

Maybe it was just because I wasn't impressed by going to Milwaukee the week before, but I really didn't have high expectations in Chicago. First of all, I was surprised by the whole U.S. Cellular field thing, as I had thought the place was still called New Commiskey park. In fact, I had heard some pretty lousy things about how it compared to the other new parks. Second, everyone in the vicinity makes it clear that there are separate "classes" of people that root for Cubs or White Sox, and I am supposed to be more of the stereotype to fit the Cubs.

One major difference from Milwaukee was the kind of tickets I was unable to get. The location was OK, although I was fairly high up. I didn't think the crowd for the Detroit series would be all that much, especially considering how the Tigers had swept the Sox just a week before. Actually, I got to Chicago about two hours before game time, and found out that the gates don't open until an hour and fifteen minutes before game time. So much for checking out batting practice, although I got a really good parking space. I guess everyone else just knew better places to park, though, because I was way back in a LONG line of people waiting to get in the entrance.

Unlike a lot of the newer parks that are either in isolated or chic areas of town, this club prides itself on being a blue collar team. This brand, spanking new park is right in the middle of a neighborhood that looks just like the setting of the ER television show. Once I got in, the place really wasn't marked all that well, the entrance was all dark with nothing but concrete ramps, kind of like Tiger stadium or the Astrodome. No fancy escalators, so I just took a ridiculous number of circles up the ramps until I finally got up to the upper deck.

The view was good, and there were plenty of bathrooms and all the food types you could think of, so I had no complaints there. Just my luck that I was getting hungry during the fifth inning of a no-hitter (with a nearly sell-out crowd), but there were closed circuit TV's with every line so that I was able to see Cornejo get out of the sixth inning.

What really impressed me were the fans. The Sox were reeling after a lousy road trip that was threatening to drop them out of contention, but everyone was out supporting the team, despite all the whining and fussing that was going on while I was listening to the Sox talk-radio station (Each contingent has their own separate station – they discuss the Cubs on 670, and the White Sox on 1000 – both are proud to exclude the other's fans). Anyway, I expected a lot of heckling and griping but was treated to a bunch of fans supporting their team in the seventh inning of being no-hit. Of course the

Tigers imploded and gave up three runs with two outs in the seventh, and the crowd responded well.

Even on the fireworks night, it wasn't like seeing a Richmond Braves game where all the families are there who don't care about the game and just wait for the show at the end. Nearly half the crowd left at the end of the ninth inning – a sea of White Sox jerseys, hats, and other paraphernalia. In fact, I only saw one other logo the entire night – until I got closer to the guy and saw that the blue shirt with the familiar looking four letter word inside the big red C didn't say UBS, after all. It said ORK.