

Five-O's Captures Third Straight Senior Softball League Title

By Ken Kotelly

The Lexington Men's Senior Softball League playoffs came to a conclusion this past week with the championship finals, as the Five-O's defeated Prime Time in just one game to earn this year's Senior Softball League championship for the third straight year.

Unlike last season when it went undefeated the entire season to win the title, this year the Five-O's were challenged more sternly by a few teams and lost three regular season games, two of which were to Prime Time. Yet the Five-O's still played just well enough to finish first in the regular season by one game over Prime Time and MJB Consulting, then ran the table in the playoffs with four straight wins to cap its third straight run to the league title.

The Five-O's won the championship final in much the same way it did most of its games this season, as eight players collected at least two hits for the winners. Dave Mack and Mike McCullough were its hitting stars with three hits each, while P.J. Passerini, Frank Boggan, John Sym, Dmitri Hoffmeyer, John Diradorian, and Phil Edelen added two hits apiece. This group helped the Five-O's score five runs in the first two innings, then break a tie by adding seven runs in the fifth and sixth frames, to give the Five-O's a seven-run lead it would not relinquish on its way to a 12-5 victory over Prime Time, and finish its season with a final overall record of 15-3 and take home its third straight league title. Prime Time did all it could to stay close with seven players who rapped out at least two hits. John Toomey and Paul Sacco both led their offensive attack with three hits each, while Gregg Armstrong, Rob Walsh, Bill Smith, Jim Hart, and Carl Fantasia added two hits each. But while Prime Time scored all its runs in the first four innings, it failed to score thereafter, including leaving the bases loaded in the seventh frame to end its last serious comeback bid.

The Five-O's wasted little time taking the initial advantage, as base hits by Passerini, Mack, Bob Waters, McCullough, Boggan, Sym, and pitcher Kevin Hazzard helped the Five-O's plate four runs in the bottom of the first inning, to take a quick 4-0 lead.

Prime Time responded in the top of the second frame, as base hits by Smith, Eric Winter, Sacco, and Carmelo Rosado helped Prime Time pour three runs across the plate in that frame, to cut its deficit to 4-3.

The Five-O's scored once more in the bottom of the same frame when Hoffmeyer doubled, went to third on a base hit by Diradorian, and scored on a fielder's choice by Edelen to make it 5-3.

Prime Time responded in the top of the fourth inning, as base hits by Hart, Fantasia, and Sacco helped Prime Time score twice in the frame to tie the game at 5-5.

But the Five-O's regained the lead in the bottom of the fifth inning when consecutive base hits by Diradorian, Edelen, Passerini, and Mack helped the Five-O's score three runs in the frame to take an 8-5 lead.

Then the Five-O's broke it open in the bottom of the next inning, as base hits by McCullough, John O'Brien, Sym, Mike Robards, and Hoffmeyer helped the Five-O's add four more runs to extend their advantage to 12-5, and cap the game's scoring.

After the game Five-O's manager Phil Edelen expressed his views on the keys to his team's success in this game, and how his squad was able to survive more stern challenges this year to still win the championship.

"This year we did the same thing we always do, which was hit and play good defense, and other teams got better this year and came after us which was good for this league," said Edelen. "Prime Time is a really good team that beat us twice during the regular season and tonight they came after us. So it was important for us that we got off to an early 4-0 lead, especially considering that they came back to tie it up in the fourth inning. But we made a couple of good fielding plays, got some big hits, and regained the lead in the fifth inning. It could have gone either way, but we just did the same thing we always do tonight and got a lot of hits, since we used 14 guys that can all hit. We tried to win every

inning, and we were lucky that we got a lot of hits since Prime Time played good defense. But we also played good defense which helped us get out of a couple of situation where they had two runners on base or the bases loaded. We got hits when we needed to and made fielding plays when we needed to, and tonight we had 14 guys that were rotating all around and played good defense, and overall this year we didn't give up a lot of runs."

With this past season now complete, the league would like to thank all of the players, managers, and umpires who helped to make this past season a big success.