

2025 JESSICA COOK WOOD BAT TOURNAMENT

LAST DAYS OF SUMMER

The 88s came up empty while digging for gold but still managed to come home with a chest full of treasured memories.

DEBUT DELIGHTS

Missing several crowd favorites from the regular roster opened the door to 3 impressive debuts.

Michelle's versatility on defense, speed on the bases and the 2nd most hits on the team (15) had her looking really good donning the blue and white.

DJ was spinning sick beats all weekend long (8 hits, 5 RBI and a couple of runs) while making the defensive play of the tourney with a put out at 2B followed by a heady turn to nab a speedy runner off 3B to complete the double play.

The more comfortable Anna got the better she became. She was a reliable target at 1B all weekend long and had an impressive .600 BA with 2 runs and 2 RBI on Sunday.

Thank you SO much to you all for stepping in to help make it a fantastic weekend on and off the field.

MICRO GAME SUMMARIES:

Game 1 vs. Weekend Warriors - Batting leadoff against his Friday night team, Tim got us off to a good start with a crisp liner but things quickly went south from there as we fell 6-2 against the eventual platinum champions.

Game 2 vs. N.B.S. - After some 4 pitch walk tomfoolery was settled; a trio of home runs from Jordan, John and Myles helped secure a narrow 9-8 W.

Game 3 vs. Big Stick Energy - Josh's bid for a shutout failed after Myles came up short on a fly ball, but thanks in part to Michelle's 4/4 and Naomi's 3/3 we finished the day strong with a 8-1 victory.

Game 4 vs. TBONES - The 8:30 am start time sucked but the bats didn't. Scoring 15 runs over 5 innings had the TBONES waving the white flag before their 5th at bats.

Game 5 vs. Flaming Moe's - Two impressive home runs from Mike Frank (Moe's), the aforementioned defensive Gem from DJ and John and a whole lot of perfect batting averages (including the weekends only 5/5 from Nikki) were the bright spots in an otherwise forgettable (yet fun and pleasant) 22-2 affair.

Game 6 vs. Pitches Be Crazy - One of the best games of the season ended up being our last. An electric 5 run 5th put the 88s up 7-6, but the Pitches threw a 3 run counter punch in the bottom half to knock us out with a 9-7 final and officially end our season.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Let's talk a bit more about that final game because what I saw brought my respect for this group to an even higher level which I didn't think was possible.

Every single one of us played smart, hard and very well. We left it all on the field (I think I finally understand what that sports cliché means) and it was a great way to wrap up our incredible 2025.

Jordan and Tim risked life and limb trying to haul in a fly ball between SS and LF, Naomi got bloodied and dirty sliding into 3B, Anna used gravity to drain her knee to bring the swelling down enough to fit into her leg brace, Joce stomached the pain in her shoulder to throw a ball in from the outfield to keep runners from advancing.

When I ask myself why would so many people sacrifice so much to try and win a game of softball, the best answer I can come up with is love.

Love for the game and love for the spirit of competing and winning yes. However dare I say part of it may also be love for one another?

Speaking personally, this feels true.

At one point in that 5th inning I found myself gasping for air at second base with my hands on my knees, feeling more physically tired than I ever have on a baseball field in my life.

What I felt in that moment is a feeling and level of effort I could not see myself getting to for any other team but ours. I wanted to do everything I could to try and extend my time with you all to just one more game.

On the final day before the autumn equinox, with the last sun of summer starting its decent, we raged against the dying of the light and I couldn't be more proud.

With us each safely back in our separate abodes tending to our various aches and wounds, miles away the last of our cleat prints were being washed away by a heavy rain, leaving only the wonderful memories that nothing and no one can erode.

Looking forward to our on field reunion in the spring of 2026.

EXTRA BITS

We finished with our best team batting average (0.638) and total HRs (3) of any Jessica Cook tournament.

Myles made his career pitching debut before quickly retiring with a 0.00 ERA.

Since Marnie didn't attend Saturday night's bonfire we had left over hot dogs for the first time despite it being the most well attended fire so far.

Shake and Bake finished Sunday with a combined perfect 13/13.

The team lunch at BP before the 2:45 game ended up being a fitting Last Supper.

A HUGE thank you to Linda for once again being my secret weapon by scorekeeping, supporting and generally being awesome all weekend long. I couldn't do what I do without her doing what she does. She earned herself a spot in the 88s group chat, but for how long???

Some have said that this year's version of the 88s has been their favorite. Without taking anything away from previous squads, that opinion is hard to argue with.