

A Pitch for Charity

Under the auspices of Hurricane Ernesto, the 4th Annual 3-Pitch for MD tournament was played on Sept 1-2 at Pierre Rocque and Carriere ball diamonds. There were 8 teams that took part in two pools of round robin play. Teams were again anxious to play in the charity tournament for Muscular Dystrophy and were as always keen about hitting a few homers, eating, and socialising to help out a good cause.

The **Red** pool consisted of the Diamond Warriors, the Line Drives (both veteran teams), the Boyz 2 Men (present and past Oafa members still in their prime) and the Du 4 Gang (a true family affair). The **Blue** pool consisted of the Novice Knights (later referred to as the Novice Nightmares), Team Fish (another young team of ~~beer drinkers~~ ball players), Fatasucki Surprise (known as the Dream Team until this year), and Lacroix Source for Sports.

The scores of the first 4 games of the tournament on Friday night indicated that the competition was fairly evenly matched. Not bad, considering that some teams boasted players that had never batted or thrown a ball before this weekend. All of the games took advantage of some good defensive plays, key hits and encouraging coaching tips - from those players, not yet old enough to play in the tournament.

After an evening of socialising at Pierre Rocque Park, the teams arrived at the ball diamonds early on Sat morning to play two more games, each team with hopes to earn a spot in the Championship game later that day.

The Red pool could have gone any way. With the Line Drives and the Boyz to Men team ending their game in a tie at 6-6, this meant that the next games had to be decided by much needed victories. The Du 4 Gang did everything in their power to over take the Boyz to Men team, but a controversial call was made when the batter stepped inside the running lane at home and he was called out. Thus the Du 4 Gang was forced to settle with an 8-7 loss. These two results took the pressure off of the Diamond Warriors team when it came their turn to play the Line Drives. Despite losing to the Line Drives 11-10, the DW team still advanced to the finals with 4 points (2 wins and 1 loss).

The Blue pool wasn't quite as close as the red pool was in terms of points. Fatasucki Surprise, a team destined to catch up with the Du 4 Gang in terms of the # of family members that are playing, ended their pool play with 2 wins and 1 loss, while Team Fish had 1 win and 2 losses. Team Fish was depending on victories from the Novice Knights to keep them in the running. Hence the change in the name to the "Nightmares". Despite great coaching tips from the novice girls, the players just couldn't keep up with the big hits from Fatasucki Surprise and Lacroix Sports teams. The big hitting team this year was Lacroix Source for Sports, with Martin Carriere leading the team in the home run category and to a record of 3 and 0 in the round robin portion of the tournament. Although the team seems to be getting away from their Lacroix "Old" Sports nickname and are recruiting some younger players; it is encouraging to see them form a team of employees/spouses in keeping with the spirit of the "fun" tournament. They too had some new players on the team and first time ball players as well. Lacroix Source for Sports thus earned the right to play in the Championship game.

The championship game was moved up to 4:30pm in hopes of beating out the "Ernesto" storm that was brewing. The Lacroix Sports team, took charge early in the game by hitting two home runs (it must have been those good bats that they sell at the store) which left the Diamond Warriors wishing they had a few shields still in reserve. The final score was 10-1. The Diamond Warriors earned the well deserved "Quest for Gold" cheer leaders for next year, while the Lacroix Sports team won the trophy and the bragging rights for being the Oafa MD 2006 All Star team.

Much applause goes out to the participants in the tournament, the volunteer umpires (Arnie Kaye, Rob McQuaid, Irv Vanwallegham, Al Penicud, Nick Bowman, Brian Friesen, Katie Naylor, and Jason Naylor) and to the fans for supporting this worthwhile cause. The 3-Pitch for MD tournament raised over \$1000 dollars for Muscular Dystrophy.

Next year we hope to get back up to the 10 – 12 teams that we have had in the past. It would be great to expand to include divisions of like teams such that restaurants, grocery stores, speciality stores, or sponsors can get involved – either through donations or by way of challenging each other on the diamond. Teams are made up specifically for this weekend event. They are not to be teams that play together on a regular basis. The aim is to have some fun and to raise money for Muscular Dystrophy. Anyone interested in putting together a team for the 3- Pitch for MD tournament next year can go to the web site at www.oafa.org .

