



SENIOR MOMENTS FOR THESE OLDER JOCKS, AGE IS JUST A NUMBER, AND COMPETITION IS A LIFELONG PASSION.

92 MICKEY PITTI
VOLLEYBALL

A self-described offense-first player, Pitti has no time for defense. "I like to score," says the oldest member of the Hemet (Calif.) Hot Flashes, a senior team that competes in tournaments around the state. Pitti picked up volleyball in high school during the 1930s and returned to competition at 55. Another favorite pastime: hunting. She and her late husband killed a 300-pound boar when she was 73. "Any sport I can get my hands on," she says, "I'll do."



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PHOTOGRAPHS BY
GREGG SEGAL

93 HOI PANG
SWIMMING

Retirement? "Not before I'm 100, then we'll see," says Pang, who first took up the sport as a 10-year-old in Hong Kong. His competition schedule has changed—he downshifted several years ago from the 200 meters to 50-meter events—but his favorite stroke hasn't. "I love the freestyle," says the Monterey Park, Calif., resident, who takes the bus to his local pool for 6 a.m. workouts five days a week. "My doctors told me seven days was too much," says Pang, who is legally blind. "I think they just don't want me to win all the medals."



68 | **WILLY C. ESCOBAR**
TABLE TENNIS

"I win so much that my house is overflowing with medals and trophies," Escobar says, "and I am going to go forever." Escobar took up table tennis as a 12-year-old in El Salvador, then started playing tournaments at 33 after moving to New York in 1973. The Sun City, Calif., resident became a two-time U.S. Open singles champ (1988, 1994) with beginner ratings on the senior circuit, and he still plays about 15 events every year. "I can never have enough trophies," he says, "although my wife disagrees sometimes, especially when it's time to dust."

68 | **JON "BULLET" BALES**
TRIATHLON

The Glendale, Calif., resident and Vietnam vet began competing in triathlons when he was in his late 30s. He's logged 37 races—and dedicates every one to those whose names are on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. "I'm driven by the fact that my brothers will never see these days," he says. "When I'm racing and I feel pain, I think to myself, This is nothing. Get your ass in gear."



72

KATHY BERGEN
TRACK AND FIELD

"When I was young, women just didn't play sports," Bergen says. "Now I'm making up for lost time." Bergen began racing nearly 20 years ago when her husband told her, "Anyone can run." Since then, she has set world and American records for her age group in the high jump and 60, 100 and 200 meters. "Some of the women I race are chatty," says the La Cañada Flintridge, Calif., resident. "But I'm not at the starting block to make friends."



61

THAD WILSON SR.
TRACK AND FIELD

Before joining the Navy, Wilson was a competitive track and field athlete in high school. Then the Oxnard, Calif., resident took a 29-year break, serving Uncle Sam for most of that time. Since returning to civilian life, he's won eight USA Masters Outdoor Championships in the 100-meter hurdles—including the past seven. "I like to win. I run to win," Wilson says. "You gotta come get me."



76 | ROBERT PAGANINI
CYCLING

The Paris-born Paganini began riding at 17, but he's been a competitive international cyclist for only the past 20 years, long after moving to the U.S. in 1961. A two-time national champion (2006, 2011) in masters road racing in his age group, he races every weekend from January through October. "If I don't do well one day," he says from his home in LA, "I always know at least I'll get to race another day."



94 | JULIAN MYERS
TRACK AND FIELD

There are decathletes and there are folks like Julian Myers. The Marina del Rey, Calif., resident will compete in 14 track and field events at the Huntsman World Senior Games in Utah in October and is looking to add to the 46 career medals he's won there. "I'm entering everything," says Myers, who still works as a Hollywood publicist. A competitive runner for 85 years, he still trains six days a week. "I love it now more than ever," he says. "Nobody's telling us to die. I love being alive. There's no reason for me to stop."

