

5 – 18 – 23 State Farm vs Ponder Hardware

It was a perfect evening at the Field of Dreams. The weatherman corrected himself and removed the possibility of rain from the forecast just as the fans were streaming in for the State Farm – Ponder Hardware matchup. After the coaches meeting and the singing of the National Anthem, Clyde Ziegler, home plate; Carol Rumberger, first base and Ed Cawley, third base, took their positions and Jackie Fox, Ponder's lead-off batter stepped up to the plate. Jackie, who is one of the most dependable lead-off batters in the league popped one up to John Gauthier at short for the first out and it was game on. Because of some ball bobbling, otherwise known as a 'throwing error' hatless Mike "Crazy Legs" Braam turned a single into a double. That led the way for hits by Ken Ford, Bryce Treece and Jerry Hinson to produce a three run inning for Ponder. With Lulu by my side we settled in for what we could see would be an exciting game.

Lulu, did I say exciting? Well excuse me, I meant to say one heck of a gangbusters exciting game. Peter Grasser led off with a single and then, yes, let me say it again, AND THEN John Gauthier blasted one to center that got past everyone and rolled to the fence. John who was vying for the moniker of "Crazy Legs" turned on his turbo and rocketed around the bases for an in the park HOME RUN. That even got Lulu up out of her seat to join in with cheering crowd and that was just the first inning. Mike Lorenc, Frank Kaker and Gary Warrick couldn't keep up with John's HR, because they only hit doubles!!!, but in the end five runs were on the scoreboard to end the inning.

At the end of one State Farm 5, Ponder 3

Rick Werstein, Randy Catron, Sue Kamrath and Glen Stephens all got on base in the second inning but only Glen got credit for an RBI for the one run scored.

Just like the first inning, this time Tracey Ginnings turned her single into a double after a throwing issue, 'ball bobble' at first. Bill Maynard made it to first, but then the excitement waned and after the third out the score at the end of two was State Farm 5 and Ponder 4.

Holy smoke Lulu, hitch up your girdle because the third inning was the end of waning excitement. Crazy Legs Braam doubled to right, Ken Ford singled and Bob Riley walked, loading the bases with no outs. Treece, Hinson, Curry and Werstein gathered up a boat load of RBIs bringing in five more runs, side out.

State Farm decided they wanted some of that action and put together a three run inning, with the score at the end of three, Ponder 9 and State Farm 8.

In the fourth Lulu finally settled down, that was just too much excitement for the little Frenchy. Well Ponder also settled down with three quick outs, bringing State Farm up to bat.

While Tracey, Bill and Joe Lecroy all got on base only Tracey crossed home for the score, but that is not how the story played out. Where is Kelly Petre (NO SHOW) when we need him to answer questions and explain the action. I hope all of you still have his phone number so you can call him. Anyway, back to the game where, if you blinked you missed out on all of the action. With Maynard on second and Lecroy on first, big Louis Berthold hit a squib grounder to Gauthier at short who proceeded to tag out Maynard on his way to third and then with a few more steps John tags out Lecroy running to second and then throws out big Lou at first for the triple play. WHEW, have you got all that. Well if

you don't, just call Kelly for the details because Lulu will be helping at the call desk assisting Kelly to answer all of your questions. Now that is a phone call that would certainly be worth the ten cents.

Well before we got into all of that triple play stuff, Tracey scored tying the game at 9 all at the end of four, even with John acting like a one man infield.

The top of the batting order brought Jackie up to start the 5th inning, where she and the rest of her storm trooper teammates all got on base with three runners scoring. Jerry H. added 2 more RBIs to his evenings production of 5 through 5. Ponder went ahead 12 to 9.

State Farm started the 5th with bats blazing. Peter G singled, then John G, (of the G whiz kids) hit a pop up over the head short stop Bryce Treece, who made an acrobatic, backwards over his shoulder catch but then fell unceremoniously on his butt. But he did make the out and held the runner at first. All in all it was fun to watch. After singles by John Coffman and Mike Lorenc, with the bases loaded and only one out Frank Kaker triples to bring in two more runs (4 RBIs for Frank). Gary Warrick's single brought in Frank for the fourth run and State Farm took back the lead at 13 to 12.

Folks this was one heck of a ball game and it wasn't over yet.

For Ponder in the 6th, everyone and their uncle got on base but only Randy Catron was able to cross home, and that run softball fans tied up the game one more time at 13 all.

Just like Lulu who was all pooped out from jumping up and down for the last hour of excitement, State Farm was also pooped out in the 6th and the side was quickly retired 1-2-3 with the score still tied at 13 all.

If you didn't already know, those benches are not comfortable after an hour, especially if you have a boney butt, so I was really happy to stand

for a 7th inning stretch to get some circulation moving in my backside. Meanwhile the umps and coaches were all agreeing that they would start the buffet inning. The hard working crew in the press box were happy for short break as they had been very busy keeping track of this action packed game. Tim Trotter kept us entertained with informative banter and great DJ skills. Linda Cawley was busy running an active scoreboard and Carl Caruso was tested to the limits, keeping the scorebook with things like triple plays, tags and force outs. Games like this require great crews to keep everything straight and reported correctly and this crew truly succeeded.

The 7th inning was a tough assignment for State Farm's pitcher, Joe Lecroy, who with the game tied would be facing those Ponder storm troopers at the top of the batting order; Braam, Ford, Riley, Treece, Hinson, Curry, Nelson, Werstein, Catron and Kamrath. Are you scared yet? The thought of that lineup should be enough to scare even the bravest soul. In spite of the situation Joe did a great job holding Ponder to just 5 runs, with the score now 18 – 13 Ponder.

Based on the previous innings, this game was not over. Louis, Peter and G whiz John all got on base. John Coffman hit a pop up over the head Bryce Treece, who again just as he did in the 5th inning, made an acrobatic, backwards over the shoulder catch for the first out, but this time he didn't fall on his butt. Mike Lorenc's triple drove in three more runs. The fans were now all standing and cheering to see if State Farm could tie up the game again, but sadly the magic ran out and the game ended with a final score of Ponder Hardware 18 and State Farm 16.

Well Lulu that was exciting, exhilarating and exhausting all at the same time. That was a heck of a game, I am worn out and I wasn't even playing. Congrats and cheers to both teams for an demonstration of great softball.

If this is a precursor for what the playoffs will be like we better get rested up because I expect those games to be even more explosive high scoring events. I can't wait for the games to start.

Lulu it is always a good time, see you at the playoffs.

Notable Performances

Mike Braam	4-4	
Ken Ford	4-4	
Bob Riley	3-4,	1 RBI
Bryce Treece	4-4,	3 RBIs
Jerry Hinson	3-4,	6 RBIs
Ty Nelson	3-4,	1 RBI
Rick Werstein	3-4,	1 RBI
Peter Grasser	3-4	
John Gauthier	3-4	Home Run
Mike Lorenc	4-4	5 RBIs
Frank Kaker	3-4	4 RBIs
Gary Warrick	3-3	3 RBIs