

Games: 25 & 26
Date: Wed. 7/23/08

Written: Wed. 7/30/08

Enough to Drive you NUTS!!

Going into these games I was quite honestly tired of writing and saying that we are better than everyone in this league. The bottom line is we are not doing a very good job of proving it. Talk is cheap. In order talk the talk you need to walk the walk. When we actually walk the walk, then I will start talking about this topic again.

Game 1

Black Jacks 12
Economos 13

Line Score

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	T
Black Jacks	4	0	6	1	0	0	1	12
Papa O's	2	0	0	0	0	9	2	13

I was as confident as I have ever been that we would win at least one of these games, if not both. We had a solid team on the field, with a consistent lineup and everyone playing in familiar positions. For the most part we have been playing together for enough time now to be jelling as a team. So, the bottom line is, we would have NO excuse if things went wrong.

We knew we had to get a quick start in order have a chance against these guys. For sure they can hit, so we had to start putting some runs on the board early. Diamond Dave got us going with a single to start the game. Lee reached base on an error and Joe flew out to right moving Dave to third. Ebs brought in Dave with one of his patented sacrifice flies. Bones then singled putting two runners on with two outs. Trice hit booming triple to left knocking in both Lee and Bones. He wound up scoring too on a throwing error for our fourth run of the inning.

Economos came back with two runs of their own in the bottom of the first. So, after one we were up four to two. Both teams went scoreless in the second, so the score remained the same.

In the third Joe, Ebs and Bones hit three consecutive singles to start the inning. Bones' hit drove in Joe for the first run. Trice knocked in another with a sacrifice fly. Marty and Franchi both followed with singles to load the bases. I proceeded to single to right center driving in another run. Haack followed with another single knocking in two more. Two batters later Dave drove in the final run of the inning with our third sacrifice fly of the game. When our half of the inning ended we were up with a huge lead, ten to two.

Trice shut down Economos again in the third, holding the score at ten to two.

In the fourth we pushed one more run across. Joe tripled and Ebs brought him home with a single. This increased our lead to eleven to two.

Believe it or not, that's where the score stayed all the way through the sixth inning. As the game got into the later innings I kept telling myself this is what we are capable of. However, I knew it would be real difficult to keep their bats totally quiet for another two innings. They were overdue for a big inning. You could just feel it. What we couldn't afford was one big bad inning. Unfortunately, what we couldn't afford is exactly what we got. A bunch of hits, a few errors, a few bad throws and BAM! Nine runs crossed the plate. There were a lot more hits than last week, when we did pretty much the same thing, so we didn't look exactly like a bunch of idiots again, but

it was close. Just like that, the game was tied. We have had two bad habits this year. One is not hitting for long stretches and the second is giving up bad innings. Both of these have killed us all year long.

So, we were down to what amounted to a one inning game. In our half of the seventh, Bones singled and moved to second on a bad throw. Then Trice knocked him in for the only run of the inning to put us up by one.

It did not take long for Economos to score the two runs they needed. I swear, it seemed like I blinked, two runs scored and the game was over.

This was simply a heart-breaking loss. We had the first place team right where we wanted them and let them slip away. It's enough to drive someone NUTS!!

		<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>
Dave	LF	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	1
Lee	2B	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Joe	LC	4	2	2	0	0	1	0	0
Ebs	SS	3	1	3	0	0	1	0	2
Bones	1B	4	2	3	0	0	0	0	1
Trice	P	2	1	2	1	0	1	0	3
Marty	RC	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
Franchi	3B	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Pete	C	3	1	2	1	0	0	0	1
Haack	DH	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Steve	RF	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

Big Hitters: Ebs, Bones, Joe, Dave, Trice, Marty, Pete, Haack

		<u>Game 2</u>
Economos		9
Black Jacks		8

		<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>
Economos		3	5	1	0	0	0	1	10
Black Jacks		3	2	2	0	0	1	0	8

It's difficult to overcome the sting from a loss like the first game. You really have to regroup and try to shake off the shock the disappointment. A few us just walked off the field for a while. Others just gathered around and tried to make sense of it all. But the show must go on. Even though we lost I was still confident that the team we had could beat them.

Economos jumped out quick with three runs, keeping their momentum going. But we bounced right back. Dave and Lee singled to start the inning, and Joe followed with a long three-run homer to right field, to quickly tie the score at three. Those were all the runs we could muster that inning.

In the second Economos kept the pressure on capitalizing on a few more of our mistakes. You have to give them credit. Whenever we'd make a mistake they'd capitalize with more hits. By the time it was all said and done, five runs had crossed the plate, and we were down eight to two. Our backs were completely up against the wall now, but it was still early.

Marty singled to start things off. Two batters later I singled moving Marty to third. Haack followed with a sacrifice fly for one run. Then Steve followed with an RBI single for the second run. That was it for the inning, but we cut the lead to eight to five going into the third.

Economos slowed down a bit with only one run in the third. So, we came up down by four. We chipped away at the lead again. Lee and Joe started things off with singles. Two batters later Bones knocked in Lee for a run. Trice, helping his own cause, followed with a big triple to left bringing home Bones for the second run. After three we were now down by two, nine to seven.

Pitching and solid defense took over for the next two and a half innings, as no one scored. Hats off to T Rice for keeping the Economos bats quiet. He was not getting any help from the ump who really called a God Awful game with balls and strikes. What a mess! So going into the bottom of the sixth the scored held at nine to seven.

We managed another run to cut the lead to one. Ebs singled to start the inning. Three batters later Marty brought him home with a single. So, going into the last inning we were down by one, nine to eight.

Economos got one insurance run in the top half of the seventh for a ten to eight lead. Two runs should be easy pickens in softball. But we just could not get the job done. We managed on hit in the last inning and for all intents and purposes went down quietly for a very frustrating loss.

Joe tried to make things positive the silver lining of, "We can beat them. They know we can. It's fine."

I hear ya brother...but until we do beat them... we can't beat them.

Box Score

	AB	R	H	BB	2B	3B	HR	RBI
Dave LF	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Lee 2B	4	2	3	0	0	0	0	0
Joe LC	4	1	2	0	0	0	1	3
Ebs SS	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Bones 1B	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Trice P	3	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
Marty RC	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	1
Franchi 3B	3	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Pete C	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Haack DH	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Steve RF	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

Big Hitters: Lee, Joe (HR #3) , Marty

Coach's Corner

Defensive Coach

Lee has taken over assigning defensive positions. This week being we had eleven, he decided to do a rotation where everyone takes a turn resting on the bench for an inning.

When you have eleven guys that can actually play the field it works. And when you have someone who can play just about any position, it works even better. Lee is the one who did that. Needless to say, it worked out well, and I think he had a lot of fun doing it.

Does anyone remember a major league baseball player named Bert "Campy" Campaneris? If anyone does, tell me what he did?

Homerun chase

Joe has taken a commanding lead in the home run race with three. Is there any body up for challenging him?

Umpires

I very rarely complain about how an ump calls balls and strikes, but this guy down right sucked! He started the game with calling two of the first three pitches illegal for being too high, meaning they were over the twelve-foot height rule. From there if the ball did not land within one or two inches of behind the plate, it was a ball...especially when we were in the field. When we were hitting, anything within two feet behind the plate was a strike. I have never, ever seen anything like it. I'm not sure if this guy had some kind of vendetta against us going way back or what. Anything is possible because over the past four seasons we have seen him quite a few times. The crazy thing is HE was complaining that Economos was taking too many pitches and not swinging at close ones. Well hello.... ASSHOLE!! Try calling a strike now and then, and maybe they'll start swinging. This was truly enough to drive me NUTS too!!

Plays at the plate

I love plays at the plate, especially when I'm catching. We had one on Wednesday. Ebs made a perfect throw to me from the outfield grass in short center, and I slapped on the tag. I swear the guy was in total shock that he actually got thrown out. That was fun!

Marty's new routine

As everyone knows, Marty is famous for his *Flip, Flop and Fly* routine. Well, this week he came up with something new. This one is called the Hydro-plane. For this trick, he comes running in, drops on his knees, slides and makes the catch. He actually did it twice. Nicely played.

The Challenge; update

Here were the challenges I laid out from last week.

1. Beat Economos
 2. Finish with an overall record of .500 or better
 3. Finish in second place in the regular season
 4. Win the play-off tournament
- We can still beat Economos. We play them one more time next week and then could face them in the play-off tournament.
 - We can still finish with an overall .500 record. We have to sweep the next two doubleheaders and then win both games in the tournament, to finish 16 – 16.
 - We cannot finish in second place. At least I don't think so.
 - We can DEFINITELY win the play-off tournament.

Here is a NEW challenge.

5. Beat Papa O's in a double header.
- This we can do this week. We lost both games to them the first time we played them, and then split the last three. So, we OWE them one.

Comic Relief

Got any balls?

- Trice:** Pete, do you have any balls?
Pete: I sure hope so
Trice: No. Balls so I can throw and warm up with
Pete: Sure. What color do you want? Yellow, green, white?
Trice: How about blue balls
Lee: He must be married.

Bathroom like mine

Trice: What does it mean if the porto-potty is bigger than my bathroom?
Pete: That's not a good sign.
Franchi: Do you have a shower at least?
Trice: Yes I have a shower, but you can fit one in there too.
Franchi: There is a lot of room in there
Trice: There so much room someone could sit right down next to me while I'm taking a crap and talk to me. I can't do that in my bathroom.

On Account

Several times on close calls the umpire kept saying..."I could have called it on account..."
One this play we almost picked a guy off of first who took a big turn.

Ump: He was safe. But, I could have called it on account.
Pete: That must be a pretty big account with all the calls you've put on there.
Ump: It is... on account of these guys just being stupid.

What do I do?

By moving players around every inning Lee got the chance to catch for the first time.

Lee: Hey. How am I doing?
Pete: You're doing great
Lee: Is there anything I should be doing that I'm not
Pete: Yeah. Talk to the ump every now and then to keep him busy.
Lee: Okay. Got it. Anything else?
Pete: Yes, once in a while purposely miss a ball so it hits the umpire. That way he really stays awake.

22 seconds

Trice: We may need to kick the bats again.
Lee: No. It doesn't work that way. It has to be spontaneous. You can't talk about it. You just have to do it
Trice: That's what my wife says.
Lee: Well that's the only way it works
Trice: According to my wife, putting it on my outlook calendar does not count as spontaneous.
Lee: Well, it would help if you didn't put a time limit on it.
Joe: Especially if it's just 22 seconds.

The End.....

Next Games

Date: 7/30
Opponent: Papa O's
Times: 8:30 & 9:30

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

Pete