

Game Dates: Wed. 5/28/08

Written: Tues. 6/3/08

New Blood...New Result

Welcome Ken Franchi and Chris Dvorak. Both of these guys made their debut last Wednesday. The lineup included four first year players. In the past few weeks a total of seven new players came on board. And this coming week one more will be helping out. It looks like the team has had a complete facelift. I have to say, it's getting kind of exciting again as our team seems to have been granted a new life. Thanks to all of you guys for stepping in. The second half of the season could get real interesting.

Game 1

Squirrel Cage 11
Black Jacks 17

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>
Squirrel Cage	2	0	2	3	0	4	0	11
Black Jacks	2	0	4	4	4	3	x	17

For the first time in weeks I felt real good about these games. I really liked our mix of players and the talent we put on the field. Even though a few guys were playing for the first time, it didn't matter. I knew these guys were all good players. I actually felt bad when making out the lineup, because I just didn't know where to bat everyone. As they say, go with what you know. So, I did, but I did apologize before hand saying please do not be offended by where I put you in the lineup because I just don't know enough yet. The part I really liked was when I told Mike Haney he was batting cleanup. Over the years I've come to realize that even though batting fourth is a compliment, and some guys love it, a lot of guys don't like it. Mike's response was priceless and really got me jacked up. It was a simple one-word response. "Cool". Ya gotta like that.

Our opponent, Squirrel Cage is an okay team, but they really aren't that good. They did beat us once in the first double header of the year, and they have two forfeit wins against us. But, we are way better than they are. They know it too.

Lee...I haven't called him this yet all year, so I may as well now...Our God of Softball...took the mound. He usually plays shortstop, but he was the only pitcher we had at the game. So, he had no choice. Anyway, he's still hobbling from a sore calf, so it's all just as well that he pitched.

In the top of the first Squirrel Cage walked away with two runs, putting us a little behind right off the bat (no pun intended). In our half of the first, with two outs Lee walked. No surprise there. Well, this year it might be because for the first time I history he does not lead the team in walks. Anyway, he picked a good time to get one. Mike Haney followed with a triple to left to bring in our first run. Ken Franchi then singled to knock in Mike tying the game. The first inning ended with the score tied at one.

No one scored in the second inning. But Squirrel Cage came up with two more in the top of the third to take a four to two lead. We came right back in the bottom of the inning. Lee started things off with a double. Haney singled in Lee with his second RBI of the game. After a line out and a fielder's choice, Haack, me, Canale and Chris Dvorak

banged out four consecutive hits. My single brought in one run. Canale's brought in another and Chris doubled to bring in the fourth run of the inning. After three, we were up six to four.

Squirrel Cage kept coming at us though. They picked up three runs in the top of the fourth to take a seven to six lead. But we would not be deterred as we battled back again. Marty led things off with a single. Lee promptly doubled him home for the first run. Franchi then singled. Two batters later Haack drove in one run with a single. Then I knocked in two more. At the end of four we were back in the lead ten to seven.

Lee did a great job quieting the Squirrel Cage bats. To me this inning was the turning point, because in the bottom of the fifth we built on that momentum and extended our lead. Danny started things off with a single. Two batters later, Lee moved him along with a single of his own. Haney came up and blasted his second triple of the game knocking in both Danny and Lee. Franchi brought in Mike with another single. Steve kept things going with a single. Then Haack ended the scoring with an RBI. At the end of five, we were up fourteen to seven.

I gotta give Squirrel Cage some credit. They did not give up. They scratched and clawed their way to four runs in the top of the sixth cutting the lead to fourteen to eleven. We were up for the challenge though answering right back. Canale started things off with a single. Two batters later Danny singled as well. Then with two out Lee singled to load the bases. Haney came up again with a chance to bring in a few more runs. This time I think they got wise to him and were happy to give him a walk, bringing in a run. Franchi then singled to bring in two more. At the end of six we were up seventeen to eleven.

Lee picked another good inning to shut down Squirrel Cage, as they were unable to mount any kind of attack, finished the game with no runs in the seventh. The final score; 17 to 11.

It felt damned good to get back into the win column. It's amazing what a team of ten good players can do. Nice job to everyone. A big hats off to Haney and Franchi. They went a combined seven for eight with seven runs scored, two walks, two doubles, two triples and eight RBI. Not bad for a couple of rookies!! If you add in Lee's awesome game, the three, four and five hitters went eleven for thirteen! That's unbelievable.

Nice job to everyone on defense. There were a bunch of nice plays all over the field.

Box Score

	AB	R	H	BB	2B	3B	HR	RBI
Danny C	5	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Marty LF	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Lee SS	4	5	4	1	2	0	0	1
Mike H LF	4	2	3	1	0	2	0	5
Franchi SS	5	2	4	0	2	0	0	3
Steve RF	5	1	2	0	0	0	0	1
Haack 3B	4	2	4	0	0	0	0	2
Pete C	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
Canale 2B	4	1	3	0	0	0	0	1
Chris 1B	4	0	1	0	1	0	0	1

Big Hitters: Lee, Mike H, Franchi, Haack, Canale

Game 2

Black Jacks **16**
Squirrel Cage **10**

	<u>Line Score</u>							
	<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	1	0	4	3	4	4	0	16
Squirrel Cage	2	0	2	2	0	4	0	10

We started the second game feeling relieved to get another win under our belts. Well, well at least some of us did. But winning one was not enough.

We took a quick one nothing lead in the top of the first on and RBI single by Franchi, bringing in Marty. Not exactly a stellar start, but it was something.

Squirrel Cage got two quick runs in their half of the inning, taking a two to one lead after one. Neither of us could muster any runs in the second. I think we were all waiting for a second wind or something.

It came for us in the top of the third. Danny and Marty got things going with back-to-back singles. Haney came through again with an RBI single. Two batters later Steve brought in two runs with a long triple to right center. He then scored on a throwing error on the same play. We ended the inning with four runs and leading five to two.

Squirrel Cage rebounded a bit in the bottom of the inning with two runs of their own to cut the lead to one; five to four. But we came right back in the fourth. Chris led off with a single. Then Danny reached base on an error to put two runners on. Marty knocked in a run with a sacrifice fly. Haney came through yet again with an RBI double, followed by Franchi's RBI single. Going into the bottom of the fourth we were now up eight to four.

Again our opponents kept coming at us. They pecked away to get two more runs in their half of the inning. So, after four we were up eight to six.

There was just no let down in us at this point. The top of the fifth was another good inning. With one out, I singled to start things off. Canale, Chris and Danny all followed with singles to make it four in a row. Chris and Danny's brought in one run a piece. Two batters later Lee came through with a big two run single to end the scoring at four. After the top of the fifth we were now up twelve to six.

Again Lee picked great inning to shut down Squirrel Cage with no runs. After five complete we were still up by six.

We were not ready to let them back in the game. For the fourth consecutive inning we kept the ball rolling. Franchi and Steve started the inning with singles. Two batters later I brought in Franchi with an RBI single. With two out Chris knocked in Steve with a single. Then Danny brought in Chris and me to end the scoring at four. We were now up sixteen to six.

With a slaughter rule of ten runs after six innings pending, Squirrel Cage need at least one to keep the game going. To their credit they came through with four, cutting our lead to sixteen to ten.

I guess we got a bit tired in the seventh. We did not score any runs, for the first time since the second inning. So, going into the bottom of the last inning Lee had a six run lead to protect. And that he did, once again shutting out Squirrel Cage with no runs. The final score: 16 to 10.

Haney and Franchi did it again this game, going a combined eight for ten. They both made me look pretty good batting them fourth and fifth. I do love when that happens!! Nice job guys.

Box Score

	AB	R	H	BB	2B	3B	HR	RBI
Danny LC	5	3	3	0	0	0	0	3
Marty RC	4	2	2	0	0	0	0	1
Lee SS	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Mike H	5	2	4	1	0	0	0	2
Franchi SS	5	1	4	0	0	0	0	2
Steve RF	5	2	2	0	0	1	0	2
Haack 3B	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Pete C	4	2	3	0	0	0	0	1
Canale 2B	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
Chris 1B	4	3	3	0	0	0	0	2

Big Hitters: Danny, Mike H, Franchi, Pete, Chris

Coach's Corner

I put this section in every now and then for various reasons. It includes stuff like: something happening in a game, but I don't remember which one; random thoughts I want to share; great performances; odd facts; impressive statistics; etc. This time it's a little bit of everything.

Flip Flop and Fly

Over the past few seasons, Marty often puts on a show that I named "Flip, Flop and Fly". This is when he dives, slides, slips, falls or whatever while in the outfield trying to make a play. In other words, he winds up on the ground. I am glad to say, for the first time this year "Flip, Flop and Fly" has returned!! Marty made great sliding shoestring catch to end one of the games, but for the life of me I can't remember which one. It doesn't matter. I was just glad to see it back!

Football play

I will take credit for being involved in the first football play, or collision of the season. Who said catching in softball is boring or uneventful. Anyway, Haney made an awesome one hop throw from left field on a play at the plate. I caught the throw and got in front of the plate just as the runner arrived. This guy was larger than me...and fatter!! Anyway, we collided and I went flying. I did manage to hold on to the ball for the tag out, but he would have been out anyway because there is a no contact slide rule in softball. I give the guy credit he was gracious and very apologetic. He said he didn't mean it. Yeah right....and my name is Johnny Bench. Honestly, it was fun.

Pretty Impressive

Here are Haney and Franchi's combined two-game statistics.
 15 for 18; 10 runs scored; 3 walks; 2 doubles; 2 triples; 12 RBI.
 That's pretty damned impressive.

DEFENSE

There were quite a few nice defensive plays in the field. The problem is I don't remember in which games. I do remember who though: Marty, Danny, Haney, Haack, Franchi & Canale. If I missed anyone I apologize. Oh yeah, then there was my collision at home plate. Who could forget that!?

Long Ball

For the past few weeks Lee has been hurting and unable to run at full speed. It's too bad too, because this is the second time he has hit a moon shot over the left fielder's head that should have been a homerun. He only has a double to show for it. What's one to do? Hit the fall even farther I guess.

Comic Relief

Gay Phone

Before the game started somebody's cell phone went off. The music sounded like something from a ballet.

Lee: Somebody's phone is ringing. It sounds like something from a ballet.
Pete: What the hell is that?
Lee: Hey! Whose phone is that? I'm telling you it sounds like ballet music.
Franchi: Is it blue.
Lee: Maybe. Does it play ballet music?
Danny: It might be blue, but it's definitely GAY!!

He needs to shut up

Throughout the two games an injured player from Squirrel Cage kept yelling at the team for not hitting. He was seriously annoying. By the second game one player had obviously had enough.

Injured Player: Look at this. We have like eleven fly outs out of twelve outs! It's ridiculous. No one is hitting the ball on the ground.
Hitter: He's really getting on my nerves.
Pete: No shit. That's down right annoying.
Injured Player: Hit the ball on the ground! Stop popping the ball up!
Hitter: Listen to this asshole.
Pete: Dude, that's just nuts. He doesn't stop.
Hitter: Listen to him.
Pete: It's your teammate
Hitter: Not my choice, that's for sure.
Injured Player: Come on guys. Let's put some hits together.
Pete: Good God with that.
Hitter: He really needs to shut the fuck up!

He failed

At the end of the game Danny gave me some not so good news.

Danny: I don't know if I'm going to make many more games.
Pete: What the hell are you talking about?

Danny: Seriously. It's going to be tough. I'm not sure what I can do.
Pete: You told me you were in for all the rest of the games.
Danny: I know, but that was before I took a Summer Class for my MBA
Pete: Summer Class? Who the hell takes summer classes?
Lee: Usually anyone who fails goes to summer school
Danny: No. It's a required course I have to take.
Pete: Yeah right.
Lee: In other words he failed.
Danny: No I didn't.
Lee: Yes you did. You failed. He failed. He definitely failed.

The End.....

Next Week's Games

Opponent: Economos & Associates
Record: 10 – 4 (I think)
Times: 8:30 & 9:30

The G.M. (and acting coach) Has Spoken.....

Pete