

Week of Monday, August 26

There were mixed results for the week of August 26th for the Henderson County Senior Softball League. On Monday, August 26th, the Henderson County 68+ Sluggers coached by Stan Steinberg and sponsored this week by Carolina Blinds made the trek to Tiger, Georgia to face the North Georgia Patriots in the Clayton 68+ League. This Patriots team was much improved over the one the Sluggers faced earlier in the season. In game one, the Patriots held a 2-1 lead after the first inning and still clung to the one-run lead at 6-5 after two innings of play. The Sluggers took the lead in the third inning and did not relinquish it as they captured a 21-15 victory over North Georgia. David Keith was the winning pitcher. The Older Sluggers had a team batting average of 0.727 in game one led by perfect outings from Bob Drew (4-4 with a double and triple) and Rick Sweeney (4-4). Also contributing with good days at the plate were Jerry Austin (3-4 with a double), Jim Zitney (3-4), Mark Hammer (3-4 with a home run), Roger Helm (3-4 with a double), Scott Searle (3-4 with a triple), Tim Epley (3-4 with two triples), Stan Steinberg (1-2 with a sacrifice fly), and Gary Warren (2-3).

Game two started very slowly for Henderson County as the first two innings produced six outs and a walk. Meanwhile, after a scoreless first inning, the Patriots put up five runs in the second inning to take a 5-0 lead into the third. The world finally returned to normal in the third inning as North Georgia went scoreless and the Older Sluggers finally got their first hits and runs as they tied it up at 5-5. Henderson County scored five runs in each of the next two innings and pulled away for a 16-8 win. David Keith was once again the victor on the mound. The slow start helped drop the team's batting average down to 0.621 in game two.

The following four Older Sluggers had perfect outings in game two: Rick Sweeney who capped off a perfect day (3-3 with a double and a triple), Gene Reiser (3-3 with a triple and a home run), Jim Zitney (3-3), and Gary Warren (3-3 with a double). Also aiding the cause were Jerry Austin (2-3 with two doubles), Mark Hammer (2-3 with a double), and Stan Steinberg (1-2 with a sacrifice fly).

With the pair of wins over North Georgia, Henderson County maintains its hold on first place in the Clayton 68+ League with a two-game lead in the loss column over Rabun County. While the Older Sluggers were winning their games over the Patriots, the Relics were sweeping all three games over Lake Keowee on the other field. Henderson County has a 27-3 record in the Clayton League with six regular season games remaining.

On Wednesday, August 28th, the mixed 70+ Sluggers coached by Danny Davis and Andy Hinds and sponsored for these games by Leonard & Moore, PLLC made the journey to Sandy Andrews Memorial Park in Marion, NC to battle the High Country squad from Boone. It was a hot day and the Sluggers started out hot as they built up an 11-6 lead after three innings of play. At that point, the Sluggers cooled off significantly and High Country warmed up as Boone held the lead at 14-13 entering the seventh inning. Henderson County tied the game at 14-14 in the top of the frame but High Country pushed across a run in the bottom of the inning for a walk-off 15-14 victory. David Keith was the hard-luck loser on the mound. There was no scorebook kept in these games so there are no statistics to report other than the score. Some players played well (you know who you are) while others did not produce the desired results (you know who you are).

Game two. unfortunately for the Sluggers, ended up eerily much like the first game. The two teams battled evenly for the first four innings and the game was tied at 12-12. Henderson County scored five runs in the fifth inning and took a 17-12 lead into the sixth. The bad news is that the Sluggers would not score again as High Country tied the game in the sixth and scored five more in the seventh to win game two 22=17. Again, David Keith was the loser in game two as he was the victim of some sloppy play at times in the field. The pair of losses were the first of the season for the mixed Sluggers as their record stands at a very respectable 12-2 for the year. This was a much-improved High Country team, so the transfer portal is working well for them.

No teams are scheduled to play next week as everyone seems to be taking the Labor Day week off. However, the Henderson County Older Sluggers will resume play in the Clayton 68+ League on September 9th as they travel to Nettles Park in Pendleton, SC to face Lake Keowee. On Tuesday, September 10th, the exhibition Sluggers are slated to travel to Winged Deer Park in Johnson City, TN to battle the Tri-Cities 65+ travel team. Finally, on Wednesday, September 11th, the mixed 70+ Sluggers will again go to Sandy Andrews Park to exact a measure of revenge against High Country.

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>.