

Week of Monday, June 17, 2024

On Monday, June 17th, the Henderson County Older Sluggers coached by Stan Steinberg and sponsored this week by **Hunter Automotive Group** traveled to Tiger, Georgia for a match-up with the Rabun County Older Relics. The Older Sluggers entered the day in first place in the 68+ Clayton League standings with Rabun County solidly entrenched in second place. Rabun County brought a team of power hitters to the field and easily put up five runs in the top of the first. The Older Relics continued to put up five runs in each of the next two innings while Henderson County was scoring twelve runs over the same period. In the fourth inning, the Older Sluggers held the Older Relics scoreless and put up five runs in their at-bat to take their first lead of the day at 17-15. Rabun County scored five more in the fifth while Henderson County could only push across one run. Rabun County would not give up the lead as they secured a 28-25 win in the slugfest. David Keith took the loss on the mound. Henderson County had a team batting average of 0.681 in game one while pounding out two doubles, three triples, and two home runs. Henderson County had two players who were perfect at the plate led by Gene Reiser (3-3 with a triple and a walk) and Scott Searle (3-3 with a triple and two walks). Also pitching in with near-perfect days were Bob Drew (3-4 with a double), Gary Ayers (3-4 with a double), Jerry Austin (2-3 with a sacrifice fly), Jim Zitney (2-3), Rick Sweeney (3-4), Roger Helm (3-4), Stan Steinberg (3-4), and Sonny Johnston (3-4 with a triple and a grand slam home run). Richard White also added a home run.

After all the hitting in the first game, the second game started with both teams producing an anemic offensive display. After three innings of play, Henderson County held a slim 3-2 lead. In the fourth inning, the bats returned for both teams and the score was tied 7-7 at the end of the inning. Rabun County took a two-run lead in the fifth and after both teams went scoreless in the sixth the Older Relics held a 12-10 lead entering the final inning. In the top of the seventh Henderson County pounded out hit after hit and put up eight runs to take a lead of 18-12. Rabun County was only able to score two runs in the bottom of the inning as Henderson County was able to secure a split on the day with the 18-14 victory. David Keith was the winning pitcher as Henderson County maintained their two-game lead in the loss column to firmly cement their hold on first place in the league. The Older Sluggers had a team batting average of 0.625 with three doubles and three triples in game two. Bob Drew (4-4 with a double) and Jim Zitney (3-3 with a double and a walk) were perfect at the plate. Near perfection was achieved by Gary Ayers (2-3 with a double and sacrifice fly), Jerry Austin (3-4 with a triple), Roger Helm (3-4 with a triple), and Stan Steinberg (2-3 with a sacrifice fly).

On Wednesday, June 19th, the mixed 70+ Sluggers coached by Danny Davis and Andy Hinds and sponsored this game by **Worsham Insurance & Tax Service** played host to a 70+ Upstate South Carolina squad. The mixed Sluggers held a 6-1 lead after three innings of play but Upstate outscored Henderson County by two runs over the next three innings to close the gap to three runs. Henderson County was able to push across one run in the last inning while holding Upstate scoreless to take the 13-9 victory. David Keith picked up the win on the mound. The mixed Sluggers had a team batting average of 0.564 for the game while hitting three doubles, a triple, and a home run. Players who were perfect at the plate were Stan Steinberg (4-4 with a home run), Jim Wicker (3-3 with a double), and Dwight Moore (2-2 with a walk). Players with near-perfect

games at the plate included Cliff Coggins (2-3 with a walk), Doug Miller (2-3 with a double and a walk), Danny Davis (1-2 with a triple and two walks), and David Keith (2-3).

Game two was a back-and-forth affair as the lead changed hands four times with both teams producing much more offense than in the first game. Upstate scored six runs in the top of the seventh to take a one-run lead but Henderson County came back with two in the bottom of the frame for a 23-22 walk-off win. Danny Davis started the game on the mound followed by David Keith with Gary Warren picking up the win. The team batting average for the mixed Sluggers in game two was 0.690 with two doubles, two triples, and two home runs. Players with perfect outings at the plate were Danny Davis (4-4), David Keith (2-2 with a sacrifice fly), Dwight Moore (3-3 with a double and a triple), and Al Kmieciak (3-3). Almost reaching perfection were Gary Warren (3-4), Stan Steinberg (2-3 with a home run and a sacrifice fly), Doug Miller (2-3), Andy Hinds (3-4 with a double, a home run and the game-winning hit), Don Chambers (1-2 with a walk), and Sid Hilker (2-3).

With the two wins the mixed 70+ Sluggers ran their record to 6-0 on the year.

Next week the Henderson County teams in action will all be road warriors. On Monday, June 24th the Henderson County Older Sluggers will travel to Tyger River Park in Duncan, SC to face the Upstate SC 68+ team in Clayton League play. On Tuesday, June 25th, the mixed 70+ Sluggers will go to Sandy Andrews Memorial Park in Marion, NC to battle the High Country squad from Boone. On Wednesday, June 26th, the mixed 60+ Sluggers will make the trip to Cane River Park to face the Burnsville Bears.

The Henderson County Senior Softball League is always looking for new players age 50 and older (35 and older for ladies). Regular league games are normally played on Monday and Friday mornings at 9:30 on fields 8 and 9 at Jackson Park in Hendersonville. For additional information call 828-260-2130 or go to Henderson County Senior Softball at <https://hcsssoftball.com>.