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AMERICA'S LARGEST CIRCULATED SENIOR SOFTBALL PUBLICATION

# SSUSA FIGHTS COVID-19

## Events Temporarily Halted; Tournaments Rescheduled

### Softball News Report

**S**ACRAMENTO – Senior Softball USA has rescheduled four of the Tournament of Champion-qualifying tournaments it cancelled in March and April because of the rapid spread of the pandemic viral disease, Coronavirus (COVID-19), and because seniors are most at risk from the disease.

SSUSA on March 16 cancelled all SSUSA Tournaments for 60 days, canceled this year's Pacific Rim Slowpitch Softball Federation Championships in Vancouver, Canada, and postponed the May International Tour and tournaments in Prague and Budapest until October.

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Photo by Otis Menasco

Quarantined American passengers in flight from Japan to Texas.

### ONE OF OUR OWN

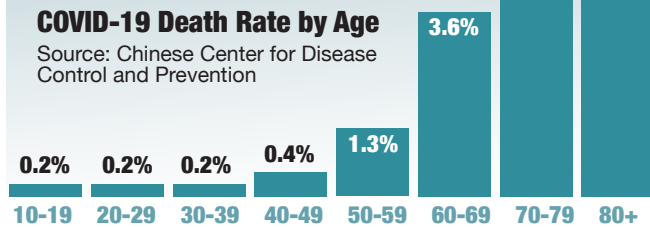
## Otis Menasco, of OMEN 70, and Wife Carol Spend 27 Days in Quarantine

### Softball News Report

**F**or one Senior Softball-USA player, the effects of COVID-19 were dealt with early on.

Otis Menasco, 73, of Granite Bay, Calif., a long-time member and sponsor of the OMEN 60s, 65s and currently 70s teams, and his wife Carol, left California on Jan. 16 to take part in a 14-day cruise to that would see the couple go to Japan, Hong Kong and

Please See Page 8



## Current Bats Good Under New Standard

### Softball News Report

**S**ACRAMENTO – Senior Softball-USA (SSUSA) has announced a new bat standard that will take effect for all senior bats produced after July 1.

All bats approved under the old standard will be grandfathered in for use.

“We are happy with the senior

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# Senior Softball News

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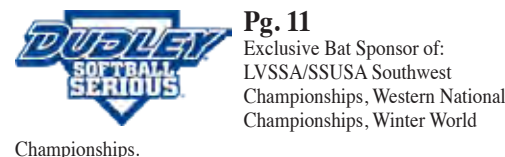
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## Tournament Bat Sponsors:



Exclusive Bat Sponsor of: Southern California State Championships, SSUSA/CAN-Sirs Northern California State Championships, Midwest Championships, Northern Championships.



Exclusive Bat Sponsor of: LVSSA/SSUSA Southwest Championships, Western National Championships, Winter World Championships.



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Exclusive Bat Sponsor of: Jim Sherman Memorial Northwest Championships, Texas State Championships, Rocky Mountain Championships, Spring National Championships.



Exclusive Bat Sponsor of: Spring World Championships, Rock 'N Reno Challenge Cup, Winter National Championships.



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Exclusive Bat Sponsor of: ISA Senior World Series, Eastern National Championships, Tournament of Champions

# COVID19: Crabtown Classic Promoted to TOC Qualifier

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“We have been working to reschedule the major TOC tournaments later in the season to give players a greater chance to qualify for both the Tournament of Champions and the World Masters Championships,” said Terry Hennessy SSUSA’s chief executive officer.

“While we cannot predict how the COVID-19 pandemic will progress in North America, we are hopeful that it will begin to decline soon,” he said. “That being said, our greatest concern is the health and safety of our players and their families, so we will continue to monitor the COVID-19 progress and make decisions based on their welfare.”

The tournaments being rescheduled include:

The **Texas State Championships** in Grapevine Texas moves to Aug. 4-9.

The **Spring World Championships** in St. George, Utah moves to Aug. 11-16.

The **Spring National Championships** in Polk County, Florida moves to

Aug. 14-16.

The **LVSSA/SSUSA Southwest Championships** in Las Vegas moves to Aug. 25-30.

The **Crabtown Classic** in Glen Burnie, Maryland will take the place of the Atlantic Coast Championships this year and will be a TOC Qualifier.

The **Tidewater Classic** is canceled because the only dates available were too close to the World Masters Championships.

For new dates and details about these re-scheduled tournaments, please go to <https://seniorsoftball.com/?events>

Teams that have paid entry fees for rescheduled SSUSA Qualifying Tournaments will be given a choice of attending the tournaments on the new dates or receiving a credit to use for future SSUSA tournaments.

In addition, SSUSA recommended on March 16 that all senior clubs, leagues and tournament associations cancel activities for 60 days as recommended by the U.S. Center for Disease Control. SSUSA sanctions tournaments

in 80 cities and senior leagues in 300 cities.

While COVID-19 can cause serious illness and death to all ages, the fatality rate for people 60-69 is about 3.6 percent and increases to 14.8 percent to those over 80, according to the Chinese Center for Disease Control. In comparison, for those under 49, it is less than 1 percent.

The World Health Organization officially declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, and the disease has made its effects felt worldwide following the first confirmed case on Dec. 31 in Wuhan, China.

Infecting more than 375,000 people (more than 16,000 deaths) in at least 195 countries, to date, COVID 19 has affected not only global economies, but the sports world as well, with major sports leagues playing in empty stadiums/arenas, or postponing/cancelling games and seasons altogether.

Many states are outlawing gatherings of more than 50 or 100 people, and many municipalities are shutting down playing fields for all sports.

The federal government has recommended no gathering of more than 10 people. In addition, a number of cities and states have instituted even stricter rules, with some requiring citizens to “shelter in place.”

The goal of these measures is not to stop the virus. Most health officials agree that with no vaccine available there is no way to stop the spread of the disease.

Their goal to spread out the number of severe cases requiring hospitalization so that hospitals will be able to care for the most seriously ill.

For senior softball players, the danger is less because they are usually in good health and it is an outdoor game. In addition, SSUSA has introduced “social distancing” and new hygiene rules.

However, players must travel to the tournaments and games by their very nature have more than 10 players competing.

“The bottom line is that the danger is greatest for our players and we cannot ignore the danger,” said Hennessy.

## COVID-19 Recommendations to Stay Safe

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Older adults and people who have severe underlying chronic medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness. Please consult

with your health care provider about additional steps you may be able to take to protect yourself.

### **Know How It Spreads**

- There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).
- The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.
- The virus is thought to

spread mainly from person-to-person.

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or pos-

sibly be inhaled into the lungs.

### **Take Steps to Protect Yourself**

- *Clean your hands often*
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are

Continued on Next Page

# SSUSA Adjusts to Pandemic Landscape

The news – including several articles in this edition of Senior Softball News – has been dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic that is a fast-changing and evolving health crisis for a growing number of cities and countries.

The pandemic, by its very nature, is changing every day – and Senior Softball has been changing with it.

Senior Softball USA's first statement, issued a few weeks ago, stated that our tournaments and our International Tour to the Czech Republic and Hungary would go on as planned.

We also recommended that healthy players and their families follow the recommendations of the CDC: wash your hands, wipe off airline tables, seatbelts and armrests before touching them, and stay away from people who are chronically coughing or sneezing. That recommendation included warnings that those players with respiratory issues or those whose immune systems are compromised contact their doctors about traveling and exposure in any group activity.

That statement, issued March 3, stood up for just

## Covering the Bases

By Terry Hennessy

nine days.

The next statement came after new studies showed in graphic detail the increased danger to older people who had underlying health issues.

As a result, we canceled the 65-and-older divisions in all tournaments for 30 days for all SSUSA tournaments. We said we would continue to hold tournaments for the 40-60 age divisions with this mandatory policy:

### **"No-Handshake/Contact"**

#### **Policy**

*SSUSA is immediately instituting a precautionary "no-contact, no-handshake policy" to be observed at every level of the organization until further notice. This includes all physical contact and extends to customary game-related activities, such as umpire-coach introductions, and post-game handshakes between members of opposing teams. Instead, staff, players and coaches should verbally "good game," without shaking hands, high-fiving or fist-bumping, etc.*

In addition, we recommended players follow CDC

good hygiene policies.

That policy lasted only three days.

On March 15, SSUSA announced the cancellation of all divisions in all tournaments for 60 days, the postponement of the International tournaments in Prague and Budapest until October, and the postponement of the Pacific Rim Slowpitch Softball Championships in Vancouver, Canada, until 2021.

On March 16, SSUSA closed its offices for two weeks in compliance with CDC and WHO recommendations.

While we obviously do not know what is coming next, we do know that after this pandemic ends – and it will end – we will be holding tournaments and greeting friends on the softball diamonds. Senior Softball is more than a game – we are a culture based on a love of the sport and an even greater love of our fellow players.

Until we see you on the field, take precautions, stay healthy, stay calm and carry on.

### **New Twist on Awards**

Last season we gave out shirts or jackets to winners

in many of our major tournaments. While most liked the prizes, there were a number of issues with getting the right sizes to teams. Most of the issues revolved around the original items being out of stock.

As a result, some players and teams had to wait months to get their prizes.

So this year, SSUSA decided to try something different. In some of our tournaments, winning players will be receiving a certificate good for merchandise or equipment. The certificates can also be used to discount more expensive items, such as bats.

We are hoping that this will give players more options – and avoid the delays we experienced last season in getting awards out to some players.

Please let us know how you like it.

We hope you have a chance to play soon and win!

*Terry Hennessy is chief executive officer of Senior Softball USA and can be reached at [terryh@seniorsoftball.com](mailto:terryh@seniorsoftball.com).*

## COVID-19 Recommendations Continued

### **Continued from Previous Page**

not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

### **Avoid Close Contact**

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Put distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community.

### **Take Steps to Protect**

#### **Others**

*Stay home if you're sick*

- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.

### **Cover coughs and sneezes**

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw used tissues in the trash.

- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

*Wear a facemask if you are sick*

**Continued on Next Page**



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# COVID-19 Recommendations Concluded

## Continued from Previous Page

• If you are sick: You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breath-

ing), then you should do your best to cover your coughs and sneezes, and people who are caring for you should wear a facemask if they enter your room. Learn what to do if you are sick.

• If you are NOT sick: You do not need to wear a facemask unless you are caring for someone who is sick

(and they are not able to wear a facemask). Facemasks may be in short supply and they should be saved for caregivers.

### *Clean and disinfect*

• Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks,

phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.

• If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

For more information, please visit the CDC's dedicated website to COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>

# Volatile Markets Prove Cash Is Always King

By Jack Sirard  
Senior Softball News

Whoever coined the phrase, "Cash is king," is looking pretty smart right now with the coronavirus virtually demolishing the stock market in a matter of days.

Most of us are old enough to have been through many tough stock market cycles including the days following 9/11 when the markets were closed for several days only to reopen to a wave of selling. And of course there have been a few notable Octobers such as 1987 when the Dow Jones industrial average fell more than 20 percent in a single day of trading.

But in my experience at least, there hasn't been anything like this since perhaps the Great Depression of the 1930s. What I'm trying to say is that we're definitely in uncharted waters and it's not because of a terrorist attack of extreme chaos in the oil markets.

No, the problem this time around is the fear of the unknown and that fear is driving the markets after wave after wave of selling hits. Daily declines of 1,000 or even 2,000 points in the Dow are

happening with all too much regularity.

And of course, volatility is off the charts.

That's why if you're either close to retirement or permanently retired to the wonders of the neighborhood softball fields, it's critically important to have enough cash on hand to cover your living expenses.

Most retirees have the financial wherewithal to take care of their regular monthly expenses like the monthly electric bill, insurance and to put food on the table, but it's the sudden and very expensive bills such as getting a new roof or home heating system, that forces drastic changes.

The last thing you want now is to be forced to sell your investments to cover an unexpected expense when the stock market is down. That's why most financial advisers recommend keeping 20 percent or more of your funds in cash or cash equivalents. Some now are saying that keeping as much as 50 percent in cash might be a solid strategy.

If there's one thing that we've learned over the years is that bear markets seemingly

always last longer and go deeper than we expect.

Another reason that "cash is king," is that it allows investors the opportunity to purchase stocks when market shares are selling at sharp discounts...such as now.

So is now the time to get back in? Perhaps. But before you decide on that course of action, know what you're putting your money into and how it can be affected by what's going on today with the shock waves of the coronavirus and the troubled oil markets.

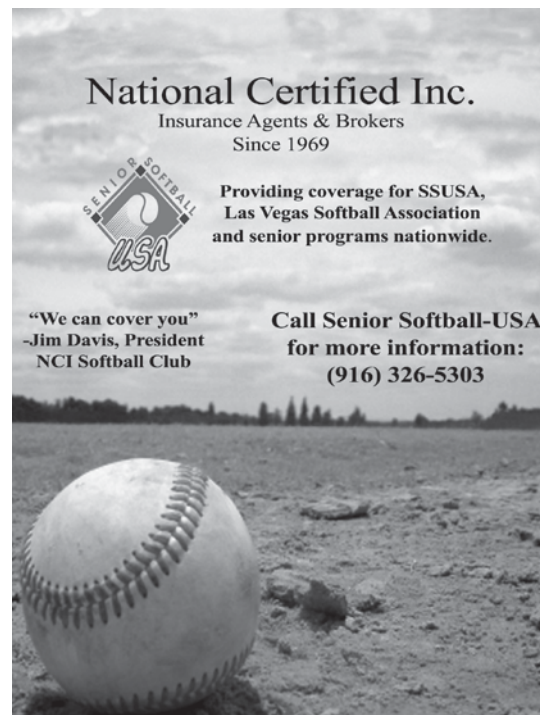
It's hard to make a case for putting money into shares of companies that are so directly affected at this time...until you understand the full scope of their problems.

For that reason, you can't just throw money at any stock because it's down 50 percent or more. Some like those in the travel industry likely won't see

their share prices rebound to former levels for some time. But other stocks which truly are not directly affected by the coronavirus might be bargain spots for some of your accumulated cash, but certainly not all of it.

The bottom line is that cash truly is king and these days it appears that you can never have too much of it on hand.

*Jack Sirard is a retired nationally syndicated financial columnist and Senior Editor for Senior Softball News.*



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# Menasco: From Dream Cruise to Nightmare Quarantine

Continued from Page 1

Vietnam.

After the couple toured Tokyo, they boarded the Diamond Princess Cruise on Jan. 20. "We enjoyed it thoroughly," said Menasco. "We had a nice room with a balcony."

On Feb. 3, all passengers were told to put their luggage out, as they would be flying back home.

The following day at 6:30 am, passengers were informed of a 24-hour delay, causing the Menascos to make flight changes for the Feb. 5.

Later on that night, passengers were informed the delay would actually be a few more days.

In total, the delay would turn into a 14-day quarantine for the Menascos in their room, as a fellow passenger had been infected with what would later become known as COVID-19 in Tokyo.

"More and more people were coming down with Coronavirus," said Menasco. As that one passenger turned into 10, then an additional 10, to then 20 more, then 50, 70, until over 700 passengers were infected, including 124 crew members.

After 12 days of quarantine aboard the cruise ship, the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo arranged for two cargo planes to transport the passengers back to the states.

"There was no heat on the planes, which had portable seating and porta potties," said Menasco, describing the flight.

The Menascos were originally informed that they would be dropped off at Travis Air Force Base in Fair-



Otis and Carol Menasco quarantined on their cruise ship.

field, Calif., about 70 miles from their home, along with another 150 passengers from California. But they would eventually find out, four hours into their flight, that they would actually be taken to Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas.

"Totally disappointed," said Menasco, when he found out about the change.

On the flight, there were seven passengers who had contracted the virus.

Feb. 6 would see the plane land at Lackland where the

passengers would again serve another 14-day quarantine in their rooms, which were 10 by 15 feet with a double size bed and a bathroom.

"They were totally unprepared for us," said Menasco regarding the measures that were taken to bring in the passengers. "Rooms had one towel and no soap. We quickly got soap, but it took three days to get another towel.

"The first five days were very bad. The food was cold. We were told our prescriptions would be renewed, as we

only brought enough for the original length of the cruise trip and we were running out. It took four days to get that straightened out. Things improved after five days. Food was better.

"They preferred that we not come out of our rooms. When we did leave the barracks to walk around, there were security guards on every corner."

The initial spread of the virus on the cruise did not stop on the base, as four people would test positive on that first day at Lackland, with six additional positive tests the following day.

"It was pretty scary," said Menasco. "They'd deliver food three times a day in hazmat suits."

"We were very diligent," said Menasco. "We stayed six feet away from others, had no conversations, and kept our masks on."

On the 13th day of the second quarantine, the Menascos once again would put their bags out ready to finally come home.

However, on the morning they were set to head home, they received a call at 8 a.m. notifying them of yet another delay.

Later in the day at noon, passengers were given the go-ahead to line up outside and wait for buses.

However, no busses ever arrived.

"People really started getting angry and yelling," said Menasco, describing the scene.

The passengers would eventually find out that San



Photo of the barracks at Lackland AFB in Texas.

Continued on Next Page



# Menasco: Finally Home and Getting Back to Normalcy

**Continued from Previous Page**

Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg had declared a State of Disaster and Public Health Emergency, ordering anyone under quarantine at Lackland to not be allowed to enter the county.

“Lackland AFB really went to bat for us,” said Menasco, as a federal judge would not sign the declaration.

“They started moving people out in the middle of the night,” said Menasco. “They gave us wrist bands and we left at 8 a.m. People were grumpy and angry, pushing each other to finally get on the bus. I made the flight arrange-

ments from San Antonio to Sacramento, with a layover in Houston.

“We finally landed in Sacramento at 10:30 p.m. on March 6.”

“The first thing we did when we got home was start our cars. Two cars started, but one did not. We also had a lot of mail and messages to go through.”

The Menascos, who actually had other cruises scheduled later in the year to the Bahamas and Scandinavia, have canceled those trips.

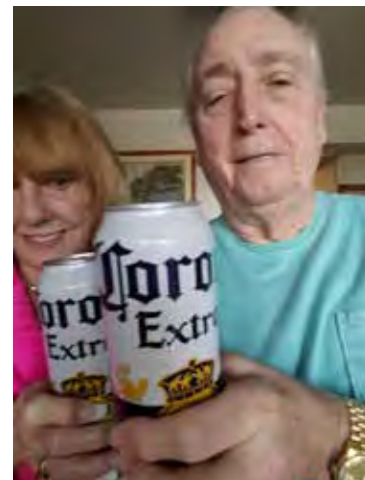
“We will not be going out to any large groups for a while,” said Menasco. “However, we do plan on going to Mexico for New Years.”

The Menascos, who had their temperature taken every day for the 27 days they spent in quarantine, continue to monitor their health, taking their temperature every day, this time in the comfort of their own home.

While in quarantine, the Menascos were tested for twice for the Coronavirus - once while on the cruise ship, and then again while at Lackland.

The test for COVID-19 is an invasive one, as they take a swab of the nose and mouth. The swab through the nose goes into the throat.

“We feel extremely lucky,” said Menasco, who was able to avoid being part



The Menascos are happy to be home and still have their sense of humor intact.

of the domino effect that began with one person in Japan, who would go on to affect nearly a thousand other passengers and crew members.

# Women's World Cup Series Debuts for 2020

## Softball News Report

VALDOSTA, GA – Women’s teams will have an opportunity to play for free – and party on Halloween during Senior Softball USA’s 2020 Women’s World Cup.

Masters and Senior Women’s team that play in three select SSUSA tournaments during the season get free entry into the 2020 Women’s World Cup here Oct.30-Nov. 1.

In addition, the tournament host – the Valdosta-Lowndes County Parks and Recreation Authority (VL-PRA) – is sponsoring a Costume Contest and party during the tournament.

The VLPRA has some exciting extras planned for the first annual Women’s World Cup, said George Page, VLPRA executive Director.

The Women’s World Cup will be played at Freedom

Park, named the 2018 SSUSA Complex of the Year.

Teams gain free entry to the tournament by playing in one of these tournaments:

- Winter World Championships in Phoenix, Arizona\*
- Rock ‘n Reno Challenge Cup in Reno, Nevada
- LVSSA/SSUS Southwest Championships in Las Vegas, Nevada
- Southern California State Championships in Hemet, California
- Eastern Nationals in Loudoun County, Virginia
- Western Nationals in Sacramento, California
- Midwest Championships in Rogers, Arkansas
- Women’s Western Classic in Las Cruces, New Mexico
- Crabtown Classic in Glen Burnie, Maryland
- Battle of the Roses Qualifier in York, Pennsylva-

nia

• LVSSA/SSUS World Masters Championships in Las Vegas, Nevada

\*NOTE: The 2019 Winter Worlds counts for all women’s teams that competed.

Teams that do not play in three of the tournaments can still pay the entry fee and compete.

For more information, click here: <https://seniorsoftball.com/?event=1542>



Unfazed (VA) - Women's 50 Major at the 2019 Eastern National Championships



# Co-Ed Division Looks for Continued Growth

## Softball News Report

LAS VEGAS – The World Masters Championships here will welcome national and international co-ed teams here for the third consecutive year – with a twist.

“We are inviting teams from Europe, Latin America, Canada and the U.S., but we are also inviting individual players from both Europe and Latin America,” said Terry Hennessy, SSUSA’s chief executive officer.

In the past few years, some International teams had been interested in competing, but were short players, Hennessy said. This year those players will be invited and will be put on a team, he said.

In the first two years the Co-Ed Division had attracted teams from Germany, Panama and the United States. This year WMC officials hope the new program will spur a number of new teams to help the division grow.

The International Co-Ed Division plays in the fourth

and final session of the WMC on Saturday-Sunday, Oct. 3-4. In recognition of their championship play, each member on the winning team wins a ring from Josten’s, maker of MLB World Series and NFL Super Bowl rings.

The WMC is the largest slow-pitch softball tournament in the world, attracting 612 teams in 2019 with players aged 40 to 85 years old. Altogether there were 33 divisions, including the Co-Ed division, that competed in the 2019 WMC.

Hennessy noted that SSUSA is working directly with the following groups to build up the number of teams playing in the international co-ed tourney:

- Slo-Pitch National (SPN) - Canada
- Independent Sports Association (ISA) - US
- Members of the Pacific Rim Slow-Pitch Softball Association - China, Japan, Canada, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Guam.
- Nations from recent



Batter from Colorado Hitmen, the eventual 2019 champions, looks to drive home a run.



Players from Bavarian Royals and Colorado Hitmen share a laugh at first base.

international tours - Italy, France, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Ireland, Mexico.

Team rosters restricted to respective metropolitan areas. For more information, visit <https://seniorsoftball.com/?event=1465>.

[com/?event=1465](https://seniorsoftball.com/?event=1465)

In addition, prospective teams can contact Anthony Ramos at SSUSA, 916-326-5303 or [Anthony@seniorsoftball.com](mailto:Anthony@seniorsoftball.com).



Player from a local Las Vegas team showing off her power.



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49074: 34" / 26 oz

49075: 34" / 27 oz

49076: 34" / 28 oz

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**NEW** Model: DLSR12

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BOBBY NIFONG

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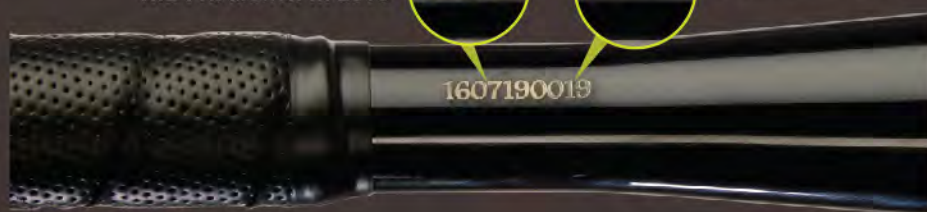
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# Opinions & Letters

## Core Reasons Why

**Terry Hennessy**

**Editor**

**Senior Softball News**

Sore arms, sore legs, sore back – sore just about everything. The longer we play, the more chances to pull a muscle or worse – and the more parts that simply wear out.

So why do we do it?

One part is the smell of the field in spring when we first walk out on the field.

The grass and faint smell of dust from the infield bring back memories of when we were kids and ran with abandon – and no sore muscles – to play ball with our friends.

Another part is the competition. No matter how old we are, there is a challenge in

giving everything we have to reach our common team goal of winning.

Perhaps the most important reason is our teammates. We stay in shape, and try our best to stay healthy so that we can continue to play – through the sore muscles, our health issues and our own private pain of loss of loved ones.

Over the years our teammates become our family. We support each other in time of need and in times of joy. And the longer we play, the more players we know – playing with and against – and soon they all feel like family.

This is the core of senior softball – and the reason we do it.



Sue Ballenger

## Bat Standard: Pioneer Dr. Brandt Retires

**Continued from Page 1**

bat performance and we have seen no significant increase in batted ball injuries, so our goal was to develop a new standard that allows all senior bats now in use," said Terry Hennessy, SSUSA chief executive officer.

The move came when Dr. Richard Brandt of New York University decided to retire. Dr. Brandt had developed the Senior Softball-USA (SSUSA) standard and had tested and certified the bats for 25 years.

The new certifications

will be done by the NTS Chesapeake Testing Lab in Belcamp, Md. The NTS lab has developed tests for equipment in several major sports as well as military armor and armaments.

"NTS is thrilled to have been chosen by SSUSA as their new Bat Certification Lab," said Mike Hinder, Mechanical and Sports Manager for NTS. "We would like to take the time to thank not only Terry Hennessy and all of the SSUSA team, but also the committee of bat manufacturers who helped create the new SSUSA Bat Standard. Without

everyone's dedication and collaboration we would not have met the kickoff deadline for the new Certification Program. SSUSA's new Bat Testing Program ensures that player safety is paramount, while allowing manufacturers to continue to deliver the bat performance that SSUSA athletes have come to expect and demand. Our team at NTS is thankful for this opportunity, and we look forward to supporting SSUSA and all participants in any way we can!"

The SSUSA standard was developed by NTS in conjunction with input from the bat

manufacturers and SSUSA.

"Our new test will use our current ball (the original test was with a higher COR ball that was used 25 years ago), and will include a test of the bats after they have been used," said Hennessy. "These improvements will ensure the best performance within the standard's limits – both when the bat is new and after it has been used."

For more information on NTS and athletic equipment testing, please visit their website: <https://www.nts.com/industries/consumer/sports-equipment/>



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# Friendship Always Triumphs Over Winning

By Dave Weinman  
Senior Softball News  
Contributor

The Buffalo MOGS (Mostly Old Guys) is my longtime softball team of guys around my age (60s and early 70s now), from Buffalo, N.Y.

In our early days – we were in our 30s but older than most of our competition- we began playing in a Thursday night league and we also had a Sunday morning pickup game all summer.

Our pickup games attracted players of various abilities and I find it interesting that sometimes even the poorest player believes he is actually one of the best out there. I wish I had that kind of confidence!

The MOGS manager was a very intense guy, I'm going to call him Darth. He was a bit dictatorial and his management style was definitely old school. Compared to him Vince Lombardi was cuddly.

Winning was important to Darth. Even our Sunday pickup games might just as well have been akin to the seventh game of a World Series.

One Sunday we were in the field, bottom of the last inning, two runners on base, and protecting a one-run lead. Darth was playing third base. Our pitcher, Spud, was a sweetheart of a guy off the field, but on it he sadly thought he was a stud.

Spud could only play pitcher. Playing catcher was out of the question because it's important to be able to catch the ball sometimes. We didn't allow walks on Sundays, and it was hard to tell if Spud rarely threw strikes



The Buffalo MOGS in 2016

on purpose or by accident but it could often take a LONG TIME before you'd see a pitch you could swing at.

So Darth calls time and walks over to the mound to talk to Spud. I'm in the outfield so I can't hear the conversation, but you can see Darth pointing here and there, going over the possible scenarios in case the ball gets hit back to the pitcher. Spud is nodding his head and is ready to go, he's got it.

Spud pitches- OMG his first pitch is a strike! The surprised batter smacks a one-hopper right into Spud's glove, right into the pocket on one bounce. The runner on third hesitates; the batter takes off for first; now they are all moving...and Spud begins to tremble. I can see his knees starting to wobble as he slowly comprehends that he has caught the ball and begins sorting through the list of possibilities they reviewed.

You know how buildings look when demolition crews set off those charges and the building collapses on itself? This was a human re-enactment. The wobbling increased, and then the twitching began as Spud crumbled to the ground. The ball rolled out of his glove off to the side, laying in the dust while the

runners circled the bases, and as the winning run scored. Darth just stood there staring at Spud, hands on his hips, muttering. It was beautiful.

Darth ran the MOGS for many years, and he was not one of those guys who mells with age. One year he told me that he and his wife had planned a long overseas trip and as he was going to miss most of the season, he asked me to take over as manager.

At that time most of us were in our 50s, but still playing in an open league against young guys. Darth always put winning ahead of friendship, so he began recruiting younger players and giving the older guys less playing time, sometimes none, and defections began. When I took over, I invited all the old guys back. We won a little less but we didn't mind because it was the old gang again.

The following year, Darth announced he was back and that he'd resume running the team. For the only time in my memory, the MOGS were unanimous- none of them wanted Darth back as manager. So Darth returned as a player only, grudgingly.

A couple of years went by with me running the team, but eventually Darth's frequent

grousing about my decisions wore me down and I offered him the managership of the team, which he eagerly accepted.

There was one game left in the season. I figured we'd finish out that year, and probably over the next year Darth would alienate all the old guys and we'd see where it led.

So Darth took over, and the micro-management he was famous for resumed. "You-move one step to your left; you- three steps back"- etc. etc.

In the seventh inning of a game, he tells an outfielder to move in behind second base and our shortstop loudly disagrees. Darth, who is pitching, barks his command again, and again the shortstop loudly disagrees, and when the outfielder in question hesitates, not knowing who to listen to, Darth SNAPS. Giving everyone on the team a big middle finger from the mound he announces loudly we are all {Censored}. He says he's quitting forever and this time he means it, and with only one out in the inning he stomps off to his car.

A bit shocked- certainly the ump and the other team were a bit stunned too- we brought in a new pitcher and finished the game.

As we headed over to the bench, putting our spikes away, trying to digest what had just happened, Darth suddenly slinked out of the darkness. He had forgotten his car keys.

We all know the world's a crazy place, so it's great

Continued on Next Page



## Toe-Arch Stretch Lessens Plantar Fasciitis Pain

By Stan Reents, PharmD  
Senior Softball News  
Contributor

If you've ever had plantar fasciitis (pain in the arch and in the heel), you know that walking and even standing can be painful.

Fortunately, a simple stretching technique is very effective.

Researchers in the Department of Physical Therapy at the University of Rochester in New York compared two different stretches in patients (average age 46 years), who had plantar fasciitis for at least 10 months.

One group performed an Achilles tendon/lower leg stretch.

This was done while standing and facing a wall. Subjects leaned toward the wall while keeping their feet flat on the ground. This stretches the Achilles tendon and the gastrocnemius and soleus muscles in the lower leg, but doesn't stretch the bottom of the foot as much as the newer technic.

In the other group, the subjects were seated.

They placed their affected foot on top of the opposite knee. They grabbed the toes of the affected foot and bent them back toward the shin. The entire

foot also pivots up towards the shin (dorsiflexion). This focuses almost all of the stretch on the arch of the foot. The plantar fascia is pulled forward from the arch toward the ball of the foot and simultaneously pulled backward toward the heel. The Achilles tendon and lower leg muscles are not affected as much during this stretch.

The subjects held the stretch for 10 seconds and repeated it 10 times in a row.

A session like this was done three times per day for a total of 30 stretches.

Both groups also received soft, pre-fabricated shoe insoles and a three-week course of the anti-inflammatory drug celecoxib (Celebrex®).

After eight weeks, those who performed the toe-arch stretch had substantially less pain than the other group when they first got out of bed and throughout the day.

At that point, the patients in Achilles group began performing the toe-arch stretch, too.

After six months, two-thirds of subjects (both groups combined) had a dramatic improvement.

At the two-year mark, 94-percent reported either no pain or less pain compared to baseline.

Several other strategies for managing plantar fasciitis are available.

Wearing a splint that keeps the foot and toes in a stretched (dorsiflexed) position can be effective.

However, it can be uncomfortable and obviously incurs expenses.

Surgery is another option. But, according to the Rochester researchers, the results haven't been as impressive as this simple toe-arch stretch.

Last, what about wearing shoe inserts (orthotics) without stretching?

In 2018, a review of 19 studies reported that these devices aren't very helpful for plantar fasciitis.

Overall, only a very small benefit was seen, possibly too small to be considered effective, though the research on shoe inserts wasn't of the highest quality.

So, if you have plantar fasciitis, it certainly seems that the toe-arch stretch is worth trying!

*Stan Reents, PharmD, is a health care professional and health/fitness coach. He created the website [www.AthleteInMe.com](http://www.AthleteInMe.com)®, a resource on the health benefits of exercise. He is also the author of "Sport and Exercise Pharmacology."*

## MOGS: Softball and Teammates are a Slice of Life

Continued from Previous Page

that we seniors are sharing a game that brings us together, overcoming the politics within and between countries for the

most part.

I think I can speak for a lot of us when I tell you that these days my little slice of heaven is playing a ballgame

or two and then going out for a burger and a beer with my teammates. Here's hoping we all have a lot more of these heavenly slices to go. Even if

you decide for the fish tacos instead.

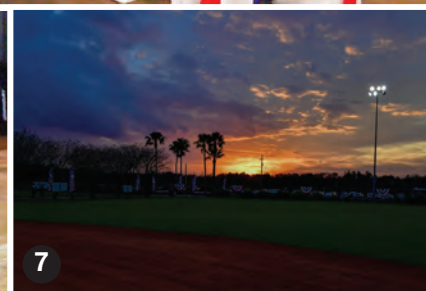
*David Weinman, NY, is a current SSUSA member and former manager (Rustbelters).*



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# 2020 TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS: POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA



1. Edward Schultz, 92, member of Center For Sight (FL), Men's 85, was the oldest competitor at the 2020 TOC. 2. Player on the Louisville Slugger Warriors shows off his arm from the hot corner in the Exhibition Game against the TOC All-Stars. 3. Player works on her swing during the hitting clinic. 4. The TOC Banquet, which annually hosts 1,500 players and families, was another marquee event. 5. SSUSA would like to thank this year's hitting instructors during the clinic - L-R: Lee Trotter, Bobby Davis, Alan Tanner, Cyrus Wilson, and Jason Kendrick. 6. Player from Louisville Slugger Warriors swings for the fences against the TOC All-Stars. 7. The sun sets on the crown jewel of Senior Softball, the Original Tournament of Champions.

## 2020 TOC Final Standings

**Women's 40 Major**  
1. Kryptonite (FL)  
2. Colorado Ohana

2. Scrap Iron Heavy Metal (CO)  
3. Long Island Jaguars (NY)

**Women's 40 AAA**  
1. Firestyx (NJ)  
2. Fireballs (MA)

**Men's 60 AA**  
1. The Starboard/OTS (DE)  
2. Syracuse Cyclones (NY)  
3. Scrap Iron Rockies (CO)

**Women's 50 Gold**  
1. Motown Magic (MI)  
2. Unfazed (VA)

**Men's 65/70 Platinum**  
1. Venom 70 (FL)  
2. Slug-A-Bug 65 (FL)  
3. Pill & Pill 65 (WV)

**Men's 40 Platinum**  
1. S2S/.40 CAL (FL)  
2. Suncoast Adidas (FL)  
3. NorthWest Legends (WA)

**Men's 65 AAA**  
1. Brantford Nissan Seniors (ON, Canada)  
2. FL Mustangs  
3. MP Components/Bomb Squad (MI)

**Men's 40 AAA**  
1. Mission: Possible (PA)  
2. Y'All Next (MD)  
3. Gigantes O.C. (MD)

**Men's 70 Major**  
1. Handeland Flooring (WI)  
2. Bradford White/Jersey Masters (NJ)  
3. Life Guard Financial/Peppo (OH)

**Men's 50/55 Platinum**  
1. CPD/Ancell 50 (MN)  
2. Brickyard Classics 50 (IN)  
3. Walkoff 50 (MD)

**Men's 70 AAA**  
1. Lane Construction (FL)  
2. Syracuse Cyclones (NY)  
3. Chicago Strikers (IL)

**Men's 50 Silver Division**  
1. Finance of America (NJ)  
2. High Street Bucs (MD)  
3. Bond 124/RDD (CT)

**Men's 55/60 Platinum**  
1. Speedwerx 55 (MN)  
2. Olympian Athletics 55 (PA)  
3. Rock N Legends 9 55 (TX)

**Men's 75/80 Platinum**  
1. Florida Investment Properties 80  
2. Monkey Joe's Big Nut Co. 75 (NJ)

**Men's 55 Silver**  
1. Vecter Scorpions (FL)  
2. New England Merchants (MA)  
3. Arizona Scorpions

**Men's 75 AAA**  
1. Syracuse Cyclones (NY)  
2. Hill Contracting (TX)  
3. Arizona Outlaws

**Men's 60/65 Platinum**  
1. Hawaii Five-O 60  
2. Cardot/Madalena Construction 60 (NY)  
3. New Jersey Hitmen 65

**Men's 80 AAA**  
1. Minnesota Masters  
2. Chicago Geezers (IL)  
3. Bucs and Bulls (FL)

**Men's 60 AAA**  
1. RedHawk Nation (FL)

**Men's 85 Major**  
1. ProHealth Legends (MN)  
2. Center For Sight (FL)

Photos by Jack Eberhard

## 30 Teams Crowned Mega Champions at 2020 Original TOC

**P**OLK COUNTY, Fla. - The 14th annual original Tournament of Champions, the often imitated, but never duplicated crown jewel of Senior Softball, was held here Feb. 5-9, and hosted 107 teams from 28 states and Canada.

Of the 107 teams, 30 would go on to become champion of champions, representing the states of Florida, New Jersey, Minnesota, Virginia, Michigan,

Pennsylvania, Texas, California, Hawaii, Delaware, Wisconsin and New York, as well as the Canadian province of Ontario.

Teams earned a berth to the 2020 Original TOC by winning one of 22 premier tournaments held during the 2019 season.

For a complete recap of the tournament that appeared in the Newsletter, visit <https://senior-softball.com/?news&story=1585>

**Tournament Highlights**  
Speedwerx (MN), Men's 55 Major, and Hawaii Five-O, Men's 60 Major, each ran the gauntlet in their respective divisions, winning seven straight elimination games to take home the championship.

Six number one seeds would go on to win their respective divisions:  
**Men's 40 Major**

The Starboard/OTS (DE)  
**Men's 60 AA**  
Brantford Nissan Seniors (ON, Canada)  
**Men's 65 AAA**  
Venom (FL)  
**Men's 70 Major Plus**  
Lane Construction (FL)  
**Men's 70 AAA**  
Syracuse Cyclones (NY)  
**Men's 75 AAA**

**Champions**  
**Women's 40 Major**  
Kryptonite (FL)  
**Women's 40 AAA**  
Firestyx (NJ)  
**Women's 50 Major**  
Unfazed (VA)  
**Women's 50 AAA**  
Motown Magic (MI)

**Men's 40 Major Plus**  
Suncoast Adidas (FL)

**Men's 40 Major**  
S2S/.40 CAL (FL)

**Men's 40 AAA**  
Mission: Possible (PA)

**Men's 50 Major Plus**  
Suncoast/Adidas/Shades (FL)

Please See Next Page



# 2020 Original TOC Champions Continued

Continued from Previous Page

**Men's 50 Major**  
CPD/Ancell (MN)

**Men's 50 AAA**  
Finance of America (NJ)

**Men's 50 AA**  
Manifest (TX)

**Men's 55 Major Plus**  
RBC/Team Miken-Worth (FL)

**Men's 55 Major**  
Speedwerx (MN)

**Men's 55 AAA**  
Vecter Scorpions (FL)

**Men's 55 AA**  
Advil Knights (CA)

**Men's 60 Major Plus**  
Florida Stingers

**Men's 60 Major**  
Hawaii Five-O

**Men's 60 AAA**  
RedHawk Nation (FL)

**Men's 60 AA**  
The Starboard/OTS (DE)

**Men's 65 Major Plus**  
New Jersey Hitmen

**Men's 65 Major**  
Slug-A-Bug (FL) (NJ)

**Men's 65 AAA**  
Brantford Nissan Seniors  
(ON, Canada)

**Men's 70 Major Plus**  
Venom (FL)

**Men's 70 Major**  
Handeland Flooring (WI)

**Men's 70 AAA**  
Lane Construction (FL)

**Men's 75 Major**  
Monkey Joe's Big Nut Co.

**Men's 75 AAA**  
Syracuse Cyclones (NY)

**Men's 80 Major Plus**  
Florida Investment Properties

**Men's 80 AAA**  
Minnesota Masters

**Men's 85 Major**  
ProHealth Legends (MN)



Managers from the TOC All-Star Game and Umpires



Firestyx (NJ) batter swings away.



First Baseman from S2S/.40 CAL (FL) attempts to tag out a runner from Homer Lovers (ON, Canada).



Kryptonite (FL) player rounding the bases.

Visit [JacksActionShots.com](http://JacksActionShots.com) to view more photos from the 2020 TOC

# American Pounces on National in TOC All-Star Game, 33-24

POLK COUNTY, Fla. - The American TOC All-Stars trounced the National TOC All-Stars, 33-24, here at Auburndale Sports Complex in Winter Haven on Feb. 5.

Each TOC-competing team is allowed one player selection to comprise the rosters, which are eventually split into the American Team and National Team, while SSUSA selects managers to oversee each of the All-Star teams.

The winning team goes on to play an exhibition game against the Louisville Slugger Warriors on Saturday.

This year, the American team, managed by Moises Longoria (manager of Los Vatos Viejos from AZ, Men's 60 AA) and Paul Sanchez (manager of Cut Loose from CA, Men's 65 AAA) defeated the National team, managed by Terry Hennessy (SSUSA CEO) and Louise O'Donnell (manager of Firestyx from NJ, Women's 40 AAA), 33-24.

The game format is nine innings, with the 65's through 85's playing the first three innings, the 55's and 60's playing the next three innings, and the 40's and 50's playing the final three innings.

The American Team got off to a hot start, jumping out to a 12-3 lead after three frames, fueled by five-run innings in the second and third.

The American team's offense continued its torrid pace scoring five runs in each of the following three innings, to build a commanding 27-9 advantage after six.

The deficit would be too great for the National team to overcome, as the American Team would go on to cruise to its 33-24 victory, earning the right to face the Louisville Slugger Warriors on Saturday night.



## Tournament of Champions All-Star Rosters

### National Team

Manager: Terry Hennessy, SSUSA, CA

Co-Manager: Louise O'Donnell, Firestyx, NJ

Jonathan Amey, Cali 40 Gold  
 Chip Lewkovich, Gigantes OC  
 Matt Fiedler, Brickyard Classics  
 Donny Bennett, Walkoff  
 Chris O'Dell, Drury Inn Road Dogs  
 Casey Hann, Grayed & Confused  
 Brian Banks, Buell Fuel  
 Emory Lunsford, Doerflinger  
 Steve Veronie, Rock-n-Legends9  
 Tim Bohlman, A.D.S./Woodlawn Hitting Club  
 Tim Collins, NE Merchants  
 Harvey Crosthwaite, Advil Knights  
 Kevin Lewis, Action Auto Parts  
 Rich Ezell, Cardot/Madalena Construction  
 Dave Koelper, Windy City Softball  
 Ralph Davenport, DT Express  
 Stuart Hicks, RedHawk Nation

Terry Frederick, TX Thunder  
 John Towle, Durham Silver Stix  
 Russ Lederman, Starboard/OTS  
 Mike Anderson, Vancouver USA Woollys  
 Donzell Jackson, Northern VA Force  
 Greg Aubert, Brantford Senior Nissan  
 Lonnie Netzel, FL Mustangs  
 Ron Christian, Long Island Jaguars Red  
 John Bankson, No Guts, No Glory  
 Bob Williams, LifeGuard Financial/Peppo  
 Zbig Chrzescjanek, Syracuse Cyclones  
 Ron Hampton, Monkey Joes Big Nut Co.  
 Mickey Mills, Chicago Geezers  
 Bob D'Amadio, ProHealth Legends  
 Jaqui Halyard, Firestyx  
 Ty Johnson, Colorado Ohana

### American Team

Manager: Mouse Longoria, Los Vatos Viejos, AZ

Co-Manager: Paul Sanchez, Cut Loose, CA

Jacob Giesbrecht, Thunderbolts  
 Chris VanLuvanee, Mission:Possible  
 David Scialo, Bond 124/RDD  
 Brian Babcock, Central FL Vipers  
 David Nichols, ETX  
 Dan Vanhorn, Lakeshore Contracting  
 Benjamin Ramos, Manifest  
 Todd Christianson, Pope Transport  
 Candido Perez, 55GZ  
 Jeff Tyler, AZ Scorpions  
 Paul Hamel, Omaha Silver Bullets  
 Mark Thomas, FL Stingers  
 Ross Borland, AZ Old School  
 Jim Pierce, NW Softball Club Underdogs  
 Gary Olson, Chicago Panthers

Michael Cohen, Long Island Jaguars  
 Ed Buonaiuto, Scrap Iron Heavy Metal  
 Gene Burnett, Los Vatos Viejos  
 Jose Valiente, Scrap Iron Rockies  
 Joe Ylda, Texas Legends  
 David Lee, Animals  
 Rick Rivard, Beef O'Brady's Southern Trace  
 Rudy Valdez, Cut Loose  
 Calvin Lounds, MP Components/BombSquad  
 Bill Lowe, Spring Ford  
 Jim Schevers, Handeland Flooring  
 Joe Byrtus, Lane Construction  
 Duke Garoutte, AZ Outlaws  
 John Ormsby, Bucs & Bulls  
 Dave Goldberg, Center For Sight  
 Marie Gaudreau, Fireballs  
 Mark Asplund, Northwest 40

# Louisville Slugger Warriors Outpace SSUSA All-Stars, 18-10

POLK COUNTY, Fla. - Fresh off its 33-24 win over the National TOC All-Star Team in Wednesday's TOC All-Star Game, the American team battled against the Louisville Slugger Warriors on Saturday here at Auburndale Sports Complex.

The annual event is a marquee highlight of all the festivities that encompass the Original Tournament of Champions.

In the seven-inning exhibition game, the LS Warriors tallied five runs in the second, and four runs each in the fourth and sixth innings, en route to their 18-10 triumph.

The long-ball was beneficial for the Warriors, who slugged out six homeruns on the night.

The TOC All-Stars' best inning came in the bottom of the fourth, where the team plated five runs.

In what has become an annual tradition, the LS Warriors raffled off two roster spots on the team for the game during Thursday's banquet.

This year's lucky winners

were Rex Cates of Texas and Chris O'Dell of Missouri.

"It was an honor to play with a group of guys with disabilities that had such great attitudes and accepted us in just like one of them," said Cates.

"Not having done anything like this before I was a bit worried how I should act or would fit in. But it was like playing on my normal team. The guys were very competitive which I love, but also respectful of the game and the other team with wonderful sportsmanship.

I got a chance to speak to several of the guys and was inspired and impressed on how open they were to discuss their disability, how it happened and how they were dealing with it. Which, in all cases, was amazing considering what they had to deal with. It was one of the best softball experiences I have ever had and will not forget it."

O'Dell echoed Cates' sentiments stating, "Playing alongside the Warriors was a

treat, softball career highlight! As a basketball official, I hear the National Anthem before almost every game, but this one brought a tear knowing what these brave softballers have gone through. Getting a few hits in the game was also special, of course I wanted to contribute. Both the Warriors and the Major players did a great job making us feel a part of their team. Thank you for this opportunity."

In a first for the LS Warriors, a female player suited up for the team.

Lisa Brubaker, from Pennsylvania and a member of Firestyx (NJ), came up to David Van Sleet, general manager of the LS Warriors, during the banquet expressing an interest to play with the team.

"They treated me like a member of their Louisville Sluggers Warriors family and made me feel like one of the guys," said Brubaker. "They were welcoming and shared their stories and lives freely, with smiles. They are a great group of guys—from the man-

agement to the players. It was truly an honor to play with the team!"

Along with its first female player, the Warriors also had its oldest player to ever be part of the team, with Thom Mikich, 82 from Wisconsin, serving as the team's Designated Hitter.

Mikich, a member of ProHealth Care 80 and Handeland Flooring 70, is the Tournament Director for the Milwaukee Classic. Mikich contacted Van Sleet prior to tournament wanting to make a donation to the team on the tournaments behalf, and be the third base coach and get one at-bat in the game.

Due to this generous gesture, Van Sleet made Mikich the team's DH.

Between the raffles and various other donations (which included donations from both Mikich and Rocco Cambareri of Florida), the Louisville Slugger Warriors were able to raise \$4,250.



1. TOC All-Stars and the Louisville Slugger Warriors gather for a group photo. 2. SSUSA Members, L-R, Chris O'Dell, Rex Cates, and Lisa Brubaker get a chance of a lifetime to play alongside the LS Warriors. 3. Thom Mikich, right, poses with Terry Hennessy and David Van Sleet. 4. David Van Sleet (middle) is presented with an appreciation award during the TOC Banquet.



# LONG LIVE THE LONG BALL



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# SSUSA Players Showcase Skills in Annual Contests

POLK COUNTY, Fla. - Players competing in the 2020 Original Tournament of Champions had the opportunity to showcase their skills here at Auburndale Sports Complex on Feb. 6.

Four skills contests - Precision Hitting, Speed, Pitching, and Power Hitting, were held, with winners declared across five divisions - Men's 40, Men's 50, Men's 60, Men's 70/80, and Women.

Winners in the Precision and Power Hitting contests received free bats, Speed contest winners received free shoes from Adidas, and Pitching contests winners received

free gloves. Several players took home multiple victories, as Jeff Uter (Precision Hitting and Speed), Ron Bruce (Pitching and Power Hitting), and Lisa Brubaker (Speed and Power Hitting) all won two skills contests.

Jeff Toburen was a repeat winner in the Precision Hitting contest, as the Michigan native posted a perfect score - 6. Toburen previously won the contest back in 2017 with a score of five. That year, Toburen also won the pitching contest.

Numerous winners would come down to tiebreakers, as Uter (Precision Hitting),

Brian Williamson (Pitching), Michelle Scecina (Pitching), and Jacob Giesbrecht (Power Hitting) all needed a few extra rounds to take home their respective titles.

### Precision Hitting

Men's 40 - Jeff Uter (2) - Won tie-breaker  
 Men's 50 - Charlie Piekanski (4)  
 Men's 60 - Jeff Toburen - (6) Perfect Score  
 Men's 70/80 - Jim Martin (4)  
 Women - Fay Jennings (4)

### Speed

Men's 40 - Jeff Uter - 11.82  
 Men's 50 - Dan Hucke- 12.36  
 Men's 60 - Larry Truss - 12.25

Men's 70/80 - Charles Valenti - 14.71  
 Women - Lisa Brubaker - 14.38

### Pitching

Men's 40 - Jason Ashton (1)  
 Men's 50 - Sly Sylvester (1)  
 Men's 60 - Brian Williamson (2) - Won tie-breaker  
 Men's 70/80 - Ron Bruce (2)  
 Women - Michelle Scecina (1) - Won tie-breaker

### Power Hitting

Men's 40 - Jacob Giesbrecht (3) - Won tie-breaker  
 Men's 50 - Todd Christianson (3)  
 Men's 60 - Al Tarrant (3)  
 Men's 70/80 - Ron Bruce (2)  
 Women - Lisa Brubaker (2)



Pitching Contest Winners (L-R): Michelle Scecina, Ron Bruce, Brian Williamson, Jason Ashton, Sly Sylvester.



Speed Contest Winners (L-R): Dan Hucke, Charles Valenti, Larry Truss, Lisa Brubaker, Jeff Uter.



Power Hitting Contest Winners (L-R): Lisa Brubaker, Al Tarrant, Jacob Giesbrecht, Todd Christianson, Ron Bruce.



Precision Hitting Contest Winners (L-R): Fay Jennings, Jim Martin, Jeff Toburen, Charlie Piekanski, Jeff Uter.

# Tournament of Champs All-Tourney Teams

The top three teams from the Tournament of Champions are able to select players to the All-Tournament team.

First place teams select five players, second place teams select four players, and third place teams pick three players.

**Women's 40 Major Kryptonite (FL):** Sara Payne, Tera Guzman, Diane White, Carolyn Deeb, Theresa Walburger.

**Colorado Ohana:** Jennifer Doolittle, Julie Ferguson, Tyressa Johnson, Holly Murry.

**Women's 40 AAA Firestyx (NJ):** Lisa Brubaker, Nikki Palakovic, Shirley Crane, Dawn McGrath, Marti Stepner.

**Fireballs (MA):** Heather Korzec, Cecilia Cruz, Melissa Provost, Michelle Scecina.

**Women's 50 Gold (Major/AAA) Motown Magic (MI):** Pamela Crain, Valerie Turner-Harris, Jacqueline Franklin, Deana Slagle, Felicia Sedewar.

**Unfazed (VA):** Melissa Spencer, Fay Jennings, Doloris Patterson, Cynthia Roberson.

**Men's 40 Platinum (Major Plus/Major) S2S/.40 CAL (FL):** Pablo Reid, Edwin Gonzalez, Harry Noga, Tony Barone, Allen Henry.

**NorthWest Legends (WA):** James Jacobsen, Kris Hampton, Sean Hofstad.

**Men's 40 AAA Mission: Possible (PA):** Keith Simmons, Brian Stump, Ryan Hogan, Steve Klapy, Ricky Stotler.

**Y'All Next (MD):** Chris Stamps, Mario Walker, Christopher Burrell, Marcus Mingo.

**Gigantes O.C. (MD):** John Mike Schouster, Phillip Miller, Kevin Forrest.

**Men's 50/55 Platinum (Major Plus/Major) Brickyard Classics 50 (IN):** Myron Dumas, Jay Foley, James Lee Madaris, Timothy Smith.

**Walkoff 50 (MD):** Barry Holland, Earle Orme, Michael Hutchinson.

**Men's 50 Silver Division (AAA/AA)**

**Finance of America (NJ):** Peter Appolito, Kevin Spellman, Daniel Righetti, Damon Roth, Nick Mennona.

**High Street Bucs (MD):** Tracy Lee, Jason Faulkner, Chester Bracey, Lewis (Bill) Grigsby.

**Bond 124/RDD (CT):** Donny Horton Jr., Craig Horton, Steven Dubicki.

**Men's 55/60 Platinum (Major/Major Plus) Speedwerx 55 (MN):** Ronald Ehoff, Donald Hoffman, Dennis Knapp, Paul Todd Zemke, Dan Degnan.

**Olympian Athletics 55 (PA):** Ricky Gene Zeger, Richard Leedy, Mike Lynch, Ronald D'Eliseo.

**Rock N Legends 9 55 (TX):** Chuck Yeager, Kurt Dorf, Paul Dorwaldt

**Men's 55 Silver (AAA/AA) Vector Scorpions (FL):** Thomas Lowther, Michael Chnupa, Chuck Torgler Jr., Fred Keeney, Gerry DuGuay.

**New England Merchants (MA):** Robert LaPierre, Richard Puopolo, Roger Wegman, Bruce Marshall.

**Arizona Scorpions:** Mark Sertic, Scott Koprivec, Tom Petrizio.

**Men's 60/65 Platinum (Major/Major Plus) Hawaii Five-O 60:** Thad Reece, Mark Gomes, Peter Ngirngotel, Ricky Ishimaru, Vern Ramie.

**Cardot/Madalena Construction 60 (NY):** Dave Sprague, Mike Yargeau, Chet Lochman, Curt Kirchmaier.

**New Jersey Hitmen 65:** Frank O'Neill, Gene McCloskey, Daniel Kelley.

**Men's 60 AAA RedHawk Nation (FL):** Wayne Skidmore, David Denison, Eric Warren, Renu Knowles, Ronald William Dick.

**Scrap Iron Heavy Metal (CO):** Arthur Talbot, Dave Lussier, Fred Hampe, John Kirar.

**Long Island Jaguars (NY):** James O'Gara, Michael Cohen, Gerard Stigliano.

**Men's 60 AA The Starboard/OTS (DE):** Chuck Corrigan, Mark Potter, John Smart, David Boyajian, Joe Oswald.

**Syracuse Cyclones (NY):** James Daniels, Jack Baxter, Albert Owens, John Ostuni.

**Scrap Iron Rockies (CO):** Sprino David Hernandez, Rick Frahm, Dennis Bret.

**Men's 65/70 Platinum (Major/Major Plus) Venom 70 (FL):** Dennis Schroeder, Vance Gudmundsen, Clyde Smith, James Davidson, Vincent Melograno.

**Slug-A-Bug 65 (FL):** Rickie Harder, Anthony Nicomet, David White, Terry Vervynck.

**Pill & Pill 65 (WV):** Ira Donley, William Lee Samsell, Gary Bochna.

**Men's 65 AAA Brantford Nissan Seniors (ON, Canada):** J. Wayne Martin, Donald Dash, Douglas Ford, Fred Krause, Casey Ciere.

**FL Mustangs:** Lonnie Netzel, Kerry Charlet, John Davis, Leonard DeBroeck.

**MP Components/Bomb Squad (MI):** Calvin Lounds, Rick Neerken, David Bartlett.

Continued on Page 25



RedHawk Nation (FL) - Men's 60 AAA Champions



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# TOC: All-Tournament Teams Continued

Continued from Page 23

**Men's 70 Major Handeland Flooring (WI):** Bert Hempler, Ron Bruce, Wayne Fiedler, Michael Ernst, Robert Szaniawski.

**Bradford White/Jersey Masters (NJ):** Dana Kimmel, Raymond Poyer, Stanley Robinson, Frank Taparata.

**Life Guard Financial/Pepeco (OH):** Roger Richardson, Jimmy Cecconi, Dennis Evans.

**Men's 70 AAA Lane Construction (FL):**

H. Richard Mest, Bill Hans, Don Bobish, Gerald Lee Jones, Terry McIlrath.

**Syracuse Cyclones (NY):** Alex Shue, Thomas Silvanic, Jim Miller, Thomas Mirande.

**Chicago Strikers (IL):** Gary Bowers, Mike McLennan, Gary Matthews.

**Men's 75/80 Platinum (Major/Major Plus) Florida Investment**

**Properties 80:** Ray Dye, Zeb Carter, Hansel Faulkner, Vinnie Remson, Brad Smith.

**Monkey Joe's Big Nut Co. 75 (NJ):** Alan Balfour,

Mike Breitenstein, Bob Lunsford, Paul Gawel.

**Men's 75 AAA**

**Syracuse Cyclones (NY):** Joseph Broun, Edward Bergamini, Daniel Dillon, Alfred Hicks, Howard Bernard.

**Hill Contracting (TX):** Frank Armijo, James Morgan, Fred Hunt, Dick Anish.

**Arizona Outlaws:** Thomas Grubb, Wayne Poindexter, Michael Sullivan.

**Men's 80 AAA**

**Minnesota Masters:** Robert Lenzmeier, Arnie Johnson, Tom Daniel, Earle

Anderson, Lowell Thompson.

**Chicago Geezers (IL):**

Paul Escamilla, Roger Clark, Jerry Handel, James Dedelow.

**Bucs and Bulls (FL):** Jim Sumner, John Ormsby, Tony Paulus.

**Men's 85 Major**

**ProHealth Legends**

**(MN):** Carroll Shook, Darrell Laschen, R.C. Brown, Dave Hunt, Dick Anderson.

**Center For Sight (FL):** Lawrence McCurdy, David Goldberg, Dwight McVicker, David Drakulich.

## Tournament of Champions MVP Selections

All 30 division winners from the TOC are allowed to select a team MVP.

Below please see the list of the 2020 TOC MVPs.

**Women's 40 Major** Kryptonite (FL) - Karen Hunger

**Women's 40 AAA** Firestyx (NJ) - Heather Alder

**Women's 50 Major** Unfazed (VA) - Sylvia Echols

**Women's 50 AAA** Motown Magic (MI) - Pamela Crain

**Men's 40 Major Plus** Suncoast Adidas (FL) - No MVP Submitted

**Men's 40 Major** S2S/.40 CAL (FL) - Allen Henry

**Men's 40 AAA** Mission: Possible (PA) -

Shawn Fillman

**Men's 50 Major Plus** Suncoast/Adidas/Shades (FL) - No MVP Submitted

**Men's 50 Major** CPD/Ancell (MN) - No MVP Submitted

**Men's 50 AAA** Finance of America (NJ) - Peter Appolito

**Men's 50 AA** Manifest (TX) - Benjamin Ramos

**Men's 55 Major Plus** RBC/Team Miken-Worth (FL) - John Livingston

**Men's 55 Major** Speedwerx (MN) - Ronald Ehoff

**Men's 55 AAA** Vector Scorpions (FL) - Andrew Packard

**Men's 55 AA**

Advil Knights (CA) - Harvey Crosthwaite

**Men's 60 Major Plus** Florida Stingers - Robert Lehman

**Men's 60 Major** Hawaii Five-O - Vern Ramie

**Men's 60 AAA** RedHawk Nation (FL) - David Dennison

**Men's 60 AA** The Starboard/OTS (DE) - Chuck Emerson

**Men's 65 Major Plus** New Jersey Hitmen - Jeff Hitt

**Men's 65 Major** Slug-A-Bug (FL) - John Martellucci

**Men's 65 AAA** Brantford Nissan Seniors (ON, Canada): Steve Cote

**Men's 70 Major Plus** Venom (FL) - Wilson (Butch)

Hays

**Men's 70 Major** Handeland Flooring (WI) - Greg Hudack

**Men's 70 AAA** Lane Construction (FL): H. Richard Mest

**Men's 75 Major** Monkey Joe's Big Nut Co. (NJ) - Alan Balfour

**Men's 75 AAA** Syracuse Cyclones (NY) - Andy Endsley

**Men's 80 Major Plus** Florida Investment Properties

**Men's 80 AAA** Minnesota Masters - Norman Setnicker

**Men's 85 Major** ProHealth Legends (MN) - Carroll Shook

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# Stay in the Dugout to Stay in the Game

At the Tournament of Champions in February, an umpire called “batter up” then watched to make sure all offensive team members cleared off of the playing field.

The on-deck batter and the “in-the-hole” batter continued to swing bats outside the dugout.

“Just one on-deck batter,” the umpire said. “Except for the two coaches and the on-deck batter, everyone needs to get back in the dugout.”

“They changed that rule this year,” a player said. “We get two on deck.”

Despite the umpire’s firm answer of “no, only one,” the team kept arguing.

That incident is an example of situations that happen fairly regularly.

Every tournament, it seems, players disagree with an umpire or tournament director on a basic rule.

In some cases, misunderstandings happen because teams just played under different rules in another association’s tournament. Sometimes, confusion grows from a rule “exception” allowed at a specific park. Other times, the umpire, manager or player simply has a rule wrong.

In rarer instances, our book fails to address a situation.

For example, what happens when a defender uses his hat or face mask to catch a pop fly? That is an illegal catch, as our book states. But our book doesn’t provide a penalty.

By protocol in such situations, we follow USA (formerly ASA) Softball rules.

Some players are unaware

## Umpire's Corner

By Donna McGuire

of this and have never consulted an USA rule book. (The penalty for an illegal catch of a batted ball is a three-base award. If the ball would have cleared the home run fence, it is four bases.)

Consider these other examples of arguments from the past season:

\*A player contended that a runner could “step off” third into foul ground, for safety purposes, while the pitch was in flight, as long as he re-touched third base before running home.

Some leagues allow this. We do not. Our rules say a runner cannot leave a base “before the pitched ball reaches home plate, is batted, or touches the ground before reaching home plate.” So don’t step off early.

\*A player repeatedly yelled at an umpire to call illegal pitches because the pitcher was not presenting the ball in his bare hand before starting his delivery.

Sorry, but that’s not required. As our book says, a pitcher “must come to a full and complete stop with the ball in front of the body.” It doesn’t say whether the ball should be in the glove or bare hand. Either is fine.

\*A manager argued that a batter should be called out for carrying the bat to first base.

Not so. Our book doesn’t ad-

dress carrying the bat to first base because it is legal in SSUSA play -- and in Major League baseball and in USA Softball, for that matter. But confusion arises because USSSA and SPA prohibit carrying the bat to first. So it is wise to know what association’s rules you are playing under.

Now, back to the issue of on-deck batters. Our rule book doesn’t mention multiple on-deck batters. It uses singular “on-deck batter” wording because only one batter can be on deck.

However, tournament directors sometimes grant exceptions.

For example, some parks have dugout openings that are set far away from home plate. Directors often allow two on-deck batters at such parks.

If no exception has been granted, you must stick with one on-deck batter.

One reason is player safety. Batted balls have seriously injured people who shouldn’t have been standing outside the dugout.

Another reason involves potential interference calls. If a thrown ball hits an offensive player who should have been in the dugout, the runner being played upon can be called out.

Plus, too many players outside the dugout can confuse the defense as well as the umpires.

At the TOC for example, an overthrown ball skipped past third base toward the dugout, hit something and bounced back toward fair ground. Two players standing just outside the dugout blocked the umpires’ views of what the ball hit.

One umpire thought it smacked a player in the dugout, which would have meant awarding bases to the runners. The other umpire thought it hit the pole framing the dugout, which would have meant no award of base.

That situation should never happen.

Our rule book states, “coaches, players, substitutes or other bench personnel shall not be outside the designated bench/dugout area except when the rule allows or when justified by an umpire.

EFFECT: The first offense is a team warning. Any repeat offense shall result in the ejection of that team member.”

So if you want to stay in the game, stay in the dugout.

*Donna McGuire is SSUSA’s Central Region UIC and Chair of the SSUSA National Rules Committee.*



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# Show Some Courtesy for Courtesy Runners

They still have waists like a working cowboy. They usually don't smoke, drink, do drugs, or party like frat boys. They have used discipline to refrain from eating three or four burritos at lunch, or half a dozen jelly rolls for breakfast.

They can accelerate and dash about like a rodeo clown. Their calves look like they were peeled off an anatomy chart. They made it to 55-plus with cartilage remaining in their knees. They like to run and are proud of it.

In Senior Softball, we call them courtesy runners.

The idea has a humane and politic genesis: Guys who have bad knees, hips, feet, vertebrae, or too much weight, like to play ball too and should be given that opportunity. But some of them can't run without pain or further

## CARL'S CORNER

By Carl Gustafson

damage. So, as a courtesy to those unfortunate guys and their teams, the opposing team allows a courtesy runner, and vice versa.

So far so good.

But it was quickly discovered that this courtesy could be a strategy. If we put in our fastest runners every chance we get, even for guys who can run but just not real fast, it adds up to runs and runs add up to victory.

But while this is a courtesy to the big, the broken, and the slow guys, it's anything but courtesy to the runners. Now entering my mid-70s, I have been around long enough to see the vicious cycle occur over and over again. I was a courtesy runner myself and

loved running the bases. I thought it would last forever, but when multiplied by league games and many tournaments, the continual pounding on my knee joints eventually took its debilitating toll.

I remember a tournament in Texas in summertime with 102-degree humid heat that didn't dissipate much at night, where we played three days and came through the loser's bracket playing five games in single day and I must have run 30 times. As the games went on my batting average went down 200 points. My home run production ceased, and my focus began to wane.

Courtesy runners are often outfielders and therefore have to run hard, long, and often during the non-batting half of every inning as well. In the meantime, those who are the recipients of the courtesy

are sitting in the shade in the dugout, sipping on cold water, telling good 'ol boy stories, and looking at the scorebook to see how good their stats are.

There's not much that we can change about this. I'm not even blaming anybody for anything. It's the nature of our game at this age. I just ask one thing, show some courtesy for the courtesy runner. If he's enabling you to play this wonderful game into your old age and helping your team to victory at the same time, maybe a thank you is in order and perhaps buy his supper sometime.

*Carl Gustafson is an SSUSA Southern California Director and member of the SSUSA National Rules Committee.*



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# Turn Barrel for More Power and Consistency

By Art Eversole

Senior Softball News

Contributor

There are many ways to deliver the softball bat to the ball, as there are with a tennis racquet or golf club, all of which will have some degree of success.

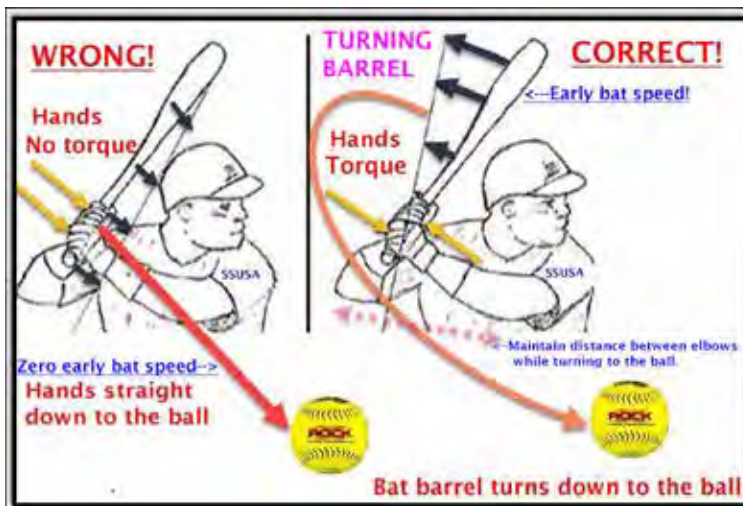
How is success defined?

Success is the highest level of proficiency you as a hitter can attain. Good swing mechanics will create a consistent and repeatable action that will make you a better hitter.

Unfortunately, bad swing mechanics work some of the time which can lead to inconsistency, great one day and terrible the next. Our goal is to produce good results game after game, which means executing good mechanics and having a great swing all the time.

An efficient technique in attaining a productive and consistent swing with high end results, is by "turning the barrel" into the swing plane. The batter's turning of the barrel is what begins the acceleration of the bat head and is done with the hands, not by using the arms. If the barrel is not turned around your backside and aligning to the incoming path of the ball, the bat head will not accelerate effectively. Your hands are primary in leveraging the bat head, not your arms.

Turning the barrel creates early bat speed before the wrists roll over, adding to total swing speed. It also gets the bat into the hitting plane early by whipping the bat around your hands. When executing the turning of the barrel, make



certain to maintain the lag in your swing until the hands release to the ball. Turning the barrel technique is taught by most top-of-the-line hitting coaches today.

How do we execute the turning of the barrel swing mechanic?

It is done by applying a torquing action with the hands to the bat handle. When hand torque is applied to the bat, the hands will be pushing in opposite directions. Therefore, torque applied to the bat handle from opposing directions will begin the acceleration of the bat. This torquing of the bat handle does not mean you grip the bat tighter to execute the opposing hand action. Take your normal grip.

Using hand torque, the bat will rotate around your hands from the rear shoulder and then deep into the swing plane, permitting the hitter to use the whole field. By getting the bat on plane early, and deep into the swing zone, allows the hitter to either go out and get the ball in front for a pull hit; or letting the ball travel deeper into the hitting zone, for those middle

and off-field hits.

Torque is what causes an object to acquire angular acceleration, like in a bat swing (reference diagram above).

Great hitters take the arms out of the swing to maximize hand torque. The role of the arms is to provide support to the bat, like a scaffolding platform. Your body rotation will move your hands to the ball and not by extending the arms. The distance between your front and back elbows should remain constant when striking the ball. The arms fully extend only after the ball has left the bat (see video link at the end).

Moving your hands directly down from your back shoulder without torquing the hands, creates a small window of intersection to hit the ball; limiting how much of the field you can hit to. This straight down path to the ball, will not create early bat speed, does not get the bat head on plane deep in your swing, and is too steep of an angle to the ball to produce consistent contact (reference diagram above).

To be a great hitter your swing must have both rhythm

and tempo that manifests itself as good timing. Rhythm is the perfect connecting of the dots that make up your swing. Tempo is how quickly you connect those dots and that's bat speed. If you jump over a connecting dot in your swing, you may lose your rhythm.

Don't start your bat from a dead stop off your rear shoulder area. Have some pre-movement (a waggle) in your swing to get the bat moving early that will create maximum bat speed. Also remember that relaxed muscle is fast muscle, and tense muscle is slow muscle.

Here is a link to an internet instructional video discussing turning the barrel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEAwd8LCBXE>

Happy hitting!

*Art Eversole, of Washington, has played on Major and Major Plus teams with W.E. Ruth Realty. He is the NW Senior Softball Webmaster/Softball Communications/Hitting Club Admin/NW Leagues internet coordinator.*

*Eversole can be reached via email at [rtmyboy01@gmail.com](mailto:rtmyboy01@gmail.com).*

## Heard in the Dugout

*When I came up to bat with three men on and two outs in the ninth, I looked in the other team's dugout and they were already in street clothes.*

**- Bob Uecker**



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