

TREMOR and AFTERSHOCK

Mascots of the Rancho Cucamonga Quakes

ON A FAULT LINE ONLY 40 MILES EAST OF LOS ANGELES, there is more than one type of tremor in the neighborhood. In Rancho Cucamonga, fans can find one of the most consistently successful Single-A franchises today. Ironically, the Quakes emerged out of a league where the only constants in the 1960s were moving, short life spans, and earthquakes.

After the Modesto Colts sat out the 1965 season, the California League helplessly watched the franchise in Salinas fold as well. A league that traditionally boasted eight teams dwindled down to a mere five. In an effort to regain its former glory and success, the Cal League decided to once again expand to eight teams. Modesto and Reno were immediately reactivated, leaving room for one new franchise. This final spot was filled by Lodi, Calif., where local investors pooled together \$2,500 to start a new team for the 1966 season. As the players trotted onto the diamond at Lawrence

Park for the first time, they were known as the Lodi Crushers, the precursor to today's Rancho Cucamonga Quakes.

While the Quakes' predecessors saw many identity and affiliation changes, not once did the franchise move in the first 19 seasons. From 1966 to 1984, baseball in Lodi came full cycle. Originally a farm team for the Chicago Cubs, the Crushers switched affiliations to the Oakland Athletics for a year and then served the following two seasons as the Lodi Padres for San Diego. In 1972, Lodi began a four-year stint with the Baltimore Orioles under three different names: the Lions, Orions and Orioles. Oh my! This tenure was followed by eight years with the Dodgers, before spending their final season as the Crushers with the Chicago Cubs once again in 1984. All the while, the Lodi franchise experienced constant ownership changes; supported on numerous occasions by the community, similar to the NFL's Green Bay Packers, until private groups put up the money.

1985 marked an end of an era when the Cubs moved their farm teams closer to home. Without a major league affiliation, ownership was forced to sell the Crushers to former major leaguer Ken

McMullen. The franchise moved south and became the Ventura County Gulls, flocking with their major league birds of a feather, the Toronto Blue Jays. Unfortunately, 1986 was the first and final season for the team. Incapable of finding a permanent home locally, McMullen sold the Gulls to a group of investors who relocated to San Bernardino. After six seasons as the San Bernardino Spirit, the team was lured by the promise of a brand new state-of-the-art ballpark in nearby Rancho Cucamonga. Unable to resist such a tempting offer, the owners set up camp in a group of trailers by the construction site, anxiously awaiting the 1993 season.

Moving to a community where earthquakes are second nature instigated fans to name their ball club the Quakes. Coinciding with that theme, the team's stadium was dubbed the Epicenter, a term used to identify the point of the earth's surface directly above the focus of an earthquake. While the Epicenter might have been able to sustain a heavy tremor, it was not able to support the overwhelming ticket requests. Baseball in Rancho Cucamonga was such an instant hit that 442 temporary outfield bleachers

RANCHO CUCAMONGA

Quakes™

PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL CLUB

were added to the 4,600-seat stadium. By the end of their inaugural season, the Quakes had shattered the California League's single-season attendance record of 218,444 and surpassed all Double-A teams' attendance totals with 331,005. Even after expanding the Epicenter's capacity to 6,500 seats the following year, the Quakes continued to break their own attendance records and hit the two millionth fan milestone after a mere five seasons!

The site of the Epicenter is rich in baseball history, dating back to prehistoric times! Almost 2.5 million years ago, the Agnomacuc Green Sox played at Episaurus Field in present day Rancho Cucamonga. Sadly, a tragic earthquake struck and only Green Sox right-handed slugger Tremor the Rallysaurus survived.

Tremor was suspended in time, trapped underneath the earth's surface for millions of years. As fate had it, another earthquake on September 9, 1992 gave Tremor a new chance at life in the big leagues. Emerging at the construction site of the Epicenter, Tremor immediately believed he was going to play for the Quakes. Unfortunately, while 6-feet-7-inches tall was a small strike zone in the Jurassic era, the Rallysaurus continued to clumsily strike out in tryouts. His talent did not awe them, but management thought Tremor's screwball sense of humor would make for a perfect Quakes mascot. As part of the deal, Tremor dug himself a lair underneath the stadium

where he lives throughout the year and hibernates during the off-season.

The Quakes loved Tremor so much that they used him as their official logo on all of the team's teal and black hats. In recent years though, the team has established its own identity. As general manager North Johnson stated, "We are not the dinosaurs, we are not the Tremors... No one else really uses teal besides the Marlins." With this idea in mind, the Quakes erased Tremor from their on-field hat, replacing him with Rancho Cucamonga's initials in a light gold and royal blue, much more traditional baseball colors.

Tremor was the only show in town until the Quakes' brass decided to expand the stadium following the strong fan turn out of the 1994 season. When the bulldozer broke ground and began excavating, surprised workers stumbled across another buried Rallysaurus. The Quakes took Aftershock from the ground and performed DNA tests only to discover that he was Tremor's long lost baby brother. To keep the family together, Aftershock was hired as his sibling's goofy sidekick, and there he's stayed for the past 10 seasons.

Finishing their fourth season as a Single-A affiliate of the Anaheim Angels this year, the Quakes posted a 36-34 record. The winning year satisfied the Rallysauruses, who are now in hibernation until the next seismic season.

Eric Karlan



DRAGGING OUT THE COSTUMES: Tremor disguises himself as a lovely lady during a Quakes game.



THE STATS ON

Tremor

D.O.B: 2,364,429 B.C.

Height: 6'7" **Weight:** 329 lbs.

Throws: Right **Bats:** Right

Position: Utility

Resides: Below the Epicenter

Draft: Selected as a free agent on September 9, 1992

Hobbies: Racing young fans, taunting opponents, dancing, training little bro Aftershock

Aftershock

D.O.B: 1,000,003 B.C.

Height: 5'3" **Weight:** 188 lbs.

Throws: Poorly **Bats:** Rarely

Position: Shortstop

Resides: With Tremor

Draft: Selected by the Rancho Cucamonga Quakes on April 1, 1995

Hobbies: Harassing Tremor, acting as a general nuisance