

# And Yes... They Keep On Winning (some)

Not all but some... and look out... her comes the return of the Red Stockings (on Friday)... B0000!!!!!! no doubt on the war path following the sweeping of the last series. The Yanks have clinched a berth for the post season. They slipped a bit but thanks to a win or two and a loss from Boston, New York has gone back to a six game first place lead and defeated the Angels of Anaheim tonight. Just sayin'. Last season, I did not get to say that.

And it looks like the Tigers (another team on tangent's radar) will be a post season hopeful, correct, [\\_justj](#)? What about the Cubbies, [taylhis?](#)

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## FOOTBALL! Time To Blog, Except...

... I've gotten engrossed in another video game. And because I'm a mom of 4 and don't have a lot of extra time, my blogging frequency is going to suffer while I divide my spare time with mindless gaming, oh well. With the start of the NFL season and back-to-school-time, I will have more time at home for my favorite quiet activities like reading the newspaper, blogging, and playing video games while my husband watches football (Go Bears!). I thought I'd be rolling out blog posts, but then my husband put an N64 emulator on my computer, distracting me with what is quite possibly the best video game ever made – in my opinion, anyway: The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time. It's an adventure game, which is my favorite

genre of video game, but I'm very picky – there has to be large 3D worlds to explore, as well as a variety of puzzles peppered with the perfect combination of inventory, fighting, and weaponry. This version of Zelda has everything, and this is actually my second time playing it through. Currently I'm in the second dungeon (Dodongo's Cavern) which is probably my least favorite in the entire game. Once I get past it though, I have lots of fun ahead – there are plenty of areas left to explore; including an underwater colony and the inside of a volcano. This game also skips ahead 7 years, and you get to see what Hyrule (the country you are defending) looks like in the future when your character has grown into a young man from a little boy. Here is a screen shot:



...which makes me want to get back to it so I can kick some Dodongo a\*\*!

GO BEARS!!!

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## Number 2 Meets Number 4

What an accomplishment to an already stellar career that shows no signs of ending anytime soon. Tonight, Derek Jeter joined Lou Gehrig (The Iron Horse, The Pride of the Yankees) as the

all time Yankee hitter at 2721. A bunt, a blast, and a rip to right field brought the new and old icons even. Even if he is a graduate of Kalamazoo High School in that state up north where he spent a semester as one of those unmentionables, Derek has handled the spotlight that comes with the stripes with integrity, and maturity over the past 15 years. Even if I were not a fan, I would find it difficult to not cheer for the shortstop phenom. Jeter's work ethic makes it nearly impossible for him to place any solo accomplishment above those of the team... There is no "I" in team. While standing on first base following his third hit of the night, Mr. November rose his helmet not once but twice and acknowledged the ovation from the fans (including his parents), his teammates, the opposing team, the entire crowd at the home of the bombers. Play ceased however briefly for the star to have his moment. And at Captain Clutch's next at bat... he is walked and the crowd goes wild with boooooos as the pitcher is retired and the Yanks score 4 and lead the TB Rays 4-2. Unfortunately, it will take some doing for Derek to get to Pete Rose's MLB All Time Record of 4256 hits. WOW! It took 70 years for someone to even the First Baseman's record. So... unless something terrible happens in this the top of the ninth the record will remain tied. And... THE YANKEES WIN! **THEEEEEEE YANKEES WIN!!!!!!**

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## **Sweeping the Stockings**

Yahoo! The Bombers finally have done something they have failed to do all season: completed a sweep of the rather lackluster (of late) Red Sox. The first time the Yanks have taken a four-game home stand from their rival since **1985?! The** one thing I grew sick of is the continuous mentioning of David Ortiz and his possible enhancement taking of 2003. I mean, it

seems as if (the last two games, anyway) that the games were more of a did he or didn't he. I think the whole scandal has gotten way out of hand and is ruining the great American pasttime.

The series began Thursday night with a 13-6 blow.

The excitement continued Friday night into the wee hours of Saturday until Alex Rodriguez smashed a two run walk-off shot in the bottom of the 15th inning. Marking the first time a Yankee-Red Sox game has gone scoreless through 14 innings and only the fifth time in recorded history that a walk-off homer has been hit in a scoreless 15 or more inning game. A heartbreaker but the pinstripes came out on top.

Saturday, the Yankees also blanked the Sox 5-0

Finally, the first place AL East boys rallied to go up 6-1/2 games with a 5-2 victory. One thing is for sure, Boston will be looking for blood when next the teams meet up. But for now.. good luck to [justj](#)'s beloved Tigers when they travel to Fenway Monday night.

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## **It Runs In The Family**

My aunt sent me the following picture of my cousins at the Cubs game the other day down in Florida – it's a screen shot from WGN. At least they got to go to the game where the Cubs beat the Marlins at LandShark Stadium! In case you're wondering, the Cubs are doing very well right now – over .500 and just a half game out of first place. They've been playing some GREAT baseball and are very fun to watch these days – GO CUBS!



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# A New HOPE From The Evil Empire

No, no this post has nothing to do with the original *Star Wars* film (or as it is officially known: Episode IV: A New Hope). Such rather derogatory names have inundated my favorite baseball team for as long as I can remember and definitely beyond that. This week, The New York Yankees have been on the streets, in apartment buildings, and in the new stadium giving back to the community that they call home. Whether it be something seemingly trivial like throwing pop flies to a ten year old or participating in an event honoring a Navy veteran who is afflicted with Lou Gehrig's disease, the NOW solo first place American League East sluggers have been receiving praise both on and off the field.

HOPE (Helping Others Persevere and Excel) week began Monday and has included the following events:

- Alex Rodriguez and pitchers Joba Chamberlain and Andy Pettite were in Greenwich Village and visited a young boy who has Cerebral Palsy. The sixth grader is confined to a wheelchair; however, the Bombers conducted

- a clinic for him and his little league teammates.
- Ace closer Mariano Rivera, second baseman Robinson Cano, and outfielder Melky Cabrera visited a small Washington Heights apartment where a couple open their home to children for lessons in community and leadership.
  - Captain Derek Jeter and first baseman [Mark Teixeira](#) (who my mother claims closely resembles our admin... I don't see it... sorry I cannot find a photo good enough to compare) participated in a ceremony honoring a Navy veteran with Lou Gehrig's Disease and his wife.

Say what you will about the Yankees... overpaid, over-privileged. The new stadium is a homerun hitters paradise. Any team who takes time out off the field to help and inspire (yes, even if the team happens to be from Bean Town) deserves some appreciation.

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## **A Patch Of Blue In A Sea Of Black And White**

We took a fun little excursion to Chicago this past weekend and had a few adventures! More about those later (if I get to them – my time to blog has dwindled A LOT lately!). What I want to write about now is the Chicago Cubs game. Let me begin by escorting the elephant from the room – the Cubs got creamed by the White Sox yesterday. There, I said it. And I'm just stating fact, unfortunately. We were lucky enough to have tickets (happy birthday to me from Hubby – THANK YOU!!!!!!) for Sunday's game – the final game of a 3 game series between the cross-town MLB rivals the Cubs and the White Sox. This game was to be the "rubber match" – with both teams tied at 1 win apiece for this series, Sunday's outcome

would decide the series winner. But the Cubs lost. Miserably. It was almost like they didn't show up to play baseball – which is something I and probably at least a few other Cubs fans lovingly yelled from the stands. We got to watch Carlos Zambrano, the Cubs famously hot-headed starting pitcher, take the mound – and consequently lose his control and get booed off the field. And let me say it wasn't just Sox fans who were booing Zambrano. But I think it was awesome that he was the starting pitcher the day we got to go watch the game live, and he was really fun to watch. It was frustrating to see the empty bullpen across right field though – it seemed empty forever. My husband and I really thought Lou Pinnella should have made the call to the bullpen a little bit sooner and at least get someone throwing balls down there – Zambrano does not recover his game often once he loses it. We were both watching for Lou's call, and finally Zambrano made his trademark nasty move – the guy gets so angry that he beans someone. He throws a 90ish mph baseball AT the batter! So then he stalks off the field, gives the fans a one-finger salute (I don't think it was THAT finger), and goes into the locker room to pout by himself. He didn't throw down any water coolers on the way this time as he's also been known to do, but I can't say that I wouldn't have liked to see that. As lucky as we were to get to see Big Z pitch, he didn't do very well and we were happy to see him go.

But alas, Zambrano was not the only problem yesterday since the Cubs' bats haven't produced much of anything for weeks, and our game day was no exception. Thus we witnessed a shut-out on the Cubs.

But that's enough of that. It 's amazing how much fun we had despite the worst possible scenario for the game! I LOVE live baseball, and MLB almost doesn't compare to the smaller AAA and AA leagues. Those are fun too, but comparing those atmospheres is really like comparing apples and oranges. It was kind of toasty in the sun, and my knees got burnt to a

crisp; I'm dealing with that today. For those of you who want to know the outrageous robbery they're getting away with in MLB stadiums across the country, at U.S. Cellular Field in Chicago, it costs \$23 to park, \$6.75 for a 20 oz. beer, \$4 for a bottle of pop or water (let me guess – they took out all the public drinking fountains, I sure didn't see any), and \$4.75 for a hot dog. If you can keep yourself hydrated during the game, you can save yourself \$6 on 2 bottles of water by buying one before and one after the game from the street vendors – they sell them for \$1, which isn't bad at all in that heat! Originally I had planned to eat all day at the stadium, but I just wasn't hungry in the heat. There's nothing like sitting there at a baseball game and cracking peanuts, but I actually passed on those too. I certainly didn't want to leave my seat much, and by the time the peanut vendor arrived, we no longer felt like sitting there calmly cracking peanuts while the Cubs played like you-know-what and gave the game away. That reminds me – we had GREAT seats, upper-level, 3rd base side, right about even with the pitcher. We had a bird's-eye view of Zambrano's animal-like pacing and stomping rituals on the mound. I guess that's enough about the game – interesting how we were ALMOST late...

Sox park (its real name is a tongue and finger-typing twister) is situated on I-90, one of Chicago's expressways. I was anxious to try Jill the GPS's skills in a city environment since she had so failed us in Pittsburgh, but more so in the outskirts, we weren't really in downtown Pittsburgh. Jill did fine in the big city of Chicago, but when we got off the expressway, it was chaos – and it wasn't like Jill was programmed to guide us through the Sox's bizarre parking system; red coupons, green coupons, etc. We THOUGHT we had left in plenty of time for the game and might even see some batting practice, but we hit some traffic on the way down (did I mention this was also a weekend for the Taste of Chicago?!? Oops – bad planning on our part; we couldn't believe it. The Taste draws *millions!*). Anyway, when we arrived on the south



side, we were confused about where to go for cash (\$23!) parking. There were people directing traffic (don't know if they were cops or city workers or Sox park workers, but I might find out so I can file a complaint!), so we asked one of the ladies how to get to cash parking. She said, "I'm going to let you make a U-Turn (we were heading east, toward the stadium), and you make the u-turn and go to 33rd street. So we made the U-turn and headed west when we began to get a not-so-comfortable feeling. Remember, we had seen the stadium, and we were now heading away from it, out of the city. And usually numbered streets in cities are parallel to each other. So if we were looking for 33rd, most likely we should see 31st, 32nd, or 34th streets first – but we weren't. So we turned around, and an hour later, when we finally figured out where to be, we had passed the "helpful" traffic person again and confirmed our suspicions: she had tried to take us out of the city **on purpose**. In fact, when we passed Ms. Directions again, there was a Sox parking pay lot *one block* in front of her. I like to think the best of people, but here it's obvious that earlier, she had us make the U-turn rather than turn around so we wouldn't be able to see that she was taking us the wrong way. Rude isn't even the word for that. As most locals know, Sox park is not known for being nestled in safe neighborhoods – Wrigley Field, home of the Cubs, is known as the "Friendly Confines" – NOT Sox Park. We were fine, the area didn't get too bad, my husband just got really upset that we might be late for the game. Indeed, when we did finally find our lot, there was a big line and we sat in it for a long time. I can't help but wonder if maybe Ms. Helpful had noticed the color of our shirts – Cubbie blue- which isn't exactly welcome on the south side of Chicago. And those Cubbie blue shirts we wore (which ironically said "Cubs win!", sheesh) were probably responsible for other rude behaviors directed our way. For instance, my husband got bumped a little harder than regular crowd jostling, and some of his popcorn spilled. Sox fans nearby jeered, and there were also the people who would walk by us up the stairs on the way to

their seats (we were seated on an aisle) and feel inclined to say “Cubs suck”. Yesterday they may have had a point.

The people directly around us were friendly enough, a mix of Chicago fans, both north and south, Cubs and Sox. Some people wore a Sox hat and a Cubs shirt, while there were families of people dressed for both teams, an interesting mix. As I looked around the stadium, I saw mostly white shirts (the black shirts were hard to see) in the sea of people, although the sea was dotted with many patches of Cubbie blue, much like the blue patch the two of us created. As rude as a select few Sox fans were though, I suppose they can't be all bad... on the way in to the stadium, it was extremely windy and we both got our Cubs hats blown right off our heads – maybe it was a sign of things to come... But anyway, it was Sox fans who helped up retrieve the runaway hats.

Overall, a great day for some baseball; definitely something I hope to do again. Except next time, I think we'll park far away and take the train to the stadium and forget trying to park in the city. We hit traffic on the way out too, and an hour after the game had ended, I turned around and I could still see Sox park which was STILL within walking distance!  
TOO MUCH TRAFFIC!

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## Look For Him Tonight

My middle brother and his son are going to be at the [Great American Ball Park](#) for the Chicago Cubs-Cincinnati Reds game tonight. When I found out that Chad and Alex were going to the big city by themselves, I said “I hope they don't get lost.” Chad got lost driving home from a town 8 miles away. Myself, I just can't find the destination I am going to but

have never been lost. However, I believe they went on a charter bus. I remember back in the day when my elder sibling would go to his friend's house and open up his COMPLETE sets of baseball cards and trade them away... not some of his brighter moments. Our parents or his godfather would spend good money on these sets. He would even "autograph" cards himself which pretty well made them worthless collectible wise. During several summers, Chad, his friend, along with "E-town's Number One Fan" rode the bus to Wrigley to watch their beloved team play. Last year, Chad and our Aunt LuAnn rode the rails to Chi-town and watched the Cubbies lose. Lu wanted to keep her tally of MLB ballpark visits up but Uncle Bob had no desire to go with them. Some year (especially if the Bronx Bombers are in town), I must make an effort to go.

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## CUBS Vs Sox



I haven't had a chance to blog much, but a few posts ago in my "To Hellinois... .. And Back Again" blog series, I mentioned that I might be partaking in a "very exciting, awesomely fun event" to which I promised, "more on that later".

Now that the event is definite, I am bursting with excitement, so I will share – hubby got us tickets to see the Chicago Cubs play the White Sox LIVE! I've been wanting to go to a Cubs game for awhile (since our last visit to Wrigley in 2004), but last summer was out because I had a baby and

unscheduled surgery from which I had to recover. So, June 28 at ~~Comisky Park~~ US Cellular Field, we will venture into Chicagoland once again to cheer on the Chicago Cubs while on the turf of the Chicago White Sox – AWESOME! My mom was nice enough to agree to watch all 4 kids for the day (and the eldest 3 for the rest of the week, BOOLYAH!), and the tickets for the BIG GAME arrived in the mail the other day.

They accidentally got thrown away in the garbage with the junk mail, but LUCKILY hubby was heads up and asked about the whereabouts of the tickets. That's when I realized that I probably had thrown them away – by accident of course! Good thing he asked when he did – the tickets were found not too near the bottom of the garbage and salvaged, thank goodness!

But anyway, I am looking forward to this event like you wouldn't believe. Not only is it **LIVE** baseball, but it's MLB, not AAA or AA. And it's the Cubs I get to go watch, and they're playing the SOX – their arch-rival (especially as far as I'm concerned – I HATE those White Sox!!!). So I would say yeah, even though it's not even 2 months after our last Chicago visit, this visit will be well worth it! So watch for us – we'll be decked out in Cubs gear to be sure to properly invade the South Side Sox turf. The game is at 12:05pm local time on June 28 – the last of a 3-game series between the two teams, so it promises to be that much more exciting! It's scheduled to be shown on WGN, so if you get that channel, check it out, you just might see Taylhis and Co.!

GO CUBS!!!!



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# 1st and Goal On Third Base

This evening, I went to watch two of my nieces play in their respective ball leagues. first stop, the 5-6 year old tot league to watch little Alyssa. Although a delight to watch, a little goes a long way. Watching the little ones just starting out, each player hits every inning and has seven chances to make contact before the tee is brought out. Alyssa was the last player in the line up for her team, getting a hit each of the three times at bat. After each turn at bat, she made a lap of the bases even after the play was made. At times, the players in the field looked more like a football team than baseball diving and tackling each other to get the ball and make the play. After two rounds, I decided to go to the neighboring field to watch my older niece, Elizabeth.

I missed a lot of action. Apparently, she not only caught a pop fly but also turned a double play... not all on the same play. I got to watch her walk and make her way to third base. She also played center field then was behind the plate the next inning. Unfortunately, the mercy rule was enacted with final tally of 13-5. But good for Elizabeth!

When we got home, I learned that Alex hit the game winner in his game across town. Now it is the final game in the Yanks/Twins four game series at the stadium (NY up 3 games to 0 and up 6-2)