

GNABRT Day 36 – Royal pain



The state of Missouri is taxing the weather powers of the Great North American Baseball Road Trip. While I had a brief battle with Colorado and tornado and flood warnings, it was short and localized. This state is having trouble all over.

So, it was with great trepidation that I waited for the game time to arrive. The sky was gray and ominous all day and I tried to focus all my alleged mental and magical powers up into the sky.

The city: Kansas City, Missouri. For anyone that has ever been confused why Kansas City is not in Kansas like New York City is in New York, take heart in the fact that it's right at the border of Kansas and Missouri and the rivers by those names. In fact, it did start its "life" as Kansas (town of) and didn't change to Kansas City until the Civil War era.

Founded in 1838 by fur traders, it had an unruly period during the civil war when Kansas (free state) and Missouri (slave state) decided to have a local fight in Westport. The bloody battle left a divided city.

As with most cities, the arrival of the railroad led to a boom, where construction and cattle led the way to prosperity and population explosion. Baseball arrived in the 30's with the Negro League. Some Kansas City notables who were born or lived there include Walt Disney and Harry S. Truman.

In the big four sports, the Royals (MLB) started in 1969 and the Chiefs (NFL) in 1972, but KC lost their hockey and basketball teams to Denver and Sacramento, respectively.

The game: Kansas City Royals vs. Minnesota Twins. After bursting out from nowhere to be the surprise team of major league baseball last year, the Royals are continuing their success by leading the AL Central this year.

Interestingly, Minnesota is one of this year's surprises, trailing the Royals by only 4.5 games and in second place where no one had imagined them. The game set up as important for both teams...if it could be played.

And it was, through an on and off drizzle. Apparently, though, I used so much GNABRT luck power on the weather I forgot to leave enough for the home team. The Twins scratched out a run early and the Royals were never able to get anyone across home plate and lost 2-0

The pivotal moment came when the Royals had the bases loaded with only one out and did not score. Almost always in baseball, when that happens, it comes back to haunt you. To his credit, the young pitcher for the Twins did a great job, throwing 114 pitches (that's a lot) before leaving after the eighth inning.

The tab: Ticket, \$21; Hot dog, \$5.25; Soda, \$5.00; Total – \$31.25

Miscellany of Day 36:

– Beside the rain, I've been battling a cold front in the hotel. I don't know how they manage it, but somehow the rooms magically transport to Antarctica if not watched. Despite the temps being in the 80's outside and actually running the heater for a while so I could shower without ice forming, once the heater is shut off, the temp plummets to low 70's.

– Speaking of not watched, the bathroom has toilet poltergeists. At random times throughout the day, the toilet will flush. I've experienced this at my own house and it means the fill valve or the flapper needs some looking at.

And an exorcism.

– I was coming back to the room with my nicely folded laundry and I saw a scrambling shape on the colorful carpet. I love and/or respect all living things in the world except one.

This was it.

– After 10 ball games, I finally got my first foul ball. I was in the upper deck on the first base side of home plate.

It was a fertile area as two other balls came in the vicinity. I gave mine to a young Royals fan in the row behind me. He was mighty pleased.

– The “path” to the game was a mud slick down a hill across a highway. It gave us some interesting adventures as a car in one lane stopped for us while the next lane came careening to a halt just in time. Then we slipped and slid on the way down, shoes caked and coated in brown mud (yes, it felt like that other brown stuff). As bad as that was, going up in the dark was even more of a thrill ride. Next time, I’ll take the long way around.