

Senior Softball-USA (SSUSA) Newsletter: Volume 6, Edition 24

Senior Softball-USA <info@seniorsoftball.com>

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The Grand Canyon State will conclude the 2020 season with the fourth and final session (Men's & Women's 50s) of the Senior Softball World Championships, Oct. 29 - Nov 1. Photo courtesy of Visit Mesa.

SSUSA's COVID Survey of World Teams

SACRAMENTO – A Senior Softball USA survey of teams that participated in the first three sessions of the Senior Softball World Championships reported 30 positive COVID-19 cases, including three serious cases.

The 15 teams reporting positive tests said most cases had mild or no symptoms. Three cases were serious, with the players developing pneumonia. All three are

LVSSA Exits WMC Agreement

On Thursday Oct. 15, Senior Softball USA (SSUSA) received a letter from the Las Vegas Senior Softball Association (LVSSA) terminating an 8-year joint agreement to hold both the Southwest Championships in April and the World Masters Championships in the fall.

The letter was a result of the closing of the fields in Las Vegas under the order of Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak in response to the global pandemic, forcing the move of all sessions of the 2020 World Masters Championships to Arizona and Utah.

In response to the letter, and LVSSA's request to stop using their name as part of the tournaments, SSUSA has changed all designations for the remaining WMC session to Senior Softball World Championships.

"We will honor LVSSA's wishes and rename all of the materials that have not yet been produced," said Terry Hennessy, Senior Softball USA's chief executive officer. "We, of course, will continue to produce the Southwest Championships and the World Championships in Las Vegas on the dates we have established over the past eight years for the foreseeable future. We wish LVSSA the best of luck in their own tournaments moving

recovering, according to their coaches.

SSUSA sent the survey to all 315 team managers who competed in the first three sessions of the Worlds and 121 teams responded. Of the teams that reported no COVID cases, most said that at least some players were tested after they returned from the tournament and all reported negative results (206 total negative tests).

The other managers said they were not sure how many of their players were tested, but they had no reports of any players developing symptoms. No umpires or officials have reported symptoms or testing positive.

Almost 10,000 players and spectators attended the first three sessions of the World Championships.

SSUSA waited until last week -- two weeks from the end of the third World Championships session -- to email out the survey to ensure that anyone infected with the virus had developed symptoms.

The fourth and final World Championships session, with 109 teams, will be played in the Phoenix area from Oct. 29 - Nov. 1. The Las Vegas Senior Softball Association had offered fields they had reserved in Bullhead City, unfortunately there were not enough fields available there to handle the 109 teams.

Pandemic protocols will remain the same in the last World Championships session, including moving spectators and teams waiting to play to areas along the

forward."

Under the agreement, SSUSA ran the tournaments and LVSSA supplied field workers and helped with registering teams at the tournament.

Negotiations to resolve remaining issues are ongoing, according to SSUSA officials.

All 2020 Winners & 2019 TOC Qualifiers Invited to 2021 Original TOC



POLK COUNTY, Fla. - The Crown Jewel of Senior Softball, the original Tournament of Champions, enters its 15th year here in 2021 - pitting the best of the best on the softball diamonds.

Due to the current pandemic, the 2021 original Tournament of Champions will have a bit of a different feel to it.

Teams winning ANY qualifier during the 2020 season, not just TOC specific qualifiers, will be invited. The invitations will also be extended to teams that qualified for the TOC in 2019.

Invitations will be emailed to managers in the next couple of weeks.

Teams that qualified in 2019 may come to the 2021 TOC, as long as they have at least six players from their original qualifying team.

The annual banquet will be for managers and a guest this year. Because of the pandemic, the banquet is limited to 300 people, down from the normal 1,500 person banquet for all teams, players and their families. The reason is the requirement that tables be socially distanced, due to limits on indoor dining.

The SSUSA original Tournament of Champions remains the premier senior softball event of the year with free rings for winners (from Jostens), bats for MVPs, gift bags for managers, and marquee events

sides of the fields, mandatory masks in the central portions of the softball complexes, masks required for catchers, umpires and base coaches on the field, and social distancing or masks in the dugouts.

The cases reported during the first three sessions of the World Championships include:

- One player on a Women's 40 AAA team (three others tested negative).
- One player on a men's 40AAA team from Maryland (8 other teammates tested negative).
- One player from a 55 Major team from Florida (8 others tested negative)
- Two players and a friend from a 60AA Colorado team.
- A pitcher from a 60AA team from Nevada.
- Coach and three players on a 60 AA Oklahoma team. The coach and one player had pneumonia.
- Three players from a 60 AAA team from Oklahoma.
- A player from a 60 Major team from Minnesota.
- A player from a 60 Major team from Washington State.
- A player, his wife, and daughter from a 55AAA Southern California team.
- Eight players of 55 and 60 Major-Plus teams from Texas. The initial player became ill on the second day of play. That player is hospitalized with pneumonia.

such as a hitting clinic, skills contests and the All-Star Game!

This year's tournament will be held Jan. 20-24, 2020. Traditionally held annually during the first week of February, the TOC was moved up to avoid conflict with Super Bowl LV, scheduled for Feb. 7 in Tampa.

Special Events

Hitting Clinic

Wednesday, Jan. 20 from 10AM - Noon at Auburndale Softball Complex.

This clinic will give players a chance to warm up and to sharpen their skills before the tournament with some of the best hitters in the sport.



TOC All-Star Game

Wednesday, Jan. 20 at 6 PM at Auburndale Softball Complex.

Each TOC-competing team selects one player to compete in the game. Two TOC managers will be selected for the All-Star teams. The winning team will play an exhibition game against the Louisville Slugger Warriors on Saturday evening.

- A player from a 65 Major team from Nevada.
- A player from a 65 Major-Plus team from California.
- A player from 75 AAA team from Arizona.

Eddie Gonzalez, Member of El Paso Angels, Dies of COVID-19



Senior Softball-USA was recently informed of the passing of Eddie Gonzalez, 53, of El Paso, Tex. Gonzalez died earlier this year on May 8 due to COVID-19.

Gonzalez began playing SSUSA in 2018 as a member of El Paso Angels 50. He most recently played in the 2019 Winter World Championships (2020 roster event) last November.

“He was a good Son, Father, Husband, Grandfather, and a fabulous Brother,” said Gustavo Gonzalez, Eddie’s younger brother and teammate on the El Paso Angels. “He loved playing sports, especially baseball and softball. He played with the El Paso Angels for more



Skills Contests

Thursday, Jan. 21 from 9AM - Noon at Auburndale Softball Complex.

Contests in five divisions (40/50, 60, 70, 80, Women) including: Precision Hitting (winners receive bats), Home Run (winners receive bats), Speed (winners receive shoes), Pitching (winners receive gloves).

*Skills contest winners will receive their awards immediately following the contests.



Optional Team Practice

Thursday, Jan. 21, 1:00 PM - 4:00PM

Team Managers choose a complex in order of preference. SSUSA will schedule the practices and notify managers of their practice time and location.

than 15 years. He was very competitive and liked to win like any other player out there. He was the type of person that will take his shirt off to help out another. He loved his kids - Sammy, Eddie Jr. Isabell and Little Angel the youngest one and his Wife very much. He is missed very much by all of us on the Angels team. He was a good motivator and a good mentor to some of the players. A very likeable person in the softball world and in the El Paso Senior Softball league."

A feature article on Gonzalez appeared in **El Paso Matters**.

Gonzalez is not the first SSUSA player to die from COVID-19. Other known deaths of SSUSA members due to COVID include: Edward Purry (CA), Nolan Spencer (CA), Eza Alexander (IL), Jimmy Walker (MI), and James Sutton (MI). None contracted the virus at a tournament.

OBITUARIES - 10/16/20



Raymond Lee Wimbrough

Ray Wimbrough, 71, of

TOC Banquet

Thursday, Jan. 21, 7:00PM

RP Funding Center 701 W Lime St. Lakeland, FL 33815

There will be a free banquet for participating TOC managers and one guest.

We will not be able to hold the banquet for all TOC players because of pandemic limits on indoor dining. The 2021 Banquet for managers will be limited to 300 and tables will be socially distanced.



Louisville Slugger Warriors vs. TOC All-Stars Game

Saturday, Jan. 23 7:00PM at Auburndale Softball Complex

The winning team from Wednesday's TOC All-Star Game will play an exhibition game against the Louisville Slugger Warriors.



The Best Amputee Baseball Team Ever

Olney, Maryland died on Oct. 6.

Wimbrough was a long-time member of Superior Senior Softball, playing on the 55, 60 and 65 teams. He earned multiple All-Tournament selections with the team.

Wimbrough last played SSUSA in 2018 with High Street Bucs 65.

Along with All-Tournament honors in SSUSA, Wimbrough earned various All-American honors in Softball Players Association.

"Ray Wimbrough was one of the most liked players in Senior Softball," said Jim Sears, manager of Superior Senior Softball. "He was one of the best pitchers I have ever seen and one great friend! He loved the game and his teammates. He will be dearly missed by all that knew him."

For his efforts on the diamond, Wimbrough was elected into the National Senior Softball Hall of Fame in the Player Category as part of the Class of 2012.

Tom Dommel (NSSHOF '97) had this to say of Wimbrough at the time of his NSSHOF induction: "I believe Ray is one of the best senior pitchers in the country. He's a crafty, experienced pitcher who has been participating in slow pitch softball for 41 years. His pitch selection, accuracy and control, as well as his style of pitching have been contributing factors to his team's victories. His reflexes and competitiveness enable him to shut down the middle, making him a double threat in the circle."



Members of the Louisville Slugger Warriors

The Louisville Slugger Warriors were recently featured in an article on livingwithamplitude.com.

To read the article, ***The Best Amputee Baseball Team Ever***, please [**CLICK HERE**](#).

The Louisville Slugger Warriors play an annual exhibition game at SSUSA's Original Tournament of Champions in Polk County, FL, against the winning team of the TOC All-Star Game.

The LS Warriors will be in action against the TOC All-Stars on Saturday, January 23.

Social Security Benefits Increase in 2021

By Jack Sirard

Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for approximately 70 million Americans will increase 1.3 percent in 2021, the Social Security Administration reports.

The average retiree will get an increase of about \$20 a month.

The 1.3 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits payable to more than 64 million Social Security beneficiaries in January 2021.

Increased payments to more than 8 million SSI beneficiaries will begin on Dec. 31, 2020. Some people receive both Social Security and SSI benefits.

The Social Security Act ties the annual COLA to the increase in the Consumer Price Index as determined by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Other adjustments that take effect in January of each year are based on the increase in average wages. Based on that increase, the maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax will increase to \$142,800 from \$137,700.

Social Security and SSI beneficiaries are normally notified by mail starting in early December about their new benefit amount.

Information about Medicare changes for 2021, when announced, will be available at www.medicare.gov. For Social Security beneficiaries receiving Medicare, Social Security will not be able to compute their new benefit amount until after the Medicare premium amounts for 2021 are announced.

Jack Sirard is a retired nationally syndicated financial columnist and Senior Editor for Senior Softball News.



Ralph Wesley Adams, Jr.

Ralph Adams, 69, of Indianapolis, died on Oct. 10.

Adams was a long-time member of Brickyard Classics 60. He also played with Job Central.com/Indy 60s, and Expert Car Care 55.

Adams last played SSUSA in 2019 with KPI.

"Ralph was my dear friend for over 30 years," said Nancy Allen, SSUSA Indiana state director. "He was also a great teammate. Anyone who knew him will miss him dearly. I remember many times talking with him and solving the world's problems at our beloved Metro Stadium. Rest in peace; I count myself fortunate to have had you as my friend, Ralphie."

Adams entered the United States Air Force at age 19, and served 24 years, retiring in 1995. He worked for the State of Indiana in the Division of Supplier Diversity as the Deputy Director of Certification.

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Robert (Bob) L. Lowery

Bob Lowery, 82, died on Oct. 10 in Mesa, Ariz.

Formerly of Citrus Heights, Calif., Lowery played for a number of years with Sac Blues 70, last playing in 2014. He also played with Sacramento Gold 75 in 2013.

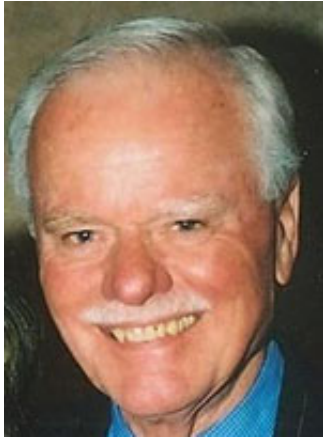
Additionally, Lowery served as a long-time tournament director for the Tournament Players Association (TPA) in Sacramento.

“Bob was the manager of the Sacramento Blues for many years,” said Jerry Johnson, current manager of Sac Blues 75. “First as the 65s and over, he then created the Blues 70 and over and managed them for several years. He was not only a director for TPA, but was president for over five years. Bob was the heart and soul of the Blues teams for many years. I know, as he was my first senior softball manager when he brought me on to the Blues.”

Contact Drago Stevanovic for more information.

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William Lenox Beshore

Bill Beshore, 82, of Burlingame, Calif., died on Sept. 29.

Beshore was most recently a member of Redwood City God Rush, last playing in 2019. He was also a member of State Roofing Systems 70 and 75.

Beshore was a graduate of Dartmouth College, where he played football and basketball.

From NorCal Senior Softball Association (NCSSA):

"Bill was a long-time member of the Redwood City Señors Softball Club and an admired and gifted softball player. He played on many tournament teams over the years, including the Redwood City Cardinals, the State Roofing Royals, and the Redwood City Gold Rush. His gifts as a player—strong bat, powerful arm, fast runner with stamina—made him a coveted player for any team. Once he aged enough to be on teams with an infielder up the middle, he played that role with verve and became the most valuable player for the many double plays he would turn in a game."



**Juan Roberto "Kiro"
Oaxaca**

Juan Oaxaca, 73, of El Paso, Tex., died on Aug. 8.

In SSUSA, Oaxaca was a long-time member of El Paso Nine Elevens, playing on the 55, 60, 65, and 70 teams. He most recently played in the Winter World Championships last November.

He also played with El Paso Legends in the early 2000's in the 50s division.

Oaxaca graduated from the University of Texas El Paso, with a degree in business, before moving on to law school at the University of Texas Austin. He also served in the U.S. Army.

Oaxaca established his own law practice with several offices in El Paso and Houston. He would later join the law office of Scherr/Legate and continued to practice until medical complications led to his retirement.

From Oaxaca's obituary:
"Kiro always had "our back", proving it with his trademark expression, "you're covered!" He was a person that we could always depend on for

help, advice and unconditional love and support. We will always remember his beautiful and contagious smile. He truly loved GOD and shared that love through his example and way of life with all of us."

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