

It was a beautiful spring evening, everything was perfect for another exciting softball game at Field of Dreams, but as usual that pesky Texas wind was howling out of the southeast and as expected it would affect the game. The teams, Rodney Landscaping and State Farm Insurance lined up for the National Anthem after which Danny Thomas made the call to play ball. Jeff Peck was at first with Scotty Baker at third when State came to bat. John Gauthier hit a hard grounder to center but Bruce Horeftis played the first bounce, grabbed the ball off of his shoe top and whipped it into second to hold John on first. Then a parade of big bats, Frank Kaker a double, Mike Lorenc a triple, and Steve Ward a double, sent three runs across the plate.

After his great defensive play, Bruce opened for Rodney with a single, followed with singles by Becky Milby and Craig Bishop, but alas no one scored.

In the second, State sent up Peter Grasser, Hal Wasson, pitcher Joe Lecroy and coach John Coffman who all got on base resulting in two more runs.

The Rodney players decided they wanted some of that action and came out swinging. Slocum, Doty, Vargo, Schewin and Horeftis singled and Frazier and Parker doubled. With no outs, Rodney drove in 5 runs, inning over, score Rodney 6 and State 5.

John Gauthier, Frank Kaker and Mike Lorenc singled in the third but no runs scored for State.

Johnny Blecher was doing his usual great job on the mike entertaining the fans with Jackie Fox keeping the book and Carol Rumberger working the scoreboard. They seemed to be having a grand old time based on the giggles and laughter that drifted down from the press box, but they were on top of their game and never missed a single pitch. They had to

be on their game because Rodney was coming to bat and they wanted to continue what they had started in the second inning.

After her second single, Becky moved to second on Luay Ashoo's single and then BAMMM, everyone just watched as Craig Bishop's fly ball climbed higher and higher until it dropped over the fence in right for a home run driving in two more runs. Not to be outdone, Mike Slocum hit one deep to the fence and started running like the police were after him until he crossed home for the second HR of the inning. With four more runs the score was now Rodney 10 and State 5.

The wind was making it difficult for the pitchers as it kept blowing the balls outside the strike zone and it was blowing balls safe when it looked like they were going foul. However the batters sure loved it as the fly balls were really taking off for the horizon.

In the fourth, Steve Ward took advantage of that wind and smacked one to the fence for a triple. Bill Maynard popped one up over third base that was going foul until the wind pushed it back in fair and in the confusion Bill scrambled to second, scoring Steve from third. With the winds blowing so hard there were a lot of deep fly balls, but that meant there were also a lot of great catches. Dale Frazier pulled in a couple of those deep balls including one by Peter Grasser for the first out. While Hal Wasson and 'Chief' Mike Flatt singled, Becky Milby made a great backhanded snag and flipped the ball to Slocum for the force at 2<sup>nd</sup>. Joe Lecroy singled but great defense held State to two runs, with the score now Rodney 10 and State 7.

Rodney fought back in the fourth with two walks, 4 singles and 1 double to drive in three more runs for a total of 13.

State was ready to take back the action in the fifth with doubles by John Gauthier, Frank Kaker, Mike Lorenc and Steve Ward resulting in three more runs with the score now 13 – 10 Rodney.

My, oh my, oh my, in the bottom of the fifth it was time for chaos and confusion. After a rare put out for Slocum at first, Dale Frazier singled, to be followed by Tom Doty's single. This is when the fun started. Tom's short grounder went to Gauthier at short who had to charge the ball, he flipped it to Dianna at second who collided with Dale on his way to second and then they both collided with John who was still charging. Are you still with me? So here's the situation, Dianna, Dale and John are all on the ground on top of each other and on top of second base all at the same time with arms and legs flying everywhere. That was when Danny Thomas and his staff as well as the rest of the infielders ran to see if anyone was injured. They were all so entangled they couldn't get up without the efforts of the surrounding crowd of players. After pulling them apart everyone got up it was good to see that no one was injured other than a little case of embarrassment. After conferences and discussions, Dale was safe at second and he eventually scored on Ty Nelson's single, with the score at the end of five, Rodney 14 and State 10. I can't believe Lulu missed this whole thing because she wanted to go shopping!

State's sixth didn't produce any runs. Then at the bottom of the sixth, Becky who was 4 for 4 and a walk, singled. Luay who was 3 for 4, tripled for another RBI. Craig who was 3 for 4 with a HR and a walk, singled driving in Luay for Craigs fifth RBI. The inning ended with two more runs for Rodney with the score Rodney 16 and State 10.

The seventh was a buffet inning for State, but sadly they couldn't generate any kind of comeback push and as the sun was rapidly setting

in the west the game ended with a final score of Rodney 16 and State 10.

It was an exciting game with the ball moving all around in the wind, the long ball hitters letting it fly and both teams putting on a great show of defensive effort. Until next time at the Field of Dreams.....