

Cuyahoga on the Yangtze

Written by {ga=tcfstaff}

Tuesday, September 03 2013 12:45 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, September 03 2013 1:41 PM



The following submission comes to us from long-time TCF reader Roger Cohen

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My first thought was, "Spam". A mid-July email with the subject line, "Invitation to Participate in Conference"? I'm glad I clicked it open since it was actually one of our sponsor companies inviting me to speak, "all-expenses paid" at China's Civil Aviation gathering in Ordos, Inner Mongolia, China.

My first thought? Not work conflicts, not family responsibilities, but "as long as it's before Browns' regular season". Bingo – August 26-28. I figured the Indians' season would have tanked by then and I'd only miss the last two pre-season games. And yes, thanks to my original since 1946 Browns' season tickets, NFL Sunday Ticket, MLB Extra Innings and even the pre-season football package, I never miss anything. Live. Ever.

But as the Indians continued to hover on the edge of wild card contention through July and most of August, I started to freak, especially when I stayed up late watching those late night Angels and A's games. My body screamed jet-lag and it hadn't even left the Eastern Time Zone yet.

Now as I fly back late Saturday, August 31, I feel there might be only a handful of fans in Cleveland or anywhere who suffered 24/7 as closely as I did over the past 10 days.

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While you can't access games on live TV via MLB.com outside the US, MLB "At Bat" might even be more travel friendly. Not only can you watch those animated pitches get thrown in real time, but the radio broadcasts come in loud and clear. There's nothing like hearing Tom Hamilton open with "From the corner of Carnegie and Ontario" while you're standing on the corner of Ganghua and Jintong in downtown Beijing. At 7:05 in the morning - -the day before the game.

And for all you degenerate gamblers, don't try past-posting a game on Sportsbook.com for live betting – it doesn't work. I tried.

But consider this: I sat in this huge conference ballroom, my left hand covering the earpiece, nodding respectfully, pretending to look engaged with the synchronized Chinese to English translator when it was really 'Hammy. While in Mongolia -- 8000 miles from the Jake. Sweet.

Also, no problem following the Browns break camp: Norwood cut, Hardesty IR, Weeden struggling against the Colts, then starting, not starting the Bear game. Cleveland.com, Ohio.com, TheClevelandFan, Brown and Orange Report, Dawg Pound Daily, just click away. Yet, for some crazy algorithm, it's easier to beat the Chinese censors and download porn than it is to access the Tribe site "It's Pronounced Lajaway". Guess, the People's Republic doesn't want any of those 1.4 billion Chinese rooting for the Tribe. That explains the Indians' sorry home attendance.

The combination of hotel wireless, my iPad and ESPN Gamecast (which is really lame) delivered the first halves of the Colt and Bear games. But I wasn't going to waste prime sightseeing time in China -- and I wasn't going to rack up thousands of dollars in international roaming charges from Tiananmen Square just to watch an orange computer graphic horizontal bar line show whether Brian Hoyer could lead a second half comeback –which he did. Chairman Mao trumps Coach Chud - -at least in August.

Barely missed a beat of John Adams' drum - -unfortunately. While we took two out of three against the Twins my first few days in China, only loss coming while I was walking the Great Wall. I figured, just one game but then it's just one wall, too.

But those three Braves' performances really stung – the only saving grace being that unlike at

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home when those one run heartbreaks keep me awake at night, I plugged into each during my morning gym routine with the sad last out coming before the 10 am conference coffee break.

Saturday morning August 31, I packed up during another lackluster Tiger effort, down 7-2 before unplugging the computer for the ride to Beijing Capital Airport during a 7th inning rain delay. By the time I finally arrived home outside DC that night and turned on MLB Extra Innings, it was another pounding.

Chilling at home Sunday – getting madder by the minute knowing Dawson’s departure was going to mean another Opening Day heartbreak for the Browns a week from today -- I just knew Danny Salazar’s great performance would be wasted when the Tigers would squeak out a sweep. But then, Aviles’ slam and only mild gas pains from Perez in the bottom of the 9th - or it might have been the residue of ten days of Peking Duck and Sea Cucumber soup.

So I started thinking. A magical ride to the post-season? Meaningful Browns games in December? http://www.ehow.com/how_7889563_make-prayer-request-taoist-temple.html

Exactly what I asked the Buddha for...

We'd like to thank Roger □ for his submission and commend the die-hard fandom he exhibited during his trip to China.