
Honoring and Preserving the Sports History of Chautauqua County



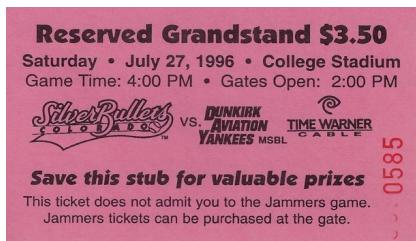
Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame

15 West Third Street - Jamestown, NY 14701

May 2022

On July 27, 1996, the Colorado Silver Bullets women's baseball team, managed by Baseball Hall of Famer Phil Niekro, invaded College Stadium in Jamestown to take on the Dunkirk Aviation Yankees men's senior baseball team managed by CSHOF inductee Charlie LaDuca. Two other Chautauqua Sports Hall of Famers also had a role that day. Larry Rodgers was the third base umpire and Jim Riggs wrote about the game in the Post-Journal and the Observer Today. Portions of the Riggs' articles appear below.

Dunkirk Aviation Dodges Bullets



It looked like the Colorado Silver Bullets women's baseball team was going to win its second straight game and up its record to 9-26 Saturday, but the Dunkirk Aviation Yankees of the Men's Senior Baseball League rallied with two runs in the bottom of the eighth to record a 4-3 victory.

The game at College Stadium had to end in the bottom of the eighth because of time restraints.

"We've won more games in the last inning this year," said Yankees manager **Charlie LaDuca (photo at right)**, who also was his team's starting pitcher. "I wish it could have gone one more inning to give them a chance."

The Silver Bullets scored three runs in the second and held the lead until Yankees rallied in the eighth.



Todd Norton led off the Yankees' eighth with a double but was then thrown out between third and second on a heads up play by the Bullets on a bouncer to the right side by Bart Carruth. Carruth moved to second on a single by Joe Pucciarelli. Jim Noto followed with an RBI single to tie the game. Then Jack Alonge dropped a double inside the right field line to drive in Pucciarelli with the winning run.

That made Carruth the winning pitcher. The loser was Cara Coughenour for Colorado.

The Yankees opened the scoring in the first when John Ferrara singles with two outs and went to second on a throwing error. He scored on a single by Carruth.

The Silver Bullets loaded the bases with two outs in the first but failed to score. In the second they took the lead. Stacy Sunny singled, went to second on a balk and scored on a single by Missy Cress. Cress stole second and scored on a two-out single by Camile Spitaleri, who stole second and scored on a single by Kim Braatz to give the Silver Bullets a 3-1 lead.



DUNKIRK AVIATION YANKEES 1996 Baseball Lineup Card

Opponent COLORADO SILVER BULLETS

Date: July 27th 1996

No.	Name	Pos.
5	CHARLIE LADUCA	1B/2B
9	sub. BRAD RAAK	7
4	2. MIKE MANSFIELD	4
21	sub. BOB MERHIB	4
3	3. JOHN FERRARA	7
32	sub. TODD NOTON	9
8	4. BART CARRUTH	31
	sub.	
22	5. CHUCK NOTO	81
12	sub. JOE PUCCIARELLI	3
15	6. JIM ALONE	2
56	sub. FILLMORE MILLER	2
20	7. AL CARMELLO	8
2	sub. JACK ALONGE	7
6	8. STEVE PANTANO	6
	sub.	
14	9. LOU NALBONE	9
7	sub. BILL SHAW	5

1996 Roster

No.	Name
2	Jack Alonge
3	John Ferrara
4	Mike Mansfield
5	Charlie LaDuka
6	Steve Pantano
7	Bill Shaw
8	Bart Carruth
9	Brad Raak
12	Joe Pucciarelli
14	Lou Nalbone
15	Jim Noto
20	Al Carmello
21	Bob Merhib
22	Chuck Noto
32	Todd Norton
56	Fillmore Miller

MANAGER: Charlie LaDuka

The Yankees got a run back in the fifth when Bill Shaw led off with a double and took third on an error. He scored on a sacrifice fly by **LaDuka** (photo above).

Jim Noto led the winners with three hits while Chuck Noto and Norton had two each. The top Silver Bullet at the plate was Braatz with three singles.

The women displayed some fine defense with a double play, a picked-off runner at second and a runner thrown out at third when he tried to advance extra bases.

Although the Silver Bullets lost the heart-breaker, the only women's professional baseball team left a lot of observers impressed.

The loss dropped the Silver Bullets record to 8-27, but some of the people watching the game were surprised they haven't won more.

"Their arms are stronger than I thought," said Yankees manager Charlie LaDuca. "If you put the ball over the plate, they're going to hit it. Their fundamentals are so good. There's no weak spot."

Third base umpire Larry Rodgers was also impressed. "They're well-schooled," he said. "They throw the ball to the right base and they hit their cutoffs. The only difference is they don't hit the ball hard. I really enjoyed it."

Bob Swanson, of Kennedy, a long-time observer of professional baseball at College Stadium, was also impressed. "They looked like a very solid team, on defense especially," he said. "Strong throws from the outfield really surprised me."

Jamestown Jammers manager Bruce Fields didn't see much of the game, but his wife Julie did. "I think they're wonderful. I'm proud of them."

Then she pointed to her husband and with a smile said, "He's a male chauvinist pig. I grew up a tomboy. I wanted my boys to see this game so they don't grow up like him."

Jammers catcher George Restovich said, "It was interesting, but I'm not an advocate of women playing baseball. They had better strength than I expected."

Someone who has seen plenty of baseball is Bill Beckerink, whose sons Darin and Adam have played on high school championship teams at Frewsburg Central.

"I was really impressed with how they hit the ball," Beckerink said. "And how they backed up each other and the arms of the outfielders."

Bullets second baseman Michele McAnany, who helped turn a double play, also opened Beckerink's eyes.

SOUTH ATLANTIC LEAGUE		
P.O. BOX 49 KINGS MOUNTAIN, N.C. 28086		
Official Batting Order		
VISITING CLUB		
Club	Silver BULLETS	Date JULY 27
ORIGINAL BATTING ORDER	POS.	CLASS
1 3 MCANANY	4	
2 2 SPITALERI	6	
3 33 BRAATZ	8	
4 30 WATSON	3	
5 20 HOLMES	DH	
6 15 MORTON	9	
7 4 SUNAMI	5	
8 50 CRESS	2	
9 13 MARZETTA	7	
REMAINDER OF ROSTER		
10 5 DAVIS	1	
11 29 SCHIFFARTH		
12 34 MITCHEM		
13 12 COOMBES		
14 44 KETCHUM		
15 21 MONGE		
16 6 ROUGHERON		
17 10 HABETZ		
18 22 SLOAN		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

IF DOUBLEHEADER:
 FIRST GAME
 SECOND GAME

Manager

Phil Niekro

"I was impressed with her," he said. "At 33 years old, she's a terror out there."

Overall the women's team left quite an impression on everyone.

"It's given the community a chance to see that women's professional sports are for real," said Jammers general manager Mike Ferguson. "We hope to have them back next year."



Above: 1996 Dunkirk Aviation Yankees
Below: Managers Phil Niekro and Charlie LaDuca

