

**MONACO BELTS GRAND SLAM IN NINTH, HAD 6 RBI; MICHNARD, PETE & DAN SAMILA HR**

# Stage House Stays Unbeaten, Conks Charlie Brown 17-9

By **DAVID B. CORBIN**

*Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times*

Veteran team captain Emidio Monaco put an exclamation mark on a showdown between the two top teams in the Wednesday Division of the Scotch Plains Men's Softball League with a grand slam home run in the ninth inning to elevate the undefeated Stage House to a 17-9 victory over Charlie Brown's at Brookside Park in Scotch Plains on July 11.

The Stage House men, who won the title in 2009 and 2011, upped their undefeated record to 14-0 and appear to have solid footing on the top rung of the division. Charlie Brown's, formerly Park Beverage, who brought down the Stage House in two games for the title in 2010, slipped to 10-4 and must keep a keen eye on the up-and-coming Diva Salon men, consisting of a host of recent graduates from Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School, along with several wily veterans.

Monaco, however, far from being a recent grad, stole the show, not only with his grand slam but also with an RBI single and an RBI sacrifice fly to total six RBI. Additionally from his catcher's position, he made a run-saving putout at home plate in the third inning.

But other Stage House teammates were also on their high horses. Andrew Michnard contributed to the 21-hits stampede with a two-run double, an RBI single and a double, while scoring three times. Rob Harder hammered out three singles and

a double, and an RBI, while scoring three times. Speedy Scotty Savarese had three singles and an RBI. Tony Wargo singled twice, had an RBI and scored once. Pitcher Mo Wright singled twice, scored twice, walked twice and added an RBI.

Dan Samila led Charlie Brown's with a two-run home run and a pair of singles and another RBI to go with two runs scored. His brother Pete (2-for-4, 2 runs scored) pounded a solo blast in the first inning. Damon Roth (run scored) thumped an RBI triple and a single, and Jeff Bendix jolted a ground rule two-run double.

The Stage House horses got their hoofs on the plate four times on six hits in the top of the first. Todd Simo, who finished with two RBI, looped an RBI single to right field. Michnard, Wright and veteran Brian Dayton added RBI singles. Charlie Brown responded with Pete Samila's solo blast and Anthony Padovano's RBI single.

Three straight 1-2-3 halfinnings followed until Charlie Brown's meandered to the plate in the bottom of the third.

"They are bringing Old Man River back for a swan song," said battle-after-battle tested,

veteran Tom Straniero before taking his turn at bat. Straniero finished 0-for-3, but Charlie Brown's did score a run when Brady Lau reached base on an error and scored on Roth's triple (almost homer until he was gunned down at the plate).

"That took a perfect throw to get him and he got him," Charlie Brown's Matt Walsh said.

Four more Stage House men scored in the fourth to up their lead to 8-3 then their lead jumped to 11-3 in the fifth. Marc Nies ripped a leadoff double and Michnard launched a two-run homer. As Harder stepped to

the plate, teammate Tim Walsh (single, 2 runs scored) hollered, "Come on Rob! Stay hot!"

He did with a double to left then Monaco later brought him home with an RBI single.

Impressive defense seemed to prevail for the next few innings. Wargo, from his shortstop position, pulled off several dazzling grabs of hot grounders. Centerfielder Savarese charged a blooper, snagged it as he tumbled head-over-heel and rebounded to his feet. Brown third baseman Kevin Spellman initiated a second-to-first double play, and pitcher Pete Samila

grabbed a liner and fired to second to complete another double play.

Stage House added a run to their lead in the seventh on Harder's RBI single then Bendix made a bold prediction.

"We had enough zero innings. I feel four this inning. What do you think?"

Pete Samila tapped a leadoff single and Dan Samila banged his two-run blast. Gus Alvarez, Kevin Woodring and Walsh followed with singles to load the bases for Bendix, who lashed a ground-rule two-run double that bounced over the leftfield fence to give Charlie Brown's four runs in the inning.

"We got the four. Let's go guys," Bendix said.

John Palazzolo tapped a leadoff single and scored on Simo's groundout to short to give Stage House a 13-7 lead in the eighth. Charlie Brown's added two in the bottom of the inning then in the ninth, Wright and Dayton drew free passes and Tim Walsh loaded the bases on a miscue at third. Monaco marched to the plate and became the game's hero with his stunning grand slam over the leftfield fence.

Stage House	400	430	114	17
Charlie Brown's	201	000	420	9

**MONDAY DIVISION (July 10):**

TEAM	W	L
Autoland	11	4
Five Guys	8	7
Vicki's Diner	7	10
Hocus Pocus	6	8
Lou's Auto	4	11
Sun Tavern	3	14

**WEDNESDAY DIVISION:**

TEAM	W	L
Stage House	13	0
Charlie Brown's	10	3
Diva Salon	8	4
A-1 Tree Service	6	8
Trinity Electric	5	10



*Story on page 9 of The Westfield Leader*

*More Photos in "Photo Library" 12jul11-stage-char-brown*

David B. Corbin for *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times*

**CALLED OUT AT HOME PLATE...**Charlie Brown's Damon Roth, No. 4, attempts to stretch a triple into a home run in the third inning but is called out when Stage House catcher Emidio Monaco makes the tag.

**Probitas Verus Honos**