

Game Dates: Wed. 4/30/08

Written: Tues. 5/7/08

It Just Doesn't Seem Fair Does It?

Going into these games we thought we had a full compliment of ten players. Five minutes before the game started, we found out we didn't. Unfortunately, through some miscommunication I didn't receive a message from earlier in the day, so I didn't have the chance to try to find a tenth man.

Now some of you might think, well what's the big deal? Baseball plays with nine players. Well, in 12" Men's softball you need four outfielders to compete. Is it possible to win with nine vs. ten? Sure it is. But, the elements have to be perfect; those being the level of your opponents and the team you put on the field.

Be that as it may, we actually thought it was going to be nine on nine, as Papa O's only had nine guys at the beginning as well. Obviously this evens things up, and to be honest, if it would have stayed that way I think the outcome of the games would have been much different. Quite frankly this team was not that good. I know who am I to say that with our record? I'm basing it on six season's worth of opponents, how good we have been in the past, and how good I think we can still be.

Game 1

Papa O's **26**
Black Jacks **22**

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>
Papa O's	2	2	7	3	12	x	x	26
Black Jacks	10	3	6	0	3	x	x	22

With the unfortunate news that we would be short-handed, we hit the field with nine players. One of those players was another rookie. Please welcome to the team Patrick Sullivan. He's a good Old Italian boy. Or not. He's a co-worker of Marty's. We won't hold that against him. The good news at the time was that Papa O's had nine as well, so we figured things would be even. Unfortunately, the level playing field did not last for long.

Papa O's opened up with two quick runs in the first. We came up and immediately went to work. We started the game with seven consecutive singles by: Steve, Marty, Patrick, Lee, Haack, Canale and me. Lee's knocked in two runs, Haack's knock in two runs and I knocked in one. Two batters later Scags drove home another run with a single. It was right around this time, when someone from Papa O's yelled to the ump, "Can we add out tenth guy now?"

I was standing on third and said, "Oh shit." This is not good."

I think it was Haack who was coaching third. He said, "We better get a lot of runs now and hope to hold on." He was one hundred percent right.

Steve then came up for the second time and drove in a run. Patrick picked up an RBI and Lee added his third RBI of the inning on another single. When it was all said and done we had a ten to two lead.

In the second inning, Papa O's added two more runs to cut our lead to ten to four. We bounced back with three runs of our own. After Canale and I singled, Scags knocked us both in with a long triple to right. Steve brought in Scags with a sacrifice fly. At the end of two we were up thirteen to four.

Just as we thought would eventually happen, the tide started to turn towards Papa O's. In the top of the third they scored seven runs. Most of them were scored on bloop and hitting where our three outfielders were not. Believe me we were lucky to get out of there still ahead by two.

I am not sure if this was the exact inning, but to make our predicament even worse, Lee hurt his calf and heel pretty badly. Basically he could not run or play the field. We had to move him from shortstop to pitcher, and he had not movement off the mound. This also meant when up at bat, no matter where he hit the ball, the furthest he could make it was first base. If we weren't in trouble before, we sure were now.

Moving on....we kept hitting though and managed to push across six more runs in the bottom of the third. We started with six straight singles, a walk and another single. Canale's, mine and Jake's drove in the first three runs. Steve picked up another RBI on his as well. Patrick drove in a run on a fielder's choice and then Lee ended the scoring with his fourth RBI of the game. So, we were still looking pretty good with a nineteen to eleven lead.

In the top of the fourth, we somehow held them to three runs. Our lead was now cut to nineteen to fourteen. But at this point, I could tell that our three outfielders: Marty, Patrick and Steve were beginning to tire. They were working their asses off doing the work of four outfielders.

Then the worst possible thing happened. We had a bad inning at the plate. We went down one, two, three in the fourth. That could not come at a worse time. You could just see our opponent's eyes go wide open knowing they had us on the ropes.

Sure enough, in the top of the fifth they bombarded us with hits, scoring run after run. It was one of the longest innings I have ever been on the defensive side of the ball for, and I wasn't the one running around. Our outfielders did everything they could to get to every ball hit. But after a while they were exhausted, and rightfully so. Little singles turned in to doubles and triples. By the time it was all said and done, twelve runs had crossed the plate. We were now down twenty-six to nineteen. That's when it became pretty obvious. Playing ten against nine, and one of those nine is injured, just doesn't seem fair.

By this time the clock was running out. We needed seven runs to tie and eight to win. The first two batters went down, and then we started to rally. Patrick singled, and Lee walked. Then Haack singled in a run, Canale singled, I singled in another run and Jake followed suit. But that was all she wrote. Unfortunately, it was too little too late. The final score was twenty-six to twenty-two.

I give all the credit in the world to everyone out in the field. They did the best they could. We all did. The disadvantages were just too much to overcome.

From there, it just got worse.

Box Score

	<u>AB</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>BB</u>	<u>2B</u>	<u>3B</u>	<u>HR</u>	<u>RBI</u>
Steve LF	4	2	3	0	0	0	0	4
Marty RF	4	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Patrick CF	5	4	3	0	0	0	0	2
Lee SS	4	2	3	1	0	0	0	4

Haack 3B	5	3	3	0	0	0	0	3
Canale 2B	5	3	5	0	0	0	0	1
Pete C	5	3	4	0	0	0	0	3
Jake 1B	5	1	2	0	0	0	0	2
Scags P	5	3	3	0	0	1	0	3

Big Hitters: Canale, Pete, Steve, Patrick, Lee, Haack, Scags

Game 2

Black Jacks 11
Papa O's 24

Line Score

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	T
Black Jacks	2	1	7	0	1	x	x	11
Papa O's	5	6	5	8	0	x	x	24

To start the game we decided to get creative. Marty suggested that we go with four outfielders and three infielders. Honestly, I couldn't object. The large majority of their hits were into the gaps or short fly balls. We had to try something. So, we moved Scags to the outfield, where he roamed around based on different hitters. And to his credit he made two great running catches.

But, making adjustments like this is like trying to plug a defective damn. When you plug up one hole another one pops open; in this case the infield. What this team started to do was beat the ball on the ground towards wherever we didn't have a player, which was usually second base. When we moved more towards that way, they hit it towards short. Let's be honest, there are supposed to be four infielders for a reason. Anyway, we gave it our best shot, that's for sure.

We opened the first inning with two runs on RBI singles by Haack and Canale to take a two to nothing lead. Papa O's came back with five.

We added one run in the second on a sacrifice fly by Steve to cut into the lead. But it was short lived because they scored six more, to take an eleven to three lead.

In the top of the third we began hitting again, and took advantage of some crappy fielding by our opponents. I told you there weren't that good. Canale knocked in the first run with a single. Then Jake brought in one with another single, followed by Scags knocking in two and Steve knocking in one. Patrick added another RBI and I ended things by bringing in the seventh run on a bases loaded walk. In the middle of the third we were unbelievably down by only one run.

Unfortunately, Papa O's continued to take advantage of our handicap scoring five runs in their half of the inning to increase their lead to sixteen to ten. I have to say, the more the game went on the less impressed I was with Papa O's. They should have been beating the holy hell out of us after three innings. We had nine guys, one was so hurt he couldn't run, and our outfield was beyond exhausted. What really got to me though was they were carrying on like they won the World Series. I wanted to remind them, "You do realize we are a bit under manned here right?" Even the ump couldn't believe it. Saying, "Carrying on like that is bound to come back and haunt you." Let's hope it does.

Anyway, at this point it was a matter if the game would be stopped, it was a matter of when. Unfortunately, the ump can only do that after a certain amount of innings and if a slaughter run rule applies. There is a two-inning slaughter rule of 25

runs, so that didn't apply. There is no slaughter rule in our league for three or four innings. The next is twelve after five. I was beginning to have my doubts as to whether or not they were really good enough to get there.

Going into the top of the fourth, I think our exhaustion caught up with us. We stopped hitting, which is pretty understandable considering the circumstances. We could not score any runs. This gave Papa O's the opening they needed. They pushed across another eight runs to take a twenty-four to ten lead. Again, the majority of these were on what I call small hits. Here is an example. With two men on, a grounder was hit to short (more on this later) an errant throw was made, and all three runs scored. Is that impressive or what? I didn't think so.

In top of the fifth we needed to score three runs to keep the game going. We managed only one on Patrick's RBI single. Thank God this thing was finally over.

		<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>
Steve	LF	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	2
Marty	RF	3	1	2	1	0	0	0	0
Patrick	CF	4	2	3	0	0	0	0	2
Haack	IF	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	1
Canale	IF	4	0	2	0	0	0	0	1
Pete	C	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Jake	1B	4	2	2	0	0	0	0	1
Scags	OF	4	1	3	0	0	0	0	1
Lee	P	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	2

Big Hitters: Patrick, Scags, Steve, Marty, Canale, Jake, Lee

As painful as this was at times, I give everyone credit for giving it everything they had and for never giving up. It just goes to show you that playing nine against ten just isn't very fair.

It's time to move on in a continued effort to turn this season around. There are still plenty of games left.

Comic Relief

Girly Glove

Marty: Whose girly glove is this?

Pete: Hey, that's mine.

Marty: This is your girly glove?

Pete: What do you mean girly glove? It's not like it's pink or anything.

I wasn't thinking

Unfortunately, Haack got doubled off of third on a line drive to third.

Lee: Did you think there were two outs?

Haack: No

Lee: Did you think the ball hit the ground?

Haack: No

Lee: What were you thinking?

Haack: I honestly wasn't.

Pete: At least he's honest

The Longest Single

Lee hit an absolute moon shot over the left fielder's head, for what should have been home run. Unfortunately, he could not run

Pete: Holy shit. You did not just do that?
Lee: It figures
Pete: You've got to be kidding me?
Lee: I can still hit, that's for sure
Pete: That had to be the longest single in the history of softball
Lee: I think it is actually.
Pete: That has to go in an instructional video

The funniest play ever

At some point late in the second game, this play occurred. And as bad as it looked on the field, it was actually very funny. It looked like a slow motion scene from Key Stone Cops, or Key Stone Softball. You really have to picture this in your mind. So read it slowly.

With only three infielders, Canale was playing short, Jake was playing first and Haack was playing second.

There were runners on first and third.

A ground ball is hit to short, and John fielded it cleanly.

As soon as the ball was hit, Jake took off towards second base to try and cover that bag so John could toss him the ball for a force out.

This left first base open. Lee, who was hurting pretty bad at this point, and he could not get off the mound to cover first.

John reacting strictly by instinct fired the ball to first base to Jake who was no longer there. So, he technically threw to no one. The only person standing there was the first base coach from the other team.

The ball ricocheted off the fence and went further up the line towards right field.

I stood there at home plate, put my hands on my head and said, "He did not just do that!"

It was so shocking it seemed like time stood still for a few seconds, because no one really reacted.

I quickly snapped out of it and took off to get the ball. At this point, the guy on third scored and the guy on first was rounding third, so he scored easily.

By the time I got to the ball, no one covered home plate, so the guy who hit the ball also scored.

Poor John. He will forever be associated with the Key Stone Cop Softball Play. Sorry buddy. You have to admit. It is pretty funny.

The exchange while coming off the field was pretty comical.

Pete: I can't believe you threw to first. What happened?
John: I don't know. I can't explain it. I guess it was instinct.
Pete: Who exactly were you throwing to?
John: I was throwing it to that guy. (He pointed to the other team's first base coach who was walking off the field and just happened to be passing by)
First Base Coach: Yeah, I didn't know what to do. I wanted to go and get it for you, but thought that's probably not a good idea.

Pete: That's pretty funny when the other team feels so bad for you they want to help you.

The End.....

Next Games

Games for May 7th were rained out

Next Games are **May 14th**

Opponent: Economos

Record: 6 – 0 **(MAN WOULD I LOVE TO GIVE THEM THEIR FIRST LOSSES!!!)**

Times: 8:30 & 9:30

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

Pete