

Incredible Baseball!

I am a baseball fan. The baseball season started not even a week ago, and I've already seen, well, I won't say that I've seen enough good baseball for the season – #1 because I don't want to jinx the rest of the season, and #2 how could there ever be enough good baseball for a fan? What I'm trying to say is, this season so far (all six days of it) has been incredibly satisfying – especially for a Cubs fan such as myself. The Chicago Cubs, my team of choice, has been involved in two rubber games – for those who aren't familiar, a rubber game is a game that will decide who wins a series. Of the two series the Cubs have played so far this season, both have come down to the rubber game. The Cubs won their first rubber game against the Houston Astros, thus winning the series, and tonight they are vying against the Milwaukee Brewers for the rubber game of their second series of the season.

The Cubs / Brewers series has been nothing short of incredible. These teams are rivals almost as notorious as the Cubs / White Sox, but then again, nothing can compare to cross-town rivalry across divisions. This weekend, we'll settle for some up-the-lake rivalry. I have to admit that on Friday night, I was disappointed. I stayed out in the living room, sacrificing myself for our game night taking place in the dining room, to watch the end of the Cubs/Brewers baseball game. The game was 2 – nothing Brewers until the 4th inning when the Cubs were able to score, making it 2-1. The Cubs were able to score again in the 6th, when Koyie Hill hit a 2-run homer to allow the Cubs a lead. But they just couldn't hang on to it, and the Brewers scored and won in the bottom of the 9th. But it was their home opener, so we should give the guys *something* for their efforts, right? So they got a win, and Saturday night, we were back in business... we listened to the game on the radio on the way home from the Toledo Zoo.

The game was a leapfrog match; 3-2 Milwaukee by the time we tuned in. But somewhere along the Ohio turnpike, the Cubbies tied it up. Then we got home and turned on the tv before we even unloaded our dollar store purchases and turned on the living room light. We did get the sleeping kids out of the car, fyi. I might be a fan of baseball, but I'm not criminally insane enough to abandon the wee-ones to slumber in the car – hehe. We turned on the tv in the living room just in time to watch a little bit of leapfrogging, baseball-style. Alfonso Soriano hit a 2-run homer to bring the Cubs into the lead and would eventually be the fate of the game, leading us to a rubber match on Easter Sunday.

As I posted earlier, we had a wonderful early Easter Sunday, and after church and brunch, we decided to have a lazy day. Well, kind of, I had to tackle Mount Washmore, which I did, but then I was able to enjoy the baseball game once it came on at (very late for a Sunday) 8pm. And this game is the entire reason why I'm writing this post – what an *incredible* game! First off, Alfonso Soriano began the game with a homer on the first pitch – AGAIN! That guy also hit a homer on the very first pitch of the season this year – not to mention the fact that his homer is what put the Cubs in the lead during last night's game – that guy is on FIRE!!! So anyway, the Cubs got themselves 4 runs ahead of the Brewers tonight, and then the Brewers got a grand slam to tie up the game – but wait – Reed Johnson grew springs in his shoes, and he jumps up and grabs that ball from homerun-dom, saving the Cubs and their lead! Across the remaining innings, they increase their lead and win the rubber game for the second time this season of the two series they've played – WHEW! It's baseball time again!!!

And I should mention, the Cubs winning this second series of the season is probably due to my hat. I'm very superstitious about my Cubs baseball hat. I was so busy with my 4 kids that I forgot to wear my hat until Saturday (when the Cubs needed some help, I might add), so I wore it all day on Saturday, and

they ended up beating the Brewers, which means that my hat has the power this year to do great things. Even though we had a lazy Sunday and didn't go anywhere today, I wore the hat around the house and what happens – CUBS WIN!!!!!!

Windy City Classic

Back in the days when it didn't count, there was only one yearly face-off between the Chicago cross-town rivals, the Cubs and the White Sox. It was called a number of things, but when I was younger, I remember it being referred to as the Windy City Classic. No matter which side you cheer for, these games are important to every sports fan in Chicago. I even remember cutting school one year to attend...

But now that there is something known as inter-league play, there are 6 of these games a year, and they do count. Today was the opening game of one such series, and I am suffering through it. One of the rare Cubs games I've actually gotten to watch on tv this year, it has to be broadcast by Sox announcers, even though the game is being played at Wrigley Field and the Cubs are the home team. I cannot stand the Sox announcers. Not only do they stink as announcers (I would be rich if I got paid for every time they've said "south-paw" – some diversity in your subject matter, guys, please?), but they are on *their* side. So every time the White Sox make a play, even though the crowd is booing, the announcers get excited. And I won't even waste much time complaining about the shouts of "Put it on the Board!" I'm subjected to every time the Sox score runs.

There's a lot at stake for this series – both teams are in first place in their respective divisions, even though it must

be noted that the Cubs have a much better record – but I'm not really minding the errands I have to run that will take me away from today's game. Watching the Cubs lose to the Sox is one thing if that happens, but hearing these horrible announcers rub in every homerun or lucky play the Sox make is a new brand of torture of which I'm glad to be relieved!