

On Wednesday July 9, 2003 Jack Brajack passed away.

Jack was a member of the FBN from 1994-1998. Jack left the league because of health issues. He suffered from emphysema. His team was the JunkYard Dawgs. Joe Rutka took his team and renamed it the Wall St. Barons.

As those of you who met Jack know, he was a character...cantankerous, but good hearted. I'll never forget how he and Ed Glass used to get into it....especially after Ed was dumb enough to leave Chili Davis (30 HRs) exposed in the entry draft that Jack participated in...and Jack took Chili.

I still saw Jack now and then....I enjoyed talking baseball and Strat with him. I'll miss Jack.

-Ed

It was really sad hearing that news about Jack Brajack today. When I first came into the league in 96 I believe, I had not played Strat in a long time previous to coming into the league. At the time - our division consisted of Jack, Ed Griifin, Rich Hamel, myself , Frank Simounutti, and Chris from Maine. But Rich, Ed, Jack and I would get together for each one of our division blocks and swap playing face to face with each other. The first time I played in the FBNA all four of us got together, and played at Jack's house. There was certain amount of awkwardness certainly, the first time playing the game in a while, and meeting people you never met before. But with those guys, it was instantly recognized the type of league that the FBNA was. Camaraderie and fun.....Jack was the first person I played and he instantly took the time and patience to revisit old rules and strategies with me that I never learned or knew, and had more concern with my team then his own. He was a really good guy, definitely a low maintenance, "high life" guy, who had a rough exterior but was a really great guy to talk to about baseball and like Ed said, a big heart. He was like the Don Zimmer of strat, always playing hunches and intuition then the numbers or logic. Pinch-hitting a lefty who could not hit lefties for a righty who could hit a lefty. Removing a "1" from the outfield who had a higher e-rating, for a 4 who say had a zero or low e-rating. Generally they never worked, but it made the face to face game fun and unpredictable. I think I may be still having stomach issues after eating one of his lasagna's at the draft one year :) There were three things that seemed important to him, his teenage son, baseball, and strat.

Sorry to hear the news - Dave (Sanborn)

Jack felt he could not actively manage his team mid-season 98 so with very limited experience I managed the Junkyard Dawgs for the remainder of the season. Jack and I spoke several times. I wanted him to manage the final block and I feel certain he wanted to. The team wasn't going anywhere but T Gwynn had a shot a .400 and may have set the all-time FBN BA record.

Unfortunately, we got our signals crossed and the league had to use "emergence instructions" for the block. During the off-season Jack and I communicated re some potential deals but he insisted it was my team now and that I should do whatever I felt was best. The tone of his voice gave him away - I sensed he missed FBN and playing FTF with the guys in the league. I was always happy to see his e-mail address in the cc field.

The history of the WS Barons starts with Jack Brajack and his Junkyard Dawgs and I too am saddened to hear of his passing.

Joe (Rutka)

Jack was a good guy. I remember going up to Boston with Rob and the rest of our division to play Jack's division at his apt complex. He cooked up a ton of food and we played strat all day. It was great!! Rest in peace Jack.

Bob (Mendez)

Hi All,

Jack was a great guy, with a gruff exterior but was a softy on the inside, literally like a Junkyard Dawg. He was a great guy to play face to face. In some ways he kind of reminded me of Jackie Gleason's character in "Smokie and the Bandit". When I lived in Belmont we were both right off Rte 60 so we used to call our series the Rte. 60 series.

Since he's been out of the FBNBA (and I have as well) I've wondered what was up with him everytime someone mentioned Malden, Mass where he lived. It's sad to hear that he's passed.

Rich (Hamel)

Being Italian and loving food - the first thing that comes to mind when I think about Jack Brajak is lasagna - and that huge tray of lasagna that he brought to the draft for a couple years. I also remember having some pretty good chili that I think he made if my memory serves me right - at one of the pre-season Nostradamus tournaments I think. But, more importantly, what I remember about Jack was his passion and love of Strat and baseball in general. I hope I can keep that same passion as I get older - I mean - how many games in the world do you play starting as a kid and continually playing through adulthood? Not many . . . we've got something special here.

Here's to hoping wherever Jack may be right now - he's got a good view of a baseball game!!!

Dave (Gineo)

Fun, Food, Strat and Towers. That's what I remember. Jack was a fun guy to be around. At his apartment complex when he hosted the "Shoot Out" was the first time I saw a strat "tower". I have used three different towers since. His tower was a work of art. My tower works. I'll remember the good times.
Rob (Bruno)

Fellow FBNER's,
Although I knew Jack had left the league around the same time as me due to some health issues, it was still a shock to open up this email and read of his passing. The Nostradamus function Dave referred to was in my basement at my former house on Lenore Dr in Meriden, and Jack did indeed bring a huge cauldron full of Chili which was the hit of the day. Jack was a fun loving guy who really loved and appreciated the game of baseball. Strat was a way for him to express that love of baseball. He was a great sport and a real credit to the FBN League.

Many of you may recall that every year the New England Lime Sox organization used to sponsor a golf tournament and a pre season baseball som tournament both named for the venerable BS Nostradamous. I have been thinking about bringing back both events but wondering how to go about it. What I would like to do is organize a golf event this summer, and after the season ends, begin planning a preseason SOM tourney for next year, which will be held just after the draft. And I would like to name these two events The Jack Brajack Memorial Golf Tournament, And The Jack Brajack Memorial Pre Season Baseball tournament in his honor and memory. Any of you who would like to participate in the golf event, please let me know. If we have enough interest, I will start making plans. Let me know by return email. Thanks, and God Bless You Jack Brajack. He will be fondly remembered.

Bruce Fogg
New England Angels