

Growing up, my coaches always told me, if you're not fifteen minutes early, you're late! Well, apparently they were right, because when I arrived at 5:57 on Thursday evening for the showdown between **Farmers Insurance and Rodney Landscaping (RL)**, there were already two runs on the board and a full inning in the books. Clearly defense was tight that first inning, but the lead batters for Farmers Insurance managed to string together a series of hits that led to a small two run rally before the RL defense shut them down with three quick outs to end the inning. **End of one: Farmers had the lead 2 - 0.**

In the top half of the second inning, Rodney Landscaping was looking for revenge. Jerry Hinson and Pat Snider each singled, setting the stage for Jeff Rumberger who, as we all know, rarely misses an opportunity with ducks on the pond. Jeff drove the ball hard to right field, past the waiting defense, all the way to the fence. And just like that, RL took the lead, 3-2! But they weren't done yet...oh no...not yet. Tim Winiesdorffer, Dan Patrick, and George Keller followed with three more hits for two runs, stopping only because they had met the five run maximum for one team in an inning, Time to give Farmers a chance. Bob Wheeler got them started with a stand up triple to set the tone. Danny Thomas sent him scampering home with an infield hit to short. Another single by Allen Day sent Danny to third, putting runners on the corners with no outs, as Charley Dobson stepped up to the plate. Charley slammed the ball up the middle for a single and the second RBI of the inning. A sacrifice fly off the bat of Bob Laderach and a couple of infield hits too hot to handle put three more runs on the board for Farmers, so that at the **end of two, Farmers had regained the lead 7 - 5.**

The Farmers held on tight to their lead in the third, shutting down the RL bats with the first 1, 2, 3 inning of the game. Rodney Landscaping returned the favor, holding the Farmers to just one hit in the bottom half of the inning. A double goose egg on the board in the third!

Luay Ashoo decided to liven things up to lead off the fourth, sending a screaming line drive back to pitcher, Sean Curry. Sean was up to the task, however, snagging the potential double out of mid air and dashing Luay's hopes for an extra base hit. The catch was made...the crowd was awed...and Sean was spotted shaking the sting off his hand out there on the pitcher's mound. Nice catch, Sean! The hit was taken off the board, but the fire had been lit. Doubles off the bats of Scott Lasater and Pat Snider along with singles by Jerry Hinson and Jeff Rumberger led to three more runs for Rodney Landscaping. Coupled with tight defense in the bottom of the inning that put another goose egg on the board for Farmers, and Rodney Landscaping had taken the lead. **End of 4: Rodney Landscaping 8 - Farmers 7.**

The Farmers defense kicked in hard in the fifth and sixth innings, holding RL to just two hits, and not allowing any of those light blue jerseys to cross the plate. Their offense also came back to life, scoring five runs in the fifth, sparked by a lead off triple off the bat of Bob Laderach. A double by Steve Courtney, singles off the bats of John Gauthier, Steve TaFoya, and a triple by Jay Wlssink put the first four runs on the board and left Jay standing on third base. Lisa McGlaston then smashed a hard ground ball between shortstop and third base, knocking in the fifth run of the inning. Farmers scored one more in the sixth off singles by Danny Thomas and Allen Day, making the score **Farmers 13 - Rodney Landscaping 8** leading into the buffet inning.

The Farmers got two quick outs in the top of the seventh, but RL wasn't going down without a fight. Jeff Rumberger and Tim Winiesdorffer kept the RL hopes alive with fly balls to RCF and LCF respectively, putting runners on first and second with two outs. Unfortunately for Rodney Landscaping however, that would be the end of their offensive story for the evening. A ground ball to the shortstop would end the inning...and the game. **Final Score: Farmers 13 - Rodney Landscaping 8**

Hats off...

To our stellar press box crew:

- Peter Day on the microphone
- Bob Riley keeping the book
- Jacquie Maurer working the scoreboard

To our umpire crew

- Mike Conley calling the balls and strikes at home plate
- Stu White making the calls at first base
- Mick Calverly rounding out the team at third base

To the players - who left it all on the field...and had fun doing it!

To the crowd...who laughed...and cheered...and sang...and even danced a little. (Rumor has Mike Conley does a mean Twist!)

That's it...another fun night at the ballpark!

A couple of games coming up on Tuesday, May 31st, starting early at 4:00 p.m. C'mon out and catch a playoff game or two.