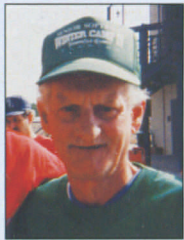


SENIOR SOFTBALL LOSES TWO OF ITS LEADERS

Co-founder Al Mills dies at 77.

Jim Van Brunt player, coach, organizer, 65.



Al Mills

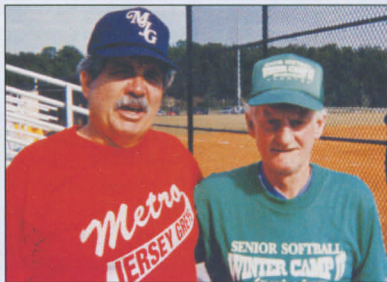
Al Mills, for many years a colorful figure in senior softball circles and a co-founder of the NJSSA and the Monmouth County Senior Softball League, passed away recently. Al was 77. He was instrumental in the formation of Senior Softball in New Jersey. In 1988 Al and Mike Christy, brought together a group of "over fifty" ballplayers that wanted to keep playing the game they loved. From that meeting the nucleus of Senior Softball was born. Later that year, Mills helped form the Monmouth County Senior Softball League, serving as its first president. Al sponsored, played and coached the Jersey Blues, one of the first teams from New Jersey to compete in a National Senior Softball World Series Qualifying Tournament. He was a gracious, fun-loving guy, who often hosted the State or County executive meetings at his home in Fair Haven, making sure you always had enough to eat and drink. Al once owned a restaurant and was a food guru. He was a fixture at all the Tournaments, greeting players, coaches, managers and fans with a warm welcome and a cheerful smile. In the early years, his efforts to keep the fledgling senior softball groups afloat was well known by those who knew him. We have lost one of senior softballs early pioneers.

Jim's knowledge of organization and his dedication will be greatly missed.



Jim Van Brunt

Another familiar face around softball was Jim VanBrunt, not only senior softball, but softball in general. Jim crossed the plate for the last time in August, just 65 years of age. He had been active in baseball and softball all his life. Jim played, managed, and coached in the old Long Branch Sunday Morning League, the Firemen's League and other competitive leagues. Many of his players followed Jim as he move up to the ranks of senior softball. For years his teams were a dominated factor in the Monmouth County League, winning League and State titles. Early on, Jim showed his leadership qualities, when he formed the first girls softball league in Long Branch, as well working with the IAMA youth programs. He was called upon by the City of Long Branch to give his expertise in the planning for the new sports complex at Manhassett Creek Park. The complex opened this spring featuring baseball, Little League, and softball fields, as well as basketball courts, soccer and a Pop Warner football field. Jim's knowledge of organization and his dedication will be greatly missed.



SENIOR SOFTBALL COFOUNDERS
Mike Christy & Al Mills

★★★ NUMBER 18 THE MODEL BALL PLAYER ★★★



Don Roth

In July of 2009, NJSSC and NJSSA lost one of their most beloved ball players Don Roth. After struggling with cancer for well over a year, Don finally gave up his battle to join our Lord in heaven.

Those of us who knew Don, experienced the true meaning of senior softball and how the game is to be played. He easily exemplified the "model ball player". I've known Don since 1995 and was fortunate to share 14 years with him on as many as 4 NJSSC teams. In that span of time, he never once displayed anything less than being the "perfect" gentleman, on and off the field.

He was never one to argue an Umpire's call, never one to criticize anyone and never one to not appreciate every single moment on the ball field.

I know not of one single ball player who has not grown when exposed to Don's kindness and love of the game of senior softball. This was clearly demonstrated by the many e-mails I received when his passing was announced.

There are few, if any, who could play the game so well. An outstanding batter (career average close to 0.700), stealth in the outfield and a burst of speed on the bases. With those high qualifications, not once did he acknowledged his value to the team. He was a shy man who spoke with softness of thought.

If we had to put a face on the greatness of senior softball ... it would be the face of Number 18, Don Roth. In his honor the number 18, will be worn by many of his friends this year on their shirt sleeve.

Though I miss my friend, I know he's reached the big league in heaven and most likely, still a glowing star among his peers. God Bless you, Don. *By Sal Sam Di Benedetto.*

Safe at Home

This Past Year Senior Softball lost the following members.

- Ed Manthey
- Norm Lannone
- Don Roth
- Tony Russo
- Don Braun
- Butch Taras
- Mike Champion
- Al Mills
- Jim VanBrunt
- Clyde Vail Jr.

In Memoriam

The following is a list of members of the New Jersey Senior Softball Association that have passed away.

Jim Airey	John Offerman
Nick Angelillo	Jen Olson
Nick Atria	Armando
Larry Behr	Passarelli
Dick Borman	Bruce Pelletier
Tom Burke	Al Perry
Bob Canales	Robert Postel
Flip Chambliss	Jim Powell
Ed Chaven	Tom Price
Joe Connelly	Joe Riggio
Dan Cox	Joel Rosenberg
Fred Daprile	Frank Scaliti
Mike DeCeglia	Barbara Schmidt
John Denito	Jim Schultz
Ray Fasteau	Sonny Senerchia
Tom Fitzmaurice	Art Shaffner
Joe Gabel	Don Slocum
Harold Gelbhaus	Ed Stevens
Frank Giglinto	Frank Sweeney
Jay Horacek	Ernie Tasseff
Russ Howell	Don Trifari
Tony Hyman	Anthony
Joe Kelly	Valeriani
Jerry Lestardo	John Vereb
Tom Madine	Lou Vespasiano
Al Manning	Pee Wee Vogel
Frank Martinelli	John Williams
John McCabe	Bill Blitz
Jerry McDermott	Dom Deo
Dennis Miller	Bob Durkin
Patrick Moran	Ed Ganczewski
Tony Muccia	Bob Krause
Ken Nixon	Larry Rehak