

2019 SEASON WEEKLY RECAPS

FULL 2019 SEASON RECAP

With autumn winds bringing in a foreshadowing chill in the air, the 88s saw their season come to an early end at the hands of a TBHJ squad who came into 2019 re-vamped and motivated to make up for their own early exit in last year's playoffs.

While the last few strides were a letdown, the journey to get to the finish line was anything but...

The season started with nearly a month of rainouts that forced the 88s to the sidelines for most of May, anxiously awaiting their chance to get playing.

The delays and build up may have caused some rust that led to the 88s stumbling out of the gate to see themselves near the bottom of the standings with a 3-10 record by mid-July. Things were looking bad as the 88s fought hard to avoid rock bottom.

It wasn't until the fiery departure of 2019's Female MVP Sandi from a game against the Misfits that the 88s got lit and turned their season around. Even though they would narrowly drop that game, they would get started on a season defining 10-1 stretch (including their franchise best 8 game win streak between July 22 - August 12) just a few nights later with an 18-6 laughter against We Got The Runs. The 88s used this stretch to separate themselves from the bottom pack of the standings.

Helping fuel the renaissance was Jeff's award winning batting performance of 3 inside the park home runs, and his team leading .871 batting average and 19 runs scored over the 8 game win streak.

A big part of not only the 10-1 stretch, but the overall quality of the season were new comers Katelin (whose .438 BA and 30 runs scored earned her ROY honors), T.J. (the best 3B the franchise has had), Jesse (who was the best player in the AllStar game by far), Becca (a natural athlete excelling at every position) and Jamie (a.k.a. Superman with his impressive dives into 3B and in RF), all of whom contributed on and off the field.

After the streak came to an abrupt and sketchy finish on the equally sketchy Bemus field, the competition level increased and the winning decreased, causing the 88s to limp down the home stretch and finish the regular season 1-5 over their final 6 games.

Despite the poor finish, their streak did enough damage to punch a ticket to the upper division playoffs. While they were ultimately overmatched and booted in the first round, the 88s still walked away with plenty of wins and highlights from the year including Matt's momentum swinging chase down catch deep in LF that earned him Defensive Play Of The Year honors, Myles' franchise record 15 home runs helping him earn the male MVP nod, and a handful of great new teammates who will certainly be invited back to 2020 spring training.

They bled, they broke, they cried. They mended, they fought, they tried.

While they turn their focus to other things over the winter, once and a while they'll dream of warmer days on the diamond, knowing spring is just around the corner.

WEEK #12 RECAP

"Playoffs?! You're talkin' about -.. PLAYOFFS?!"

Game 31 @ TBHJ was the 88s first playoff game in 2019 which felt like the first game of the season as the 88s looked rusty from the start. Inconsistent and unproductive hitting against a very good defense combined with painfully missed gimmie outs on the other side of the ball sunk the 88s and sunk them fast.

Sputtering out of the gate with only 1 small ball run in the first 7 innings (leadoff double -> ground out moved runner to 3B -> sac fly scored the runner), this game was never really in doubt.

A rare OF assist between CF **Myles** and C **Elizabeth** to nab a runner at home to end the bottom of the 6th provided a spark, but after not getting a runner past 1st in their top of the 7th, it was quickly snuffed out before it could be nursed into a flame.

Jesse wraps up her season with a solid 3/4 + RBI night before heading on the road back to Halifax, while **Myles** (3/4 + 2 runs), **Jeff** (3/4), **Matt** (2/4 + run + 2 RBI) and **Elizabeth** (1/4 + run) provided what little offence the 88s but muster on this gray misty evening.

They look to extend their season in a win or go home game 2 Thursday night back in the friendly confines of Memorial.

Game 32 vs TBHJ was more of the same, only with an even more lopsided final score (6-21).

WEEK #11 RECAP

"Humbling Home Stretch"

After starting the month as hot as a pistol with 5 straight wins, the 88s stumbled down the stretch when their schedule toughened up. They faced every top team looking to secure their spots in the standings and this showed in their 1-5 (-37) record over the final 6 regular season games.

Game 28 vs. TBHJ was the first time this season that the 88s dealt with an auto out in the lineup on top of only having a 3 person outfield with 9 total players. Despite the huge disadvantages against a 19-6 team, the 88s managed to hold tough and avoid a beat down with a final score of 7-13.

It was also the first time they had to use the gentlemen rule by bringing over a player from another team to avoid the forfeit. Big thanks to **Brandon** (2/4 + run + RBI) for making the stroll over from Castle MacKay on short notice to save our butts.

Despite the 3 person outfield, **Matt** (who nabbed a speedy runner at home for an impressive OF assist), **Myles** (who made a catch of the year candidate deep in CF) and **Jeff** (who had to deal with being out on an island most of the night with CF playing left of centre), held their own and avoided being the reason for the loss. That credit is shared evenly between the auto out (cost us 4 outs total + forcing us to start 2 innings with an out, including the 9th) and TBHJ's strong defense robbing the 88s of 5+ very well hit balls.

A few players managed to slip past the defense on occasion, with **Elizabeth** (2/4 + run + RBI + the catcher on the other end of Matt's OF assist), **Jeff** (a team high 3 hits + RBI) and **Myles** (homerun + BB + 2 runs + 2 RBI), but ultimately there were too many factors going against the 88s and they fell after a valiant fight.

Game 29 @ Sons of Pitches was much better this time around. After a franchise record low 7 hits / .212 BA in their previous matchup, the 88s came out swinging with 25 hits / .500 BA on their way to 13 runs. Normally 13 runs would be enough to get the win for the 88s, but the defense had an uncharacteristic off night, which spells disaster against a team known for speed and aggressive base running.

Sandi continued to do her thing on the mound, including striking out SOP's speedy leadoff spark plug to stifle one of their innings, while producing 2 hits + run + RBI at the plate herself. Doing a lot of damage tonight was **Myles** (5/5 + 3 runs + 2 RBI + 2 scraped knees) and **Matt** (4/4 + 2 runs + his season best 4 RBI).

Game 30 vs. Top Dawgs was a sad day for baseball. Starting with the 88s 8-24 mercy by the Top Dawgs to wrap up the regular season (to be fair they considered it an exhibition game and got players practice in different positions), a good number of 88s went to Welland Stadium to watch the Jackfish get swept from the playoffs with their own humiliating 19-7 defeat. Hoping to salvage some joy, they walked over to watch their former comrade play softball at the Complex only to learn he went home early due to a house emergency and his team was getting crushed.

When all hope seemed lost, the joy they had been missing came running down the stadium concourse with a baseball in hand. After hours of trying and failing to gather a foul ball on the stadium's first baseline grass, including an old man heart breakingly turning his pitiful requests for one down, Bentley was gifted a ball (and a hug?) from one of the Barrie Baycat's bullpen pitchers. The 88s can take some lessons from the spirit of this young lad heading into the playoffs. Never give up. Even if you're the smaller slower one in the group, find an angle that is effective and play to your strengths.

Let's get after it.

WEEK #10 RECAP

“Streak snapped, spirit intact”

While their magical run of 8 in a row came to an abrupt end, their will and effort did not, salvaging a 2-2 record for the week to maintain their 5th spot in the standings.

Game 24 @ TFCO was the team’s first Monday late game so they were going to need a heroic effort if they wanted to extend their win streak to 8. Enter the Justice League.

The 88s were down to 4 females available, but they all played like wonder women. **Nikki** (4/7 + run + 4 RBI), **Sandi** (4/7 + 3 runs), **Julie** (3/6 + 2 runs + 2 RBI) and **Katelin** (4/6 + 4 runs + RBI) all played great on both sides of the ball, with Julie making several key outs at the plate.

Brian “Green Lantern” Chandler got the highlight package started when he blasted a laser into space for a 3 run shot as part of a 4/4 + 4 runs + 3 RBI night. He also made an impressive OF assist at home to take away a run and prove no evil shall escape his sight.

Myles “Flash” Calvert beat out a grounder to first base then later came around to score to help kick start their biggest inning of the night.

Yet it was in their darkest hour, with TFCO’s biggest weapon at the plate and bases loaded no outs, that our heroes needed to be saved themselves. Never fear, **Jamie** “Superman” Bradley is here. Having already tied a season best 6 RBI at the plate, he dawned his cape once more to take flight and snag a hard liner for the innings first out in right field, allowing the 88s to escape the jam and wrap up their 4th straight mercy win.

Game 25 vs Top Dawgs felt like a bit of a throwback to the 88s of June when they were often hurting themselves with unforced errors. A handful of overly aggressive base running decisions and a few uncharacteristic miss-steps in the field cost them approximately 8 runs in this writer’s conservative estimation. When facing a team with as much pop as the Top Dawgs, there’s less room for error and mistakes like these become amplified. Before you know it, despite hitting decently well as a team overall, you’re heading home early after a 7 inning mercy defeat.

A few of the bright spots on offence were **Jamie’s** 3/3 + 2 runs, **Elizabeth’s** 2/4 + RBI, **Jeff’s** 3/3 + run + RBI and **Brian’s** 3/3 (which has extended his AB/hit streak to 11 straight).

Game 26 @ Misfits was their final crack at the top ranked squad, and despite once again keeping it close, there was still no cigar for the third time in a row, falling 12-16 thanks to a late inning push behind a 3 run homerun from Myles in the 6th and a bases clearing triple from T.J. in the 7th to keep the final score respectable.

Despite the 0-3 season series record, the 88s held their own against the perennial champs, with a final run tally of 27-36, and twice scoring above the Misfits average runs allowed per game of 7.2 (10 and 12).

Playing this game with 9 fielders, the Misfits strategically pounded the gaps early and often, putting the 88s in a big 12-2 early hole. They couldn't crawl out despite solid performances from **Sandi** (4/5 + BB + run + RBI), **Nikki** (3/5 + BB + 2 runs + 2 RBI) and **Myles** (3/3 + run + 4 RBI + HR) and a team record 3 walks from Julie, Nikki and Sandi.

Game 27 vs Flaming Moe's was a rubber match between their friendly rivals. Being deadlocked at a game apiece with an identical runs F/A (30-30), Moe's still graciously offered that the 88s play their 6th male at catcher in order to play 10 in the field, which 88s accepted after some initial resistance.

According to the box score this was likely the difference in the game. In the innings when 88s played with 10 in the field / 4 OF (2nd – 6th), the score was 11-2 for the 88s, but when the 88s played with 9 in the field / 3 OF (1st and 7th) the score was 12-7 for Moe's.

However the highlight of the night and catch of the year candidate would have happened regardless, with Matt sprinting back in LF and making a running, reaching, leaping grab at the fence to take away extra bases and kick start a 1-2-3 second inning, which was much needed after giving up 5 runs the inning before. He grabbed the ball for himself and the momentum for the 88s.

With all players getting at least 2 hits, and 3 of the 88s guys with perfect 4/4 nights (including **Matt's** 4/4 + 4 runs + RBI and **Brian's** 4/4 + run + 2 RBI), the 88s were able to build a commanding 16-7 lead by the 6th. Much like game 2 in the series, Moe's piled in late runs to make the 88s sweat it out and hang on for the tight win.

Myles battled through a sore groin to have his best game of the year going 4/4 + 4 runs + 4 RBI including 2 homeruns (1 inside, 1 over the fence), while **Julie** dealt with a potentially broken finger to finish 3/6 + run + 2 RBI.

The 88s now sit at 14-13 overall, and hope to finish the regular season with a winning record for the first time since 2017 despite their final 3 games being against 3 of the 4 teams ahead of them in the standings, all of which have had their number so far this season.

WEEK #9 RECAP

“Uncharted Territory”

Just when fans thought it couldn't get better for their beloved 88s, they go out and win a double header by a combined 50-15 score against two quality opponents to extend their winning streak to 7 straight, which is now an all-time franchise record.

Game 22 @ OMG was the second game in a row against the same OMG squad. After winning 24-11 last week, this time around was more of the same as they put up another 24 runs against OMGs 7, on their way to another mercy victory. The 88s did most of their damage in the 2nd (10 runs) and 7th (11 runs –

tying a season high) while their defense stifled throughout thanks in part to Jesse's catch and doubling off of a runner from CF.

Major contributions on offense from **Nikki** (3/5 + 2 runs + 3 RBI including a double), **Myles** (3/4 + 3 runs + 3 RBI including a homerun), **Katelin** (4/5 + 2 runs), **Jeff** (4/4 + 3 runs + RBI), **Jesse** (3/4 + 2 runs + RBI including a double) and **Matt** (3/4 + 2 runs + 2 RBI) helped form the blade. However the sharp edge that did the most damage was forged by breakout games from **Julie** (3/3 + sac fly + run + 4 RBI) and **Steve** (4/4 + 2 runs + 5 RBI).

Game 23 vs. Primetime was the 88s third mercy victory in a row, this time coming against a team who has always played them tough no matter the year or division. They only needed 6 innings to put them away with a convincing final score of 26-8 by putting up at least 3 runs in every frame to prove they can be consistent, not only feast or famine.

Every player had at least 2 hits, **Julie** (4/6 + 2 runs + 3 RBI) and **Steve** (4/4 + 3 runs + 3 RBI) built on their impressive game 1's, **Jamie** fit right in with the surging 88s after time off for load management finishing his night 6/8 + 2 runs + 4 RBI, but the star of game 2 was **Brian** who didn't let his dud of a game 1 affect him, finishing 4/4 + 3 runs + 6 RBI including the team's first Grand Salami of the season, which came at a time when the game was still in question (9-5) and the 88s needing some breathing room.

After the grand slam gave them a nice buffer, it was station to station on offence and business as usual on defense, highlighted by an impressive OF assist from **Jeff** in RF and **Elizabeth's** towering fly ball caught in CF.

When the sun was set and the dust was settled, the 88s found themselves up to 5th of 11 in the standings, a far cry from fighting to stay out of the bottom of the basement less than a month ago, with only the legit contenders ahead of them.

The win streak record wasn't the only historic moment for the 88s tonight, they also unveiled their official mascot in a pre-game ceremony, Buster The 88!

WEEK #8 RECAP

"Cue the montage"

Game 20 @ Under Construction was retribution for the 88s, coming away with a victory against a team that's had their number this year. After losing the first 2 matchups by a combined 18-40 score and being called whiners, it was the 88s causing the tears this time with a convincing 12-4 win.

Despite only having 9 players in the field, the 88s defense stifled the potent Under Construction offence to the tune of 5 goose egg innings, including the first 4 in a row to build an 8-0 lead in the 5th. **Myles**, **Nikki** and **T.J.** each flashed a little leather in the 4th to help the 88s dodge bullets while their opponent seemed to be constantly threatening with runners on.

On the offensive side of things, **Brian** (4/4 + 2 runs + 3 RBI), **Jeff** (3/3 + 2 runs + RBI) and **Matt** (3/4 + 3 runs) handled the heavy lifting while many others chipped in with timely hits of their own (quirky stat: all 4 females each went an identical 1/5 at the plate).

Let's play 2!

Game 21 vs. OMG was a slugfest for the 88s. While their game 1 victory relied more on defense and aggressive base running, the story of game 2 were the 88s bats. In the first half of the season the 88s were a notoriously slow starting team, failing to score a 1st inning run in 9 of their games, but this doesn't seem to be the same 88s team. They came out guns a blazin' to put up 6 runs in the first, 4 in the second and another 6 in the third on way to their 4th mercy win in their last 8 games, finishing the night early 24-11.

Every player had at least 2 hits while 6 players had at least 3 RBIs. A few of the most impressive lines came from **Nikki** (4/5 + 4 runs + RBI), **T.J.** (3/3 + 3 runs + 4 RBI), **Katelin** (3/4 + run + 3 RBI) and **Brian** (4/4 + 2 runs + 4 RBI – who is now a crazy 15/16 + 10 runs + 10 RBI over his last 4 games) but pretty much everyone put up solid numbers, check the stats.

The moment of the night goes to **Jesse** and her absolute rocket to CF. What went down as an RBI triple was more than that in reality. With Brian waving her around and the whole team watching in anticipation, Jesse rounded 3rd and headed for home. With the throw coming in and her legs carrying the hopes and dreams of many, she was JUST called out at the plate on a bang bang play, much to everyone's dismay, as she missed out on the franchise's first lady homerun by milliseconds.

After starting the season 3-10 and eyeing the lower division playoffs, the 88s have been reborn by going 7-1 over their last 8 games (including a franchise tying streak of 5 in a row) to climb to 10-11 (+20 run differential) and putting themselves firmly up with the contenders.

WEEK #7 RECAP

"Running on all cylinders"

Game 17 @ OMG was tense in the early going while the game hung in the balance as the 88s only managed to cross a single run over the first 3 innings. Thanks to strong defense, especially a well-timed double play outfield assist from **Matt** and nearly flawless in fielding by **Nikki**, **Katelin**, **Steve** and **T.J.**, the 88s weathered the storm, minimized the damage and kept themselves in it long enough for their bats to come alive.

Boy did they ever. After sputtering over the first 3, the next 4 were a different story as the 88s knocked around 20 hits for 13 runs to finish with a 16-4 mercy victory against a very strong team.

Run production was spread around well, with 9 of 10 players hitting in at least 1 run and 9 of 10 players crossing the plate themselves. With a quickly developing reputation as fighting royalty, the reigning King

of Coventry led the charge into battle and came out untouched with a 4/4 + 3 runs + RBI line. Following on his heels were ladies **Katelin** (3/5 + 2 runs + RBI), **Elizabeth** (2/5 + run + 2 RBI), **Sandi** (2/4 + run + 2 RBI) and Lords **Matt** (3/5 + 3 runs + 2 RBI), **Myles** (3/5 + 2 runs + 4 RBI + HR), **Steve** (3/4 + 2 runs + 2 RBI), and **T.J.** (3/5 + run + RBI).

The 88s look to take their battle tested squad into Harold Black the following night and win another 2 against teams they're battling for position with in the standings.

Game 18 @ TFCO was the 2nd mercy win in a row, finishing with a season best margin of victory 23-5. While the game was still somewhat in doubt 8-1 in the third, the 88s faced a 1 out bases loaded situation with one of the opponent's best hitters up. After **T.J.** ended the threat with an unassisted double play (touch 3B, throw home), the 88s carried that momentum the rest of the way, putting up another 15 runs and wrapping the game up in the 7th.

While **Sandi** put up exceptional numbers going 4/6 + run + RBI with her usual rock solid pitching, and others like **Brian** (4/4 + 4 runs + 2 RBI), **Katelin** (3/5 + 3 runs + 2 RBI), **Myles** (4/5 + 2 runs + 4 RBI) and **Elizabeth** (3/5 + run + 3 RBI) putting up numbers of their own, this was truly an all-around team effort with all 11 players crossing the plate at least once and all knocking in at least a run.

Game 19 vs We Got The Runs was the second of a back to back. Unlike last week when they faced the same situation coming off a game 1 win, the 88s would maintain their focus and energy to finish the night perfect, winning 16-8.

The story of this game seemed to be how the top 4 All-star vote getters were making sure to earn the accolades. Playing in the last game before the break, **Jesse** busted out with 3 smashed hits including the team's first woman triple and a season high matching 4 woman RBI. **Katelin**, a close second in the polls, followed suit with a triple of her own. On the men's side it was All-star **Myles** (2/4 + 3 runs + 3 RBI with HR) and close second **Jeff** (4/4 + 2 runs including 2 triples) using their new vote getting confidence to help power the ship.

Some less than stellar substitute in fielding late in the game may have caused the 88s to miss out on their 3rd mercy victory in a row, but valuable lessons were learned (i.e. throws to 1B should be catchable) which may bear fruit in the playoffs.

The 88s finished their best week 3-0 (5-2 over their last 7), creating separation between themselves and the bottom pack, firmly putting themselves in the upper division playoff picture. Next up for the 88s is a rematch against the dangerous Top Dawgs, a W would mean the 88s finish July with their first winning month since August 2017.

WEEK #6 RECAP

"Out of the basement and into your hearts"

Game 13 vs Primetime was on a Sunday but it wasn't a fun day for the 88s, who lost their 4th straight and 10th overall, falling to rock bottom in the standings. After the 88s escaped a bases loaded 1 out jam in the 4th and tied it up 6-6 in the 5th on a **T.J.** single, Primetime turned it up a notch with the bats, crossing 6 more runs over the final two innings to take what proved to be an insurmountable lead.

For the ladies, who have been seen carrying the team offensively in recent games, it was an especially rough morning finishing 5/19 with two double plays. With the ladies having a rare off game, it was the guys' chance to take the load and they didn't disappoint with all 6 getting at least 2 hits including **Myles'** 5th inside the parker, **Jeff** stretching his AB hit streak to 9 and **Brian** and **Jeff** joining the walk party with the teams 2nd and 3rd BBs of the season. Not wanting to see her gender come up empty, **Becca** was a bright spot going 2/3 with a run scored and completing a key out at home as catcher (and just missing another great play by cm's as the ball barely missed her glove on a dive attempt).

Game 14 vs We Got The Runs was the first game on Coventry road and the team's first mercy victory of the season, a much needed 18-6 cruising against a team they're jockeying for position with in the standings. Taking advantage of team speed and a wide open outfield, several players put up impressive performances (**T.J.'s** 5/5 + 2 runs and the game ending RBI / **Katelin's** 3/4 + 3 runs + 2 RBI including two doubles / **Myles'** 4/5 + 4 runs including three triples, **Steve's** 3/4 + 2 runs + 4 RBI including his first round tripper), but taking the cake and eating it too was Jeff's epic 4/4 + 3 runs + 6 RBI including a hat-trick of inside the park homeruns, which stretched his AB hit streak to 13 and made him the reigning King Of Coventry.

To help me summarize the game, ladies and gentlemen Mr. John Denver...

*"Almost Heaven,
in east Niagara,
no near mountains,
only Welland River.*

*Was no shade there,
from a lack of trees.
If the bats weren't swinging,
There'd be no summer breeze.*

*Coventry road, felt like home,
It was a place, that they belonged,*

*East Niagara, homeruns like mountains,
No lead blown, on Coventry road."*

Game 15 vs Flaming Moe's was retribution for the 88s, winning 16-14 after losing by the same score to the same team earlier in the season. After getting down 6-0 by the 2nd inning, they showed no panic or quit, building a 15-7 lead by the 7th. Flaming Moe's exploded for 6 runs in the 8th to make it interesting but the 88s held on for the W as the final out landed harmlessly in **Matt's** glove.

Setting the tone in the leadoff spot was **Steve** going 4/5 + 3 runs + RBI including two triples, following his lead were **Sandi** going 3/5 + 2 runs + 3 RBI, **Becca** going 3/5 + 2 runs + 2 RBI, and **Myles** going 4/4 + 3 runs + 2 RBI including his first home run over the fence.

Game 16 @ Sons Of Pitches was a whole different story in game 2 of the double header. With Brian and Nikki arriving after missing game 1 to hopefully provide the team a boost of energy, the 88s went on to get thumped 2-10. Coincidence? I'm just a volunteer local sports reporter and can't really say for sure, but, no it wasn't. Speaking on condition of anonymity, one of the 88s Halifax rookies Becca C... no wait, that's too obvious, we'll call her B. Chilvers, told this reporter "It was deflating you know? We finally got to play a game without them and to see their cars pull into the parking lot for game 2 was a real crusher."

Myles opened the game with a pathetic pop up to second on the first pitch to set the tone and things never got better. 6 players failed to record a hit and 8 players failed to record a smile until the game was mercifully over and they got to go home to their lovers, pets or in some cases their pet lovers.

It wasn't a total waste, as the 88s added several new team categories to the record books... Least hits (7), lowest team batting average (.212) and quickest 9 inning game (65ish minutes). Short and sour, a real stinker that will be flushed and ignored.

Despite the bitter end, the 88s had their best week of the season, finishing 2-2 and moved up to the 8th spot, which for now would likely be an upper division playoff spot.

WEEK #5 RECAP

"A ruff couple dog days of summer"

Entering the halfway point of the regular season, the 88s found themselves on the short end of two tough defeats, knocking them down to a tie for dead last with their comrades from Flaming Moes.

Game 11 @ Under Construction was hopefully the last we've seen of Centennial 2 but unfortunately not the last we've seen of Under Construction. After a humbling mercy back on June 18, the 88s suffered another sound thumping 9-19 for a little déjà vu.

As was the case in the first go around, it was the 88s usually solid defense that let them down, including 3 errors in LF by **Myles** leading to who knows how many runs. The first inning pretty much told the story with the first 5 batters for Under Construction crossing the plate before the 88s recorded an out. On the flip side the 88s guys began the game 0/6. On the plus side the 88s showed no quit, clawing back to 6-10 at one point before giving up a 9 spot in the 5th to make the game out of reach.

Leading the way on offence for the second game in a row was **Katelin** going 3/5 + 3 RBI + 2 runs while playing solid defense at 2B. **Brian** was effective in the leadoff spot scoring 2 runs thanks to some smart and aggressive base running while dragging around a sack of enchiladas in his gut.

Most impressive hit of the night goes to **Jesse** for her final inning blast into LF for a double once the whiskey wore off and she stopped striking out.

Game 12 @ Misfits was a back and forth affair but in the end the 88s finished on the bottom of the battle and the overall standings.

In front of a season best crowd of 11 (0 of which paid any attention, the babies were too cute), the 88s fought hard against the 1st place team once again, flip flopping the lead 4 times.

Early on, despite a couple missed chances to do even more damage, the 88s found themselves ahead 5-1 thanks in part to a 2 run no doubter by **Brian** deep to left, the teams first over the fence homerun of the season and a high producing 2/2 + 2 runs + 2 RBI stat line from **Sandi**. After the Misfits took their first lead 7-6 in the 4th, **Myles** continued his season of warning track power with his 4th inside the parker of the season in the 5th (he had only 5 total in the last 2 seasons combined) to take an 8-7 lead. The misfits once again took the lead 9-8 in their half of the 5th before **T.J.** tied it up with a sharp double scoring Brian all the way from first. The 88s had more chances late, but unfortunately ran out of bullets and fell 10-12, continuing their winless July.

Next up for the 88s is a stretch of 3 games against teams in their section of the standings that could go a long way in terms of either making the upper playoffs or being sent down to the kiddies table with the rest of the mouth breathers.

WEEK #4 RECAP

“Hanging with the big girls and boys”

Game 10 vs Misfits was a soggy affair that saw the 88s tied 5-5 going into the final inning against last year’s champs and this year’s first place team. Although they would eventually fall 8-5, after coming off a big win against another top team the week before, they’ve proven they can hang with the best.

Hits were hard to come against the Misfits’ solid all around defense, but both Katelin (3/4 + RBI) and T.J. (3/4 + 2 runs + RBI) broke through to lead what little offense the 88s could muster. Brian and Becca combined to hit 2/8, but each had equally memorable triples, with the former sending a rocket to the fence in LF and the latter choosing the more creative route of bouncing hers off the plate to the pitcher.

Defense was the story for the 88s as much as it was for the Misfits. With usual starting pitcher Sandi missing her first game since 2017, Jeff stepped in and stepped up by only walking 1 and only nearly dying once. Behind him were several play of the night candidates with Steve’s running catch behind 3B, Myles’ sliding catch in LF and Jesse’s running / reaching catch deep in CF all keeping the 88s in the game.

The 88s get a nice long break to heal bruises and egos.

WEEK #3 RECAP

“Trending Up”

Game 6 vs TFCO was an early season battle of the basement that the 88s prevailed in despite missing half their regulars with huge thanks to fill-ins Lois, Dan and Josh. They combined with the 7 regulars to play solid defense all game, limiting a dangerous TFCO squad to only 3 runs. On the offensive side it was Myles and Steve combining for 8 hits, 4 runs and 6 RBI to lead the way, with key contributions from Elizabeth (2 hits + run + RBI), Matt (3 hits + run + 2 RBI) and Josh (3 hits + 2 runs – with the aid of Dan ‘young legs’ Ventresca pinch running + RBI).

Game 7 @ Primetime was played but I can’t remember what happened.. Oh well.

Game 8 vs TBHJ saw the 88s in another deep 9-1 hole after 6 innings and things were not looking good, especially coming off a 14-1 beat down at the hands of Primetime the night before (oh right, now I remember). Then the 8th inning happened. The 88s put up a season best 11 runs on 12 hits highlighted by ALL 6 girls getting a hit and capped off by Myles’ inside the parker to take a 13-9 lead. Becca had a breakout game with 3 hits and great defense in every position, Jeff went a perfect 4/4 + run + 2 RBI, and Brian continued his early stellar campaign with a 4/5 + run + 2 RBI.

Even though they ended up losing 14-13, they showed they can hang in with the better teams and planned to roll that confidence into next game.

Game 9 @ Top Dawgs was their 4th game in 5 days, played under the baking sun, and had several of their old f*cks dealing with various old f*ck types of injuries and issues. They needed a spark and two of their new young studs delivered. Becca and Jesse combined to go 7/10 + 4 runs + 4 RBI while playing top notch defense in front of a capacity crowd of 7, helping lead the 88s to a signature 18-13 win against a perennial powerhouse and former champs.

If they were the spark, that would make Jeff the fuel with a season best stat line of 6/6 + 3 runs + 4 RBI in the leadoff spot, tying the male hits in a game record. Another clear standout was Brian with a 4/5 + 2 run + 2 RBI line along with several Jeter like plays deep at SS, including one to end the game and seal the win. After a slow start Myles got it going with another 3 run inside the parker to finish with his own 4/5 + 3 run + 3 RBI and Jamie (dealing with a bad back), threw some dirt on it and contributed with a 3/5 + 2 runs + 2 RBI line.

The 88s finished the week 2-2, moving them to 3-6 overall which is currently good for 8th place and likely a spot in the upper division playoffs.

WEEK #2 RECAP

"A night of firsts"

Game 4 @ We Got The Runs was the 88s first victory of the season and it came on the back of solid defense. It started with an impressive turn at 2B by Katelin then later matched by an untraditional double play finished off by Becca at home plate (who also chipped in with her first career hit). Other debuts including Jeff pitching for the first time this season and Jesse's 3/5 + run contributed significantly to the cause. We Got The Runs also played solid defense for the most part, limiting the 88s offence to 6 total runs, but it was Myles' horseshoe that broke through for an error aided 4/4 + 2 RBI + 2 run stat line.

"I was throwing smoke and my team behind me was in lockdown mode." said Jeff following his pitching debut. "I've been waiting for this opportunity and knew I couldn't hold back on the heat."

Game 5 vs Under Construction was another first, the 88s first mercy loss of the year. Some early moon shots lost in the twilight sky got them into a deep hole which they could not crawl out of. They refused to give up without a fight, putting up a season best 5 runs in the 4th, but it was far from enough as they went on to lose 21-9. Jeff (3/3 + 2 runs + 2 RBI), Steve (3/3 + 2 runs + RBI), Brian (3/3 + RBI) and Jesse (2/3 + run) all shined on offence, but it was Sandi as the brightest star this night, going 3/4 + a personal best 4 RBI along with her usual solid pitching and defense.

"F*ck those motherf*ckers BAH!" Sandi proclaimed after the game.

Following tonight, the 88s somehow find themselves not in last place overall, just ahead of last years top dogs, Top Dawgs.

WEEK #1 RECAP (+ First game)

"Losin' but learnin'"

Game 1 vs TBHJ wasn't quite the 10-19 beat down the score seems to illustrate. If it wasn't for a funky rundown play / call in the 3rd inning with 2 outs the 88s may have avoided TBHJ's big 8 run inning. Playing their first game after nearly a month of rainouts, the 88s showed little rust at the plate putting up 10 runs behind a very productive ¾ + 4 RBI from Julie, a great 4/4 debut by newcomer T.J. and a 4/4 + run from Elizabeth who has signed on with the club officially after her probation season last year.

Game 2 @ Flaming Moes was tight throughout, with the 88s coming out on the short end of a 14-16 defeat due to some spotty defense at times. The offence was doing their part and producing big time. On the back of 2 record tying performances from Nikki (5/7 + 2 runs + 2 RBI) and Elizabeth (5/7 + run + RBI) as well as a monster 5/5 + 4 runs + 3 RBI from Brian (who also made the play of the game deep in RF while a not so stealth bomber flew closely overhead), the 88s put up 14 runs by scoring in all innings except for the 3 up 3 down 3rd.

Game 3 vs. Sons of Pitches hurt. After going up 9-4 heading into the final inning thanks to holding the opponent scoreless for 5 straight innings (3rd – 7th), the Sons Of Pitches bats woke up in the 9th to pummel out 10 runs on 13 hits (11 of them singles) to go up 9-14. The 88s whimpered out in their half of the 9th going 3 up 3 down and fell to 0-3 to start the season. Katelin had another strong performance at the plate going 4/6 with an RBI, Jeff did perfect lead off duty with a 4/4 + 2 runs + 2 RBI, while Myles hustled around the bases for the clubs first homerun of the season in the 6th.