

BK Control Softball

Season: 8
Recap: 11
Game: 13 / Play-offs
Game Date: 8/11/10

At Least You Guys Aren't a Bunch of Dicks....

FINALLY! Two weeks later than scheduled, the play-off tournament arrived. The top five teams earned spots. The tournament schedule looked like this:

Game 1: # 4 Riffs (7-5) vs. #5 Scorgasm (4-8)
Game 2: Semi Finals: # 2 BK Controls (8-4) vs. # 3 Amadons (8-4)
Game 3: Semi Finals: # 1 The Bumps (11-1) vs. Winner of game 1
Game 4: Finals / Championship: Game 2 winner vs. Game 3 winner

So, for the third time we were facing the Amadons. Based on our first two games, we fully expected another high scoring, close battle.

Not sure how many of you are familiar with the construction madness in the Chicagoland area, but the old saying goes, "There are two seasons in Chicago: winter and construction". Construction completely wrecks havoc on every road imaginable. Just when you think you've found an alternate way to get somewhere, that road goes under construction too! Anyway, we have enough problems getting guys to games on time. Needless to say construction compounded the situation with quite a few guys arriving minutes before the game started and one arriving late. I guess you can say nothing unusual for us.

So, let's get this party started. We were home team so we took the field first. Defensively, we were set up like this:

Pitcher: Trice
Cather: Pete
1st Base: Scummer
2nd Base: John
3rd Base: Phil
Shortstop: Lee
Left: Joe
Left Center: Danny
Right Center: Dave
Right: Marty

The Amadons started out with four consecutive lefties. I don't think I have ever seen that before. All four were awesome hitters, and they started the game with four consecutive hits. By the time we caught our breaths and finally got the third out, they

were up five to nothing. I think we all had a feeling they'd come out swinging, so this was really no surprise to us. It was a matter of how well we could minimize the early onslaught and how fast and hard we could come back.

Our batting order looked like this

Danny

Phil

Lee

Joe

Trice

John

Scummer

Dave

Marty

Pete

Andy

Unfortunately, we weren't quite awake yet, and we came up empty in the first.

Unbelievably, no body scored in the second inning. It was like the calm before the storm.

In the top of the third, their lefties got at it again. I do believe one of them hit a homerun. They scored three more runs, to increase their lead to eight to nothing. We for sure had some work to do. It was time to get down to business.

In the bottom of the third, Andy got things going with a single. Two batters later, Phil singled. Then Lee hit a grounder to short that was bobbled to load the bases. Joe came up and crushed a double to the fence in left to bring in two, finally putting us on the board. Trice walked. John then hit a grounder to the pitcher that he the booted and threw away. Joe wound up scoring on the play. Dave then singled in Trice for the final run of the inning. We managed to cut the lead to eight to five.

Game on!

In the top of the fourth, their lefties once again inflicted serious damage. They hit their second homerun of the game. All totaled they scored five more runs, getting back the five we scored, to take a thirteen to five lead.

As we came to the bench Lee and I both began to yell. He said something like, "Eight runs, no big deal here!" I added, "We've done this a million times guys! Eight runs is nothing!"

Marty led off and singled to center. He took second when the outfielder bobbled the ball. I came up and singled up the middle to bring him home to get the scoring going. Andy moved me to second with a single to left center. Then Danny grounded a single to left bringing me home for our second run of the inning. (Yes, my leg finally healed and I am able to run again. I even slid when I scored!)

Phil singled to right to load the bases. Lee made it six consecutive singles bringing in Andy and Danny. Trice doubled to left and cleared the bases bringing in two more. John singled and took second on a throw. Scummer singled to right bringing in both Trice and John. After the dust settled, we pushed eight runs across and tied the score at thirteen!

Now this is playoff softball folks!

Going into the fifth inning, it was like starting all over again with a shortened game because the score was tied. We did a good job and held them to one run. This gave us a monstrous opportunity to take the lead and possibly put the game away.

Unfortunately, we came up empty handed.

In the sixth, things just seemed to quiet down. They did not score for only the second time in the game. We once again had a huge opportunity to take the game away. For the second inning in a row, we just could not put any hits together and as a result did not score.

Going into the seventh, we trailed by one. We needed to hold them yet one more time. And we did just that. For the second inning in a row, and third time in the game, Trice shut them down. It just seemed like he was moving the ball around a little bit more staying away from their power. Whatever, he was doing it was working.

This was it. All we could ask for was a chance and we had it, being only one run down and having last at bats. All we needed was two runs to steal the game and advance to the finals.

Trice led off and singled. Then John blooped a single to left, putting two runners on. Dave came up in a huge spot and singled to right off the first basemen's glove, bringing in Trice and tying the game at fourteen! We still had two runners on and were one big moment away from a win.

Scummer came up and the Amadons decided to intentionally walk him to load the bases and create a force at any base. They brought their infield to try and cut down a runner at the plate and their outfielders came in a bit too.

The stage was set. We could not ask for a better opportunity to score one run. We had bases loaded and no outs!! A hit, a walk, a decent fly ball even a grounder not directly at an infielder would win the game.

What transpired from this point on can only be described as a Gift from the Gods or just plain old fashioned Irish Luck for the Amadons. Remember, an Amadon is an Irish phrase.

Quite simply, we did not score. The who, what, where and how of what actually happened does not really matter. I will get into this more later. But for now, let's just say someone was looking out for the Amadons. Everything and I mean everything fell in their favor. They could not have planned it any better. All I do know is after a ground ball and a fly ball that ended in a bang-bang play, they should have either fell to their knees to thank whoever their God is, or kissed the Leprechaun they had hiding in one of their bags! The chances of them coming out of that situation and not giving up any runs are pretty astronomical. But, somehow, somehow, they did it.

So, we move on to extra innings with the score tied at fourteen. For those that don't remember, every extra inning starts with a runner on second base in order to promote scoring. We had shut them down for two consecutive innings, but I really did not expect that to continue. I knew they would score. It was just a matter of how many. This is a good team and you can only keep them down for so long.

As expected, they pounced quickly with their lefties once again playing a major role. They managed to score three runs, which actually wasn't too bad.

A three run lead is usually not ever safe, and is certainly not insurmountable. We were due to break through again as well. We had scored only one run in the last three innings.

I trotted out to second base as the start off runner, and I truly believed I would be scoring in a matter of minutes. What flashed through my head was last season, when we scored nine runs in the bottom of the last inning to win the first round game. I truly believed we were going to win. I didn't pray or hope. I believed!

Well, again...call it what you want, the bottom line is, it was simply not meant to be. We did not score a single run. Game and season over!

I wish I had better news. We truly believed we had this game. Hats off to them for getting it done and to whatever lucky charm they had with them. Sometimes in order to be good, you have to be lucky.

Line Score

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>T</u>
Amadons	5	0	3	5	1	0	0	3	17
BK Controls	0	0	5	8	0	0	1	0	14

Box Score

	<u>AB</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>BB</u>	<u>SAC</u>	<u>2B</u>	<u>3B</u>	<u>HR</u>	<u>RBI</u>
Danny	5	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Phil	3	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Lee	5	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Joe	4	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
Trice	3	2	3	1	0	1	0	0	2
John	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dave	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Scummer	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Marty	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pete	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Andy	4	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
		19	14	5	0	2	0	0	12

Hitting

- Seven guys had two hits and five had two RBI. That's about the most spread out I have seen hits and RBI in a long time.
- The lack of extra base hits hurt us again. We only had two doubles.

Coach's Corner

- This is the first time we lost a first round play-off game since season two, when we were playing in Westchester.

- This was for sure a tough one. I was pretty numb for about twenty-four hours. But after a while you just realize that for some reason, it was just not meant to be. It is certainly not the way any of us wanted or expected the season to end. I know we all thought if we got by that game we would have won the championship. As it turns out The Bumps (the first place team, who we beat 21 – 5) LOST their first round game to the fourth seeded Riffs, who had beaten the Scorgasms in game one. And in the finals The Amadons won it all by beating the Riffs 18-12. The Riffs is the team we lost the rain shortened game to, and then beat 18 -2. This is why it's so easy to think we could have walked away with the championship. But...woulda, coulda, shoulda...means nothing.
- In retrospect, it is easy to blame on one person, one play or one thing in a game like this. However, that's bullshit. We did too many things wrong as a team, over the first six innings, that put us in that situation to begin with. It should have never come down to that. For example: not enough extra base hits; not enough clutch hits; only one run in the last four innings. That's the stuff that really lost that game. Win as a team, lose as a team! And that's all I've got to say about that.

Statistical Tidbits and Anomalies

- To prove how important extra base hits are, check out these numbers. We won both games that Trice hit a homerun. When we banged out five extra base hits or more, our record was 5 – 0. In games with at least one triple we were 4 – 1. When we had four extra base hits or less, our record was 2 – 5. With three extra base hits or less, we were 2- 4. Get the picture? I think the team is in dire need of another power hitter! What do you think?
- Batting Average leaders (Top 5): Trice .680, Phil .667, Lee .638, Joe .594, Ebz .576
- For the seventh time in eight seasons, Joe led the team in RBI. And just think he only played in eight of the twelve games. Here are your RBI leaders (Top 5): Joe 20, John 19, Pete 16, Lee 15, Ebz 15
- Over the course of eight seasons, only three players have collected over 200 hits. Yes, I have statistics for every year we have been in existence since 2003. Considering most seasons are about 16 games long, that's pretty damned good. Last year Joe was the first to hit the mark and he now has 228 hits. Lee did it earlier this year and he now has 226. And the third....well...that would be me. I now have 203. Of course, this has everything to do with how many games you play and how many seasons you have played, but there is something to say about it. At least in my book.
- Finally....only ONE player played in every game and got at least one hit in every game. Who was it? No, I do not mean getting a hit in every game the player

played, because a few guys did that. I mean played IN EVERY GAME (12 total) and got a hit in all of them. Answer at the bottom of the recap.

Closing Thoughts & Thanks

- Special thanks to my father-in-law Bill Koch (BK Controls), for sponsoring us again! We all really appreciate it.
- Thank you to every guy who played, even those that chipped in for just a game or two. It is greatly appreciated.
- I have been asked several times now if there will be a season nine. What I will say at this point is this. I would LOVE to keep the team going. But, every year it gets tougher to field a team on a consistent basis with solid players. Chasing players week after week is a tough deal. Let's face it we all have families, kids, obligations, school, business travel, vacation, coaching responsibilities etc, etc. And that is to be expected. The answer to making this easier on me is finding a few more players who are willing to fill in when needed. If we can do that, then the team will be back. Besides, I have been saying for a few years now that I want a 10 year softball career. I still have two to go. So, as my favorite uncle used to tell me all the time. "The good lord willing and the creek don't rise....."

Comic Relief

Pre-Playoff Email fun

Pete: Gonna get there early and root hard for the Riffs! LOL!
Ebz: I thought you would be a scorgasm kind of guy.
Pete: Nah...don't like those guys at all. Tried to have a conversation with one of them after our game a few weeks ago and they guy was a complete dick! Besides...I want to play the team with the chick AND get a little more revenge for that rain shortened game!
Ebz: Maybe he thought you were a dick! Ever think of that? Ha!
Pete: Nah! I'm not the dick type...an ass for sure...even an asshole...but not a dick!

Vania is here

After not seeing Joe's wife Vania for quite a few years, she made her second appearance this season.

Vania: Hi Pete!
Pete: Hi Vania! Good to see you again!
Vania! Yep I'm here again.
Pete: Very happy to see that.
Vania: I gotta tell you though, if Joe doesn't play any better than he did last time, this is the last time I come.

I don't know how you do it

Marty How do you do it?
Joe: What?
Marty I don't know how you get around the bases so fast.
Joe: I just do
Marty: You run like you've got a stick up your ass

An Amadon Closing

After the game Lee and I were hanging out talking. Every time an Amadon player would come by we'd say good luck or whatever....I guess word got around and one of their players came over to us.

Amadon It was good playing you guys.
Lee: Yeah you too.
Pete: Yeah, good luck
Lee: Yeah, good luck to you guys
Amadon: Thanks. You guys are good to play against.
Lee: You too. We had three real good games.
Amadon: At least you're not a bunch of dicks!
Pete: Yeah, we're alright.
Lee: We're not like that.
Amadon: We just wanna play and have a good time.
Lee: Yeah, just play and have some fun.
Amadon: No you guys are cool.
Pete: We may be a lot of things, but we're not dicks

ANSWER: The coach!!!

The End!

The Coach Has Spoken.....