

Tuesday September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

**Sunsets are proof that endings can be beautiful**

It started out great for the 88s. They came out swinging and running like a team down 1-2 facing elimination should. They used this momentum to build a 21-13 lead by the 5<sup>th</sup>. Then, like a winter wind coming down from the north to usher out summer, the bats went cold. After TBHJ weathered the early storm, their offense came to life late scoring 8 runs in their half of the last inning, putting the final nail in the 88s season.

Refusing to accept the dying of the light, players like Sabrina (5/5 + 3 runs + 2 RBI), Chris (4/5 + HR + 4 runs + 5 RBI), and Andrew (3/4 + 2 runs + 4 RBI + key late double play) raged. Alas, it would not be enough to overcome a 2/12 fizzle out over the last 3+ innings on offense, and the 88s season was snuffed out only 2 wins away from the finals.

Winter is coming, but spring is always close behind.

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Tuesday September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

**Oh no, we suck a-gain!**

Perhaps hungover from a tough loss the night before, the 88s came out flat and got steam rolled by a more motivated TBHJ squad 18-7. The lone bright spot in the box score was a 2-0 first inning lead that was quickly doubled up on in the bottom half by TBHJ who never looked back.

Plenty of blame could be spread around with 4 players combining to go 1/15 at the plate and many blunders in the field, highlighted by a TBHJ player somehow scoring from 1<sup>st</sup> base on a caught fly ball in CF.

This game was a stinker, no doubt about it, but stinkers happen and the 88s are still very much alive in the series. They will have almost a week off to forget about these games and come back focused and strong when the series resumes.

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Monday September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

**Quite the blow job.**

Up 13-5 in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning, the 88s were looking a 2-0 series lead in the face and took their eye off the ball. Boudens (4/5 + HR + 3 runs + 3 RBI) and Nikki (a franchise tying + personal best 5/6 + 2 runs + RBI) led the way offensively.

The 88s were cruising along until a defensive collapse in the top of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning, allowing TBHJ to explode like they're capable of, piling on 8 runs and tying the game.

Neither team could tack on a run in what was meant to be the last inning, including Boudens sending a shot just short of the fence, narrowly missing a walk off winner. TBHJ got their runs when it meant the most, including 4 in the top of the extra inning. The 88s could only respond with a single run, due in part to a terrific catch by the TBHJ girl in RF to rob Myles of extra bases for the 2<sup>nd</sup> out. Lkanfddv dvjksdb &%%\$^%&^

The 88s will look to take a pivotal game 3 and bring the momentum back to their side as they continue their playoff march.

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Thursday September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

**Taking care of business, no need for overtime.**

It only took the minimum 7 innings for the 88s to continue their scorching hot play with a convincing victory over a very solid TBHJ team to take a 1-0 lead in this best of 5 second round series.

The praise can be spread around with 6 batters collecting 5 hits a piece (Ryan, Laura, Matt, Rebecca, Jeff, Sabrina – her second game in a row with 5 hits), and it was Laura's record setting and breaking performance that takes the cake. Her 5 runs scored set a new female run record (and ties her hubby for overall run record), while her 5 hits and 4 RBI also tie those respective record categories. Rebecca also put her name among the all-time franchise greats with her 5 hit and 4 RBI performance (both tie existing records).

Other people to play were named Sandi, Myles and Nikki. They aight.

- No homeruns needed to put up a record number of runs (27)
- Record number of hits as well (43)

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Thursday August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

**First playoff series win in franchise history**

Coming into the game with a 2-1 series lead, the 88s smelt blood and were looking to seal the deal. On the wings of Chris Herbert the 88s came out flying early building a 12-7 lead by the 5<sup>th</sup>. Impressive outings like Sabrina's 5/6, and a debuting Steve's 6/6 helped fill the bases for Herbert's 2 bombs (a 3 run

and 2 run shot respectively), while Andrew kept the ball in the yard but was just as effective piling up 7 RBIs (and would have broken the team record if a collision in the OF didn't stop play).

The 88s now move on to face a veteran TBHJ team who was been resting and waiting for 2 weeks.

- Matty crushes his first HR (Grand Slam actually) deep over the fence for an impressive out.
- A scary collision in LCF between 2 TFCO players
- Incredible infield defense from Chris, Steve, Andrew, Rachel. Not as incredible for the OF who will remain nameless.

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Monday August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**Back in the saddle again.**

After falling down 0-1 in the series, the 88s put together one of their best performances of the season to take a 2-1 series lead on the back of a 17-13 game 1 victory followed by a 21-8 game 2 mercy win.

Ryan Bambino- I mean, Ryan Boudens put on a very impressive power display sending a total of 4 balls deep over the fence. Unfortunately only 2 of them counted due to the homerun limit rule. Running right alongside him in the impressive category was Laura going 5/5 + 3 runs + 3 RBI in game 2, narrowly eclipsing her bedtime buddy who went 4/5 + 5 runs + 4 RBI + the rare toilet toss from center field.

Myles scuffled at the plate but attempted to make up for it by reaching out to make a sliding grab to end an inning and threat. Other defensive highlights included several scoops at 1B by Rachel, an unassisted double play by Josh, 2 liner snags by Rebecca at second, and a running grab behind the plate by Sabrina.

- Birthday boy Matty went a combined 8/11 + 5 runs + 3 RBI
- Sandi combined to go 7/10 + 3 runs + RBI in addition to her usual stellar pitching
- Josh returns from DL to go 8/10 with 4 RBI

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Monday August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017

**Couples that K together, stay together.**

It never felt like the 88s were in this one. Using their revamped playoff roster, TFCO scored early and often finding holes and gaps for singles all night leading to a 17-9 loss for the good guys.

The brightest spot for the 88s was Laura's performance at the plate. She went 4/5, scored 2 runs and knocked in 2 RBI while using her speed to cause havoc on the bases. Unfortunately her efforts just weren't enough to make up for a rare off game by a couple normally very reliable hitters.

The 88s lose game 1 of the best of 5 first round series.

- Matty & Rebecca lovingly didn't let each other be the only one with a K in the game. How sweet.
  - Piluso with the play of the game by scooping, stomping, and slinging an unassisted double play
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Tuesday August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**Double the header, double the fun.**

The 88s wrapped up the regular season with a positive night in the points column. As the fog crawled in from the outfield, symbolizing the looming entrance of Autumn, the 88s refused to go quietly into the night. They raged, raged against the dying of the light.

Game 1 was a solid 14-9 win against a team that's had their number and Sandi's leg this season. Big flies by Boudens and the resurgent Herbs led the way while Sandi scored 3 runs and 5 guys went 3/4.

Game 2 was more exciting. After falling back 2 entering the 9<sup>th</sup>, the 88s exploded for 5 runs including a bases loaded double by Myles to pad the lead. They couldn't hold it during the bottom half giving up 3 runs and forcing the season's first 10<sup>th</sup> inning. It was in this extra frame where the two teams again traded a couple runs ending the game in a deserved 16-16 tie.

- Sandi struck out 8, including a season high 5 in game 2.
  - Chris combined to go 7/9 + 2 HR + 4 runs + 4 RBI over the 2 games
  - Boudens combined to go 6/9 + 2 HR + 5 runs + 6 RBI
  - Myles was the first to 21 in the OF, what a legend.
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Thursday August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**Huge upset win for the 88s**

While the Las Vegas sports books had the 88s as a (-) 10.5 run underdogs on paper, a much different story played out on the field. The Misfits (22-2 record entering the game) were coming off a 2 week hiatus and seemed a bit flat. The 88s had their own hurdles while playing with 6 regulars (including a 5<sup>th</sup> string SS) + 3 fill ins. The Misfits very graciously offered to give the 88s a catcher so they could field 10.

Defense was the story of the game for the 88s, with all three fill ins (Dan, Casey, Darion) each contributing in big ways on the field turning hits into outs and doubles into singles. The game played out a full 9 innings with the 88s squeaking out a hard fought 7-4 victory.

The 88s are 9-3 in their last 12, improving their record to 15-11 overall, which is good for 3rd place overall.

- Rebecca & Casey each went 4/6, supplying the bulk of the base runners
  - Jeff going 4/5 (3 runs + RBI) and Myles going 4/5 (1 run + 2 RBI) supplied the production
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Tuesday August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**Herbs provided the spice and everything was nice.**

After losing several late game heart breakers earlier in the season, the 88s have flipped the script so far in August with their second last inning victory in a row. This time it was Chris Herbert sending a bullet into LF to score Myles from 3B (who got on with a 2B, then moved over with a situational opposite field grounder by Sabrina) which walked it off for a 8-7 victory against a top team in the league.

Keeping the 88s in the game the whole way through was their stellar defense highlighted by Nikki's quick snag and throw across the diamond to steal a hit while a runner was standing on 3B hoping to score with any throw that wasn't spot on. Fill in Darion Gilbert also had his moments to shine on the diamond with a heads up throw to 2B to nab a runner and many catches in CF.

- Myles going 4/5 (HR + 3 runs + RBI)
  - Jeff going 4/5 (2 runs + RBI)
  - Sabrina going 0/4 (BUT she scored a run, and knocked in a run, and set up the winning run)
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Tuesday August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017

**Walk off Magic Matt!**

After an 8 run bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup> for the 88s to come back and take a 4 run lead, Primetime put together a 4 run comeback of their own to tie things up heading into the bottom of the 8<sup>th</sup>, which could have been a lot worse without a sensational running catch deep in CF by Chris.

The stage was then set for back to back Ventresca hits, first by Rebecca to get on base, then by Matt to crush her home. While Primetimes leader sat hunched over in the infield, the 88s celebrated their first walk off win in franchise history.

- Rebecca going 4/5 (AGAIN) + 3 runs + 2 RBI
- Matt going 4/5 (including the walk off winner. AB hit Streak ended at 27/27)

- Myles going 4/5 (all extra base hits)

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Wednesday July 26th, 2017

**Boudens' new nickname: Artillery**

With a rocket launcher at 3B and a swing that hits bombs, Boudens led the way for the 88s with his explosive play (c'mon, that's a great line amirite?!).

It was a pretty tight game throughout until the 88s pulled away in their half of the last inning on way to a 16-10 victory to finish the month with a winning record for the first time in franchise history.

- Ryan going 4/5 + 2 HR, 4 runs, 5 RBI (also with a web gem at 3B)
- Rebecca going 4/5 (including her first extra base hit)
- Matty going 4/4 + Sac Fly (Extends his AB streak to a redonk 25/25)

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Tuesday July 25th, 2017.

**No pitcher, yes problem.**

The 88s were unexpectedly left shorthanded to start the game. Really WTF graciously provided us a player so we can avoid the forfeit and we got off to an 8-0 start after 2 innings.

When Really WTF starting being more selective at the plate, the wheels came off the defence a bit eventually leading to a 20-15 loss as the 88s bats fell silent in the bottom of the last inning, going quietly 1-2-3.

- Ryan going 3/3 with HR (tying franchise record with 7 RBIs)
- Sabrina going 4/6 (plus a run and RBI)
- Matt going 3/3 (As part of a franchise record 21/21)

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Thursday July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**3 Mercy Sweep**

Fielding their 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> fill ins, the 88s pieced together another 9 person roster and another victory on way to a 20-5 win over the Sloppy Seconds while bringing their record above .500 for the first time since mid-June.

Many players led the way for the 88s including:

- Sandi with 5 hits (a franchise record for females)
- Jeff going 6/6 (as part of a 17/17 streak and counting)
- Matt also going 6/6 (including a Grand Slam + 6 RBI)
- The debuting Rachel with 4 hits (and 4 runs + 2 RBI)

Dan Ventresca was also there.

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Tuesday July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Straight Mercy**

Playing the Sloppy Seconds for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time in a 3 game set, the 88s were in for a bigger fight then last game as the Seconds went up for an early 3-0 lead after 1. This seemed to wake up the 88s who stifled their opponent the rest of the way leading to a 16-4 mercy victory.

Jeff and Matt both continue their recent hot streak going 5/5 + 3 runs + 2 RBI and 4/4 + 3 runs + 4 RBI respectively while the Pilusos made their return to the diamond a success combining for 5 hits and playing great defense.

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Thursday July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### **B team mercy**

With 5 guys missing for various reasons, the 88s were forced to call upon 3 guys who filled in admirably. Dan Ventresca made his season debut a good one going 5/5 with 3 RBIs, and Eric Kowalsky rounded the bases for his first home run.... Possibly ever.. Including video games.

Down to their 6<sup>th</sup> string SS (Myles), it was Laura at 3B and Sandi at P that locked down the infield defense with a half dozen eye brow raising plays. At the plate Myles took advantage of a large field and subpar outfielders to round the bases twice on way to 7 RBI.

Hopefully the 88s can continue to pad the win column next week when they face this same team 2 more times.

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Tuesday July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### **shorthanded butt kickin'**

With Sandi missing her first game all year, Jeff stepped up and delivered a solid pitching performance in a 19-11 win over a quality team for the 88s who were dealing with the auto out and 3 person OF at the large Complex.

Matty (5/5 + HR + 3 runs + 5 RBI), Laura (4/5 + 2B + 3 runs + 1 RBI), Boudens (5/5 + 4 runs + 2 RBI) carried the load offensively while Rebecca Alomar- I mean Ventresca, had her best game on defense with several put outs at 2B and a screaming liner catch to squash a rally.

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Tuesday July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**All pain no gain**

While once again shorthanded and dealing with the auto out and weakened outfield, the 88s fought hard but couldn't overcome. Sandi took several hard hits off the rib and thigh, leading to delays, annoyance and even a gifted runner to the other team? (still steamed about it).

Leading the way for the women was the newly appointed Mrs. Ventresca who went 3/4 + 2 RBIs in her first game as Becky V. While Randi had another solid performance going 4/5 + 3 runs + 1 RBI.

The blast of the game goes to Andrew's crushed base clearing triple in the 4th to bring the game close again.

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Wednesday June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**Back in the win column**

After 5 straight losses, most of them tight, blown lead tough losses, the 88s end the month with a fun and well fought victory against the significantly improved We Got The Runs squad.

It was Randi's turn to shine on the diamond by catching back to back outs behind the plate in the same inning, while contributing 2 hits + a run next to the plate.

The blast of the game goes to Myles' 8 foot dribbler that they didn't even try and make a play on since it was such a perfectly placed swinging bunt, which was done on purpose.....

Josh came off the DL to drive in 2 key early runs and play solid defense in the infield. His much, much.. much better half Joanne filled in admirably once again with a key RBI. Darion made his season debut an impressive one by using his speed to get on 3 times and score 2 runs.

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Tuesday June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**Auto out hurting us**



The team's toughest opponents lately are the schedules of its players.

Losing 5 in a row by a combined 12 runs leads one to believe that with an increased ability of showing up, 88s would be winning some of these if they didn't have to deal with the constant automatic out in the lineup.

Playing in the bang box joke Plymouth park, Chris and Myles took advantage with a blast each, while a debuting Eric went 4/4 and a debuting Joanne contributed a hit and a key late out. Sandi hasn't let her struggles at the plate (1/15) affect her pitching which has continued to be great. Chris shined like a diamond at short stop once again.

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Tuesday June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### **That one hurts.**

Thanks in part to a few great performances with the bat (Sabrina: 3/4, Walk, 2 runs + Chris: 5/6, HR, 3 run, 5 RBI + Casey: 4/5, Walk, 2 runs, RBI) and a few web gems in the field (In order of occurrence: Andrew, Myles, Casey), the 88s built a 7 run lead heading into the bottom of the 9th.

It was then the rain started to fall, wind started to blow, the TBHJ bats woke up big time and the 88s web gems dried up. The game was capped off with a 3 run walk off HR to CF, leading to a 2nd straight tight loss against a top tier team, and breaking coaches heart (and his steering wheel).

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Monday June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### **Comeback falls short**

After falling back 9-3 against the top team in the league, the 88's fought their way back only to come up short 11-9.

In what may have been a wide spread case of the Mondays, the game started with a field equipment related delay, and the 88s were off their game in the field at times and on the base paths, costing themselves crucial runs and outs that could have been the difference.

Boudens defied the odds and hit a solo shot deep to left into a strong wind, while Weapon X continued his hot streak at the plate, once again going 4/4.

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Wednesday June 14th, 2017

### **Latest Margin of Victory**

In what was expected to be a struggle with the 88s missing 5 players, taking an automatic out in the 10th spot and playing a 3 person OF at the big Complex field, the script was flipped and the result was a +20 win.

Jeff (5/5 + 4 runs + 1 RBI + 2 innings pitched), Sandi (4/5 + 2 runs + 3 RBI + 5 innings pitched), and Matt (5/5 + 2 runs + 3 RBI) led the way, while the two fill in players more than held their own with a combined 8/10 + 4 runs + 7 RBI.

Special note for the very impressive double play turn by Sabrina at 2B that sadly won't go on record since the ump blew the call at 1B.

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Monday June 12th, 2017

### **Strugglers Come Through**

Not having the best of starts to the season, Andrew Piluso (who also filled in excellently in center field), Myles Calvert and Randi Howey combined for 11 hits, 8 runs scored and 10 runs knocked in.

On the defensive end, major contributions made by Chris Herbert making his first start at SS and being in the middle of several double plays. One of those plays involved him throwing to 1B for an out, and Jeff throwing over the diamond to Nikki to nab an aggressive base runner for the 2nd out.

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Tuesday June 6, 2017

### **Lets play two!**

The 88s split their first double header of the season. First blowing an early 10-0 lead against the first place team and getting walked off in the bottom of the 9th. Then they took out their disappointment on the unsuspecting Sloppy Seconds for a 17-5 mercy victory.

Chris Herbert made his long awaited season debut and didn't disappoint by sending the first pitch he saw over the fence on his way to a perfect 6/6 night with 2 runs and 6 RBIs.

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Thursday June 1, 2017

### **Losing Streak Is Over**

The newest Herbert and newest 88 made her season debut a success going 4 for 6 in a win over the last undefeated team in the league. The victory ended the 88s brief 2 game losing streak and got them back above .500 for the season.