

August 5, 2006

Just When You Don't Think They Care

First of all, I just want to say, how truly blessed I am. I get to go to all kinds of sporting events (usually for free). I get to see our county's best athletes week in and week out. I've stood on the sideline at Oklahoma's Memorial Stadium. I've had lunch with Dean Blevins, interviewed Jimmy Houston, and done even more things that I don't have time to mention. My life is good.

Earlier this week, my wife signed up for a contest on KXOJ radio. Winners were picked to go on a chartered bus, and go to the Sooner Fan Appreciation Day in Norman. After hearing we didn't win a spot on the bus, I was a little bummed out. I had thought about going as a member of the media, but there's always a part of me that wants to just "be a fan" once in a while, and not as a journalist..

As a "professional journalist" (if you can call me that), it's often hard for me to get a chance to just be a fan. I have my favorite high school and college teams, but when I am doing a job, I have to be partial and neutral. If I didn't do that, my writing would be biased, and I would never want myself to start becoming a "homer" for a team..

Late Thursday afternoon, my wife received an email from KXOJ. There was room on the bus for four more seats. We were invited. So, my twin seven year olds and I made the early morning trip to Tulsa, where we would ride on a Sooner Caravan to Norman.

We departed from Tulsa at 6:30 am. On the bus, was 30 people - all dressed in crimson and cream - and we watched the 2000 National Championship game. We chanted BOOMER SOONER, talked about our favorite OU memories, and my kids played their Gameboys.

We arrived at Memorial Stadium around nine, and proceeded to stand in the longest line I have ever been a part of. I watched as my boys' face had the exact same look as mine did twenty some years ago, when I made my first trip to OU. They had that "deer in the headlight look", and their drool was starting to puddle up on the concrete.

When the gates opened at 10:30am, 99.9% of the fans made a b-line to Adrian Peterson's table. The boys and I made it to Bob Stoops' line, and after a 30 minute wait in that line, the moment of truth happened for me. My boys were face to face with their favorite teams' coach.

Coach Stoops signed my boys' stuff and told them hi. Once again, they had the same "Bowyer at OU" look.

"I can't believe coach Stoops autographed my ball," said one of my sons. "This is awesome," said the other."

At 12:15pm, we boarded the bus bound for Tulsa. We watched the history of the OU Heisman on DVD, and my kids went back to their Gameboys. I watched them, thinking to myself, "I wonder if they realized what they had just been a part of."

Not a word was spoken about the trip. Finally, when we arrived back in Chouteau, I had to ask them: "Well guys, did you have fun today?". "Yeah", they said. Not another word.

When my wife got home though, and asked the same question, they gave a different, and longer answer. It took them about ten minutes to tell my wife about Jason White, that bonehead Bomar, Bob Stoops signing their football, the slides and games that were at the "OU place", getting their

picture taken with that "big trophy (National Championship Trophy), and the happy meals daddy bought them on the way home.

"WOW", my wife said. "Sounds like you had a good time."

"THE BEST", my kids said. "Can we go again?"

Man...just when you think they don't care.