

Week of Monday, November 4

On Monday, November 4th, the Henderson County 68+ Sluggers concluded their 2024 season with a classic battle against the (mostly) younger Henderson County Division 1 stars in front of their main (and only) fan Pom-Pom Mary Phipps. The 68+ Sluggers were coached, as usual, by Stan Steinberg while the Division 1 stars were piloted by Handsome Joe Fishleigh. Although the game itself was close and entertaining, the highlight of the day was the return to the field of Gary Ayers. Gary suffered a heart attack in August and, after having quadruple bypass surgery, capped off his recovery by coaching first base for the 68+ team. We all look forward to his return to action next spring.

The 68+ Sluggers were represented at the game by Jerry Austin, Bob Drew, David Clay, Mark Hammer, Roger Helm, Sonny Johnston, Don Phipps, Gene Reiser, Don Ward, Mike Warner, Gary Warren, and Jim Zitney. The average age of the 68+ Sluggers in this game was 71.83. The Division 1 star's roster included Gary Charles, Kevin Doyle, Joe Fishleigh, Kirk Hall, Frank Johnson, Doug Miller, Dwight Moore, John Musser, Robert Novak, Andy Pytel, and Tom Welbourn. The average age of the Division 1 stars in this game was 67.61, although if you remove the ageless wonder Doug Miller from the equation the figure drops to 66.5. The game was a tight affair for the entire nine innings with the largest lead held by either team being five runs. The Division 1 stars jumped out of the gate by scoring three runs in the top of the first inning while the 68+ Sluggers went scoreless in their at-bat. The Sluggers battled back in the second frame to take the lead and the game stayed close the rest of the way. When the Division 1 stars came to bat in the top of the 8th inning they trailed by a 17-12 margin but battled back scoring five runs to knot the score at 17 all. When the Sluggers could not score in the bottom of the frame the two teams went to the final inning tied. The Sluggers held the Division 1 stars scoreless in the top of the ninth and managed to push across the game-winner in the bottom half of the inning to close out an 18-17 victory. There were no losers on this day and the big winner was the Henderson County Senior Softball League as they produced a competitive, fun softball game with good sportsmanship exhibited by both teams.

The only stats available on Team Snap were for the 68+ Sluggers so that is all that can be reported. The winning pitcher for the Sluggers was Don Ward while Dwight Moore took the loss on the mound for the Stars. The 68+ Sluggers had a team batting average on the day of .0596 and were led at the plate by perfect outings from Jerry Austin (5-5 with a double), Mike Warner (3-3 with three doubles and two walks), and Jim Zitney (5-5). David Clay (3-4 with a triple) and Gary Warren (1-2 with a double) were one out away from perfection. The 68+ Sluggers ended the year with a regular season championship in the 68+ Clayton League with a record of 32-4 in league play. Their overall record for the year was 34-5.

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>.