women's Division: Cheryl Connors (Kiss Our Stix, CA)

Men's 40/50 Division: Russ Ramsey (Mid-Atlantic Elite 40, MD)

Men's 60 Division: Mike Cimmarrusti (Kamikaze 55, CA)

Men's 70/80 Division: Darrel Laschen (Jimmy's Minnesota Legends 80's)

Power Hitting Contest:

Winners of the Power Hitting Contest (most balls hit over the fence) received an Ultra II bat.

Women's Division: Sara Payne (Kryptonite 40, FL)

Men's 40/50 Division: Bob Woldyk (DLB Softball, WI)

Men's 60 Division: Mark Thomas (Hollis Appraisals, FL)

Men's 70/80 Division: Donald Cohron (Columbus Silver Sticks, IN)

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2015 TOURNAMENT

TOC: NY, Ohio, Florida, Michigan Win Titles

Continued from Page 17

The Men's 40/50 Platinum division, featuring four teams, showcased the highly competitive nature of the tournament. In the 40 Major-plus division, Homer Lovers eked out a win against MidAtlantic 24-23 to take the championship. The 50 Major-plus Champions Team 1 Sports narrowly defeated MidAtlantic 27-26 for their title.

The Men's 50 Major Division saw four teams grind it out for the big ring. Despite Monster Softball's best efforts, Miami Power proved victorious. In their first meeting during bracket play, Miami Power dominated 26-18, only to face a tough rematch in the championship game after Monster mustered a win against Doug & Don's 20-19. In the championship game, Monster fell 24-23 to Miami Power's sizzling bats.

Featuring the first 'If' game of the tournament, the Men's 50 AAA division showcased some fierce com-

petition. Team Sonic put on a dazzling performance throughout bracket play knocking off Team Elite 18-12, Florida Automated Shade 19-18 and All Secure 18-3. Florida Automated Shade took the narrow loss in stride and after three consecutive wins met Team Sonic again at the championship game. Losing 18-16, Team Sonic quickly rebounded from the loss and shell shocked Florida Automated Shade 17-7 to win the division.

Roc City 55's took the 55 AA division, defeating Rocky Mountain Extreme 16-10, New Mexico Boomers 18-16 and Lake Charles Lakers 22-16. Despite the Laker's tough loss, they earned the 50-AA division title.

The Men's 55 division, featuring 10 teams, saw the fourth seeded High Street Bucs rise from the ashes of the elimination bracket to face off against the dominant second seeded CNM Wealth Mgmt/Lance for the championship. At their first meeting, CNM Wealth trounced High Street Bucs 21-6. The second time around, High Street Bucs put up a fight but still couldn't manage a win, losing 14-13 to CNM Wealth, a true champion.

David Bowen and the Golden Vipers put on quite a show in the Men's 55 AAA division. The top seeded team, Golden Vipers easily marched their way through the championship bracket disposing of Central Illinois Chiefs 20-5 and David Bowen Sporting Goods 19-9. Not to be undone, David Bowen defeated Integrity 17-10 to take another shot at the Golden Vipers. In a nail biter, David Bowen felt the sting of Golden Vipers' bats losing 25-24 in the championship game and the Vipers took the 55 AAA division crown.

In the 60 Platinum division, Hollis Appraisals earned the division title despite Houston Fire's attempts to put them away. In their first match-up, Houston Fire walloped Hollis Appraisals 25-14. Undaunted by the loss, Hollis Appraisals raised their bats against a determined IN Legend/Acc. Therapy

squad and narrowly survived 20-19. Then, avenging their first loss, Hollis Appraisals defeated Houston Fire 22-11 to take the title.

In a crowded 60 AAA division, 11 teams pursued the crown only to see their hopes dashed by two strong squads; American Scaffolding of Ohio and Minnesota Masters. The top seeded Masters, despite losing their first bracket game 19-16 against Wisconsin Masters, remained determined. Winning five consecutive games, including a tough match against a strong Slug-A-Bug squad 18-14, the MN Masters slogged their way out of the elimination bracket to earn a spot in the championship game. After a slim victory against Slug-A-Bug 14-13, American Scaffolding met the reso-

lute bats of MN Masters. In an exciting match-up, American Scaffolding defeated MN Masters 14-11 to take the division crown.

With eight teams competing in the 60 AA division, the seventh seeded Team Texas surprised the competition. Top seed, Talaga Construction, looked like the team to beat at the onset of bracket play only to be bested by Syracuse Cyclones 20-17. Cyclones, hoping to make a run for it after beating the top seed, were unseated by Team Texas shortly thereafter, but pulled off another magnificent win against Talaga Construction 19-18. In the championship game, Team Texas cooled off Cyclones' hot bats and in a decisive 19-14 victory, sealed the

Please See Page 19



Photo by Jack Eberhard
TOC umpire enjoying a moment.

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OF CHAMPIONSHIPS

TOC: Dreamgirlz, Chill, Old School Win Women's Divisions

From Page 18

division.

The 65 Platinum division saw Murphy's Law decimate the competition to earn the division title. Defeating Roadrunners 19-13, 4:13 Rim Fire 24-15, and Voice Tech 15-6; Murphy's Law nearly went undefeated except for one loss during seeding play against Michigan Express.

Midwest Express and Mello Financial vied for the 65 AAA division title. Falling to Midwest Express 20-12 at their first meeting during bracket play, Mello Financial fell to the elimination bracket to play Lake Wales Legends. In a fiercely competitive match, Mello Financial overcame Lake Wales Legends 27-26 to replay Midwest Express in the championship game. This time around, Mello Financial annihilated Midwest Express 21-5 to take the division title.

With five teams competing in the 65 AA division, Chicago Hitmen and Anaconda Sports of New York, battled

it out for the title. Anaconda Sports played strong right from the start dispatching Duke City 12-11 and Chicago Hitmen 9-8. Following their first loss in bracket play, Chicago Hitmen beat Sacramento Buds 7-5 to face off against Anaconda Sports again. Unable to stifle Anaconda's bats, Chicago Hitmen fell 10-8 and delivered the division title on a platter.

The TB Financial Group overpowered their competitors to earn the 70 Major division title, swiftly putting away MCC Insurance 70's and Vacar Stars. Florida Legends won the 70 Major-plus championship.

The 70 AAA division forced an "If" game to determine the division champion. Kokopelli Eye Institute gave Triple Play a run for its money during their first meet up outscoring them 20-17. Triple Play turned it around however, and after defeating American Legion Post 19-16, went on to beat Kokopelli Eye Institute 17-14. Not going down without a fight,

The Gray Sox 80s from Michigan competed in the oldest division in the TOC, the 80/85 division. Though the Sox didn't end up with a trophy, they provided inspiration for the 115 teams competing.



Photos by Jack Eberhard

Players were looking for any edge they could get at the TOC.

Kokopelli Eye Institute overwhelmed Triple Play 18-14 to claim their division title.

Cozy Grille of Rhode Island scorched the 70 AA opposition during bracket play going undefeated. Beating Columbus Silver Sticks 12-7, Syracuse Cyclones, and Hill Contracting 12-9; Cozy Grille walked away with the ring.

In the 75 Gold division, Pfeiffer Gray Sox outgunned Bucs and Bulls 14-6 to take the 75 AAA division title. Joseph Chevrolet put down PDR Fast-signs 9-6 to earn the 75 Major division

championship and Florida Investment Properties beat Fairway Ford 12-8 to win the 80 Major division ring.

The 80/85 Gold Division saw a strong rivalry develop between Jimmy's Minnesota Legends and ProHealth Care out of Wisconsin. Losing to ProHealth Care 14-7, Jimmy's Minnesota Legends kept their bats warm for their next competitors, Center for Sight, delivering a 17-14 victory. In a nail biter of a championship game, ProHealth Care barely managed the win against Jimmy's Minnesota Legends 18-17 to earn the division title.

The Women's 40-Masters AAA division saw five teams compete for the title. Despite several strong performances, Twisted Fossils and Chill 40 Below managed to take it all the way to the championship game. In a close, low-scoring bout, Chill 40 Below barely overcame Twisted Fossils 7-6 to take the division title.

In the last "If" game of the tournament, Old School 40 eked out a thin win over Kryptonite 10-9 to take the Women's 40-Masters Major division championship ring.

Dreamgirlz crushed the competition to earn the Women's 50 division championship ring. Routing AZ Dream Team 19-4 in their first matchup, the championship game saw Arizona Dream Team put up a fight but ultimately fall to the Dreamgirlz 8-5.



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Photo by Jack Eberhard
One of the highlights of the TOC All Star Game was a home run for the National All Stars by Aretha Tilley-Pigrum, rounding third base at left, of Kiss Our Stixx.

2015 TOC All Tournament Players Selected

2015 Tournament of Champions, Polk County, FL All Tournament selections named:

Men's 40 Major – **MidAtlantic Elite:** Troy Daub, Dave Lohr

Men's 50 Major – **Miami Power:** Richard Clark, Kevin Gordon, Richard Anderson, Rody Carballo, Jose Armas; **Doug & Don's Auto Care:** Mark McConnell, Gary Greskowiak

Men's 50 AAA – **Team Sonic:** Paul Biocic, Scott Donaldson, Rick Hankins, Harry Seward, Danny Brodhagen; **Florida Automated Shade:** Joe Varacchi Jr, Hank Buczynski, Tim Workman

Men's 50/55 AA – **Roc City 55:** Steve Keating, Dave Hanna, Tony DelVecchio, Bob Mills, Vin Perrone; **Lake Charles Lakers:** Harvey Griffin, Larry Shuff, Bobby Stollsteimer; **New Mexico Boomers:** Pablo Martinez, Julio Rios

Men's 55 Major – **CNM**

Wealth Management: Roger Bard, Doug Schram, Dale Franklin, Brad Rector, Steve Rubin; **High Street Bucs:** Tony Allen, John Hall, Dave Maertens; **So Cal 55:** Robert Sewell, Eddy Wong

Men's 55 AAA – **Golden Vipers:** Dan Geatches, John Johnson, Edison Davenport, Dan Fritz, Bob Burgee; **David Bowen Sporting Goods:** Andy McQuagge, Jeff Cherry, Freddie Williams; **Rocky Mountain Extreme:** Andy Gonzales, Dave Rieker and Sprino Dave Hernandez

Men's 60 Platinum – **Houston Fire:** Bob Schulz, Sergio Angulo, Gil Stalbaum, Bailey Nance, Mike Hirth; **Hollis Appraisals:** Mark Thomas, Jack Aronson, Pat McLellan; **Indiana Legends/Accelerated Therapy:** Tommy Johnson, Jack Phelps

Men's 60 AAA – **American Scaffolding:** Dale Constable, Jim Richardson, Mike Viox, Greg Klein, Bill Willis; **Minnesota Masters/Ancell:** Jon Jannetto, Ray Glynn, Wayne Peterson

Men's 60 AA – **Team Texas (SA):** George Araujo, Oscar Vigil, Juan Vargas, Richard Perez, Cruz Chavez; **Syracuse Cyclones:** Joe Broun, Tom Maroney, Steve Tompkins; **Talaga Construction:** David Kuchinsky, Michael Alpert

Men's 65 Platinum – **Murphy's Law:** Dennis Schroeder, Rich Mekeel, Marvin Swosinski, Bobby Schreyer, Glenn Slaimen; **Voice Tech Slammers:** Larry Sample, Chuck DeTore, Jim Davidson; **4:13 Rim Fire:** Andy Harbin, Steve Snow

Men's 65 AAA – **Mello Financial 65:** Don Bobish, Huch Mitchell, Lou Jiannine, Terry McIlrath, Gary Marsden; **Lake Wales Legends:** Ron Butler, Gary DeFalco

Men's 65 AA – **Anaconda Sports:** Jay Hayner, Joe Romeo, Rick Palmer, Tom Mulligan, Jerry Smith; **Chicago Hitmen:** Jim Kupiec, Phil Whitman, Rick Masino; **Sacramento Buds:** Robert Nishimoto, Dan Severson

Men's 70 Platinum – **TB Financial:** Bob Thomas III, Gustavo Blanco, Gregg Foster,

Tom Giles, Roger Scott; **Vacar Stars:** Robert Shires, Sonny Hill, Frank Shotwell; **MCC Insurance:** Dennis Hogan, Jerry Flannery

Men's 70 AAA – **Kokopelli Scorpions:** Mel Bently, Al Grefsheim, Jay Crenshaw, Larry Richey, Troy Singletary; **American Legion Post 8:** Larry Grabb, Frank Jacobs

Men's 70 AA – **Cozy Grill:** Fred LaFazia, Peter Castriotta, Norman O'Brien, Felix Chico DeCesare, Jerry DeMello

Men's 75 Major – **Joseph Chevrolet:** Pete Burger, Santi Cacciola, Tom Sides, Jim Bavis, Hansel Faulkner; **PDR/Fastsigns:** John Fournier, Bob Rose, Charles Barracato, Robert Quarantino

Men's 75 AAA – **Pfeiffer Gray Sox:** Larry Martin, Dick Fox, Mike Wunderlin, Chuck Lindstrom, Barry Griffin; **Bucs and Bulls:** Bill Miller, John Ormsby, Doug McLellan; **Back Office Associates:** Jim Parmelee, Mike Sullivan

Men's 80 Major – **Florida Investment Properties:** Ray-

mond Bosetti, Roger Thresher, Rocco Cambareri, Ferrell Sparks, Norm Haltrich, Al DeWerth, Bob Johnson, Larry McCurdy; **Jimmy's MN Legends:** Don Hutchinson, Bob D'Amadio, Norm Robinson

Men's 80/85 Gold – **Pro-Health Care:** Jim O'Connor, Willie Wood, Roger Schroder, Blake Waterhouse, Dick Steinmetz; **Center For Sight:** Bill Altman, Hugh Brotherton, Paul McGillicuddy, Sal DeRosa, Don Gsell

Women's 40 Major – **Kryptonite:** Sara Payne, Karen Hunger, Carolyn Deeb, Kellie Berning

Women's 40 AAA – **Twisted Fossils:** Donna McLean, Deb Larson, Lori Franchina, **SoCal Toxic:** Donna Vandagriff, Kathy Shomaker, Melanie Grieco

Women's 50 – **Dreamgirlz:** Shirley Snell, Sylvia Echols, Debra Tucker, Kathy Keys, Mona Onyemelukwe; **Arizona Dream Team:** Angie Ayala, Dixie Dalton, Wanda Stokes



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The 65 AAA division competed at the pristine Canyon's Softball Complex in St. George, Utah, during this year's Spring Worlds, with teams competing for a berth at the Tournament of Champions.

Spring Worlds Kicks Off With 88 Teams

Softball News Report
By Joseph Ruggiero

MESQUITE, Nev. and ST. GEORGE, Utah – The Spring World Championships returned here to host 88 teams from all over the western United States.

The dry desert valley surrounded by mountainous regions and canyons provided a scenic milieu for players itching to play some ball.

According to Tournament Director Don Brooks, several players remarked that the 30 minute drive through the Virgin River Gorge on their way up to the Canyon's Complex "was absolutely beautiful."

"It was a great tournament with great weather," said Brooks. "The fields were impeccable. Players loved the facilities and the maintenance staff was on top of it, prepping the fields, lickety split, in between games."

With a few more teams attending than last year, the tournament went off smoothly and featured some highly competitive bracket play.

The 50 Major division pitted Code Blue against SoCal Knights. The bracket took place March 28 at the Canyons Complex in St. George. The opener could have gone either way as the Knights eked out a 21-20 win over Code Blue. With the win the Knights found their bats and swept Code Blue 30-19 for the division title.

In a crowded and experienced field, 13 teams vied for the 50 Silver division championship. Top

seed, Phoenix Bulldawgz, bulldozed the opposition going undefeated all the way to the championship game leaving second seed McU Sports and the third seeded Never Say Never to pick at the scraps. Never Say Never started strong defeating AZ O.S. 13-11, and McU Sports 19-11.

Unable to muster enough runs to halt Bulldawgz' winning momentum, losing 17-14, Never Say Never fell to the elimination bracket to face off against McU Sports. In a fun rematch, McU Sports avenged their first loss outscoring Never Say Never 20-10 to find a seat at the championship table. Hungry for the win, Bulldawgz triumphed over McU Sports 33-18 to earn the division title.

The 55 Major division saw SoCal 55 pull off an amazing feat competing with seven teams for the title. Sent to the elimination bracket by Old Dawgz in a tough loss 12-5 early on, SoCal 55 remained steadfast winning four games in a row to claw their way out of the doghouse. Beating S.I. Thunder 27-20, Doubleplay, Top Gun 55's 18-13, and a strong Old Dawgz squad 16-13, SoCal 55 went on to play Tucson Bandits in the championship game. In a decisive win, SoCal overwhelmed Tucson Bandits 19-11 to force the first "If" game of the tournament. The only team to successfully double dip their opponent, SoCal Gusto vanquished Tucson Bandits 15-14 in a thrilling match to grasp the division championship.

With only three teams facing off in the 60 Major division, Top Gun III took the division by storm.

Handedly defeating Christensen 27-5 in their first match-up, Top Gun III prevailed again against Christensen 17-11 to gain the division title.

Braves, a relatively new California team, seized the 55 AAA division title. The Braves easily swept bracket play mowing down their opponents one by one defeating LVSSA Hitmen 16-6 and Mountain Men 17-8. Despite Mountain Men's rebound out of the elimination bracket with a strong win against Rocky Mountain Extreme 16-7, the squad couldn't defend the Braves' offensive firepower falling 21-14.

The 60 AAA division showcased an exciting and competitive set of teams. Results Realty, despite their low seeding, commanded respect early on beating Grant's Posse 31-15, Git-R-Done 19-8 and Last Call 13-7. Facing off against a stout War Eagles squad in their next match-up, Results Realty lost a close one 18-17 to fall into the elimination bracket to face the Scrap Iron Diamonds. In a thrilling semi-championship bout, Scrap Iron Diamonds fought hard to hold off Results Realty but ultimately fell short losing 20-19. In a well-deserved rematch, Results Realty just couldn't keep up with War Eagles who won 11-6 to take the division.

Scrap Iron Coyotes proved victorious in the 55/60 AA division. Despite losing to Scrap Iron Freedom 22-11 in the first game of bracket play, the Coyotes regained their footing. Overcoming New Mexico Warriors 17-13 and Copper Gang, Scrap

Continued on Page 22



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Spring: Scrap Iron Teams Rock

Continued from Page 21

Iron Coyotes avenged their first loss by outscoring Scrap Iron Freedom 20-18 to force the second "If" game of the tournament. With a strong offensive resurgence, Scrap Iron Coyotes defeated Scrap Iron Freedom 22-17 to take the 55 AA championship. Despite the rough loss, Scrap Iron Freedom earned the 60 AA championship.

Eight teams competed in the 65 Major division with SoCal Gusto and Ryan's Way vying for supremacy. After losing to SoCal Gusto 21-7, Ryan's Way swiftly climbed their way up the elimination bracket by outscoring Old Dawgs 28-17, R&R 21-20 and Scrap Iron Phiten 17-6. Unable to combat SoCal Gusto's offensive drive, Ryan's Way fell 17-13 surrendering the crown to SoCal Gusto.

The 65 AAA division saw Arizona Ancients doing their best to upset OC-Mustangs. In a close first contest, OC-Mustangs pulled through defeating Arizona Ancients 17-16. Despite the loss, Arizona Ancients persevered 26-21 over the formidable Fountain Valley Outlaws to get a shot at the title. In a turnabout, Arizona Ancients managed a slim win over OC-Mus-



tangs to compel the third "if" game of the tournament. OC-Mustangs, however, proved victorious managing a 15-12 win to seize the division title.

Scrap Iron Legacy seemed poised to easily sweep the 70/75 Platinum division if not for the handiwork of Omen 70. Losing to Scrap Iron Legacy 13-10 in their first meeting, Omen 70 pulled off a key win over Tharaldson 12-10 to earn another crack at Scrap Iron Legacy. This time around, Omen 70 captured the win 15-14 damaging Scrap Iron Legacy's confidence. Forcing the fourth "If" game of the tournament, Omen 70 put it all out on the field but came up short 17-12 and Scrap Iron Legacy snatched

the division championship.

The 65/70 Silver division saw Scrap Iron 70 Red dominate the competition and gain the division crown. Finding only a little resistance from Top Gun 70, Scrap Iron 70 Red quickly disposed their opponents beating California Oaks 19-14, Sons of Pitches 21-11 and Top Gun 70's 21-19 respectively. After achieving a solid victory over Sons of Pitches 14-10, Top Gun 70 attempted to unseat Scrap Iron Red in the championship game only to fall short 16-4.

Six teams competed for the 70/75/80 division title, but only Top Gun Silver remained after the dust settled. Gold Coast 75's attempted a rousing comeback after losing their first bracket game 11-10 against Git-R-Done 70's. Eliminating Slammers 9-5, Fairway Ford 18-14 and Git-R-Done 70's 23-16 in a stunning rematch, Gold Coast 75's survived to get a shot at the title. Unfortunately, Top Gun Silver proved too strong a squad and outmuscled Gold Coast 15-2 to win the division.

For complete game results, please visit Senior Softball USA's Spring World's tournament page at: www.seniorsoftball.com.

TOC Repeat Winner Fabel of NY, Dies

By Joseph Ruggiero
Softball News Report

Herbert L. Fabel of White Plains, N.Y., died on Dec. 12 at the age of 74. An excellent all-round player, Herb played senior softball from 1995 to 2013 with both the New York Streaks and the Long Island Jaguars.

An avid sportsman and dedicated player, Herb won several championship rings including two Tournament of Champion crowns.

Streaks' manager Tony Prettitore and Long Island Jaguar's manager Joel Reich said that Herb had the ability to brighten everyone's day. The practical joker of the team, Herb always kept the game loose and fun.

Herb was "very good to everybody" and always gave "a lot of encouragement," said Prettitore, "He taught me how to use the heavy arm." After his knee operation, despite not being able to play, Herb helped coach and kept the books; always willing to help out his teammates and friends.

FHC Raises \$1,000 For Wounded Warriors

Softball News Report

Hillsborough County, FL – The Florida Half Century Softball Association (FHC) held their annual "Wounded Warrior Classic II" tournament here on March 7. In its second year, the tournament raises money for the Wounded Warriors Amputee Softball Team (WWAST).

With 25 teams competing, the tournament generated over \$1,000 for the WWAST.

The WWAST, according to their website, "is a public charity whose mission is to inspire and educate others while enhancing the health and welfare of Wounded Warrior Amputees." SSUSA frequently works with the team and organization, and they were a highlight of the SSUSA's Tournament of Champions in Polk County, FL.

Spring World All Tournament Players Selected

2015 Spring World Championships, Mesquite, NV & St George, UT. All Tournament selections named:

Men's 50 Major – **SoCal Knights:** Mike Price, Russ Walling, Walter Sannes, James Robinson, Guy Wulf

Men's 50 AAA – **Phoenix Bulldawgz:** Jeff Brandhagen, Darren Cox, Randy Tompkins, Cory Firzloff, Richard Chiquete; **Never Say Never:** Bart Hubbard, Mike Wondergem, Skip Cluff

Men's 55 Major – **So Cal 55:** Ray Robles, Deano Kester, Moi Hill, Eddy Wong, Robert Sewell

Men's 55 AAA – **Braves:** Ron LARRIER, Eric Nordseth, Ralph Hernandez, Art Estrada, Tony Vasquez

Men's 55/60 Platinum – **Tucson Bandits:** Barry Morten, Arnie Vice, Dave Quenzler; **Top Gun 55:** Mark Aumann, Kevin O'Reilly

Men's 55/60 AA – **Copper Gang:**

Kent Wardle, Stan Miller, Neal Matthews
Men's 60 Major – **Top Gun III:** Jim Strickland, Bob Castro, Joel Hawk, Paul Ortiz, Scott Wolters; **Christensen Arms:** Terry Miller, Steve Schroeder, Bob McFarland, Mike Chau

Men's 60 AAA – **War Eagles:** Kevin Pringle, Mike Kalas, Ben McDonald, Scott Harding, Joel Arbogast; **Realty Realty:** Dan LoBue, Rich Thomas, Alan Geary, Dave Oakden; **Scrap Iron 60 Diamonds:** Dave Adams, Curt Dicke, Terry Liverant

Men's 65 Major – **Ryan's Way:** Lew Agius, Gregg Shaver, Jerry Hester, Bob Hough; **R & R 65:** Steve Chavez, Dick Markota

Men's 65 AAA – **OC Mustangs:** Pepe Siniard, Paul Dahlgren, Ernie Stucki, Gary Nieman, Bob Westphal; **AZ Ancient:** Bob Holland, Bob Vogt, RJ Ashley, Wayne Ross; **Fountain Valley Outlaws:**

Ron Tripodi, Doug Cruz, Steve Harabedian

Men's 65/70 Silver – **Scrap Iron 70 Red:** Bob Sims, Warren Bailey, Bob Bennett, Wayne Fields, Larry Ouret; **Top Gun 70:** Bill Jennings, Mark Rudich, Walt Webber, Jeff Millard; **Sons of Pitches:** Charlie Wiley, Carl Craft, Jim Krogman
Men's 70/75 Platinum – **Scrap Iron 70 Legacy:** Mike Smith, Don Pierson, Dale McLaughlin, Jack Robinson, Dick Schimmels; **Omen 70:** Bill Nevis, Al Oxley, Larry Patrick, Billy Wilson; **Tri-State Diamondbacks:** Geno Fernandez, Ernie Tafoya

Men's 75/80 Gold – **Top Gun Silver:** John Ihrig, Bob Teston, Ed Balinger, Norm Hall, Rico Coronado; **Gold Coast 75:** Jim DeFrates, Jack Paulson, Hal White, Jeff Hilgaertner; **Git-R-Done 70:** Donnie Sternberger, Steve Motske, Bryan Wilkins; Fairway Ford: Jack Scott, Merle Cummings



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Perfect Weather for ISA Winter Nationals

By Joseph Ruggiero
Softball News Report

LAKELAND, Fla. - The Independent Sports Association along with Polk County Sports Marketing recently held the Senior Winter Nationals here and ISA Chief Executive Officer Don Stratton called it a "chamber of commerce weekend with the temperature in the mid-80s and no clouds in the sky."

Champions were crowned in six different divisions with the winners receiving a team trophy, ISA championship watches and monogrammed polo shirts, while the second place teams received ISA T-shirts.

The 50 Platinum division saw four teams duke it out for the crown with Team 1 Sports/Miken reigning supreme. Team 1 played impeccably surviving their first game of bracket play against 50 Caliber St. Louis 27-26. Building steam, Team 1 annihilated Blast (FL) 41-22 to turn around and replay them in the championship game with a strong win of 22-6.

New Rule Softball faced some tough competition from Vero Scorpions, but ultimately swept the 50 AAA

ISA All Tournament 2015 ISA Winter National Championships, Polk County, FL All Tournament player selections:

Men's 50 Platinum – **Team 1 Sports/Miken:** Bob O'Brien, Alan Tanner, Doug Knerler, Kip Grant, Ed Starcher; **MDM Inc/GAP Sports:** Mark Miller, Jeff Farr
Men's 50 AAA – **Public Enemy:** Lewis Craig, John Loftus
Men's 50 AA – **Jackson Merchants:** Greg Maddelein, Bob Dingee, Jeff Toburen
Men's 55/60 Gold – **CNM Wealth Management:** Sal Amadeo, Pete Bassignani, Doug Schram; **Promotion:** Beau Gantz, Robert Griffith
Men's 65 Major – **Southern State Services:** Syd Andrews, Larry Sample, Bill Magley, Pete Carrier, Jeff Hancock; **SW Florida Thunder:** Jim Davidson, Gary Nicolay, Glenn Slaimen
Men's 65 AAA – **MCC Insurance:** John Hayes, Harry Wright, Ed Fultz, Bob Darrah, Bob Thompson



division with a 23-19 victory.

With only two teams facing off in the 50 AA division, a formidable Grey Geese Squad proved triumphant knocking out Jackson Merchants 22-

Tai Chi Joins Silver & Fit Exercise Program

The Tai Chi for Health Institute will be partnering with the Silver & Fit exercise and healthy aging program to offer Tai Chi for Arthritis/Fall Prevention classes to Silver & Fit fitness facilities and members nationwide.

In 2013, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommended Dr. Paul Lam's Tai Chi for Arthritis/Fall prevention program. Lam, a family physician and tai chi expert, founded the Tai Chi for Health Institute in 2009. Its mission is to empower people to improve their health and wellness.

According to Ileina Ferrier, Tai Chi for Health master trainer, tai chi originated as a martial art dating back to ancient China. Though relatively unfamiliar to a large swath of American seniors, several aspects of modern tai chi have been proven to promote health and wellness.

Focusing on inner awareness that incorporates physical movements, mental concentration and relaxed breathing; tai chi has been proven to be effective for fall prevention by promoting muscle strength and flexibility to improve balance.

"Our goal is to raise awareness that tai chi is a modality that promotes health and wellness," said Ferrier. "Teaming up with the Silver & Fit program gives us another avenue that allows us to connect with older adults who can benefit from our programs."

"We're excited to endorse the Tai

19 and 13-4 respectively.

In the 55/60 Gold division, Jerry's Cross-Cut Select and CNM Wealth Mgmt. contended for the division title. In their first match, Cross-Cut managed an excellent win 18-9 against CNM. After knocking out Promotion Sportswear 30-22, CNM countered Cross Cut with a close 23-21 victory. Forcing an "If" game, Cross-Cut barely came out alive defeating CNM 13-12 to snatch the division title.

Southern State Services dominated the playing field in the 65 Major division. Thwarting SW Florida Thun-

der 20-7 and 14-6 to take the division title.

MCC Insurance 65's managed to seize the 65/70 AAA division title despite some solid ball play by their competitors. After falling to the elimination bracket in a tough loss to MMC Insurance 19-11, Plaque Attack bounced back. Defeating Red Heat 19-17 and Cross-Cut 70's 20-17 to replay MCC Insurance in the championship game. MCC Insurance ended up outscoring Plaque Attack 19-11 to take the crown.

Chi for Health experience because it gives facilities the opportunity to offer their members a safe, proven way to enhance their balance and reduce falls," said Silver & Fit Vice President Brett Hanson.

According to the CDC's website, one out of three 3 older adults (65 or older) falls each year and these falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries.

The program will allow fitness

facilities contracted with the Silver & Fit program, "to endorse tai chi classes suited to different levels of need, from standing to seated classes for older adults, regardless of experience or fitness level."

For a national listing of instructors and workshops in your area, please visit the Tai Chi for Health Institute's website, www.tchi.org, or contact Ileina Ferrier at taichialoha@gmail.com.

Cougar Riccio, 77, Student of Game

By Joseph Ruggiero
Softball News Report

Anthony J. Riccio, 77, of Littleton, Colo., lost a long hard-fought battle with cancer at his home on February 19. An eight-year veteran of Senior Softball, Tony was a member of Colorado Cougar's, helping the squad win four national championships.

A fierce hitter and skilled outfielder with a strong arm and quick feet, Tony was "extremely passionate about softball." Colorado Cougars Manager, Charles Kasson, added that though Tony was competitive, he always displayed integrity and believed in fairness on and off the field.

Not only athletic, Tony also studied the game and it served him well as co-manager and left center. "He could tell you all the players stats from California, Nevada, Utah, you name it" said Kasson.

Willing to talk to anyone, Tony



Anthony Riccio

always greeted with a firm handshake and a friendly smile. Described by friends and those close to him as a man with a big heart, Riccio was loved by his fellow teammates and family and will be greatly missed.



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Helping Launch Slowpitch Softball in China

Softball is known throughout the world as a uniquely American sport. Like many other popular sports, it long ago expanded beyond its home borders and is now played in countries around the world.

It is easy to understand why softball has grown in popularity.

Softball is one of the few sports that can be played throughout life, as we in senior softball are well aware. For seniors, softball provides healthy exercise, creates the foundation of friendships, and inspires individuals to work together for a common cause (winning the game).

But there is even more to our sport.

In younger ages, it not only provides healthy exercise, but teaches the young how to work together as a team, instills the concept of sportsmanship – and respect of those we compete against -- and helps youngsters learn how important it is to follow the rules of the game and win fairly.

Recognizing these benefits, a delegation from China visited the World Masters Championships in Las Vegas in 2012 to get some ideas to help grow the sport in that country.

The Chinese delegate, Zhaoli Chen, told us that the Japanese Softball Association had recommended she contact Senior Softball-USA (SSUSA).

SSUSA had helped the Japan Softball Association launch a senior program in 2000 and has sent teams to compete in Japan and promote the sport since that time. Japan now has a very strong senior softball program, with an annual championships that draws more than 60 senior Japanese teams.

After hearing about our relationship with Japan and seeing the World Masters Championships, Ms. Chen asked Senior Softball-USA to act as an official consultant to growing softball in China.

Traditionally the way SSUSA has promoted senior softball overseas has been through International Softball tours.

Over the past 27 years SSUSA has

COVERING THE BASES

By Terry Hennessy

brought hundreds of American senior players to more than 30 countries to play ball – and act as ambassadors for this truly American sport. This year, the tour, run by SSUSA's International Sports Holidays, will be playing tournaments and games in Italy in October. The tour is open to any SSUSA member and their friends and family.

To promote softball in China, SSUSA launched an international tour to Shanghai, Xian and Beijing in 2013. Teams from Japan and Taiwan also competed. The tournament was christened the Pacific Rim Championships.

The momentum of the tournament -- built upon the friendships of the softball organizers in Japan, China, Taiwan and SSUSA -- led to the creation of the Pacific Rim Slow-Pitch Softball Association, which was launched at the 2nd Pacific Rim Championships in Japan the next year.

The purpose of the association is

to grow softball throughout the region. The four charter members – China, Taiwan, Japan and the United States – hope to add several more countries to the association in the coming years.

Growing softball in China has turned into an entirely different program from anything SSUSA has done before.

The program is focused on introducing tee-ball in elementary schools and slow-pitch softball in middle and high schools. Both sports use extremely soft “safety” balls, so fielder's gloves are not essential and the fields can be much smaller than the regulation American softball fields.

Unlike America, where baseball for boys and fast-pitch for girls is king, Chinese educators are pushing for the safer tee-ball and slowpitch softball programs using safety balls.

Chinese parents are extremely protective of their children, the result of the one-child-per-family law, and school officials feel it will be much easier to establish PE programs with the softer balls.

The program is at a critical juncture in China. In the past eight years, Chen has developed programs

in about 500 schools – a small number considering there are 220 million elementary through high school students in the country.

Chen is developing teaching materials and videos to help teachers, many of whom know nothing about softball, establish PE classes for both tee-ball and slow-pitch softball. One of the critical teaching materials Chen is using is a book by senior softballers Rainer and Julie Martens, “Complete Guide to Slowpitch Softball,” which Chen has translated.

She has received approval from China's Central Committee to test a pilot program in Chongqing City in north-central China. If the pilot program is successful, Chen says she hopes to establish the sport throughout China's schools.

While it is a vastly different arena for SSUSA (consulting on building softball among schoolchildren) it is somehow fitting that U.S. seniors open the door to a lifetime of fun for children halfway around the world.

Terry Hennessy is chief executive officer of Senior Softball-USA. You can reach him at terryh@seniorsoftball.com.

Hot Hitter and WWII Vet Longenecker, 89, Dies

By Joseph Ruggiero
Softball News Report

Bruce Joseph Longenecker Sr., 89, of Annville, PA, died suddenly on Nov. 23 at home. A 22 year veteran of Senior Softball, he was a member of William Smith's Tremont team out of Baltimore for 13 years, winning 23 National Championships.

A tremendous hitter and accomplished coach, Bruce was inducted into the National Senior Softball Hall of Fame in 2008 and the Central Pennsylvania Hall of Fame in 2009. He embodied true excellence in athletics.

“The best of the best. One of the finest senior athletes to come



Bruce Longenecker excelled in softball as a hitter and a coach.

third baseman. He was the most all-round player in senior softball.”

Prior to his success in Senior Softball, Bruce earned three varsity letters in high school. A veteran of World War II, Bruce also played on the European fast-pitch championship team while stationed in England.

In Annville, he also coached Little League baseball and was active in the community. Rep. Mauree Gingrich of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives wrote that Bruce was “committed to community involvement as well, as evidenced by his service to the local Little League and Cub Scout Troops.”

along,” said Bill Smith, a friend and fellow player. “Bruce could play anywhere. He was the best pitcher, the best catcher, the best



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Survey: Golden Years Spent on Diamonds

Continued from Page 1

sport in America for men and women 55 and older and the number two sport for those aged 45-54, according to the latest study from the Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA).

Who is the senior softball player of 2015?

To find out, Senior Softball-USA surveyed active players last month. Here's a snapshot of the results:

* The average male is 67 years old, the average female is 58 years old. Most, 77 percent, have played some type of organized softball for the past 20 or more years.

* They play an average of seven tournaments per season.

* A small majority, 52 percent, participate in leagues and of those, most average participation in two leagues per year.

* They have an average disposable income of \$38,250 per year.

* The most frequent purchase is bats (67 percent), with shoes and gloves representing 28 percent and 4 percent of their purchases respectively.

* More than 43,000 players compete in Senior Softball-USA leagues and tournaments, with 27,000 of those players comprising the best and most competitive senior players in America.

According to the SFIA study, there are 1.5 million softball participants in the United States older than age 45 and the last few years have shown a drop in league participation throughout the country, especially in the younger divisions.

While nationwide league participation is down, Senior Softball-USA league sanctioning is on the rise.

"We have seen tremendous growth over the last year in our sanctioned leagues," said Stephanie Hopkins, SSUSA's executive assistant for leagues. "We currently sanction leagues in 205 cities across the United States and continue to grow every day."

The baby boomer generation grew

up with America's past time and baseball legends such as Willie Mays and Mickey Mantle. To them, baseball provided entertainment but more than that, it provided a tangible definition of what it meant to be American.

The game is only that...a game, but it is the characteristics of baseball that make it so appealing: competition, emotion, patience, persistence, determination, athleticism, camaraderie and freedom.

For the players of Senior Softball-USA, slow pitch softball has become a way to transition from the youthful demands of baseball to a game able to be enjoyed by those well into the twilight of their lives.

As former baseball and fast pitch players continue to age, slow pitch softball provides a way to stay active and healthy while still being able to enjoy everything the sport provides.

It has truly become America's game.

And women, accounting for only about 10 percent of the senior softball players today, is by far the fastest growing segment of the sport.

The growth of women in senior softball can be attributed to many factors but the influence of Title IX, enacted on June 23, 1972 is undeniable.

Title IX provided women in the educational and workplace sector equal opportunity to attend colleges and pursue careers -- and sports -- of their choice. As a result, women's high school and collegiate athletics flourished. Since Title IX's implementation the growth of the women's division has increased dramatically.

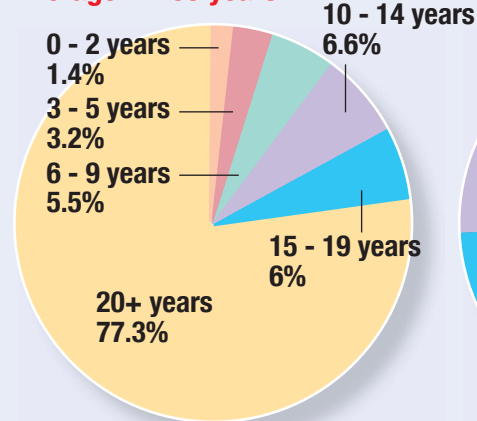
"Before Title IX there was little opportunity for women's sports to grow, but its enactment has broken down barriers to allow women to enter the sport in large numbers," said Terry Hennessy, chief executive officer of Senior Softball-USA. "Along with the popularity of fast-pitch softball, we expect that the number of women entering the sport of senior softball

Portrait of a Senior Softball Player

In a survey conducted by Senior Softball USA of approximately 5,200 senior softball players, here is the picture that emerged. The average age represented is 65.

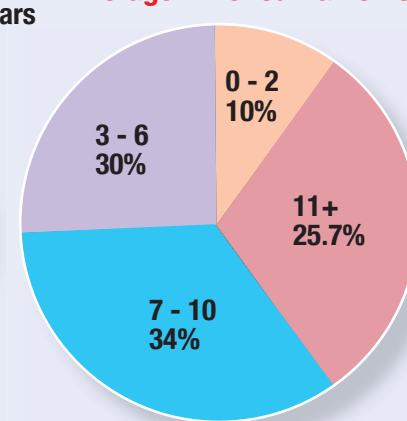
Number of years they have played softball

Average: 21.65 years



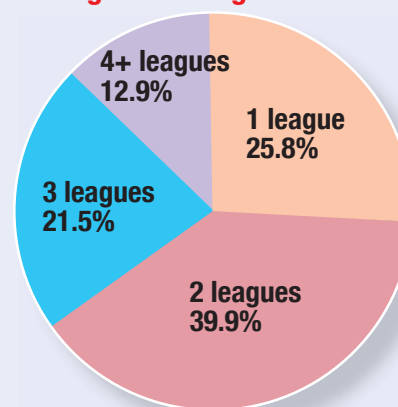
Number of tournaments they play each year

Average: 7.46 tournaments

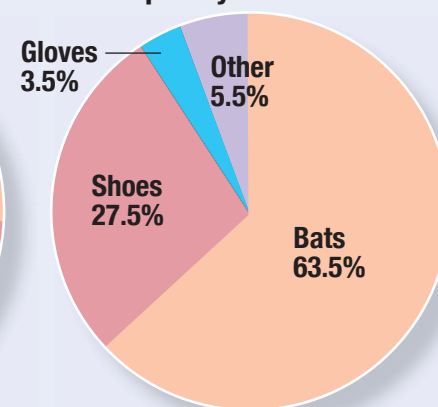


Number of leagues they participate in

Average: 2.35 leagues



Softball equipment purchased most frequently



will only continue to grow over the next three to four decades."

The retirement of the baby boomer generation continues to be a major factor in the growth of the sport. As life spans increase and the length of retirement becomes greater, many new players are migrating towards the game.

The goal of Senior Softball-USA has remained unchanged since its inception in the spring of 1988 by founder Bob Mitchell.

"We are dedicated to informing and uniting the senior softball players of America and the world," said Mitchell, who died in 2010. "Our

goal is to provide the opportunity for any senior to play softball."

The average senior softball player is, in one word, loyal. They are loyal to a game that they have enjoyed for the better part of their lives, whether that be baseball, fast pitch or slow pitch. Senior Softball-USA leaders say they hope to continue to provide players with the opportunity to enjoy the game through premier tournaments and sanctioned leagues.

"We have brought thousands of seniors the opportunity to remain healthy and vibrant during the golden years of their lives," said Hennessy. "And that is a precious gift indeed.



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Online Home Health Products Target Boomers

By Craig Hood
Special to Softball News

Baby Boomers outspend other generations by an estimated [\\$400 billion](#) each year on consumer goods and services and 72 percent of adults age 55-63 shop online.

In addition, an estimated 82 percent of adults over the age of 50 use the Internet to research health and wellness information.

What's more, studies show that [88 percent](#) of Americans over age 65 want to remain in their homes for as long as possible. This means that home healthcare and products that enhance health, medical care and lifestyle will become an integral part of everyday life for seniors living at home.

To meet this growing need, the Internet has become the go-to resource for products, supplies and equipment

designed to make living at home safer and easier. This option also makes it possible for seniors to delay or avoid living in costly long-term care facilities.

While Baby Boomers can browse aging-in-place products online and have them delivered to their door, the array of choices can be overwhelming.

Therefore, they should focus on four key areas: skincare, dietary supplements, wound care and mobility.

It's especially important for seniors to take care of their skin because it is the body's natural barrier to acquired conditions such as cuts, skin tears and infections.

To help restore and rejuvenate skin, they should search for products that use only natural premium ingredients, including no-rinse body washes, skin moisturizers and anti-microbial body cleansing spray. Individuals

should avoid products that contain benzoyl peroxide, an extremely drying chemical that is difficult for a moisturizer to repair or revitalize the skin.

If it becomes necessary, seniors also should wear protective garments and use baby wipes to maintain good hygiene. Other important health products for seniors include: vitamins B and D, calcium, and iron, wound cleanser, gauze, syringes, bandages, 4-wheel scooters, walkers, canes, power chairs, bath supplies, pillows, massagers and nutritional drinks.

To manage their health at home, individuals can purchase home medical equipment online, such as slip-and-fall monitors, wheel chairs and daily living aids, making it possible for them to avoid expensive hospital visits. When purchasing medical supplies for home use, the [cost can be offset](#) by a variety of government

programs, health insurance and other financial assistance. Some online catalog companies offer one-stop shopping and premium customer service for a number of products, supplies and equipment, making the aging-in-home experience that much more convenient and sustainable.

Craig Hood, executive vice president of Allegro Medical, has extensive experience working as a caregiver for adults with developmental disabilities and as a rehabilitation specialist caring for individuals recovering from strokes and traumatic brain injury.

FIP 80s Wins Slam

Florida Investment Properties won the 80 Major Triple Grand Slam in Las Vegas during the 2014 World Masters Championships. We apologize for omitting FIP from the last edition.

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SSUSA Launches Online 3-Week Newsletter

By **Beth Hamilton**
SSUSA Newsletter Editor

In a major move to keep players up to date, Senior Softball-USA has launched the online Senior Softball Newsletter.

The Newsletter, published online every three weeks, is sent to players' and managers' via e-mail.

Senior Softball Newsletter features up-to date stories of all SSUSA tournaments with information on the

results, photos, weather and more. The Newsletter also features information on the latest news _ keeping you in the loop with all things SSUSA affiliated.

Keep a lookout for the Senior Softball Newsletter!

If you have not been receiving the Newsletter or have some information for the Newsletter, send us an email at newsletter@seniorsoftball.com or call the Senior Softball-USA office at 916-326-5303.

Danny Caruso, 77, Instrumental in Launching NorCal Leagues

By **Joseph Ruggiero**
Softball News Report

Danny Caruso, a longtime player and devoted champion of senior softball, died in March in Lodi, Calif., at the age of 77. Caruso began playing senior softball when he was 55. He has played on several teams throughout the years including Court Jesters, Sacramento Blues, Big Valley Seniors, Sacramento Rebels and the Redwood City Chiefs.

Caruso was not just a player as he served the larger senior softball community as a board member for the following associations: Stockton Senior Softball Club, Cal-mex Softball, Big Valley Senior Softball and Northern California Senior Softball. He also served as a representative for the American Softball Association.

"I had the opportunity to work with Danny each year to set up his Big Valley League. Danny was a good man who would do anything for anybody. He will be greatly missed by the softball community," said Executive Director of SSUSA Fran Dowell.

Ron McElyea, who served on the NCSSA board with Caruso, echoed Dowell saying "Danny was always ready to help. He was level-headed, patient, and always wanted to be involved. He was a real gentleman."

Most proud of his induction into the NCSSA Hall of Fame in 2014, Caruso perhaps summed it up best, "I just love playing softball. I'm not a superstar, but I enjoy playing ball."

Caruso and his beloved wife, Madalyn, who passed away in December, were inseparable and were known for traveling together in their RV to softball tournaments and other events. Her presence during his induction into the NCSSA Hall of Fame was one of the happiest moments of his later years.

Paul Dennen, a friend and fellow ballplayer, remarked "Danny was a guy you could really rely upon. A great pitcher and a great team player. He did whatever he had to do, everybody loved him and we will miss him terribly."



The Senior Softball Newsletter is designed to keep players, managers and their families up to date more frequently than possible with the Quarterly Senior Softball News. The News will still be published quarterly.

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