

Week of August 4, 2025

The Henderson County Senior Softball Association had two teams see action in the past two weeks. On July 30th the mixed 70+ Sluggers, coached by Andy Hines and sponsored by **Hunter Automotive Group**, traveled to Marion, NC to face the High Country team from Boone, NC. In game one, the mixed Sluggers had a team batting average of 0.667 as they coasted to a 17-6 win over High Country. Three batters achieved perfection in the game: Jim Wicker (2-2 with a walk), Mike Elmaleh (2-2 with a walk), and Stan Steinberg (3-3). In addition, Danny Davis (1-2 with a walk) and Don Chambers (2-3) came close to perfection. I received no word on who pitched but an educated guess would be Don Chambers and/or Danny Davis. Game two produced similar (but better) results for Henderson County as they rolled to a lopsided 19-2 victory over High Country. Five Sluggers achieved perfection in the second game: Danny Davis (3-3), Jim Ready (3-3 with two doubles and a triple), Jim Wicker (3-3), Mike Elmaleh (2-2 with a double), and Stan Steinberg (2-2). Aiding the cause also were Don Chambers (1-2) and Gary Smith (1-2). The team batting average was an outstanding 0.821 in game two.

The 70+ mixed Sluggers took to the road again on Tuesday, August 5th, as they traveled to Johnson City, TN to face the Tri-Cities 70+ team. The Sluggers were sponsored by **WNC Family Medical Center** and coached by Andy Hines. Again no word on who pitched for the Sluggers but the guess is Danny Davis. In game one the Sluggers had a poor team batting average of 0.486 and that is reflected in the outcome of the game as Tri-Cities defeated Henderson County 16-5. No Sluggers achieved perfection in the game but five batters came close: Jim Ready (2-3), Jim Wicker (2-3), Lewis Bergman (2-3), Mike Elmaleh (2-3), and Danny Davis (2-3 with a triple). Game two produced much better results as Henderson County came away with a 16-12 win over Tri-Cities. The team batting average rose to 0.658 in the second game led by Danny Davis (3-3 with a walk). Coming close to perfection were: Jim Ready (3-4), Jim Wicker (3-4 with a double and triple), Lewis Bergman (3-4 with a walk), and Mike Elmaleh (2-3). With apologies to any non-roster players who played in the games and performed well for the 70+ Sluggers, I only see the players in Team Snap who are listed under Game Statistics so I could not see your data. Stan probably knows how to retrieve this data but I dropped out of school before completing this course as I had a family to feed.

On August 4th, the Hickory Games Sluggers made a successful trip to Hickory to face some stiff competition. The Sluggers were coached by Sonny Johnston and sponsored by **Kiefer Family Chiropractic**. In game one, the Sluggers faced Lake Norman and came away with a 13-10 win. The team batting average for the Sluggers was 0.575 and perfect plate performances led them from Bud Bonnema (3-3), Joe Fishleigh (3-3), and Steve Strusowski (3-3 with a double). Also aiding the offense were John Musser (2-3), Sonny Johnston (2-3), and Tom Welbourn (2-3 with two doubles). Game two was another close battle as the

Sluggers picked up a 19-16 victory over the Hickory 65+ squad. I am guessing that Joe Fishleigh was the pitcher in both games but again that is an educated stab. The Sluggers raised their team batting average in the second game to 0.683. Scott Searle was 2-2 with a walk. Providing plenty of help were: Frank Johnson (3-4), Joe Fishleigh (3-4), Kevin Doyle (2-3 with a walk), Tom Welbourn (2-3 with a triple), and Sonny Johnston (3-4 with a triple and home run).

Also last week four Henderson County players traveled to the corn fields and unhealthy air of Des Moines (Grimes), Iowa to participate in the National Senior Games. Gene Reiser and Roger Helm played with the Upstate Joe's 70+ team and secured a Silver medal in Division 2 losing out in the finals to a team from Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Trailing 13-11, they came from behind in the seventh inning and scored three runs to take a 14-13 lead over the Jersey Boys in the game that sent them to the finals. Gene made a diving catch on a line drive in the bottom of the seventh to help secure the win. In the 75+ group, David Keith and Gary Warren played with the South Carolina Stars. They faced off on the final day against a team from South Dakota. The Stars were in the drivers seat as they had defeated South Dakota the previous day 15-14 and only needed to win one of the possible two games to follow. In the first game on Monday, August 4th, the Stars played their worst game of the tournament losing 21-13 after making multiple errors resulting in many unearned runs. In game two with the lead changing hands multiple times, South Dakota held a 16-10 lead as the Stars came to bat in the bottom of the sixth inning. The Stars scored five runs to cut the margin to 16-15 and held South Dakota scoreless in the seventh. In the bottom of the inning, the Stars scored two runs for a walk-off 17-16 win to take home the Division 2 Gold medal.

Next week the league will have three teams scheduled for action. On Monday, August 11th, the Henderson County 68+ team will host Upstate South Carolina 68+ at Mills River Park in Clayton League play. On Tuesday, August 12th, the mixed 70+ Sluggers will host Tri-Cities at Jackson Park. On Wednesday, August 13th, the mixed 60+ Sluggers will travel to Sunset Park in Mauldin to battle the Upstate South Carolina 60+ team.

The Henderson County Senior Softball Association 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 828-606-8556 or go to Henderson County Senior Softball at <https://hcsssoftball.com>.