

2021 JESSICA COOK WOOD BAT TOURNAMENT

PLATINUM WINNERS!

Bonfire. Burgers. Beers. Baseball.

The 88s had themselves a well-rounded end of summer weekend that included another B word; bling. A platinum division crown from the 27th annual Jessica Cook Wood Bat Tournament has been added to the trophy case of the 88s.

They snagged the overall #1 seed after rolling through Saturday with a perfect 3-0 record, finishing +21 (18-4, 14-0, 14-2) thanks in part to Schumer's 8 hits, home runs from Travis and Brian, a perfect 11/11 from Jeff (who finished 16/17 overall), and more stellar pitching and defense from Sandi and the squad behind her.

Claiming the top seed meant the 88s had the luxury of sleeping in and filling up with a fantastic breakfast graciously made by Nikki on Sunday morning.

Sunday was a tougher test but they were up to the challenge thanks to being fueled by the teams new official drink, the 88s Blue Mimosa, unveiled by Schumer during breakfast.

The semi-final will likely go down as one of the more memorable games in franchise history.

After Jeff opened the game with an impressive running snag in RF to take away a hit, the 88s stayed reliant on their defense, including a web gem by Myles ranging from SS for a diving catch. They had to keep the game close long enough to try and scrap together enough offence.

Down 2-1 in the bottom of the last inning, Chandler used his patience and wits to draw a key 2 base walk and 2 batters later Adam knocked him in with a sharp single to send it into extra innings.

In extras, Off Constantly was threatening with runners on 1st and 3rd with only 1 out. The 88s would need something special to keep it tied.

A sharply hit ball was knocked down by Jay at SS who tossed it over to Jesse at 2B who made a great turn and throw to a stretched out Marnie at 1B for the 3rd and final out of the inning as the runner from 3rd harmlessly crossed home plate.

In their half of the extra inning with Jesse waiting on 2B (last out of the previous inning starts at 2B), Myles stepped in with 2 outs and knocked a liner to RF that scored Jesse for the walk off winner to send them into the finals.

After a 4 hour gap between games, the 88s came into the final game a little rusty for a re-match against the same Off Constantly team. While they struggled to get back into gear, they found themselves down 4-0 after 2 innings. Once they got rolling again, the 88s did 88s things.

After an uncharacteristic off game by Travis in the semi's he came back as his usual strong self with a 3/3 + run + RBI line. Marnie came up big with 2 huge run sparking hits, Jeff capped off his impressive weekend with 3 more hits and runs, Veronica fueled the fires with 3 hits of her own and Brian drew another key walk, this time with bases loaded to score 2 runs and tie the game.

They finished the game on an 8-1 run to win 8-5 and take the tournament win after Travis wrapped things up with a running grab in CF.

As twilight rolled in late on a Sunday evening, the 88s cozy warm in their newly won hoodies, plans were discussed to take their show on the road in 2022 by playing in the London SPO provincials. They're starting to outgrow their original shells.

EXTRA BITS:

- Hot dog hot dog hot diggidy dog
- Franchise win streak now at 25 overall
- Team Shake and Bake went undefeated in Cornhole
- The franchise records its first ever shutout (14-0 in game 2 on Saturday)
- Walk up songs are fun
- Linda's first AB in years resulted in her getting on base for the first time in her career