

2022 JESSICA COOK WOOD BAT TOURNAMENT

THE CROWN DEFENSE

It's the year 2022, the world has just lost who some are calling the last great monarch in Queen Elizabeth II. In desperate need of stability, the population invests their hopes into the 88s ahead of their Jessica Cook Wood Bat Tourney crown defense in Welland Ontario...

The dense atmospheric fog that blanketed the city during the early hours of opening day was abruptly burned away by a rising mid-morning sun. It felt like someone was smiling down on the tournament, giving all involved one last surge of gorgeous summer warmth.

The 88s were as hot as the weather during day 1.

They gave up an average of 1.3 runs per game during the 3 round robin games to finish +32 as the #1 overall seed.

- Game 1 vs. Ricks River Rats: 12-3
- Game 2 vs. Flaming Moes: 7-0
- Game 3 vs. WalkOffs: 17-1

Some of the individual stand outs included:

Pope blasting a 3 run inside the park home run as part of his 7/8 + team leading 7 runs + 6 RBI day 1 total.

Sandi's 1.89 day 1 ERA being nearly overshadowed by her 4/4 + 3 run + 3 RBI game 3 batting performance, her first perfect line of 2022.

Rookie Melissa knocking off 3 years of rust with an incredible running shoestring catch on a hard hit dying liner in center field during.

Nikki leading the team with 8 hits (8/12) and Sean leading the team with 7 RBI.

With the fire crackling and wieners roasting the 88s turned their minds to other things while awaiting news of the next day's gauntlet.

DAY 2 - GAME 1

In tough against their strongest opponent yet, while battling through cold bats and some

uncharacteristic misplays in the infield, the 88s found themselves crawling and scrapping for the entirety of game 1.

Knowing that the winner moved onto the finals later that day, the 88s found the will to dig deep enough to pull out a win thanks to an extra inning clutch liner to centerfield off the bat of another of the 88s newest family members, Kristopher Cyr Chapados.

GOLD FINALS

A nearly 7 hour gap between games meant the 88s had to get their cold engines revving again in time for their re-match against Designated Drinkers, a squad who just pushed them to the brink earlier in the day and who had just finished dispatching a dangerous Chuggers team in their semifinal matchup.

After waiting a little longer due to an earlier rain delay, the skies cleared, the wind quelled and the stage was set.

By giving up 1 in the opening half inning, the 88s found themselves on the cusp of losing the first and finding themselves in unfamiliar deficit territory.

However while down 1-0 with 2 outs in their bottom half, Myles stepped up with one of his patented fly ball hustle round trippers scoring 3 total and taking their first lead of the finals.

The 88s took that spark and fanned the flames over the next 6 innings.

Thanks to a towering bomb double by Sean in the 2nd, a 3 hit performance from Sandi, a clutch 2 out 2 RBI liner from Jay, all 5 ladies getting at least 2 hits each, and 5 guys batting .1000 (Brian, Jeff, Myles, Sean and Jay), the 88s had a raging inferno on their hands that not even a very talented Designated Drinkers team could do much to douse.

Wanting to prevent their opponent from fighting fire with fire, it was Ladder 8 leader Sandi with another complete game 0 walk outing.

The sexy firemen on her truck were Sean with his dazzling ranging stop and toss from deep SS and Jeff with a catch and double up of a runner trying to advance to second in the final inning which stomped out any hazardous embers that tried to ignite their opponent's offense.

With the complex lights lit and the sun under the horizon, the 88s completed their mission and gave the world the comfort it was looking for with a crown defending 16-3 victory in front of raucous crowd of a record 37 people!

EXTRA BITS

Big props to Chandler for providing the weapon of choice for most 88 batters.

Congratulations to Jack for catching a praying mantis (a.k.a “the biggest bug ever”) during game 3 on Saturday (with an assist from WalkOffs).

The 88s only gave up 10 total runs over the span of 5 games. To put it into perspective, that’s the same amount of RBI hit by one player on the 88s during those same 5 games.

John scored every single time he got on base. That’s gotta be a record.

Thank you to everyone involved for once again organizing an incredible tournament. It’s an annual end of summer tradition we look forward to every year.