

SnakeByte™

A Product of Balls to the Wall Publications

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Blackburn Park, DeKalb County Parks and Recreation

So, yeah, I haven't written a **SnakeByte** in six years. Oh? You haven't heard of **SnakeByte**? I guess not, since, of the regulars on the team now, only Robbie would remember. It's back simply because I figured this was a good time for a special edition.

It's like this. Back in the day (1999-2004), I would write a recap of the week's game for the team. In addition, I would put stats (sometimes), the team's record at that point, a schedule and other softball stuff. The concept was blatantly stolen from Rocky McCoy's weekly missive, **The Sports Page**, including the Chris Berman-esque nicknames. Over time, the nicknames faded and so did **SnakeByte**. Once you get behind on this sort of thing, it's a bitch to catch up and trying to remember the details of a game from three weeks in the past with just a scoresheet to reference overheated my neurons a bit.

Venom's mascot is a cobra, thus the name of the newsletter, which would be probably known as a blog now. Either way, the "byte" part is a computer joke. It's probably only witty to me.

We used the cobra on Venom's first jerseys, the purple on gray ones. The classic white on purple threads didn't have it, of course, but it found its way onto the new ones, via the shoulder patch.

I wouldn't hold my breath waiting on me to do this again anytime soon.

Season Recap

In the Summer 2010 season, Venom posted a 9-1 record, including a 10-inning epic on August 11, which, after the lone loss, capped off a three-week run of late inning comebacks. After that, a string of decisive wins closed out the season. We took first place in the Summer Mens C-Minor league and earned a first-round bye in the PST.

Even though Venom has made it to the PST just about every season since coming to Blackburn in 1999, and had several appearances in the PST Finals, the championship eluded us. That situation was resolved when Venom won the PST in the summer of 2008, coming out of third place in the league and low in the bracket. The final that year was a one-run nailbiter headed by stout defense in the bottom of the seventh to hold off a surge in the opponent's offense.

That year, we played the PST with a lot of subs and constantly-changing lineups due to the games being played during the week rather than over the weekend. For this year's PST, though, we had all of our regular players in the dugout. I believe that was integral to our performance and I appreciate that all of you made the effort to be there.

Thanks to all of the guys who subbed during the season. Summer seasons present management challenges with vacations and such, but I was able to call on these guys and they were able to deliver.

PST Game 1 vs. Sneaky Sunday

Sneaky Sunday came from the Monday night league and, based on a report from a friend who plays in that league, were a solid team. They won the coin toss and took the home dugout. They played earlier at 9AM in the first round and had, obviously, won, this being a single elimination tournament. Venom had a first-round bye and so was suiting up for its first game of the day.

In the top of the first, Robbie led off with a single to the flats in left. Sneaky Sunday's shortstop made a highlight-reel play and turned two on the next batter. Dusty responded with a double and Mark banged a triple to score him. The next batter ripped a hard liner but Sunday's third baseman stabbed it to end the inning. In the bottom of the first, Sneaky Sunday tied the game.

The top of the second started with a ground out but four straight singles followed and John capped that with an inside-the-park grand slam. Two good shots to left were caught but Venom had plated five. The Purple D held Sunday to a goose egg in the bottom half.

In the third, both teams smacked a couple of doubles and got two runs apiece. Venom 8 – Sneaky Sunday 3.

John led off the top of the fourth with a single and it was on. David went yard with a man on and then Venom drilled the Sunday defense with 11 straight singles, embellished with back-to-back doubles from Robert and Tim. When the dust settled, Venom had sent 18 men to the plate and scored 13 times. John, David, Robert, Tim and Charles were all 2-2 in the inning.

Sneaky Sunday squeaked out two runs in the bottom of the fourth and it wasn't enough to stave off the run rule. Venom 21 – Sneaky Sunday 5.

Charles Johnson went 4-4 with 1 RBI. John Randall went 3-4 with an inside-the-park grand slam and 6 RBI. Mark Reilly went 3-4 with a triple, an over-the-fence home run and 4 RBI. Tim Pritchard went 3-4 with two doubles. Robbie Crider went 3-4.

Line Score

Run Rule		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Venom	V	1	5	2	13	X	X	X	X	21
Sneaky Sunday	H	1	0	2	2	X	X	X	X	5

PST Game 2 vs. Knights of Decatur

In the semi-finals, Venom faced the Knights of Decatur, veterans of the Softball Country Club. Purple won the coin toss and took the field.

This one started slowly with the Knights getting one in the top of the first and Venom bagging a goose egg in the bottom half. It looked as if this game would be a defensive battle, with good glove work on both sides.

In the top of the second, the Knights plated one and were denied more by nice plays in Venom's outfield. In the bottom half, Venom decided to change the tempo of the game and, after a lead off fly-out, banged out eight straight singles to score six and open the gap a little.

Venom's defense continued its stingy ways in the top of the third, shutting out the Knights. The offense got one on David solo shot into the soccer field. In the fourth, both teams swapped doughnuts. After four, Venom 7 – Knights 2.

After a lead-off double in the top of the fifth, Venom set down the Knights 1-2-3 without letting the man on second score. In the bottom of the fifth, Dusty led off with a single, Mark doubled him in and it was on again. A few batters and four runs later, the run rule kicked in (10 after five innings in the PST). Venom claimed victory over the Knights, 12-2 and advanced to the Final.

Robert Pritchard went 3-3. Thomas Miller was also 3-3 with 1 RBI. Robbie Crider went 2-2 with a walk and a RBI. David Payne was 2-3 with a dinger over the fence and 2 RBI.

Line Score

Run Rule		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Venom	H	0	6	1	0	5	X	X	X	12
Knights	V	1	1	0	0	0	X	X	X	2

PST Game 3 vs. Neighbors

There is some question over who was actually in the other dugout for the championship game. They didn't have matching shirts and it was not readily apparent what the team's name was from that information. The field manager couldn't be found to ask (and there's no guarantee that he was keeping up with the bracket). Analysis of the bracket and who we saw play and who we saw leaving from the other field indicates that "Neighbors" was the team name and, yes, that what was written in the bracket.

The championship game has no time limit and you play all seven innings but the run rule is still in effect, 10 after 5. Venom won the coin toss, elected to be the home team and got off to a rocky start. The Neighbors scored three in the top of the first while Venom went down 1-2-3 after a lead-off single.

The Neighbors continued hitting and scoring and flashing leather as they got one in their half of the second and set Venom down 1-2-3 in the bottom half. After two, 4-0 Neighbors.

In the top of the third, the Neighbors got two more. In the bottom of the third, Tim led off with a double and Charles doubled right behind him to crack the goose egg. The insurgence died a little too quickly and Venom only got one in the third. After three, 6-1 Neighbors.

In the fourth, the Neighbors plated another one to go up 7-1. In the bottom of the fourth, feeling the wall getting closer to their backs, Venom responded. Dusty led off with a double, accomplished by some very nice baserunning. Mark, John and Robert followed with B2B2B extra-base hits. Some singles followed and by the time the inning was over, Venom tied the game at 7-7.

By now, the top of the fifth, Venom was fired up and the momentum had clearly changed. Venom's D shut down the Neighbors after two singles started the top of the inning. In the bottom of the fifth, Mark started the fun early, blasting a two-run dinger, and everyone else took advantage of the lack of respect in the outfield. After batting around, Venom had plated six more and had taken the lead, 13-7.

The Neighbors were shaken and went quietly in the sixth, assisted by more good glove work from Venom's D. The Venom offense, though, also cooled off, going down 1-2-3 in the bottom half.

As the seventh started, the Neighbors were clearly nervous and, though getting a runner on, did not score in the top of the seventh.

Venom wins the Summer 2010 Post-Season Tournament.

Line Score

Regulation		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Venom	H	0	0	1	6	6	0	X	X	13
Neighbors	V	3	1	2	1	0	0	0	X	7

Summer 2010 Post Season Tournament (Overall)												
	G	AB	H	BB	1B	2B	3B	Y	IHR	AVG	OBP	RBI
Charles Johnson	3	10	8	0	7	1	0	0	0	0.800	0.800	5
David Payne	2	6	3	0	2	0	0	1	0	0.500	0.500	2
Dusty Randall	3	11	5	0	3	2	0	0	0	0.454	0.454	1
Gregg Brooke	3	10	7	0	6	1	0	0	0	0.700	0.700	6
John Randall	3	10	6	0	4	0	1	0	1	0.600	0.600	6
Mark Reilly	3	11	6	0	1	2	1	2	0	0.545	0.545	8
Robbie Crider	3	10	8	1	8	0	0	0	0	0.800	0.818	1
Robert Pritchard	3	10	7	0	5	2	0	0	0	0.700	0.700	3
Scott Faulkner	3	9	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0.333	0.333	4
Thomas Miller	3	8	5	2	5	0	0	0	0	0.625	0.700	3
Tim Pritchard	3	10	6	0	2	3	1	0	0	0.600	0.600	3

Total Runs Scored: 46 Total Runs Allowed: 14 Average Score: Venom 15 – Other Guys 5

We held all three opponents to single digit scores. We only gave up the lead once in all three games.