

Wednesday, May 24th Field of Dreams

Another perfect evening for RR Championship softball, sunny, a gentle breeze, and a comfortable 81F, just perfect. The 2nd placed Farmers (F) (Manager Mike Moss) would like to push his team to the next playoff level, taking on the 7th placed Argyle Dental (AD) (Manager Ken Kamrath). But as we witness every year, playoffs are full of surprises. In fact, all during 2023 we have witnessed pro-sports top teams crumbling under pressure to lesser teams. In NHL hockey the Boston Bruins, in NBA LeBron James and the LA Lakers, so many sport surprises. What is not a surprise is our experienced Press Box team, Jimmy Reese bringing his comical wit and command of announcing, Ron Schwertner making the scorebook perfect, and Linda Cawley keeping the scoreboard accurate for all us fans to follow. Controlling tonight's game from behind the plate was Umpire Mike Braam and assisting him in the field was 1st base Kevin Buckrucker and 3rd base Danny Thomas. Honors to our flag and it was game on!

1st Inning:

Farmers Sharon Deputy threw the first pitch of the game to AD lead batter Bob Laderach who singled, a single from Bill Reese gave F the first out on a force to 2nd base, Steve Wardlaw singled for the second force out at 2nd base. Two out and Manager Ken Kamrath smashed for a double and one RBI, Ken Ford (now nicknamed 'crash' for obvious reasons) added another RBI on his single, but on the next single hit F achieved their 3rd out on their third force out at 2nd to keep AD to 2 scored runs. Farmers was kept to a short inning by AD SS Steve Wardlaw who made catches for two outs and the third out was a force out at 2nd base. **SCORE: AD-2 F-0**

2nd Inning:

Mick Calverley started off AD with a solid hit to RCF, Joe Dougherty sent up a high flyer that was captured by 3rd base Clyde Ziegler – one out, Sue Kamrath singled but F got the second out at 2nd base, bringing up Louis Berthold (who I now know is nicknamed "Lulu", not to be confused with the sexy French lady friend of Game Reporter Ken, did you know- the name means "precious female warrior"- no comment Louis), but he got on base with a solid single, Bob Wheeler also added a single to fill the bases, bringing up tough Cheryl Soule who punched out a single and RBI, but the next batter singled and F was able to stop AD to only one scored run. John Gauthier (the only sub in this game – certainly unusual for RR softball) had a fabulous hit, but ROV Bill Reese was there to make one of two great catches this inning for 2 two outs. The innings third out came on a single from Gary Warrick, keeping F scoreless. **SCORE: AD-3 F-0**

3rd Inning:

AD Bill Reese drove a hard hit towards third base, but Clyde Ziegler handled it for the first out, Steve Wardlaw earned a walk, bringing up Manager Ken Kamrath whose high hit fly ball was caught by the ROV speedster Mike Moss, for out #2 (no RBI's this time Sir), but undeterred Ken Ford aka 'crash' tripled and added another RBI. Weldon Wallace shot up a lovely fly, but that third base Clyde Ziegler messed up his hopes getting the third out. Farmers were hitting the ball, but AD was fielding for the outs, Bill Smiley smashed a long shot towards LCF – but then that Manager Ken Kamrath chased it down to end the Farmer dreams. **SCORE: AD-4 F-0**

4th Inning:

Mick Calverley dropped a perfect hit over the 3rd baseman to land himself on third base, Joe Dougherty added a single, but now pitching for F - Gary Warrick who caught a batter on strikes, and after a Louis Berthold ('Lulu') pop to SS John Gauthier, he threw to catcher Sharon Deputy who easily made the catch for the final out at home plate for no scored runs. Farmers had to get themselves back into this game – no more snoozing! Sharon Deputy sailed a shot over third base for a single, Mike Moss fired a hot tamale, but SS Steve Wardlaw handled it for one out, Gary 'Papa' Brown got on base with his single and starting the top of the batting order: Andy Bradshaw, with a single and Farmers first RBI. Carol Rumberger added to load the bases with her single, setting the stage for the seasoned Johnny Blecher whose solid single added another 2 RBIs, however AD did get an out at second base. John Gauthier added another 2 RBIs smashing for a triple, but the Farmers drive was cut short when a fly ball from Gary Warrick was caught.

SCORE: AD-4 F-4

5th Inning:

Excellent fielding by Farmers would frustrate AD and keep them scoreless this inning. Most notable was the third out high fly ball snagged in LCF by Johnny Blecher to make that third out. With the game tied, Farmers remained hungry. Farmers Jeff Rumberger stepped up and boom, stand-up double, next Henry Moore, boom, dang, that AD ROV Bill Reese messed it up - one out - well Clyde Ziegler restarts the effort with a well-placed single to RCF and earns an RBI, Bill Smiley gets on base with his single, Sharon Deputy singles for another RBI, but also a forced out at second base, two out. Mike Moss missiles for a standup double, but AD Bob Wheeler chases down a Gary 'Papa' Brown flyer to end the inning. **SCORE: AD-4 F-6**

6th Inning:

This would be the highlight inning for AD. However, AD leadoff batter Bill Reese's pop ended in the 2nd base Andy Bradshaw's glove- one out. It was a Steve Wardlaw single that started the roll, Ken Kamrath singled, bringing up 'crash' Ken Ford to double and bring in the first RBI, 'Wylie' Weldon Wallace added another RBI on his single, Mick Calverley copied for another RBI, three thus far. The singles kept rolling with Joe Dougherty, and Sue Kamrath adding an RBI on her single. 'Lulu' Louis Berthold sent a flyer way out to LCF, but Johnny Blecher was on it for his second great catch of the evening, two out. It was AD Bob Wheeler who ended the batting frenzy when his single landed the fifth RBI to reach that RR magical number five. Hopefully, Farmers was starting the inning at the top of their talented batting order, but AD would have none of it. AD chased down all the bats, with notable catches by ROV Jim Reese and 3rd base Weldon Wallace, keeping Farmers scoreless this inning. **SCORE: AD-9 F-6**

7th 'Buffet'

No flip flop in the 'buffet', the score is too close. AD is going to try and ensure their lead, and Farmers need to squash it. Cheryl Soule singled to start the AD prospects, but Farmers dug deep and quickly put down three out, with 'medical miracle' Johnny Blecher (Announcer Jim Reese mentioned that visiting doctor's offices may be a Blecher hobby) making his third timely LCF catch of the evening. Who said anything about age slowing us down? Now it would all be up to team Farmers to produce 4 runs to capture a playoff semi-final spot, but unfortunately it would not be in the spring season. AD jumped on

every hit like 'crazed rabbits' to shut Farmers down scoreless. Continuing the week's trend, all the season's underdog teams are rising to the occasion. This was a hard nerve-racking well fought game by both teams - very entertaining and nail-biting for all us fans though! I can only imagine what Thursday's game will result in? Guess I will have to go to the Field of Dreams to see!

A couple of Announcer Jim Reese's comments that I would like to mention: his request to HP Ump Mike Braam to not refer to a ball hit into the pitchers netting as 'DEAD' sounded like a sound request here on the ranch. Secondly, he brought up the unassisted triple out play that occurred earlier this week, well I did some homework because this was a RR softball first for me. Apparently, the odds of witnessing an unassisted triple play are 1 in 12,492. It is a play when a defensive player makes all 3 outs him/herself (oh ya, ladies have done it). Most often an unassisted triple out occurs when either the SS or 2nd baseman catches a line drive (one out), then steps on a base before the approaching forced runner (two out), and then can tag a runner before he can return to a base (three out). So, folks, those of us attending the evening RR softball games this week witnessed a 'softball rarity'.

On to the next game . . .

Killer Neagli reporting from the Field where Dreams occur.