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Lamorinda Weekly Writer Plays in Second Straight Championship Baseball Game

By Nick Marnell



Photo provided

The Tribe stormed to an early lead and withstood a fierce mid-game rally to defeat the Giants 15-10 in the Tri-Valley Men's Senior Baseball League 65+ championship game Sept. 19 at the College of Alameda.

The contest pitted the division's top pitcher, Kirt Simoncini, against the leading hitter, Dale Skinner, and though pitching won out in the end, Skinner was hardly stopped, going 3 for 4 with two doubles.

"It's all a credit to my defense," said Simoncini. "They did it for me." Simoncini, one of the league's most durable pitchers, departed with the lead after seven innings. "A little fatigue, a little tightness in my shoulder," he said. The Tribe right-hander had pitched a complete game against the Seals in the division semifinal the previous weekend.

The Tribe quickly put an end to the prospect of consecutive tense, tight 65+ championship games by jumping to a 10-1 lead in the fourth inning. But those 10 runs would not be enough to secure a victory. The Giants scored seven runs to pull within 10-8, and after the Tribe added five late runs, the defending champions staged a last-gasp ninth inning rally, with the tying run in the hole as the final out was recorded.

"I was feeling deja vu out there," said Tribe reliever Rich Mangini, who gave up two fly ball extra-base hits in the ninth inning. In the 2014 championship game, Mangini watched helplessly from the mound as a fly ball fell in the outfield in the 10th inning, allowing the Giants to score two runs and win the title. "At least this time, there was a better result," he said.

"It wasn't pretty, but we won," said Tribe manager Cy Rogers. "Our starting pitching was the difference. A bit of revenge? Yeah, sure, it was. Especially after coming so close last year."

Gerry Dasey led the Tribe offensive attack with three hits, three RBIs and two runs scored, while Dave Lewis went 4 for 4 with three RBIs and two runs scored to pace the Giants. Lamorinda Weekly's Nick Marnell went 1 for 3 with a run batted in for the Giants.

"I'm proud of our team," said Giants' manager Don de Cordova. "We got into big trouble early, but kept fighting back, and made a game out of it. The Tribe knew they were in a battle to the very end.

"I also would like to thank Steve Sigler of MSBL, and our own Mike Protheroe, for giving us the opportunity to once again play baseball at such a high level."

"I guess we're just like those other Giants across the Bay," said starting pitcher Jerry Emanuelson. "We only win in even-numbered years."

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