

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!!!!

Take Me Out to the Ballgame – Uecker Style

Well, the Cubs lost their second series to the Brewers this season, but equally upsetting is what happened today during the 7th inning stretch. Taking place at Wrigley Field, today's game was the "rubber game" of the series. Someone decided Bob Uecker, aka 'the voice of the Brewers' would be a good guest to come and lead the crowd in 'Take Me Out to the Ballgame'. Nevermind for a minute the events that took place during the song today; this decision doesn't seem very wise to me from the get-go. Bob Uecker was born and raised in Milwaukee. He grew up watching the minor-league Milwaukee Brewers, and the first team he signed with in the major leagues was the Milwaukee Braves. He's been doing the play-by-play announcements for the Brewers on the radio since 1971, and still holds the job. Why then, did someone deem it a good decision to have him come to Wrigley Field, home of the Chicago Cubs, to lead the crowd during the 7th inning stretch? If we pretend the Chicago White Sox don't exist – the Cubs have their biggest rivalry with their neighbors to the north, the Milwaukee Brewers. So why invite someone who has obviously been a lifelong Milwaukee fan to do the 7th inning stretch during a Cubs / Brewers game on Cubs turf? I just don't get it...

Here is a play by play of today's incident. Bob Uecker comes

out to sing the 7th inning stretch. Nothing seemed amiss, until the part in the song that goes, "root, root, root, for the *Brewers*". He actually said 'root for the Brewers' at Wrigley Field. He was immediately BOOED LOUDLY by the crowd, of course, so then he sings, "you do the same for the Cubs" to the tune of the song, but by this point, the organist just gives up because now he's out of tune and has lost the organist in the song. In order to get back on track, he then proceeds to skip ahead, or maybe it's because he realized it would be an even worse decision to say something like "if they don't win it's a shame" about the Brewers in Wrigley Field. Either way, he skips ahead to "for it's ONE, TWO, THREE (*organist comes back into the song, hardly missing a beat except for the made-up lyrics*) strikes you're out at the old ball game!" I had kids to tend to, so I didn't see the entire fallout from the fiasco, but I did get back to the tv just in time to hear Ueker say, "I'm rooting for the Brewers, what do they want me to do, root for the Cubs?" YES! Of course the Cubs fans want you to root for the Cubs, especially at Wrigley Field! And if you can't do that, pretend! And if you can't pretend, then stay in Milwaukee!

Well, forget Bob Ueker and whoever invited him to Wrigley today – that person was probably fired before the beginning of the 8th inning anyway. The Cubs are off to a great start this year, and I can only hope I get less busy so I can see more games because they are playing some great baseball, and it's fun to watch! I can only hope they beat the pants off the Cardinals who are in first place in the Cubs division by only a half game... That series begins tomorrow and I will be watching – in between kid duties, of course! GO CUBS!