

Batter up! Men's Senior Softball underway

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MEN'S SENIOR SOFTBALL

Nothing says fall in Englewood like the return of softball players to the fields at the Englewood Sport Complex.

Between the return of seasonal residents and newcomers to the area, the Englewood C. B. White Men's Senior Softball league has moved into full swing. The softball fields at the Englewood Sports Complex have returned to being busy at 8:30 a.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Friday as league members and newcomers alike have gotten their bats and gloves out of storage and taken to the diamonds for practice and practice games.

"The league's mission is to create an opportunity for men over 60 to play recreational softball," said Rich Entlich, a member of the league's executive committee. "It's great to see our old friends return, and we've been impressed with the number of new players coming out."

The league started in

the early 1990s and is one of the most popular activities in the area, drawing players from Venice, North Port, and Port Charlotte in addition to the greater Englewood area.

The past two years have seen the league focus on recruiting more players to the league.

"We've worked hard to get the word out, and it's nice to see that effort begin to pay off," said Rudy Davis, who plays in the Gold Division. "Last year we had over 40 players at the draft tryouts. We are anticipating more this year and already have plans to add a team or two."

Davis noted that all but handful of those players ended up on a team.

The league has two divisions, the Silver division is solely for players over the age of 67 who have slowed a bit or are not drafted in the Gold division. The Gold division is for players 60 and over.

If you're 70, and still have skills, you can be drafted by a Gold division team. "We hold a draft the first week January to fill out the



PHOTOS PROVIDED

John Graham of Englewood gets a hit during a recent softball practice session.

teams," explained Davis. Following the draft, league play begins.

"We are fortunate, and grateful, to have local sponsors support the league," said Mike Panas, manager of the Norma Jean's team.

Until the draft, its practice, practice, practice, which is open to anyone 59 or over. The Englewood Sports Complex is located at 1300 S. River Road just east of Pine Street in Englewood, and is widely considered to have some of the best adult softball fields in southwest Florida. Entlich encourages all

to come out and give it a try, regardless of when you last played.

"You'll have some fun, and don't worry if you don't have a glove yet, or a bat. We have them to spare."

For more information about the league, contact Rich at 941-460-9645 or visit the league's website at www.englewoodseniorsoftball.weebly.com.

Registration for the draft is required and can be done by filling out a registration form available at the Englewood Sports Complex, or by downloading the form from the website.



Members of the Englewood Senior Softball league practice Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at the Englewood Sports Complex.