

Game Dates: Wed. 5/21/08

Written: Tues. 5/27/08

NOTE:

For those of you who were looking for recaps from the past few weeks, you didn't miss anything because there weren't any. The reason is we had to unfortunately forfeit two nights in a row because of a lack of players. That is the first time in our six-season history that we have had to do that. Needless to say, it stung just a little bit.

However, I think the worst is over. We have added a few more players and we have some others coming back that have not been able to play much. So, things are looking up.

Go Figure

For those of you who have been following along, the last actual games we played were against Papa O's, and we were short-handed playing with only nine. They beat us in both games, but got bit under my skin because they carried on like they won the World Series. As fate would have it we played them again.

On Wednesday morning we had eleven players ready to go. By 9:00 AM we were down to ten. At game time we were once again down to nine. What happened? It doesn't really matter. Things just happen I guess. Bad Luck, Bad Karma....whatever. But like I said the worst should be over.

Anyway, at 6:30 we hit the field with nine. I'd like to welcome yet another new player, Chris Trice. He is a friend of Marty's. Yes, another one. I wonder how much he pays these guys to say they are his friends. But just like all the others, we won't hold it against him, at least not yet. Besides, after the way he pitched, I don't think we ever will.

As the game started Steve Caviolo, whose new nickname is Bernie (more on that later), said he had a buddy of his who lived in the area who might be willing to play and get us back to ten. Obviously I was all for it. So between innings he was on the phone trying to track down another player.

Game 1

Black Jacks	16
Papa O's	10

Line Score

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>T</u>
Black Jacks	6	0	3	1	1	3	2	16
Papa O's	2	5	0	1	2	0	0	10

When you only have nine players, the key to having any kind of chance of winning is to score a lot of runs and hold on for dear life, because playing with one less fielder will usually catch up with you. That is unless your pitcher does an awesome job and you have few "difference makers" on the field.

In the top of the first, Danny and Marty led off with back to back singles. Then Lee walked to load the bases. Trice, who was pitching, brought in the first run of the game, with his first ever Black Jack hit and RBI on a single. Two batters later Steve knocked in two with another single. I followed suit to bring in another run. Haack got an

RBI on a fielder's choice. Scags kept things going with a single. Then Danny hitting for the second time in the inning ended the scoring with an RBI single. So, we were off to the fast start we needed, up by six.

Papa O's managed to cut the lead by two in their half of the inning. After one we were up six to two.

I'm not sure what happened in the second inning, but our bats got quiet and we were held scoreless. Papa O's jumped on that opportunity scoring five runs to take a seven to six lead after two innings. At this point, three things needed to happen in order for us to have a chance. We needed to pick up the pace at the plate and keep scoring. We needed a well-pitched game. And we needed solid play on defense. We got all three.

In the top of the third with one out, I walked to get things going. Then Haack singled putting two men on. Two batters later Danny knocked in his second run of the game with a single. On the play Haack scored on a throwing error, to bring in the second run. Marty then kept the ball rolling with another walk. Lee brought in the third run, knocking in Danny on a fielder's choice. We were now up nine to seven.

Trice did an awesome job in shutting down Papa O's in the third. He began to really help himself in what he calls "fend for your life" defense, while on the mound. Several balls were smashed up the middle and he made every play.

Danny also really began to make his presence known with his incredible speed in the outfield. His positioning was perfect and he of course covered a lot of ground.

In the fourth, looking for some breathing room we added another run. Putrow tripled and Steve brought him in on a fielder's choice. We held Papa's to one run in the fourth. So after four we were up ten to eight.

We added another run in the fifth on Lee's RBI single that brought in Danny. Papa O's chipped away at our lead scoring two in the fifth. After five we were up eleven to ten.

We badly needed to increase our lead going into the late innings. The chances of a one run lead holding up when you are playing short-handed are pretty slim. With one out I singled. Haack got on base via an error. Scags knocked me in for the first run, and I believe Haack also scored on a wild throw. Danny then came up and knocked in Scags, but unfortunately he got caught trying to stretch a single into a double. I cannot remember the last time that happened.

We held Papa O's to no runs again in their half of the inning. After six full innings we were up fourteen to ten.

In the top of the seventh we added another two insurance runs. Putrow opened things up with a single. Then Steve followed with an RBI triple. I brought in Steve with a single to end the scoring.

Unbelievably Trice held Papa O's to no runs in the seventh for the third time in the game we were winners, 16 – 10.

I said a few weeks ago that it's not impossible to win with nine against ten. You just need the right combination of players, good hitting, good defense and what I call "Difference Makers." This was for sure a huge team win, but I have to give credit where credit is due. In my opinion we had three Difference Makers in this game. The first was the return of Danny. His speed in the outfield is unmatched. He covers ground and gets to balls that no one has a right getting to. Plain and simple, he was all over the place, making up for the outfielder we were missing. The second was the emergence of Haack at third base. Haack usually plays second, but out of necessity he has stepped up and played third, which is NOT an easy position. Haack came into his own making several

huge defensive plays to save runs. The third was Trice. He pitched one of the best games I have seen in a long time and his defense was phenomenal. Again, I am not minimizing anyone's contribution in this game. However, it's stand-out performances like these that give you a fighting chance especially when you are short-handed. Nice job guys.

Box Score

	AB	R	H	BB	2B	3B	HR	RBI
Danny C	5	3	4	0	0	0	0	2
Marty LF	3	1	1	2	0	0	0	0
Lee SS	4	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
Trice P	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Putrow 1B	5	1	2	0	0	0	0	1
Steve RF	5	2	2	0	0	0	0	4
Pete C	4	2	3	1	0	0	0	2
Haack 3B	5	3	2	0	0	0	0	1
Scags 2B	4	1	2	1	0	0	0	1

Big Hitters: **Danny, Pete, Putrow, Steve, Haack, Scags**

Game 2

Papa O's 7
Black Jacks 5

Line Score

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	T
Papa O's	1	1	4	0	1	0	0	7
Black Jacks	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	5

By the start of the second game, Steve's friend Mike Haney showed up to help us out. So, let's welcome Mike to the team. Man, how many Mike's do we have on this team now?! And I wonder why we use nicknames.

After winning the first game with nine, you can imagine how confident we became when we hit the field with a full compliment of ten players. I just didn't think there was any way we could lose.

Funny thing happened during the first four innings of the game. We couldn't hit our way out of a paper bag. I have no idea what happened. I don't think anyone does. It was a bit insane and down right disturbing. Everyone seemed to be hitting the ball pretty well, but nothing was dropping in and we just couldn't buy a break.

By the time we started to snap out of it, we were down seven to nothing going into the bottom of the fifth. And we only managed to score one run on an RBI single by Mike.

In the sixth I really thought the tide had changed. Trice and Steve both had RBI singles and another run scored on a bad throw. Going into the last inning we were down seven to four.

I thought Trice pitched an awesome game in the opener, but this one was even better. When we need to keep their scoring down he got the job done. He gave us every opportunity to win this game.

Going into the seventh we were still down seven to four. Four runs for us should be easy. Unfortunately, not this time. We managed one run on Lee's RBI single, and that was that.

We win with nine and lose with ten. Go Figure.....

	<u>Box Score</u>							
	<u>AB</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>BB</u>	<u>2B</u>	<u>3B</u>	<u>HR</u>	<u>RBI</u>
Danny LC	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Marty RC	4	1	3	0	0	0	0	0
Lee SS	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Trice P	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Putrow 1B	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Steve RF	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	1
Pete C	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Haack 3B	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Scags 2B	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Mike LF	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

Big Hitters: Marty, Steve

Comic Relief

Wonder Boy Bat

Certain bats are illegal in our league and sometimes teams ask if they can use a specific bat. This time a player from Papa O's walked up to the plate with what really looked like a home made wood bat.

Player: Can I use this?

Ump: What's that?

Player: It's a softball bat, but it's wood.

Ump: Wood? I've never seen anything like this

Player: It's legal. It's not aluminum or anything. It's wood, so it has to be legal.

Ump: No it doesn't.

Player: What's wrong with it?

Ump: It looks home made or something.

Player: It's just an old wood bat.

Ump: No. You can't use this.

Player: Oh come on. Really?

Ump: Really. You can't use it.

Pete: *(movie reference)* Did the bat have an inscription of Wonder Boy? If it did, then there's no way he can use it.

Johnny Bench

I had some fun behind the plate t his game. I actually caught three foul pops. The last one was near the backstop.

Danny: Nice play coach

Trice: Nice Play!

Pete: Thanks. They don't call me Johnny Bench for nothing.

Marty: Who calls you Johnny Bench?

Pete: I do.

Bingo

I was trying to get the bats going

Pete: Come on guys. A little bingo here.
Marty: Bingo?
Pete: Yeah, a little bingo.
Marty: Who says that?
Pete: I do.
Marty: No one says that anymore.
Pete: I think it came from my little league days.
Steve: I 71
Pete: BINGO

Roster check

Seeing we finally had a tenth player, I had this conversation with the lead off hitter from Papa O's

Player: I need to see your roster.
Pete: What?
Player: I want see if that new guy is really on your roster.
Pete: Good luck with that
Player: No really
Pete: Is that the way this is going to be?
Player: Nah.....I'm just fucking with you.
Pete: Did you hand in your roster?
Player: Nope
Pete: Do you even have a roster?
Player: Nope

That's what Mark does

After one of Haack's nice plays at third

Pete: Way to go Haack
Haack: Thanks
Pete: We'll make a third baseman out of you yet.
Haack: I found out it works better when I close my eyes
Pete: That's what Mark does. He puts his glove in the general direction of the ball and closes his eyes. What do you think makes him so good.
Haack: Well, it really works.

Who listens to me?

At the beginning of the night I asked everyone to sign two versions of the official roster. At the same time I asked a few guys who I did not have any information on to fill out the roster and then sign it. I guess it got a little confusing.

Steve: Here I signed it and filled out the other sheet
Pete: You didn't have to fill anything out. Just sign it
Steve: You said fill it out too.
Pete: What the hell are you listening to me for. No one listens to me. Right Haack?
Haack: Yep. Well, unless you're giving us the time of the game.

Bernie

I got tired of calling Steve by his last name.

Pete: We need a nickname for you.

Steve: Okay

Pete: So what do your friends call you?

Trice: Bernie

Pete: Bernie?

Trice: Yeah, look at his shirt

Pete: *The shirt said Bernie's across the front.* Hey look at that. Bernie it is.

The End.....

Next Week's Games

Opponent: Squirrel Cage

Record: 4 - 8

Times: 6:30 & 7:30

The G.M. Has Spoken.....

Pete