

A Turning Point For The Season?

Friday night saw the return of Alex Rodriguez to third base for the New York Yankees following his recovery from hip surgery. Depending upon how the Bombers do by seasons end, this game may be seen as the one in which the team turned around... after losing a deplorable 5 games in a row (their longest losing streak in two years). Even the unremarkable pitching of C.C. Sabathia was on par as he pitched a 9 inning shutout and winning 4-0.

I'm not going to dwell on the past scandals of A-Rod. Not his admitted substance use that has come to light, nor the more bizarre report of pitch tipping. The first pitch he saw Friday night with no spring training was a perfect 98MPH fastball delivered by Baltimore's Jeremy Guthrie. The bat connected and travelled over the left centerfield fence of Camden Yards scoring three runs. Although, he went 1-4, a message was clearly sent. Hopefully, his return will brighten the field that is (as seemingly usual) plagued by injury.

Back On The Mound

On Sunday, the Seattle Mariners defeated the Oakland Athletics 8-7 in 15 innings. While neither team is high on my radar to follow, the Mariners possess one player with very close ties. [Denny Stark](#) pitched to four batters in the game. This came after an absence of 1747 days (last appearing on the mound in 2004) and two Tommy John replacement surgeries on his right elbow.

How well I remember back in the day (he was a year behind me in school) when Denny was on the mound or on the hardwood either scoring 1000 points in basketball or pitching on the mound at EHS. Totally amazing and he was definitely one who started out as soon as he was big enough to throw a ball to his father. I know for a fact that his parents encouraged his talent and gift. His father, "Connie" (and mother, Roz), coaching, developing him, but never being the stereotypically domineering parent.

Sometimes, coming from a small town and knowing everyone and what they are doing is a good thing. In little league, I remember having Connie as a coach who never demanded anything less than what you were capable of giving. So often we hear of coaches or parents who push as hard as they can in order to realize their own dreams through their players or children, but it was absolutely untrue in this case: THIS IS DENNY'S DREAM and it has been realized once again... if only for four batters. Hopefully, this is only the beginning. Perseverance does have its rewards. I remember going to a Ft. Wayne Wizards game one summer when Denny was scheduled to pitch for the opposing team. However, we were unable to see him pitch as he was called up to the next level.

UPDATE: According to a more local [newspaper](#), Denny will be used in a middle relief capacity.

Simultaneous Sports

Last night was rare – my husband and I were watching two different sports on two different tvs, and football was not involved! My husband is a huge fan of the Chicago Bears, and tries to catch every one of their games. But it's not

football season, so we decided to check in on the Chicago Bulls since they are in the playoffs. We tuned in right at (what was supposed to be) the end of the game, and it was really exciting! Let me back up to 1997 for a minute – a few weeks after we met, my husband took me on a date to a Chicago Bulls game. Not just any game – it was game 6 of the NBA Finals, and the Bulls were going for the win over the Utah Jazz. Not only that, we got to see the “Dream Team” in action – Michael Jordan, Scottie Pippen, Dennis Rodman, Luc Longley, etc. And the Bulls ended up winning that night! It was so fun... well, except for when I passed out on the street before the game – it was in such a bad neighborhood that people thought I had OD’d. But I had just not eaten or drank much water that day since my car had overheated, and I had to walk to a pay phone and try to get a hold of my husband, er boyfriend at the time to pick me up where I was stranded. We were almost late to the game, and it was obviously a hot day and I think I dehydrated... Anyway, that was my first and only live NBA game, and it was enough to let me appreciate basketball, especially exciting games with high stakes.

So last night, the Bulls were on the verge of getting eliminated from the series, when the score was tied and they went into overtime – not once, not twice, but triple overtime! And the Bulls ended up beating the Boston Celtics – tying the series at 3-3. Winner of the next game takes all! It was a lot of fun to watch, and Saturday’s game will be even more fun! So that game was on the tv, and on my laptop I had put on the Cubs game which also went into an extra inning, but I won’t talk about that too much – they didn’t end up winning. But the game was very exciting up until the 10th inning, and I noted how unusual it was to have duelling sports on in my house – especially because it’s not the time of year when MLB and NFL seasons overlap!

Bowling Obsessed

For date night this week, our movie options were limited. We are lucky enough to live nearby cheap movie theaters that allow us to go to the movies weekly, so we see almost everything that comes out. Well, everything we have an interest in seeing, anyway. There are movies such as Krank 2 that you couldn't PAY me to see – I would rather just skip the movie altogether – same with the upcoming Star Trek (no offense to you Trekkies – just not my kind of movie!). So this week we were left to choose between Obsessed, a stalker-thriller with Beyonce Knowles and the new boss Charles (who already left) from the Office or a movie called The Soloist, which is about a Julliard-trained musician who ends up homeless because his schizophrenia stands in the way of his success. The Soloist actually seemed to have some substance, but it also seemed like the kind of movie that could wind up being a tear-jerker or just plain boring. So we went with Obsessed, despite its 4.0 rating on imdb.com (which had slipped to a 3.8 as of today – ouch). Obsessed is a movie about a successful business man who had a beautiful wife (Beyonce) and child – essentially the perfect life – until an obsessed temp gets in the picture. This woman is truly psycho, and I really enjoyed watching how she made this poor man's life unravel. The movie wasn't bad until a few clues shed the light on the movie's secret – Beyonce can't act. Add in bad character development and a weak script, and I can definitely see where the 4.0, er, 3.8 came in. There was one line near the end of the movie that was one of the stupidest lines I've ever heard in any movie. I won't spoil it for you, but let's just say that my husband and I got dirty looks for laughing out loud at its absurdity. On top of all of that, the movie was completely predictable – it must have been based

upon (copied) every popular stalker movie ever made – The Crush, The Temp, Hand That Rocks the Cradle... Would I recommend it? To the right person, maybe... you have to like thrillers; so much so that you'd want to see one that is almost a thriller parody. You have to go to this one in a cynical mood, looking for stuff to make fun of – and you won't be disappointed.

After the movie, we decided to mix it up a little and go bowling – something we haven't done in a LONG time (I blame my 4 pregnancies – bowling is NOT a recommended sport for expecting women, and I've been pregnant for about one tenth of my life!) So anyway, for my first game, I'm embarrassed to say that I got a measly 99 – not very good for someone who used to bowl in a weekly league for years. My second game was back on par with a 137 – but I was still surprised at how quickly I got the sore muscles of bowler's fatigue. I guess picking up 10 lbs with three fingers uses muscles that haven't been thought about for years. While I'm happy to report that I wasn't sore at all the next day, I do have to say that my first attempt at bowling as a 30-year-old wasn't pretty. I guess I have to practice, especially if I'm ever going to go ahead and join that league I've been talking about doing for years. I just hope I don't hurt myself too badly.

Out of respect for my wonderful hubby, I will not disclose his bowling scores. Let's just say that he didn't stand a chance against the former high school 'Female Intramural Bowler of the Year'. □

It was a pitchers' dual

I really was enjoying a good ball game until the 7th inning. After that inning it was no longer a ball game, it was a slaughter. And yes, my favorite team got slaughtered.

Maybe it is the competitor in me, but I've always liked close games. It never mattered win or lose. I even enjoy a good slug fest for one team if it just happens to go that way all night. I don't really enjoy good tight ball games for 5+ innings and then have one blow out inning. I generally just turn those game off. Yes, it does make it more difficult when the team I want to win is on the losing side, but I've turned them off in both directions. Congrats to the Yankees and their excellent pitching performance. That side of the game was well worth paying attention to. The top of the 7th, well that was just sad. A poorly played ball, some lousy pitching and some good hitting made it a laugher. I'm just wondering what Tiger pitcher(s) will be sent back to the minors or even released after this game. Three pitchers did little to prove they should be in the majors tonight. I'm don't usually complain on one inning of work, but a relief pitcher should throw strikes. If the other team smacks the ball around fine, but walks and especially back to back walks should happen rarely.

Oh well, that is my rant for the night.

Safe at home

Kind of a double content post.

My youngest made it back from her competition in Myrtle Beach. A superior rating was given to the dance choir. They scored 95

out of 100 in the competition. I will need to wait until tomorrow to get more information, it seems the trip tired someone out.

The other thing, one of my 'other' favorite teams (anyone playing the Yankees – Sorry Jamiahsh) had a player steal home. A rare feat in baseball. A matter of timing, skill, and a bit of luck. Not done too often now. Major league record holder for most swipes of home was a former Tiger, Ty Cobb. Just for Jamiahsh, Lou Gehrig is on the home steal list with 15 and even Babe Ruth had 10. No it isn't something that happens very often. More pitchers staying in the stretch when there is a man on third. Managers not wanting this to happen. Ball players a bit more cautious. Any and maybe all of those things contribute.

I'm trying to find the active player with the most steals of home, but it is hard to find. I'll keep looking.

By the way, I didn't mention Ty Cobb stole home 54 times. 50 times for the Detroit Tigers and 4 for the Philadelphia Athletics.

West Coast Baseball...

My favorite team (the Detroit Tigers) are at the end of a West Coast road trip. After tonight's (this morning's) game they will head to Kansas City. I'm curious as to the start times used on the West Coast. In Seattle, the games started just after 9:00 PM our time. Most of the games were over before 1:00 am. In Anaheim, the games start just after 10:00pm, and they haven't been over before 1:00 am.

I usually have to get up by 6:00 am, at the very latest, so

these west coast trips are usually going on past the time I would like to be asleep (I don't always get there, but that was another post). Since I'm paying for Game Day Audio, I feel like I should get my money's worth and listen to as many games as possible. So, yes I did stay up for all of the west coast games (3 in Seattle and 2 so far in fair Anaheim).

As you could guess, I'm kind of tired today. I did go to "bed" early last night, but I woke up in time for the game. But that really doesn't get to my initial curiosity. Why the different start times for Seattle and Anaheim? They are in the same time zone, aren't they? Now the 10:00 start is what I would consider normal (that is 7:00 in California), but the 9:00 (6:00 in Washington) is a bit odd. So, I started doing some research, and found my memory failed me (I was missing some sleep here). Only the Saturday game started at 9:00 our time. That now makes sense. Saturday games could get the people there by 6:00 local time. Not a bad idea.

Of course, now everybody knows why I was so tired on Saturday during filming. I was up late listening to the Tigers lose last Friday... ☐

Since I answered my own question, I imagine there won't be many comments here... ☐

Do you remember when “The Bird” was the word?

Since the beginning of this baseball season a number of people in and around the game passed away. Since I am a Tiger fan, the one that hit closer to home was the death of Mark Fidrych. Unfortunately, I never got to see him pitch at the stadium,

but he was frequently on TV and his antics were played on the sports highlights of the News. Monday night baseball was a big thing on TV in 1976. There weren't the number of cable stations. Believe it or not televised games were usually only shown on Saturday. Anyone else remember the 'Game of the Week'?

Mark Fidrych brought a bit of the kid in all of us to the ball park. From filling in holes on the mound with his hands, to talking to the baseball or himself, and then shaking the hands of almost everyone when he won the game or left the game. He was a kid having fun on the ball field. He won 19 games in his rookie year, was voted rookie of the year, won 9 games before being named an all-star. And as quick as it started, the magic ended. An injury the next year made his season start late, and after winning 6 games his arm just gave out. Without the injuries who knows what his career would have been.

I remember watching those Monday and Saturday games. I remember some of the news stories and articles in the paper. It was the summer just before my Senior year. Even though the Tigers were a sub-500 team that year, they captured the nation for every game that Mark Fidrych pitched. I don't recall anything else in baseball that came close to that year, and a performance by a 20 year old pitcher known as "The Bird".

[MLB network talks about the Bird](#)
[Last batter in Monday Night game](#)
[Mark 'The Bird' Fidrych interview](#)

Oh Captain, My Captain

Tonight, I was treated to a surprise on the television after I got home from work: only the second televised Yankee game of

the new season and it was the first game broadcast on the New York station we get via DishTV. Quite a difference from yesterday's 15-5 debacle. New starter A.J. Burnett had a no-no going through six, but in the bottom of the 7th, the Rays scored a pair to make the score even. By the ninth, the Bombers had made the score 7-2 capped off by Captain Jeter's three-run dinger. I now see that the Yanks and [Tigers](#) are even in their respective divisions at 4-4; however, the Detroit-Chicago White Stocking game was postponed due to rain. And the [Cubbies](#) continue their winning ways at 5-2... GO CUBBIES!

For the past week or so, I have been rather surprised that neither ESPN station nor the New York affiliate were going to carry the opener at the new cathedral. I searched and searched the guide at Thursday afternoon at 1PM. I guess I should have checked the Ohio Sports channel. If I had realized that the Yanks were facing the Tribe from Cleveland, I would have checked it before tonight. So, following my shift Thursday afternoon... I just hope no one wants to watch soap operas.

No More Goat Heads, Please

Ok, we get it – the Chicago Cubs have had a goat curse on them since 1945. It began when a tavern owner put a curse on the Cubs because they wouldn't let him bring his pet goat into the stadium for a World Series game, and the Cubs have not played in a World Series since. So why, here in 2009, does someone feel the need to leave a severed goat head outside Wrigley Field on the day of the Cubs home opener? Not only that, but the pranksters were at it last year as well. We get it – the Cubs have a goat curse on them. Ha,ha, laugh, laugh, nudge,

nudge. Those Sox fans aren't very creative, are they? At least the head most likely was not specifically "crafted" for the prank – apparently there are a number of ethnic butcher shops in the city that carry goat's and sheep's heads – yum.

GO CUBS!