

# BASES LOADED



**MANCHESTER SOFTBALL LEAGUE**

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## This week's games

### TUESDAY

#### Division 3

Bandidos 1L @ Seagulls 2L (pitch 2, umpire Sharp)

Sluggababes 3W @ Screwballs 9W (6, Warren)

#### Interdivisional

Fireballs @ Tiggers—postponed

Thunder III 2W @ Raiders 3L (4, P Fagan)

Thunder IV 10L @ Stingers 6W (3, Huggill)

#### Division 4

Swingers 1W @ Barflies 4W (1, F Fagan)

### WEDNESDAY

#### Division 1

Mayhem @ Travelling Dodgers

1L (D, Davies)

Sharks @ Mavericks 10W (B, Wallace)

Speeders @ Meerkats (A, P Fagan)

Thunder @ Camels (C, Somers)

Greensox rest

#### Division 2

Dodgers @ Titans 1W (G)

Freeze @ Bats (H, Creelman)

Mavericks II @ Tigers (E, Strayer)

Thunder II @ Camels II (F, Caird)

Hackers rest

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## Mid-term round-up

It has been a tumultuous week for MSL, with good news and bad news. The bad news is that the **Enforcers v Barflies** game in Division 4, which was forfeited by the Enforcers, having fielded an illegal line-up (see page 15) is subject to an official complaint, and looks like resulting in changes to the Enforcers' profile, including a new name, **Phoenix Fireballs**. The good news is an exciting game on the same evening which resulted in a record-breaking 46-45 win (see below).

Meanwhile, it's time to take stock as the first rotation in Divisions 1 and 2 comes to its conclusion—almost. In Division 1 the opening-day game be-

tween Speeders and Meerkats was postponed, while last week's TDs-Greensox game remains to be completed. But these games "in hand" are significant: the bottom three teams are all affected, and a win could take any one of them, out of the relegation zone. Greensox are currently bottom, a surprise from a historical perspective, but less so considering their late entry into the league. Speeders' position, 2nd bottom but only because their single win was against the Sox, is less surprising, as even they would admit. And the other promoted team, Meerkats are only one game ahead of those two. Last week both

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## Record-breaking game

Sluggababes beat Tiggers by the odd run in 91 last week in an amazing game that broke several MSL records. To start with there's the **highest aggregate score** record, previously

88 from the infamous Outlaws-Bats game in 2009 which was somewhat manipulated to achieve the high score and break other records.

⇒ Continued on page 5

SCORE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			total
team batting first <b>TIGGERS</b>	6	4	19	8	2	2	4			45
team batting 2nd <b>SLUGGABABES</b>	9	10	3	15	3	3	3			46

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Available online at <https://manchester-softball.co.uk/softball-news/the-review/>

## Birthdays

Week beginning June 26th

**Monday** Keith Altena (Meerkats)

**Wednesday** Flores Magali (Thunder IV)

**Thursday** Gareth Evans (Camels)

**Friday** Maz Yung (Speeders)

**Saturday** Jade Shaw (Barflies)

**Sunday** Ian Caird (Seagulls)

## Corrections

In last week's round up it stated that Laura Somers hit a home run on the eve of her birthday. It *was* her birthday the next day but it was her sister Amy Somers who hit the home run, as was correctly recorded in the home-run list and the box-scores.

Talking of birthdays, Mayhem's Karen Tange was misnamed as Kevin last week. Apologies.

In the Next week's fixtures section, Thunder IV @ Stingers was listed under Division 3. It is of course interdivisional.

## On this day ...

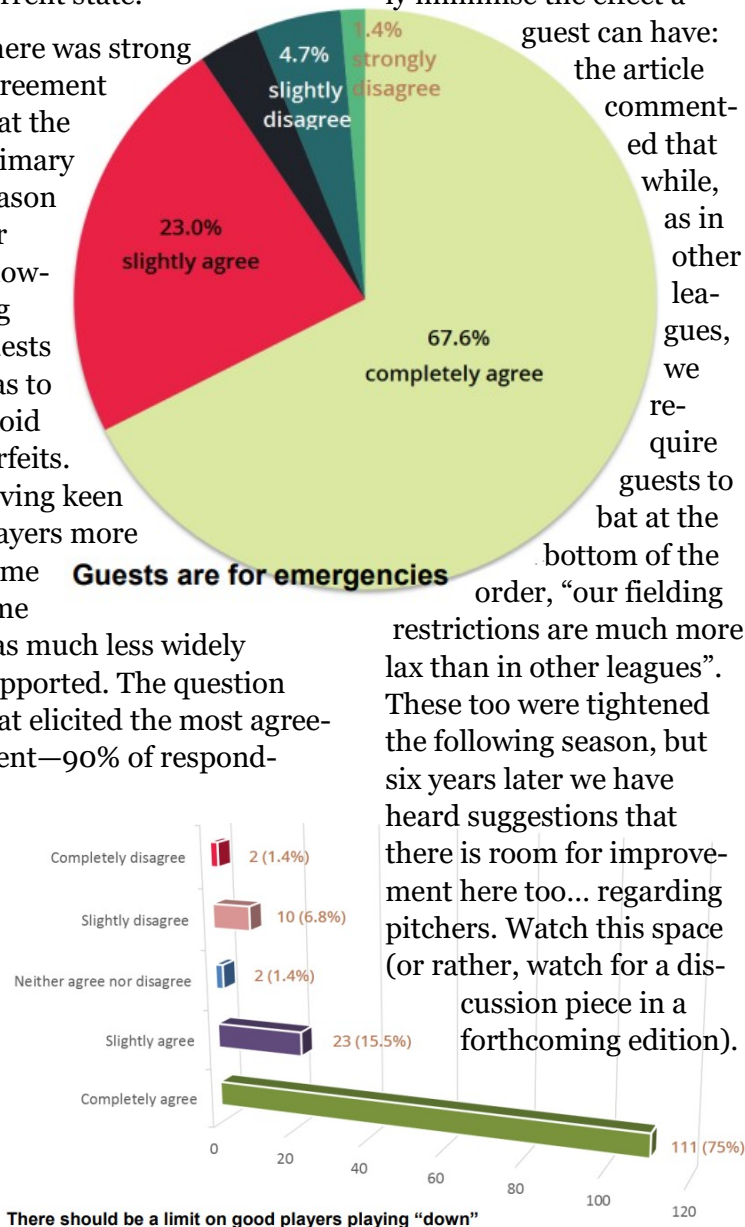
*Bases Loaded* six years ago (27/28/29 June 2017) featured the results of an informal online poll of players regarding our guest rules. The survey asked a number of deliberately provocative questions to gauge opinion league-wide. At the time there was an on-going debate about the rules, which were subsequently revised more or less to their current state.

There was strong agreement that the primary reason for allowing guests was to avoid forfeits. Giving keen players more game time

was much less widely supported. The question that elicited the most agreement—90% of respond-

ents—was that there should be limits on “top quality” players playing in the lower division, and this was one of the restrictions introduced the following year (guest can play “down” a maximum of two divisions). Just over half the respondents agreed with the suggestion that our fielding and batting restrictions do not sufficiently minimise the effect a

guest can have: the article commented that while, as in other leagues, we require guests to bat at the bottom of the order, “our fielding restrictions are much more lax than in other leagues”. These too were tightened the following season, but six years later we have heard suggestions that there is room for improvement here too... regarding pitchers. Watch this space (or rather, watch for a discussion piece in a forthcoming edition).



**Mid-term round-up***(Continued from page 2)*

the bottom two, **Green-sox** and **Speeders**, lost in “slaughters”, to **Camels** and **Mayhem** respectively, while **Meerkats** lost in an untypically low-scoring affair to **Sharks**, 8-3. At the top, Mavericks, who were resting, have beaten everybody, as have 2nd-paced **Thunder** (with one exception obviously), so their return fixture, on August 2nd, will be eagerly awaited. Thunder completed their rotation with a straightforward run-ahead rule win over **Travelling Dodgers**.

So who is going to win it? It's really too close to call: Thunder, who will have home advantage, only have to beat Mavs by three runs to go top, assuming they match each other's results in other games (their first game ended 23-21 to the home side). In years gone by, when there were eight teams in the division, the pair would have had a third meeting, but the current structure means that just one game can be hugely significant, and the title could be won by a single run! *Bases Loaded* predicts that the title will be won (or rather lost) on a different field, with one of them slipping up in a game they might be expected to win.

**Division 2 round-up**

There are no outstanding games from the first rotation in Division 2, where the position at the top is

quite similar to Division 1: **Dodgers** have beaten everyone, while **Camels II** have beaten everyone except the Dodgers. **Thunder II** and **Freeze** were respectively the defeated teams this week, while **Tigers** consolidated 3rd place with a “mercy” win against **Hackers**. **Mavericks II** and **Bats** had a close mid-table game in which Bats led from start to finish, though in the end the margin of victory was a single run (and a final half-inning not needed). The result, coupled with Thunder II's loss to the Dodgers leaves the three teams all on 4-4 records, and in head-to-heads they are all 1-1. In this situation, aggregate scores just in the games involving the three teams decide the order in the standings: Mavs have a +11 aggregate, Bats -3 and Thunder II -8. Down at the bottom, Titans, who rested last week, can feel moderately comfortable with a two-game gap to the relegation zone, which is occupied by winless Freeze, and above them Hackers, with just one win (against Freeze obviously). Hackers might have been expected to do better, especially considering that their close rivals from last year—the Bats—are comfortably mid-table. Freeze's position is less of a surprise, frankly, but captain Kris Timms assured *Bases Loaded* that they were nevertheless enjoying their season, learning from facing up to players of a higher standard.

So what about predictions at the half-way point? To be honest, we don't see Dodgers slipping up. After merging with the Lions to get a relegation reprieve two years ago, they have actually benefitted from the dreaded drop, and *Bases Loaded* predicts they will win the shield possibly with a perfect record. Camels II look well placed to go up with them, though it wouldn't take much to let the Tigers into the race. And—just to mention the unmentionable—how much teams actually want promotion to the top table can become the factor that dare not speak its name.

**Tuesday's highlights**

The outstanding result from Tuesday's schedule was undoubtedly the **Tiggers-Sluggababes** game which ended with a 46-45 win for the babes, breaking several records on the way (see second story, page 2). Sluggababes took a 19-10 lead with two bat-around innings, but Tiggers hit back with a massive 19-run 3rd inning, to lead by seven. They doubled their lead in the 4th, but then saw the slugs hit 15 to tie up the scores at 37-37. The scoring calmed down after that with Tiggers scoring eight over the last three innings, and the babes going one better in each of the 5th and 6th innings. But that lead was wiped out in the top of the 7th, and the home team needed three to take the win by the odd run in 91. Phew. The top-of-the

-table clash between **Bandidos** and **Screwballs** was much closer than might have been expected given that the Mexicans were playing one-short due to a late drop-out. In fact, the league-leaders trailed for two innings, but closed off the opposition in the later innings and won with an at-bat to

spare. **Stingers** remain 2nd after a tough interdivisional battle with the **Raiders**, against whom they did not go ahead until the 7th inning. The Raiders' lowly position and 1-7 record surely masks the potential of this fast-improving squad. **Thunder III** won the all-Div 3 clash with **Seagulls**, lead-

ing from the start and never looking in much danger. Their clubmates, **Thunder IV** fared rather less well against the **Swingers** with a run-ahead rule loss in six innings which maintains their winless record so far, the Swingers' victory being their first against this opposition in six attempts (or seven, including 2020).

### Record-breaking game

(Continued from page 2)

But the game also smashed a couple of records which have stood since 1996, only the second year from which we have any records. 46-45 is now the **narrowest win** in history, while 45 is the **highest losing score**. Previously both these records belonged to a game between the Greensox and Platt Fields Pirates played on 1st May 1996 which ended 35-34.

As the box score shows, there were several high-scoring innings, though the Sluggababes' 19-run

3rd is not even the highest-scoring this season, and is only just over half the record (36). The game featured 14 home runs, again not a record, including two grand slams, one of them hit by the league's oldest player (he won't mind me mentioning this), and which must surely therefore be the oldest age for a grand-slam hitter. And there were sibling homers for Mat and James Tanner, with James's four equaling the record for this season.

Our two graphics show the top 12 closest games, which include the 37-37 tie which featured in the very first edition of the *Review*

back in 1995, and which remains the highest-scoring tie in MSL history. Interestingly, the previous record for narrowest defeat had stood since 1996.

The second graphic shows the history of our highest-scoring game record, with the bar set pretty high on the first week of play for which we have records, in May 1995. That bar was raised a couple of times, but the record 86 runs scored in July 1996 stood until 2009 when a game was apparently somewhat manipulated to break this and other records, some of which still stand. But at least that's one asterisked record off the books!

### Top 12 closest games

46-45	Sluggababes—Tiggers	2023
37-37	Bats—M16s	1995
35-34	Greensox—Pirates	1996
34-33	Hackers—Funsters	1997
33-32	Dodgers—Runners	2001
32-31	Allstars—Speeders	2006
	Rebels—Tigers	2018
31-30	Growlers—Hackers	2001
	Speeders—Blue Gnus	2011
30-29	Hillbillies—Hackers	2003
	Bats—Cubs	2004
	Storm—Space Cadets	2009

### Highest-scoring games since records began

91	Sluggababes 46 Tiggers 45	June 2023
88	Outlaws 65 Bats 23	June 2009
86	Dodgers 53 Funsters 33	July 1996
78	M16s 64 Twatters 14	June 1995
68	Bats 57 Hackers 11	May 1995
65	Pirates 54 Funsters 11	May 1995



## Match reports

### Records tumble in closest game ever

**TIGGERS** 6 4 19 8 2 2 4 **45**  
**SLUGGABABES** 9 10 3 15 3 3 3 **46**  
 Pitch 3, Umpire Anthony Garcia Reyes

**TIGGERS** Harry Schulte (CR), Natasha Wicikowski (3B), Steve Beddows (P), Lynsey Taylor (2B), James Wright (CL), Emma Pritchard (LF), Matt Lyons (SS), Jennifer Loubo (C), Aiden Peakman (EP), Rachael Andrews (RF), Dave Wareham (1B), Georgia Orton (EP)  
 HRs Wright 2, Lyons  
**SLUGGABABES** Mat Tanner (SS), Eleanor Harris (LF), James Tanner (3B), Emma Beall (2B), Joe Wright (CL), Georgina Pugh (1B), Johan Lemmers (CR), Jess Flaherty (RF), Tim Roberts (P), *Hayley McTear (CAM) (C)*  
 HRs M Tanner, J Tanner 4, Beall, Wright 2, Lemmers, Roberts, McTear

Dubious about the dimensions of Pitch 3 pre-game, Dave Wareham whipped out his industrial tape-measure and shifted the bases away from the marked lines. An issue, perhaps, for the Umpire-in-Chief, League Head, and Parrs Wood ground-staff. Obviously the increased distances between the bags would result in fewer runs...er, no! Scoring nine, then ten, runs in their first two innings—with the SBHs hitting solidly—the Sluggababes could have thought themselves on the way to a comfortable win.

But they were shaken by

the bouncers' 19-run 3rd. An unacceptable number of walks combined with erratic ground fielding necessitated a call to the bullpen and Mat 'birthday boy' Tanner stepped up to save the day.

Leading the slugs' offensive effort were MVPs James Tanner with four dingers and Emma Beall with her first. Also on the HR list were Joe Wright with two, Johan Lemmers, Mat Tanner, and welcome guest Hayley McTear. Modesty aside—and your correspondent's pitching left much to be modest about—he did hit his career-first grand slam after a mere quarter century of trying.

*Two-out Tim*

MVPs Taylor, Lyons (TGG), Beall, M Tanner (SLG)

### Gerald and Daphne are underwhelmed

**TIGERS** 6 3 0 9 3 **21**  
**HACKERS** 4 0 0 0 2 **6**  
 RAR, Pitch E, Umpire Paul Fagan

Having been enthralled by a cliff-hanger between Seagulls and Sluggababes at Parrs Wood the previous Tuesday, Gerald and Daphne return to Wythenshawe the following day hoping to be thrilled again (not much seemed to get Gerald excited these days according to Daphne)

**TIGERS** Oli Sharpe (2B), Holly Smith (C), Simon Sharp (P), Bailey Saunders (1B), Stéphane Karayannis (CL), Anissa Aghtarafi (3B), Ed Covington (SS), Caroline Drake (RF), Robert Laurence (CR), Sara Al-wagfi (LF), Richard Goar (EP), Tereza Kokocińska (EP)  
 HRs Sharpe, Karayannis  
**HACKERS** Darren Corner (SS), Abbie de Zwart (RF), Jack Hoban (CL), Grace Mills (LF), Peter Rush-ton (3B), Ella Mills (1B), Alex Mills (CR), Emma Cosgrove (C), Ian Mills (P), Rachel Naylor (2B), Sean Raft-

but unfortunately they chose to watch the Hackers!

Daphne: Oh, I do hope we see some exciting ghetto cricket again this evening, Gerald. Even better if we witness someone try and head the ball like last night. He was really committed wasn't he?

Gerald: He should have been, yes!

Gerald: Oh look. It's those hooded IT specialists again. They are playing some kind of wild animals.

Daphne: Those are tigers, Gerald. Grrrrrr.

Gerald: Daphne, stop biting my ear lobes, I'm trying to concentrate here, which is what those Hackers should be doing too! They scored four in the 1st (two less than the furry fiends) but haven't scored since. Meanwhile the Ti-

gers are scratching up the runs on the scoreboard with some Sharpe batting from Oli and great catching from Holly.

Gerald: Oh, and now the one they call Steph has absolutely thrashed one over the fielders and into the long grass

Daphne: Ooooooh, he's hot!!

Gerald: I think they are all a bit sweaty in this heat, darling.

Daphne: No but he's REALLY hot.

Gerald: Oh, you mean he's really good. Well yes, he did hit a monster home run on his first at-bat but thereafter he was caught every time by that pretty girl in left field who seems to do all the fielding and batting for that Hacker team. MVP if ever I saw one.

Daphne: Pretty!!! Avert your eyes immediately, Gerald, before I poke them with a pointy stick.

Gerald: Sorry darling, it was just a descriptive term and not any indication of me being attracted to the young lady. I say lady but she's clearly from the wrong side of town as she wears her cap back to front so really not my type. I only have eyes for you, darling so please put that stick down.

Daphne: Why did the

bowler shout "big balls hitter" when that man Steph came up to bat? I mean, how does he know?

Gerald: I'm not sure, maybe the chap's underwear is not supportive enough and one dropped into view.

Daphne: No, I was looking closely, just for research purposes you understand, and couldn't see anything no matter how hard I looked.

Gerald: Well you won't be able to stare at him any longer, Daphne, because it's all over after only five innings. 21-6 to the felines. Poor show if you ask me. I think maybe those Hackers should stick to their PlayStation™ games in future. Apart from Jack Hoban and Rachel Naylor who batted 1.000, they can't hit a cow's arse with a banjo.

Daphne: Language Gerald!

Gerald: Come on, let's go Daphne. I think we'll stick to watching Two-out Tim and the Sluggababes on a Tuesday from now on.

Daphne: Oooo is that the new musical show on at the Opera House?

Gerald: [rolls his eyes] Yes dear.

*Ian Mills (still no Boon)*  
MVPs Smith, Sharpe (TIG), G Mills, I Mills (HAC)

*Footnote: No pitchers were seriously injured during the writing of this episode.*

## Screwballs, Bandidos count to 9 in different ways

**BANDIDOS** 3 3 5 4 1 0 1 17  
**SCREWBALLS** 5 4 1 4 6 3 x 23  
Pitch 6, Umpire Adam Hugill

**BANDIDOS** Adam Morrison (CL), Loz Birch (2B), Liam Morrison (SS), Carol Ann Costello (1B), Jacob Arnison (CR) (sub Harry Somers), Kate Davidson (LF), Jason Kneen (3B), Donna Brierly (C), Nacho Sánchez (P), auto out HRs Birch, L Morrison 2  
**SCREWBALLS** AJ Hoysted (CL), Nicola McKenna (LF), Isaac Howard (1B), Catherine Millan (C), Zak Morris (SS), Rachel Loggenberg (EP), Lee Harvey (EP), Kathryn Craine (RF), Dan Strayer (P), Emma Swarsbrick (3B), Naveed Ahmed (3B), Carola Guevara (2B) HR Strayer

In a showdown that could have easily jumbled the top of the Division 3 leaderboard into an all-out second-half war, the Manchester Screwballs outlasted a truly heroic performance from an under-womanned Bandidos side.

The Screwballs stayed unbeaten at 9-0, reeling off a too-close-for-comfort 23-17 victory that keeps them in sole possession of 1st place. The Bandidos fell to 7-2, in sole possession of 3rd place. Stingers are in the silver position at 8-1, beneficiaries of a victory earlier this month over Bandidos.

Bandidos shortstop and large-ball MVP Liam Morrison belted two re-

⇒ Continued on page 8

**Match reports** *(Continued from page 7)*

sounding homers in the contest, while the hard-hitting small-ball MVP Loz Birch added her own. Morrison was walked three times, while Birch tacked on a pair of doubles, a single and three runs scored on a four-hit night. Morrison stands in second place in the division with 11 homers, trailing Mike Mia of Thunder III.

The visitors reeled off at least three runs in each of the first four innings, capped by a five-run 3rd. This despite giving away an out every time through the batting order because this formidable side were stuck with just four small-ball hitters due to an unfortunate late scratch from the lineup. Nacho Sánchez had his swing going, stroking three hits, including a pair of doubles. Sánchez and Adam Morrioso scored three runs apiece.

This valiant effort was paying dividends for Bandidos. But like all tides, games can shift. And in the bottom of the 4th with a 15-10 lead, so it was for the Bandidos. Screwballs southpaw Naveed Ahmed took over the pitching duties for Dan Strayer, and had a brilliant outing to take home the victory.

The Bandidos would push in just two runs across the final three innings.

Like Guns N' Roses, the Screwballs made their move with just a little patience. Veterans Lee Harvey, Carola Guevara and Isaac Howard set the tone by drawing three walks apiece, and young teammates like Ahmed, small-ball MVP Nic McKenna, AJ Hoysted and co-captain Caz Millan (continuing a torrid pace throughout the month of June with four RBIs and a staggering .833 batting average) followed suit. All judiciously coaxed free passes as Bandidos pitching struggled to find the strike zone.

Howard and Zak Morris each drove in four runs as a result, whilst Ahmed drove in three.

The Pink and Blue slowly chipped away and took the lead for good in the 5th with a six-run frame, tacking on three in the 7th to seal it. The catalyst was Strayer's leadoff opposite field homer that beat an overshifting defence so extreme that it would make Corey Seager blush.

The large-ball MVP added a single, double and a walk to drive in two, combining with McKenna to patrol the left side of the outfield for some critical

catches as Ahmed closed off a Bandido threat.

It will be a treat to see the two sides go at it again - with hopes they'll both be at full strength.

**NEXT WEEK:** The Sluggababes hope to bring chaos to the top of Division 3 Tuesday on Pitch 6 in another Division 3 contest against host Screwballs. At 6-3, they're just outside the promotion zone in 4th place, fresh off an exhilarating one-run win over Tiggers. Sluggababes are paced by the power hitting of James Tanner, Joe Wright, Emma Beall and Rachael Wake. Meanwhile, the Bandidos are the visitors again this Tuesday—this time, Pitch 2 is the site, and the Seagulls are the host. They're in the drop zone at 4-5, eager to turn it around in the second half. Despite the loss last Tuesday, the Bandidos hold the distinction of allowing the fewest runs of any team in the lower two divisions, impressively doubling the 99 runs they've let in. Only Division 1 sides Thunder, Camels, Travelling Dodgers and Division 2 leaders Dodgers have allowed fewer.

*Dan Strayer*

MVPs Birch, L Morrison (BND), McKenna, Strayer (SCR)



## It's (After-)Party time!

MSL's Entertainments Officer NJ Dyson is excited to announce the dates of this summer's post-game "After-parties", now a regular feature of our season. The first will celebrate 4th July in true American style, with food and drink, music and fireworks, and will mean that Division 3 and 4 games are played at WSG. Of course Div 1 and 2 players are more than welcome too.

The festivities will begin after the games

end, and players are encouraged to bring USA-themed props and fancy-dress items to the party.

Please note, it is planned that the evening will end with a short firework display: players who bring their dogs to the game would be advised to consider leaving them at home just this once, or else regrettably leave before the firework display begins.

The Wednesday Afterparty is pencilled in for August 2nd, though this has yet to be confirmed.

More details soon.

## Manchester Main filling up fast

In other news from NJ, the registration page for our main tournament, August 5th and 6th, is now open. Go to the MSL website and follow the "Get involved" link to "Registration" and you'll find "Tournament Registration" at the bottom.

There are already 13 teams registered, so the tournament is filling up fast.

Be quick or be disappointed.



## The catcher's job

“One job” shout the other players and spectators as the catcher lets a pitch roll out of play behind them.

Of course it can be more than a minor inconvenience if the game happens to be on pitch 3 at Parrs Wood or D or F at WSG, as the ball is likely to disappear into the bushes and require some time hunting or a replacement, but on all the other diamonds the ball will be quickly back in play and no-one will remember.

In baseball a “passed ball” is when the catcher fails to control a pitch that they would be reasonably expected to (otherwise it’s a “wild pitch”), and this allows base runners to advance. There is no such thing in softball, as runners must be in contact with the base until the pitch is hit, so the catcher letting the pitch go behind them will not cost the team at all.

The job of stopping the ball going out of play behind home plate belongs to the backstop, which is the fence there and off which the ball is playable. The BBC confused

the two when they asked for a catcher to appear on the news to discuss the Northern Ireland backstop in Teresa May’s ill-considered Brexit deal. Having backstops on all of our diamonds would be lovely and speed up games a little but not that much – it’s not as if the Tuesday games on diamond 7 always finish well before the other games. So the catcher is still relied on to stop pitches that the batter has looked at or swung at and sent backwards – although on the diamonds mentioned above it can be useful to have a member of the batting side as an extra ‘fielder’ in front of the bushes as they tend to be of more use than a row of kitbags or similar.

What should the catcher do then?

### Mike Goff

If they really do only have one job then that is to make outs at home plate – catching pop-ups in fair or foul territory, taking the ball on home plate for forced plays (catchers with a better arm should also try to get the forced runner at third base too, but make sure that the fielder there is expecting the throw or the force could disappear completely) and tagging unforced runners. Always remember that a forced play is the only time you need to stand on the plate... the rest of the time you will only be in the way. Stand with your back foot on the corner of the plate nearest to the thrower and keep it there until you have controlled the ball. You need to give





runners as much of the plate as you can – for everyone's safety! To tag a runner it is best to start off low so that they don't slide underneath your attempt. If they then try to jump over it simply lift your glove into them. Only keep hold of the ball throughout, with both hands if necessary, as the ball popping out of the fielder's glove is often the best hope a runner has of escaping a tag and so they might deliberately try to make you drop it, by running with force or trying to dislodge the ball as they pass.

But of course catcher's have a lot more to do:

- If there is no play at home, then try to get out to back up the 1st baseperson, especially if some of the other fielders have wild arms, because saving the extra bases from a ball thrown dead could keep the force on and make a big difference to the game. If the fielder at 1st is good enough to come and back you up with plays at home, then it's only nice to repay the favour occasionally.
- Instruct the pitcher to wait until the fielders are ready. This is usually the outfielders, and since the pitcher has their back to

them then they could start to pitch before everyone is in position, or even looking the right way. The pitcher has ten seconds to pitch after receiving the ball and the batter being ready (delay beyond this is a ball in the batter's count), so there should be enough time for the outfield to move in or out for the next batter.

- If there is no play at home, or none expected, then they should keep an eye on the baserunners to make sure that each runner touches each base. Once "Time" has been called, they can then appeal missed bases to the umpire (who should likewise be keeping an eye on missed bases, but cannot do anything unless they are appealed), who will give the runner out if they also saw it. If the umpire did not see a missed base then the appeal will certainly remind them to watch for them in the rest of the game, which could be to your team's benefit. Imagine a batter hitting a grand slam, only for

the lead runner to miss home plate, an appeal made and that runner the third out of the half-inning: from four runs in to zero through the catcher's awareness.

- A knowledgeable catcher can influence the game by their memory of opposition batters. If they know that a particular batter has trouble hitting inside pitches then they can signal this to the pitcher, or get the short-stop to move back and right if they know that is where the batter usually goes. These signals should be silent and, given from the usual position of the catcher, the batter will be unaware of them.

⇒ *Continued on page 12*



Photos: Abbie de Zwart (left),  
*Bases Loaded* (above)



**The catcher's job***(Continued from page 11)*

▪ Exchange the game balls with the umpire between batters, and throw the new ball back to the pitcher. Not the most exciting of the catcher's duties, but still pretty important as many LBHs would love to get to hit a small ball. You also have a glove, and the umpire does not, so they will have no hope of controlling or catching a full-bodied throw from the shortstop for example. Take the opportunity to chat to the umpire between plays – it is usually welcome and one minute you're talking about their new dog then the next you have just happened to mention that the opposition's 1st base fielder seems to be standing in the wrong place and constantly obstructing runners when your team is batting.

As One Job you also need to be prepared to throw your metal-brimmed bowler at secret agents trying to bring down your boss' criminal empire at the drop of a hat. (Ed's note, that's Odd Job, Mike, Odd Job).

**Parrs Wood baselines 5 foot short**

Suspensions that most of the pitches at Parrs Wood have been wrongly marked out all season were proved correct when Dave Wareham came armed with a tape measure and discovered the base distances were 60 feet instead of 65 feet.

We believe this is the case for all the pitches except pitch 7.

Does this mean that the games played on these short pitches are null and void? Not a bit of it, though Fixtures Secretary Andrew Bogie joked

that this perhaps explains the rash of high scores being reported on a Tuesday.

Of course the ground staff at PW will be informed, and the error rectified.

But what about the record high-scoring game (91 runs in total) reported elsewhere this week? Will this record now carry an asterisk? Thankfully not. Just before this game started, the bases were moved to their correct positions, as seen here!



## New kit for Travelling Dodgers

Travelling Dodgers have got a new kit deal in preparation for their participation in European competition in Sofia, Bulgaria in August, according to their Facebook group page. The new kit, which will be available in both home and away colours, will also be worn for MSL games.



Their main shirt sponsor is TecCre8, and a second sleeve sponsor is B.B.U.

TecCre8 Services is a UK-wide monitoring surveyor in construction finance who currently oversee over £10m of development finance on behalf of some of the UK's biggest lenders. TDs' regular 3rd baseman George Swann was particularly involved in

the design, which was realised by Squared Away Sports Apparel.

Captain Jonny Huck explained the inspiration for the kit:

"This is our third kit since we started the team in 2015.

"We have had to invest in a new kit due to the Na-



Left to right, the "home" shirt, front and back; the "away" shirt

tional Travelling Dodgers team qualifying for the Euros where there is a requirement for both home and away shirts.

"We are extremely grateful to George Swann and his company TecCre8 for sponsoring us."

Regarding the design itself, Huck said "We have come to be known for having a half UK, half USA flag on all our shirts for two reasons: first,

slowpitch softball originated in the US but is played in the UK and second, we have had numerous American players playing for us past and present. We love diversity and different backgrounds with players from lots of different nations such as Canada, Nicaragua and Colum-



bia. We love how each player adds part of their culture into the team and feel that has been a major factor in the success we have had over the years. We opted for the tag line 'makingsoftball-greatagain' simply because people get too serious about softball forgetting that no one is being paid to play so we are all playing for the love of the game and to have a break from the daily grind of work."



## Northwest Series 2

**W**hile the blue and red teams from the USA were playing in the MLB London Series, northern England hosted a beautiful sunny day for softballers competing on the second day of the Northwest Series tournaments.

The NWS tournaments are designed to give local teams more opportunities to play softball. Teams from all parts of the country are welcome to enter for either one day, or for all the three tournaments that span the outdoor playing season.

Our own Screwballs bravely jumped to the higher Comp level of the tournament for the first time and looked at home there. They played several very competitive games against their more experienced counterparts, and ended up grabbing third place. BaseballSoftball-UK North West Development Manager Luis Arrevillagas remarked, "I was very excited to see the Screwballs playing Comp this weekend; I know they train hard and are very disciplined

and receive great coaching from Dan Strayer and John Reeves. A team full of rookies playing with the best shows that their hard work is paying off. Hats off to the coaches and players!"

Dan Strayer from the Screwballs added, "It was an amazing experience: actually it was pretty damned fun. We were nervous in the first inning, and then we just exhaled and started to play very well. It was a neat experience!"

The teams played a round-robin in either Comp or Rec level, then played semifinals and finals for the sought-after medals. After plenty of runs and amazing plays, the top spots in Comp

### Luis Arrevillagas

were grabbed by the Meerkats, with the Mavericks in 2nd place and, as mentioned, Screwballs a creditable 3rd. The Rec tournament was won by a Bats team made up of players from Manchester and Liverpool, with the Leeds Coyotes 2nd and Seagulls 3rd.

The weekend's event manager, Linni Mitchell, commented, "Another sun-filled tournament in the North West! A huge thank you to our umpires, Fliss Fagan, Ian Caird and Daniel Simpson, for their efforts in the heat! We look forward to welcoming teams to the last tournament of this series on 22 July."



Photo BSUK



## Enforcers forfeit game

As reported elsewhere, the Enforcers forfeited their game against Barflies last week, after fielding an illegal line-up.

The Enforcers' line-up, already one short, included a player who was registered as a large-ball hitter (LBH), playing in place of a small-ball hitter (SBH). This line-up was therefore illegal according to the laws of softball, which (in our local version adapted for gender inclusivity) require five SBHs and five LBHs (though playing one short is also allowed). There is currently no provision in our rules for players to change their declared gender and/or chosen ball-size once they have registered for the season. Therefore a registered LBH cannot play as an SBH, nor vice versa, though this may be looked at for future years.

It should also be noted that this game is the subject of an official complaint, the details of which will be published in these pages in due course.

## Last week's MVPs

CAM	Sarah Cassin (3B), Adam Hugill (SS)
GRX	Tanya Lochery (1B), Matty Green (P)
MAV	rested
MHM	Emma Agostini (3B), Nathan Barratt (Happy Birthday) (CR)
MKT	Sonia Hine (RF), Darren Shaw (LF)
SHA	Rebecca Ebo (LF), Mike Hulme (SS)
SPE	Emma Bennett (LF), Jeremy Fothergill (P)
TDS	Katie Jessop (1B), George Swann (2B)
THU	Kim Hannessen (CL), Tom Russell (SS)
BAT	Carla Zuill (1B), Chris Frost (P)
CM2	Jen Douglas (2B), James Wooderson (CR)
DOD	Lisa Jepson (1B), Elieser D Mendoza (SS)
FRZ	Laurie Salford-Ingham (1B), Mark Haywood (P)
HAC	Grace Mills (LF), Ian Mills (P)
MV2	Charlotte Lee (2B), Wes Ng (LF)
TH2	Bryony James (RF), Jeivo Gomez (CR)
TIG	Holly Smith (C), Oli Sharpe (2B)
TTN	rested
BND	Loz Birch (2B), Liam Morrison (SS)
SCR	Nicola McKenna (LF), Dan Strayer (P)
SGL	Gina Amos (1B), Jay Bhagdev (P)
SLG	Emma Beall (2B), Mat Tanner (SS)
STG	Michelle Cleator (1B), Nick Sims (CL)
TGG	Lynsey Taylor (2B), Matt Lyons (SS)
TH3	Ellie Sams (LF), Luis Allan Arrevillagas (CL)
BFL	walk-over
ENF	forfeit
RAI	Kerry Brown (LF), Ross Jubber (CL)
SWI	Rhianne Boag (CR), Alex Hartley (P)
TH4	Kelly Brookshaw (1B), Simon Ronksley (P)

*Note: names are reproduced here exactly as submitted on the scoresheets.*

## Guests

### DOWN

Luis Arrevillagas (Thunder) for Thunder III v Seagulls  
 Hayley McTear (Camels) for Sluggababes v Tiggers  
 Bailey Saunders (Tigers) for Swingers v Thunder IV  
 Ashley Swaby (Thunder II) for Swingers v Thunder IV  
 Ed Woodcock (Thunder II) for Thunder IV (2nd) v Swingers

And in a further development, the Enforcers captain and another player are reported to have left the team, which is now regrouping under new leadership, and has changed its name to

Phoenix Fireballs. The new team will inherit the Enforcers' records. This week's game against the Tiggers has been postponed in order to give the players some breathing space after an eventful and troubling week.

## Home runs

### Division 1

#### **SBH**

2—Maddy Gresty (MAV)

1—Emma Agostini (MHM), Tanya Burton (GRX), Sarah Cassin (CAM), Rebecca Ebo (SHA), Celine Frederic (GRX), Beth Jarratt (THU), Katie Jessop (TDS), Sherry Kenyon (MAV), Nat Leyland (TDS), Linni Mitchell (MHM), Jacqueline Ng (CAM), Su OBrien (SHA), Rachel Shkurko (TDS)

#### **LBH**

8—Joe Grantham (THU)

6—Dan Downes (TDS), Tom Russell (THU)

5—Anthony Garcia Reyes (MHM)

4—Keith Altena (MKT), Tom Atkinson (CAM), Gurarjun Grewal (GRX), Kris Hadwin (THU), Tatsuyoshi Hikawa (GRX), Andy Lott (CAM), Karthik Manjunath (SHA), Oscar Marenco (TDS), Luke Martin\* (TDS), George Stamets (SHA)  
3—Carlos dos Ramos (MKT), Brad Hadwin (THU), Adam Hugill (CAM), Pete Nightingale (MAV)

2—Baljit Ahluwalia\* (MAV), Luis Arrevillagas (THU), Nathan Barratt (MHM), Ian Blease (MAV), Craig Brooks\* (MAV), Jordan Colton (MHM), Chris Lennon\* (SPE)

1—Alex Claridge-Ingham\* (SPE), Matt Fairweather (MKT), Paul Kidley (GRX), Dave Leverton (THU), Mike Lott (THU), Colin McKie (CAM), Laurence Pearmain\* (MAV), Andy Rawson (GRX), Jack Scholes (CAM), Darren Shaw (MKT), Sam Steele (TDS), Igor von Orel Bronte (MKT)

### Division 2

#### **SBH**

5—Grace Mills (HAC)

3—Lisa Jepson (DOD)

2—Faye Dunlop (MV2)

1—Sara Alwagfi (TIG), Nicola Booth (CM2), Keely Congleton (DOD), Suzanne Donovan (BAT), Bryony James (TH2), Lynsey O'Farrell (MV2), Abbie Thwaite (DOD), Kate Winfield (TTN)

#### **LBH**

10—Stéphane Karayannis\*\* (TIG)

9—Chris Mannion\* (DOD)

8—Cameron Waddelow\* (BAT)

7—James Wooderson (CM2)

6—Harry Bell (HAC), Wes Ng (MV2),

5—Elieser Doronsoro\* (DOD)

4—Conor Battersby\* (CM2), Jeivo Gomez (TH2), Craig Lawson (CM2), Dave Martin Baez (MV2), Oliver Potts (CM2), Luis Rodriguez (DOD), Simon Sharp (TIG), Brian Slusarek (DOD)

3—Steve Bartlett (TH2), Alex Bates (BAT), David Dyson (DOD), Chris Gresty\* (MV2), Sean Rafter (HAC)

2—Sam Baker (TTN), Andrew Bogie\* (TH2), Darren Corner (HAC), Ed Covington (TIG), Jeff Fong

(MV2), Mark Heyward (FRZ), Alex Mills (HAC), Ian Williams (MV2)

1—Robbie Cowbury (TTN), Chris Frost (BAT), Dan Hocking (TTN), Steve Howard (DOD), Dan Jarman (CM2), Lee Kendrick-Walker (DOD), Ian Mills (HAC), Luke Nelson (TTN), Leo Pearn (CAM), Jerry Seabridge\* (BAT), Oli Sharpe (TIG), Drew Stanton (FRZ), Richard Taylor (TTN), Richard Thompson (TIG), Ed Woodcock (TH2), Ben Wright (TTN)

### Division 3

#### **SBH**

3—Nikki Bradshaw (STG)

2—Samiya Rahman (SGL), Natasha Wicikowski\* (TGG)

1—Emma Beall (SLG), Loz Birch (BND), Tanya Lochery (BND), Nicola McKenna (SCR), Amy Somers (TH3), Amy Sykes (STG), Lynsey Taylor (TGG), Hannah Tillyard (SCR), Rachael Wake (SLG)

#### **LBH**

12—Mike Mia (TH3)

11—Liam Morrison (BND)

10—Ross Birch (BND)

9—James Tanner (SLG)

8—AJ Hoysted (SCR), Dan Strayer (SCR), Joe Wright\* (SLG),

7—Carl Emsley (SGL), Kristian Stokwicz (STG),

6—Jason Kneen\* (BND), Milan Nechvátal (SCR), Charlie Whalley\* (SGL), James Wright (TGG)

5—Dean Cull (TH3), Anthony Henderson (SGL), Nick Sims (STG)

4—David Grice (SGL), Harry Schulte (TGG)

3—Danny Casey-Wright (STG), Zac Morris\* (SCR), Mat Tanner (SLG), Alex Wardle (SLG), Jimmy Warren (TH3)

2—Naveed Ahmed (SCR), Jacob Arnison (BND), Dilan Bastiampillai (TH3), Tom Childs (TH3), Antoon Lemmers (SLG), Adam Morrison (BND), Josh Normie (STG)

1—Noah Arnison (BND), Luis Allan Arrevillagas (TH3), Ian Caird (SGL), Rory Casey-Wright (STG), Mark Fox (STG), Isaac Howard (SCR), Lewis Le Fevre (TH3), Johan Lemmers (SLG), Matt Lyons\* (TGG), John Reeves (SCR), Tim Roberts\* (SLG), Nacho Sánchez (BND)

### Division 4

#### **SBH**

3—Daisy Lord\* (BFL), Jade Shaw (BFL)

2—Atiyah Malik (TH4)

1—Rhianne Boag (SWI), Kerry Brown (RAI), Claire Holden (BFL)

#### **LBH**

9—Aleck Aspinall\* (BFL)

7—Luke Crannage (RAI), Chris Smith (BFL)

5—Dave Dean (BFL), Ebby Hassan (BFL), Ben Leeks (SWI), Chris Newhall (ENF), Simon Ronksley (TH4),

4—Jordan Wilcock (ENF)

3—Alex Hartley (SWI), Mike Spiers (RAI)

2—Ben Acton (TH4), Mike Cooney (BFL), Mark Crannage\* (RAI), Bryn Davies (ENF), Simon Grainger\*

⇒ *Continued opposite*

## Next week's fixtures 4/5 July

Next week sees the return fixtures in Divisions 1 and 2 of games played May 3.

### Division 1

**Mayhem @ Camels** (pitch G, umpire Green) Earlier this season Camels won 16-9 and lead 8-4 in all meetings or 8-5 including 2020.

**Speeders @ Mavericks** (E, Caird) The first rotation game was their first meeting in 13 years: Mavericks won 20-5 and have won all but one of their 17 meetings.

**Thunder @ Greensox** (H, Creelman) In May Thunder won 13-12, but Greensox lead overall 18-13.

**Travelling Dodgers @ Meerkats** (F, Strayer) Previously TDs won 10-5 making it 5-6 in all meetings.

Sharks rest

### Division 2

**Bats @ Thunder II** (B, Somers) In their earlier meeting Thunder won 19-15 to take a 3-2 lead in all meetings.

**Camels II @ Titans** (J, Wallace) In May Camels

won 26-11, but Titans lead 3-2 in all meetings.

**Hackers @ Dodgers** (D, Davies) Dodgers won their first meeting since 1996 32-10, and have won four of their five meetings.

**Mavericks II @ Freeze** (C, P Fagan) Last time, Mavs won 37-3 making it 2-0 in all meetings.

Tigers rest

*Tuesday's games to be played at WSG, pitches TBC*

### Division 3

**Tiggers @ Seagulls** (P Fagan) Only previous meeting 27 July 2021 (Division 4), Seagulls won 17-15.

### Interdivisional

**Bandidos @ Thunder IV** (Carruthers) Last meeting 6 July 2021 when Bandidos beat Colt 45s 25-2, making it four wins in four meetings.

**Phoenix Fireballs @ Thunder III** (Sharp) Last meeting 23 August 2022 (Division 3), Thunder beat Enforcers 17-11 but the now renamed Fireballs lead 9-7 in this, the most played fixture in the lower two divisions.

**Screwballs @ Swingers** (Goff) Last meeting 28 June 2022 (Division 4), Screwballs won an exciting encounter 24-23 to take a 2-1 lead in all meetings.

**Sluggababes @ Raid-**

**Results** (continued from page 18)

### Division 3

**BANDIDOS** 3 3 5 4 1 0 1 17  
**SCREWBALLS** 5 4 1 4 6 3 x 23  
Pitch 6, Umpire Adam Huggill  
HRs **BND** Loz Birch, Liam Morrison 2; **SCR** Dan Strayer

**THUNDER III** 3 3 3 0 5 4 7 25  
**SEAGULLS** 1 0 2 2 4 6 2 17  
Pitch 1, Umpire Mike Goff  
HRs **TH3** Michael Mia, Dean Cull, Luis Arrevillagas (THU); **SGL** Carl Emsley, Sam Rahman

**TIGGERS** 6 4 19 8 2 2 4 45  
**SLUG'BABES** 9 10 3 15 3 3 3 46  
Pitch 3, Umpire Anthony Garcia Reyes  
HRs **TGG** James Wright 2, **Matt Lyons** (GS); **SLG** Mat Tanner, James Tanner 4, Emma Beall, Joe Wright 2, Johan Lemmers, **Tim Roberts** (GS), **Hayley McTear** (CAM)

### Interdivisional

**STINGERS** 7 2 2 2 1 4 7 25  
**RAIDERS** 4 5 2 0 6 0 4 21  
Pitch 4, Umpire Fliss Fagan  
HRs **STG** Nick Sims 3 (1 GS), Danny Casey Wright, Kristian Stokwisz; **RAI** Ross Jubber

**ENFORCERS** 0  
**BARFLIES** 20  
Forfeit, illegal line-up

### Division 4

**THUNDER IV** 0 2 0 0 0 0 2  
**SWINGERS** 3 3 1 4 3 3 17  
RAR, Pitch 7, Umpire Paul Fagan  
HRs **SWI** Ben Leeks 2, Pete Gordon **TH4** Simon Ronksley

## No umpire—apology

There was no umpire for the Thunder v Travelling Dodgers game due to an oversight, for which the League apologizes.

**ers** (Hung) Last meeting 28 June 2022 (Division 4), Babes won 16-7 to make it two out of two.

**Stingers @ Barflies** (F Fagan) First ever meeting.

(ENF), Ross Jubber (RAI), Kalpesh Makanji (BFL), Jon Pearson (RAI), Chris Radford (BFL), Ben Rocca (SWI), Richard Valentine\* (RAI)

1—Jamie Acton (TH4), Phil Cosgrove (TH4), Pete Gordon (SWI), Ed Roberts (SWI), Andy Whatmore (ENF)

\* grand slam



# Results and Standings

Played 20/21 June

Standings Week 9

## Division 1

**CAMELS** 2 12 1 2 9 **26**  
**GREENSOX** 1 1 2 0 0 **4**  
 RAR, Pitch C, Umpire Dan Strayer  
 HRs **CAM** Adam Hugill, Andy  
 Lott, Tom Atkinson

**MAYHEM** 5 7 7 4 10 **33**  
**SPEEDERS** 0 6 0 0 0 **6**  
 RAR, Pitch J, Umpire Harry Som-  
 ers  
 HRs **MHM** Emma Agostini, Na-  
 than Barratt, Linni Mitchell; **SPE**  
**Chris Lennon** (GS)

**MEERKATS** 0 0 0 2 0 0 1 **3**  
**SHARKS** 3 0 3 0 1 1 x **8**  
 Pitch B, Umpire Ian Caird  
 HR **SHA** George Stamets

**TR DODGERS** 0 0 2 0 0 0 **2**  
**THUNDER** 3 0 3 8 2 1 **17**  
 RAR, Pitch D  
 HRs **TDS** Katie Jessop, Sam  
 Steele; **THU** Joe Grantham, Dave  
 Leverton

## Division 2

**FREEZE** 1 2 5 3 1 0 **12**  
**CAMELS II** 6 2 0 4 12 3 **27**  
 RAR, Pitch G, Umpire Gemma  
 Wallace  
 HRs **CM2** James Wooderson 3  
 (1GS), Dan Jarman, **Conor Bat-**  
**tersby** 2 (1GS)

**MAVERICKS II** 0 0 2 5 2 2 1 **12**  
**BATS** 1 0 7 2 1 2 x **13**  
 Pitch F, Umpire Mike Davies  
 HRs **MV2** Ian Williams, Wes Ng  
 2, Dave Martin Baez; **BAT** Camer-  
 on Waddelow, Alex Bates

**THUNDER II** 2 1 1 3 0 2 3 **12**  
**DODGERS** 4 5 0 1 3 5 x **18**  
 Pitch H, Umpire Arthur Hung  
 HRs **TH2** Ed Woodcock, Steve  
 Bartlett, Jeivo Gomez; **DOD** David  
 Dyson, Lisa Jepson, Elieser Dor-  
 ronsoro

**TIGERS** 6 3 0 9 3 **21**  
**HACKERS** 4 0 0 0 2 **6**  
 RAR, Pitch E, Umpire Paul Fagan  
 HRs **TIG** Oli Sharpe, Steph Kara-  
 yannis

⇒ Continued on page 17

P W T L F RS RC Pts% GB

## Division 1

► <b>Mavericks</b>	8	8	0	0	0	143	103	1.00	-
► <b>Thunder</b>	8	7	0	1	0	160	83	.917	1
► <b>Camels</b>	8	5	0	3	0	144	97	.750	3
► <b>Mayhem</b>	8	4	0	4	0	127	109	.667	4
▼ <b>Trv Dodgers</b>	7	3	0	4	0	83	96	.619	4½
► <b>Sharks</b>	8	3	0	5	0	94	101	.583	5
▼ <b>Meerkats</b>	7	2	0	5	0	86	104	.524	5½
► <b>Speeders</b>	7	1	0	6	0	37	142	.429	6½
► <b>Greensox</b>	7	1	0	6	0	87	126	.429	6½

Speeders above Greensox on head-to-head

## Division 2

► <b>Dodgers</b>	8	8	0	0	0	203	86	1.00	-
► <b>Camels II</b>	8	7	0	1	0	159	115	.917	1
► <b>Tigers</b>	8	5	0	3	0	141	102	.750	3
► <b>Mavericks II</b>	8	4	0	4	0	142	112	.667	4
► <b>Bats</b>	8	4	0	4	0	143	144	.667	4
▼ <b>Thunder II</b>	8	4	0	4	0	120	136	.667	4
► <b>Titans</b>	8	3	0	5	0	126	128	.583	5
► <b>Hackers</b>	8	1	0	7	0	120	184	.417	7
► <b>Freeze</b>	8	0	0	8	0	81	228	.333	8

## Division 3

► <b>Screwballs</b>	9	9	0	0	0	232	147	1.00	-
► <b>Stingers</b>	9	8	0	1	0	208	152	.926	1
► <b>Bandidos</b>	9	7	0	2	0	198	99	.852	2
► <b>Slugg'babes</b>	9	6	0	3	0	199	191	.778	3
► <b>Thunder III</b>	9	4	0	5	0	212	179	.630	5
▼ <b>Seagulls</b>	9	4	0	5	0	180	186	.630	5
► <b>Tiggers</b>	9	3	0	6	0	173	212	.556	6

## Division 4

► <b>Barflies</b>	9	7	0	2	0	255	195	.852	-
► <b>Swingers</b>	9	3	0	6	0	121	184	.556	4
► <b>PhxFireballs</b>	9	2	0	6	1	124	169	.444	5½
► <b>Raiders</b>	9	1	0	8	0	144	222	.407	6
► <b>Thunder IV</b>	9	0	0	9	0	129	239	.333	7

Enforcers have changed their name to Phoenix Fireballs