

Well, you know what they say “better late, then never”, right. This article is long overdue, but unfortunately the G & H Tournament Directors were very busy with their other full time jobs, so this article had to take the back seat. All in all it was another great G & H tourney, with a G & H record “26” teams signing up to battle it out to be crowned Champions for the season kick off “March Madness – St. Patty’s Party”.

Eight teams were solid legitimate Division I teams, leaving the remaining 18 teams to go fist to cuffs for a shot at the Division II title. Although the weather forecast was a little suspect going into Sundays competition, the sun was shining high in the sky and welcomed a great day for smashing softballs!

The host Sports Pub was the Tustin Brewing Company, which was conveniently located between the two facilities used. Tustin Brew Co. sent out a couple of their beer babes to pass out discount flyers and green St. Patty’s day beads to all the G & H participants and their fans in the stands.

Pool play kicked off with a bang at 0800 hours in both divisions. The competition was as level as it gets, but it all depended on whose bats got hot at the right time. There were some very close games along with some eye-brow raising upsets along the way.

Division I teams concluded with the following records and seeding at the end of pool play.

Pool – A

- 1 - LA Fire “Red” 2-0
- 2 - CHP “Balls Deep!” 1-1
- 3 - LASD “Smokin Guns” 1-1
- 4 - LAPD “Lawmen” 0-2

Pool – B

- 1 - “Outlaws” PD Combo 2-0
- 2 - LA Fire “Gangreen” 1-1
- 3 - Orange County Fire 1-1
- 4 - “OC Alumni” 0-2

The Division I brackets were set and the fuse was lit. The big “boom” started with LA Fire “Red” going hose to hose with OC Fire. When these two power houses were done dousing each other, it was LA Fire Red on top 16-6. Over on field #1 LA Fire “Gangreen” was going toe to toe with LAPD “Lawmen”. The Fireman looked solid in pool play, and it was just the opposite for the Lawmen as they caught fire and turned and burned for 26 runs! The Firefighters of “Gangreen” couldn’t extinguish the blaze and fell only matched 11 of those runs. Final 26-11 Lawmen. Field #3 was witness to CHP Balls Deep! hacking it out with the OC Alumni squad. The Alumni were assembled as a reunion team for players that have rolled with the mighty O.C. Alliance of yesteryears. The Alumni all wore different uniforms from years past and although packed with talent,

were out there with fun on the agenda over win at all costs. The “lets have fun” mindset assisted the Alumni with an early exit at the hands of “Balls Deep!” 17-4. The last game of the round saw LASD “Smokin Guns” out-gun newly formed but packed with cagey veterans, the “Outlaws” PD Combo, by a score of 15-6.

The semi-final games were a good mix of talented teams representing 4 large agencies. First up was a battle for “City of LA bragging rights” as the big engines of LA Fire “Red” squared off against their cop counterpart LAPD “Lawmen”. The big Red machine rolled on, staying undefeated, while the Lawmen took the posse home to lay down the law another day, final count 20-13 LA Fire advances to the final. The other semi final game was Cop on Cop crime as LASD “Smokin Guns” and CHP “Balls Deep!” went into “mutual combat” for a spot in the final. When the dust settled it was Balls Deep! in a last at bat effort, edging the Guns, 22-21.

The Championship game was a rematch of an earlier pool play game in which LA Fire “Red” slipped past CHP “Balls Deep!” by one run. Both of these teams knew the other would be a tough opponent to face in a Championship game. LA Fire drew first blood and scored at will. “Balls Deep!” bounced back and tied the score 17-17 going into the final inning. The cops were up first and knew it was their last shot at scoring. They took advantage of a bobbled double play by the Firemen that would have been the nail in the coffin. Instead they scored 8 runs in the inning. The Firequenchers had last shot at taking the win, but could only muster up 1 run in their at bat. Final score 25-18 CHP “Balls Deep!”.

Division II teams finished with the following records/seeding when pool play concluded.

Pool C

- 1- NAVY “Outlaws” 2-0
- 2- CDC “Desert Dirtbags” 1-1
- 3- Culver City PD “Chaos” 0-2

Pool D

- 1- USMC Camp Pendleton 2-0
- 2- CYA “Lockdown” 1-1
- 3- San Diego “Old Dawgz” 0-2

Pool E

- 1- Ontario PD 2-0
- 2- Riverside County “Heat” 1-1
- 3- Torrance Fire 0-2

Pool F

- 1- LASD “151’s” 1-1
- 2- Colton PD “Blue Heat” 1-1
- 3- Buena Park PD 1-1

Pool G

- 1- "OC Dirtbagz" PD Combo 2-0
- 2- Ontario Fire 1-1
- 3- Santa Monica PD "One Time" 0-2

Pool H

- 1- LA Fire "Dropzone" 2-0
- 2- Beverly Hills PD 1-1
- 3- "10-Ringers" PD Combo 0-2

Division II was up for grabs as all teams looked poised to assume the title of "Top Dog" at the G & H March Madness – St. Patty's Tournament. Opening round saw the only 4 teams to not receive a first round bye, duke it out to remain alive. Game 1 pitted Ontario Fire against the scrappy little Co-ed team, the "10-Ringers". Although Ontario Fire is solid, the "10-Ringers" hung in there and made it close in the end, 18-15 Ontario Fire advances. Next up, Beverly Hills PD challenged Santa Monica PD. When the dust settled it was Beverly Hills standing victorious 19-13. Torrance Fire and LASD 151's were both looking armed and dangerous as they duked it out to a 16-15 finish, with the Sheriff team moving on. Ontario PD went absolutely berserk on Buena Park PD and moved on with a 38-11 score. Over on Field #4 the Navy "Outlaws" were acting outside the law as they toppled Ontario Fire 27-14. At the same time, Riverside County "Heat" had locked horns with CYA "Lockdown" and at snuck past em 12-10. On field #2 the "OC Dirtbagz" PD Combo were embroiled in a true punch-out with SD "Old Dawgz". When the fists stopped flying it was the Old Dawgz walking away with a 20-19 win. On field #1 was a classic Guns vs Hoses match up as Culver City PD "Chaos" edged out LA Fire "Dropzone" 17-15 to advance to the next round. CDC "Desert Dirtbagz" exchanged rounds with Colton PD, but in the end it was Desert Dirtbagz grabbing the win 16-12. The last game of this round pitted scrappy Beverly Hills PD against the hard-chargin "Devil Dogs" of Camp Pendleton. Beverly Hills PD "Down & Out" fought valiantly, but the Devil Dogs were too much for them on this day. USMC 20, BHPD 11.

The quarter-finals were set and it was off to the races! First up was Navy "Outlaws" and Riverside County "Heat". The "Heat's" bats went cold as they could only collect 5 runs to the Navy teams 23. Another lop-sided victory was playing out on field #2 as the "Old Dawgz" hailing from San Diego up-ended the LASD "151's" 29-8. It was a much closer match as Ontario PD squeaked past Culver City PD "Chaos" 22-19. The last battle of this round was another nail-biter as the CDC "Desert Dirtbagz" slipped past the "Fighting Leathernecks" of USMC Camp Pendleton 19-16.

Only the "Final Four" remained, and it was anyone's tourney to win! Navy "Outlaws" stood toe-to-toe with the San Diego "Old Dawgz" initially. But the Sailors started to pull away and sank the Old Dawgz Battleship with a score of 18-7. Over on Field #1 it was much closer as Ontario PD and the Prison Guards of CDC "Desert Dirtbagz" pulled off the kid gloves and engaged in a bare knuckle brawl. This one went into the G & H

sudden death overtime rules and the Dirtbagz capitalized where Ontario didn't. Final count 15-14 CDC "Desert Dirtbagz".

The Championship game looked very even on paper, but the Sailors representing the Navy Outlaw team had other ideas as they squared off against the CDC Desert Dirtbagz. The dirtbagz ran out of steam when it counted most and couldn't match the Navy boys momentum. When the ump screamed "ballgame" it was Navy "Outlaws" in the winners circle 16-7.

All in all, it was a great tournament and fun was had by everyone in attendance. Congrats to the winners of the two separate divisions. We at G & H want to thank Del Pickney and Jeff Blair for their assistance with bringing this tourney together. A check \$1000 was made out to the Walter Karp Police Officer Memorial Fund.