

## Week of Monday, September 1, 2025

The Henderson County Senior Softball Association had two teams in action this week and, in a rare occurrence, the league had a losing record. On Tuesday, September 2nd, the Henderson County 70+ Sluggers, coached by Andy Hinds and sponsored by the **Hunter Automotive Group**, hosted the Tri-Cities 70+ team at Jackson Park. In game one, the Sluggers posted an anemic team batting average of 0.387 as they lost to Tri-Cities 14-6. Bud Bonnema was the only batter to achieve perfection for the Sluggers, going 2-2 with a double. Bob Drew (2-3) and Andy Hinds (1-2 with a walk) aided the offense, but these efforts were not enough to overcome the visitors. Game two was more competitive for the home team, but they still came out on the short end of the scoreboard as Tri-Cities left town with a narrow 12-11 win. In the second game, the Sluggers improved their team batting average to 0.541, led by Cliff Coggins (4-4) and Jim Wicker (3-3). Narrowly missing perfection were David Keith and Dwight Moore, who both went 2-3. The 70+ Sluggers still have a winning record of 11-7 for the year, even after dropping both games.

On Wednesday, September 3rd, the Henderson County 60+ mixed Sluggers, coached by John Musser and sponsored by **Parks Ford**, faced the High Country 60+ squad from Boone, NC. John's on-the-scene report of the games follows:

Wednesday, Hendersonville's Mixed '60s Sluggers travelled to Maples Sports Complex in Marion, North Carolina, to take on High Country. An opponent that Hendersonville is very well acquainted with and routinely sweeps with walk-off victories.

Welcome back from the dead, Rod Sterling! Somewhere, enroute to the ball field, every one of Hendersonville's Mixed 60s players must have gone through a wormhole. No doubt the eerie work of Rod Sterling. It was as if, from beyond the grave, he wrote a new episode, wherein he cast the Sluggers portraying the Bad News Bears reunited in their senior years to play ball one more time. With much angst to the start of the day (a dead alarm, a dead battery to the coach's van and no answer from the park's maintenance as to whether or not the games would be able to be played because of rain overnight) the start of the game was just as bewildering. Hendersonville started with a very strong lineup against High Country, but the stats don't reflect the firepower showing up that day. Having only put up two runs in five of their seven innings, while the remaining two were respectable with a four-run and five-run inning, the bats were not working. And, with the Rod Sterling touch, Hendersonville may as well have been trying to field and throw slinkies! Balls were popping up out of gloves, going over players' heads, landing behind them, being dropped four or five times just trying to pick them up off the ground, wild throws left, right, infield, outfield.... It was mayhem and chaos everywhere! Hendersonville played the role of visitors in the first game. And, for the first time in the Mixed '60s history, their opponent didn't have to bat in the 7th inning. For only the second loss of the season and the first to High Country, Hendersonville walked off in dismay and disbelief, losing 11 to 17. With the team only putting up a .444 batting average, there were just a few bright spots. Dwight Moore was

perfect at the plate, going 2/2 with a walk, while some support came from Chris Culberson 2/4 with a triple, Kirk Hall 1/2 with a triple, Kevin Doyle 2/3 with a double and a triple, Frank Johnson 2/3 and Scot Webster 2/3 with a double. Dwight Moore took the mound and suffered the loss.

Hendersonville's Mixed 60s Sluggers took the field in game 2, having chosen to be the home team in the second match. Hades must have stepped away from the TV and realized Rod Sterling had vacated the grave, summoning him back to the dead. With an immediate effect, Hendersonville was restored to its normal self. Routine was now routine once again. With law and order justly restored, Robert Novak led off the second game, nailing a shot to the fence, giving him a solo run home run. A lot more firepower followed afterwards. Hendersonville almost perfected their first four Innings by only being one run short of the perfect mark of 20 runs and tallied another five-run inning in the 6th. The routinely vaunted defense of Hendersonville came back to play as well as they held High Country to only 11 runs in their seven innings, while Hendersonville themselves did not need to bat their final seventh inning, having outscored High Country 26 to 11. Hendersonville walked off the field at the end of the second game, having put up a .700 team batting average, regaining the respect they are due. As should be expected, many players improved their at-bat appearances. Perfect plate performance award goes to Mike Elmaleh 3/3 and a walk, Jim Wicker going 2/2 with a double and two walks, and John Musser going 3/3 with a double and a walk. A strong supporting cast made their appearance with Robert Novak going 3/4 with a home run and a walk, Kirk Hall going 2/3 and a walk, Dwight Moore going 2/3 with a double and a walk, Tom Welbourn 3/4 with a double, a triple and a homer, Frank Johnson going 2/3, Scot Webster going 3/4, John mix going 2/3 with a walk and Kevin Doyle going 2/3 with a double, a triple and a walk. For those who might be keeping score, Hendersonville scored a record 11 walks in the second game. Dwight Moore started on the mound and was relieved by John Musser. An injury to Kevin Doyle took John Musser from the mound and placed him back in the outfield, bringing Dwight Moore back to the mound for the win. Thank you, Hades, for reclaiming Rod Sterling. You have one job to do! Keep the dead there, please? Especially that Rod guy.

Next week will see each of the league's travel teams in action. On Monday, September 8th, the Henderson County 68+ Sluggers will travel to Tiger, Georgia, to battle the North Georgia Patriots in Clayton League play. Also, that same day, the Henderson County Hickory Games team will go to Stanford Park in Hickory to face teams from Lake Norman and Hickory for a pair of games. On Wednesday, September 10th, the Henderson County mixed 70+ Sluggers will have a chance for revenge as Tri-Cities returns to Jackson Park. The Henderson County 60+ mixed Sluggers will close out the week when they host Upstate. Here's hoping for a winning week for our league.

The Henderson County Senior Softball Association is always looking for new players aged 50 and older (35 and older for ladies). Regular league games are generally 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://hcssoftball.com>.