

Week of Monday, October 6, 2024

The Henderson County 68+ Sluggers traveled to the Parker Meadows complex in Franklin, NC, on Monday, October 6th, to begin play in the Clayton 68+ League season-ending tournament. The Sluggers are coached by Stan Steinberg and sponsored this week by **Carolina Blinds**. The top-seeded Sluggers opened play against the 6th-seeded Lake Keowee Eagles. Henderson County took the lead in the first inning and never trailed thereafter. The Sluggers had a team batting average of 0.667 in the game. Don Ward was his usual masterful self in picking up the victory on the mound. The final score of 24-8 reflects the dominance of the Sluggers in this game. Three Sluggers batted 1.000 for the game: Jim Zitney (2-2 with a double and a walk), Scott Searle (3-3 with two doubles), and Stan Steinberg (2-2 with a double and a home run). Several Sluggers were near perfect including: Bob Drew (2-3), Don Ward (2-3) Jerry Austin (2-3 with a double and a triple), Mark Hammer (2-3 with a double, a triple, and a walk), Tim Epley (2-3 with two doubles), Gene Reiser (1-2 with a triple and a sacrifice fly), and Gary Warren (1-2 with a sacrifice fly).

Game two on the day featured the 5th-seeded North Georgia Patriots taking on Henderson County. For the first time all day, Henderson County trailed after an inning as North Georgia led 2-1 at the conclusion of the first inning. That would be the last time the Patriots would lead as the Sluggers rolled to an 18-5 win over North Georgia. Once again, the Sluggers had a team batting average of 0.667, and once again, Don Ward was the victor on the mound. Five Sluggers batted 1.000 in game two: Scott Searle (3-3 with two doubles), Jim Zitney (2-2 with a double and a walk), Roger Helm (3-3), Gary Warren (3-3 with a double), and Stan Steinberg (2-2 with a triple). Five other Sluggers were near perfect: Don Ward (2-3), Bob Drew (2-3), Mark Hammer (2-3), Jerry Austin (2-3 with a double and a triple), and Gene Reiser (1-2 with a double and a sacrifice fly).

The Sluggers closed out the day with a game against the 4th-seeded Franklin Old Bones. Henderson County took a 5-2 lead after one inning of play. The second frame saw Franklin score four runs while holding the Sluggers scoreless. So for the second time all day, the Sluggers trailed at the conclusion of an inning. However, that would be the last time Henderson County would trail as they coasted to an 18-14 victory over the Old Bones. Franklin scored five runs in the top of the 7th inning to narrow the margin of victory. Again, Don Ward secured the win on the mound to go 3-0 on the day. The Sluggers upped the team batting average to 0.711 in the third game. Four Sluggers batted 1.000 in the game: Don Ward (3-3), Roger Helm (3-3), Jerry Austin (3-3 with a double), and Tim Epley (3-3). Seven other Sluggers were near perfect: Gene Reiser (2-3), Jim Zitney (2-3), Mark Hammer (2-3 with a double and a triple), Norm Royo (2-3), Scott Searle (2-3 with a double), Sonny Johnston (2-3), and Stan Steinberg (1-2). In addition, Jim Ready contributed a home run to the offensive output.

Next Monday, the level of competition will rise as the Sluggers will face the third seed Upstate South Carolina and the second seed Rabun County Relics. These were the only teams able to garner a win against Henderson County during the regular season, as the Sluggers took five out of the six games played against each team. At the end of the day, the season will be over for the 68+ Clayton League, and hopefully, the Sluggers will bring another championship back to Henderson County.

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>.