

For the last seven years, as you know, I have done a write-up each time I visit a baseball stadium for the first time. Tonight, I am writing to immortalize Chip Foster's last visit to The Diamond.

I was very excited when Craig offered tickets to the playoffs, and he mentioned that Chip was coming also. Even better, we had box seats in section 103. Now the last time I sat in that section, the sections were numbered on the back wall. Unfortunately, the last time I sat in that section, my daughters weren't born yet. Now all the writing has worn off and we had to ask directions to get to the section, since the accountant was the only one that could count to three and neither of the other two believed me.

As we were walking in, Chip had been talking about how he would threaten the life and livelihood of anyone who dared trying to sit in our reserved seats. But as he spotted two men in our spots and decided he was afraid of confrontation, he went for a beer... leaving Craig and I to fend off the two 140 pound octogenarians on our own. Once the coast was clear, he came down and enjoyed the start of the game with us.

Having before sampled the culinary adventures known as food at this park, Craig and I had both eaten leftovers at our homes before the game. Chip, on the other hand, ran up to get a hot dog. Two innings and a Richmond run later off Craig's former pitcher Jae Seo, Chip returns without a hot dog, as he was unable to find any food. You see out of the 5,003 in attendance, 5,001 were planning to eat dinner there and were all in every line that Chip tried to use. Half the concession stands were closed, the ones that were open had planned on a few dozen in attendance, and the iced containers for water bottles all had cigarette stubs in them, to hear Chip tell about it.

After Wes Timmons collected his second double and scored his second run, Chip ran over and rubbed the braves cap of a gentleman in the next section for luck, as Timmons had signed the cap before the game.

Shortly afterwards, everyone in our general area started showing up with pretzels. I was worried about a rain delay with all of Chip's drooling, but we all lost our appetites when the guy with the cap leaned over his daughter (?) in the seat ahead of him, and fed her with the pretzel piece that was in his mouth at the time. I think Chip was a little delirious in his hunger, as he suggested that he had also licked the lady's glasses. Regardless, he immediately realized that he had touched the guy's hand and started trying to wipe his hands on my leg. It was at this point that Chip declared he would

never step foot in the park again.

It's now getting towards the sixth inning. Chip was getting the shakes due to his lack of food, Richmond led 2-0, and the three of us started talking in general terms about no-hitters, while carefully managing not to mention Durham's offensive output. Meanwhile, Francisley Bueno hit 101 pitches and there was going to be a new pitcher in the seventh.

All of us baseball purists then knew what was going to happen next, and we weren't wrong. Durham scored three in the top of the seventh before an out was recorded. Chip was getting even more irritable, and decided to take a vote on kicking me out of the league since I am still stuck at 121 games. Seeing as how voting was to be based on pounds and he estimated that he weighed more than Craig and I put together, my future participation in our hobby was looking bleak.

After the seventh, I went for a bathroom break and saw Chip Foster Nirvana. As the concession stand was closing, there was one pepperoni pizza left, enabling me to bribe myself back into the good graces of the league. Feeling guilty, he did give me one of the mini-slices of what he called the best pizza he had ever tasted. In a moment, though, I saw something fly by as, just to top off the evening, Chip dropped his last slice.

At this point, the Braves blew a one-out, bases loaded opportunity and Chip left to go raid a Hardee's on the way home. Craig and I stayed, but to no avail as Richmond didn't come back. Only time will tell if Chip ever does.