



## **SENIOR SOFTBALL PLAYER PROFILE: ART HAMER**

**By Larry Wolfe**

**Art Hamer (NOT Hammer, although he did used to “hammer” opposing running backs as an outside linebacker for Morton High) was born and grew up in Cicero, Illinois, made famous (or infamous) as the hangout of Al Capone in the 1930s. Art’s prowess on the gridiron earned him an athletic scholarship at Kansas State where he was a fullback and linebacker before being drafted into the Army. He later played for three years with the semi-pro Chicago Rangers. Art would spend five years in the military before going back to college on the GI Bill.**

**Earning a degree in Mechanical Engineering at Morton College opened the door for a long, successful career in engineering-related occupations, including ten years with Three-Star Manufacturing in Chicago. But after two consecutive winters with 100-inch snowfalls, Art and his wife, Sandy, headed for the blue skies of Arizona. Art worked for McGraw-Edison and Arvin Air here in the Valley for many years before venturing out on his own as an independent Contract Engineer. He had engineering contracts with many large corporations in the area including Honeywell and Hughes. Prior to retiring in 1999, he enjoyed a two-year assignment with SpeedFam where his innovative work resulted in four patents in the silicon wafer industry.**

**Sandy and Art lived in Phoenix and Chandler before building a home in Cottonwood in 1991, so they had their retirement home several years before**

**actually retiring. Art had long envied the guys playing softball at the old Riggs Road Field as he drove by on his way to work. By 1999 he was ready to play! Now in his 12<sup>th</sup> year in the program, Art still swings a solid bat and is an adept outfielder and first basemen. He's also played on the 65s and 70s Tournament and Travel Teams.**

**The Hamers enjoy traveling all over the USA in their 38-foot RV. He says they never go to the same place twice; it's always on to a new adventure. Art also enjoys golf, but his real love is hot rod cars. He builds classic and modified-classic cars and shows them at various Classic Car Shows. His pride and joy was a 1932 three-window Ford, which he eventually sold to another Sun Laker. It can still be seen tooling around the neighborhood. His current beauty is a 1956 Chevy in which he's still cruisin' around.**

**Other great experiences include taking four Tiger Cruises on Navy carriers where son Patrick is a CW04. (Tiger Cruises are Navy-sponsored adventures where family and friends of crewmen gain a first-hand experience of life on a big ship.) He also thoroughly enjoyed his one-year gig as a Golden Glover for the Arizona Diamondbacks. (Those are the old guys along the foul lines that chase foul balls!)**

**At the end of our interview, Mr. Hamer reminded me that it's Hamer with one "m," but it's ironic that his first love is puttin' the HAMMER down on his '56 Chevy!**