

Week of Monday, June 24, 2024

The Henderson County Senior Softball League had three travel teams in action this week. On Monday, June 24th, the Henderson County Older Sluggers coached by Stan Steinberg and sponsored this week by **Carolina Blinds** traveled to Tyger River Park in Duncan, SC to face Upstate South Carolina in a pair of Clayton 68+ League contests. The Older Sluggers had a team batting average of 0.732 with five doubles and two triples in game one to take a 22-12 victory with the help of six runs in the buffet inning. Don Ward took the win on the mound. Henderson County was led at the plate with perfect outings from Bob Drew (4-4 with a double), Gene Reiser (2-2 with a walk and sacrifice fly), Jim Zitney (3-3 with a walk), and Stan Steinberg (3-3). Also aiding the cause for the offense were Roger Helm (2-3 with a double and sacrifice fly), David Keith (3-4), Don Ward (2-3 with a double and sacrifice fly), Rick Sweeney (3-4), Scott Searle (3-4 with a triple and sacrifice fly), and Tim Epley (2-3 with a triple and a walk).

In game two the Older Sluggers put up five runs in the first inning and four in the second to take a 9-3 lead but as the afternoon temperatures rose the offensive output dropped off. Still, the defense and pitching stayed strong throughout the game as Henderson County took a 10-6 win over Upstate. Don Ward again secured the victory on the mound with another strong effort. The team batting average of 0.517 reflected the offensive drop-off in game two. The Older Sluggers did manage two doubles and a home run in the nightcap. The offense was led by perfect outings in game two from Don Ward (3-3), Tim Epley (2-2 with a walk), and Jerry Austin (2-2 with a double, home run, and sacrifice fly). Also pitching in with strong efforts were Jim Zitney (1-2 with a walk), Rick Sweeney (2-3), Roger Helm (1-2 with a walk), and Scott Searle (2-3 with a walk). With the pair of wins Henderson County continues to lead the Clayton 68+ League with a record of 15-2.

On Tuesday, June 25th, the Henderson County mixed 70+ Sluggers sponsored this game by **Postage Express** and coached by Danny Davis and Andy Hinds traveled to Sandy Andrews Memorial Park in Marion, NC to battle the High Country team from Boone. I was able to retrieve the final scores from Team Snap but received no other information so I cannot report on any individual heroics. Henderson County took both games winning the first 23-10 and capturing the second by a score of 17-2. Based on those scores there had to have been lots of good hitting and solid play in the field. With the pair of wins, the mixed 70+ Sluggers extended their record on the year to 8-0.

On Wednesday, June 26th, the Henderson County mixed 60+ Sluggers sponsored this week by **Wild Birds Unlimited** and coached by Bud Bonnema made the trek to Cane River Park in Burnsville to face the Burnsville Bears. John Musser was our on-the-scene reporter at these games so I will relay the information exactly as it was received. After a scoreless first inning in game one, the mixed Sluggers proceeded to put up 19 runs over the next five innings. After Burnsville was held to only one run over the first three innings, they showed some life by scoring 13 runs over the next three innings to narrow the deficit to 19-14. The Sluggers pushed across six runs in the buffet inning while holding the Bears to one run to finish off a 25-15 victory. Don Chambers captured the win on the mound. Kevin Doyle drilled an inside-the-park home run and a double to go 4-4. Bud Bonnema also attained perfection at the plate with a 4-4 outing. Tom

Welbourn had a double and a triple. There was a parade of players with doubles led by Kirk Hall with two and Joe Fishleigh, Frank Johnson, Randy Bowman, and John Musser with one each. Several players had near-perfect outings including John Musser (4-5), Steve Strusowski (3-4), Rob Kennedy (3-4), Kirk Hall (3-4), Frank Johnson (3-4), Don Chambers (3-4), and Bill Kane (3-4).

The heat seemed to take a toll on the Sluggers in game two as they went scoreless over the first two innings while the Bears put up four runs to take the lead heading into the bottom of the third. At that point, Henderson County rallied for sixteen runs over the next four innings while holding Burnsville to two as they picked up a 16-6 victory. Dwight Moore took the win on the mound. Leading the offense at the plate in game two were Bud Bonnema (3-3), John Musser (3-3), Joe Fishleigh (3-3), and Randy Bowman (2-2 with a walk). Near-perfect outings were achieved by Steve Strusowski (3-4) and Bill Kane (2-3). Several players again led a parade of doubles with Steve Strusowski drilling two and one each contributed by Rob Kennedy, Frank Johnson, Bud Bonnema, John Musser, and Dwight Moore. With the pair of wins the mixed 60+ Sluggers brought their record to 9-1 on the year.

There will be no travel games played next week. The only game on the original schedule had the mixed 70+ team traveling to Nettles Park to face Lake Keowee. However, Lake Keowee could not muster enough players to field a team and thus the game has been cancelled and will be rescheduled at a later date.

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://hcssoftball.com>.