



The Champion Desert Bats: Front row, l-r: Ron Carmichael, Manager Dave Rinaldo, Bill Sturgeon, Reyes Gonzales and Mike Gloyd. Back row, l-r: Larry Kaufmann, Mike Lebet, Dave Quenzler, Dave Platt, Doug Friesen, Steve Hilby, Rick Oien and John Martin.

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DESERT BATS WIN PINETOP TOURNEY

By Larry Wolfe

The Desert Bats, one of our 60+ travel teams, recently won the Pinetop Tournament. The tourney featured teams from Payson, Tucson and New Mexico in addition to our Sun Lakes squad.

Manager Dave Rinaldo's boys started slowly, splitting four games in the seeding round of the tournament, but came back strong to sweep the elimination round. They first edged the Tucson Gavilanes 12-11 before crushing the No. 1 seeded Tucson Los Vatos team 19-6.

The Bats played a version of "small ball," relying on a high on base percentage, timely hitting and a strong defense to capture the title. In fact nearly 80% of their base runners eventually scored, an extreme example of

hitting in the clutch. Larry Kaufmann led the Bats with a .889 average. He was supported by Reyes Gonzales and John Martin, both at .800. The team as a whole had a robust .753 average. “Thin Rick” Oien had the Bats’ only homerun.

Congrats to Manager Rinaldo and the entire team for a hard-earned championship!