The 2007 Indians season started and ended with disappointment. Brian McPeek attended the snowstorm home opener with his 12-year old daughter. And watched the season come to a heartbreaking end with her on Saturday night. In this superb piece, Brian talks about this magical season, the end of the dream this weekend, and getting a chance to experience it all with his soon to be teenage daughter. A must read.

This Indians season started and ended with disappointment.

I'm not talking about for the Indians or for me personally. Though no greater truth could be told today. I'm speaking specifically about my soon-to-be-teen age daughter.

For Christmas last December, part of our gift to Danielle was Indians Opening Weekend tickets. Three games in the mezzanine for her and me. I took a day off work for the Opener and we headed down early to make a day of it. We parked at the National City Bank garage and walked around downtown. Danielle is a Jacobs Field veteran but she hadn't experienced this rite of ‘spring' before.

The weather was abysmal, as you may remember. So we walked around 9th and Superior and all over downtown looking for a decent place to sit and eat and maybe warm up before the game. We settled on Tower City's food court. Partly because she hadn't ever been there, partly because the crowds were less concentrated.

After something to eat we walked through the corridor to The Jake and

found our seats. The fact we had to brush the snow and water off them was, obviously, a harbinger of things to come. We spread a blanket over our two seats and took in what festivities the weather didn't kill dead. I recall a Dalmatian falling off an icy fire truck. I tend to keep such sights filed in my mind.

Now, Danielle may be a Jacob's Field veteran, but she's also a typical lady-in-waiting. By that I mean she's more conscious of how she looks than whether or not that look is functional or not. It wasn't half an hour before I saw her trying to hide her chattering teeth and her blue fingers. Off came one of my many, warm, ugly layers to try and keep her comfortable. Our personal comfort is but one of many things we sacrifice for our children.

The game eventually did start after we watched grounds-crew members blow snow off the field with hand-held gas blowers. But the first delay was quickly upon us and Dani and I covered our seats and got up to walk and get warm somewhere. We camped out near the doors of the Team Shop and warmed up whenever someone walked in or out. Drastic times call for drastic measures, and all that.

We worked our way back up to our seats where my many layers of clothing dwindled to the point that Danielle was sweating from her personal warmth and I looked like I had been stranded unprepared in an ice shanty. The game was eventually called (quite famously if you recall the Mike Hargrove delay tactics) and we walked back to the car. Danielle was disappointed that she didn't see her first official opener. I explained she had just attended and lived through something that would be talked about far more often.

We went back the next day for a day/night doubleheader. She was more sensibly dressed. The results were the same. The games were called. More disappointment. We tempered that disappointment with a trip to Chipotle and we ultimately watched our opening weekend unfold

on TV a week or two later in, of all places, Milwaukee, when the weather just wouldn't allow for baseball in Cleveland.

The season played out and we went when we could, grabbing tickets here or there or redeeming the rain checks from the opening weekend for other games. But far more often than not, Indians games were our rendezvous point for the evening. We'd convene in the living room for the 705pm games and we'd watch an amazing season play out. It was a season of winning and it was a season of growing in many ways. Baseball is a game that lends itself to conversation. So it was that a 40 yr old man and his 12-year-old daughter talked about baseball and about everything else, both learning different things.

I'm not a smart man. But I'm bright enough to realize that 12-year-old girls eventually turn 13 and then 23 and develop interests that don't include Indians game or fathers. That soon the ‘Indians Wall' in her room will be replaced by things other than Tribe ticket stubs, towels, posters and jerseys.

I remember being in Vegas for the 2005 collapse. I called home a couple times a day and on the last day I called home, after the Indians had lost, Dani answered crying, upset about the fact that a promising season was suddenly done. Those were tears of inexperience and of not understanding that good things don't always happen to your teams or to you. Those were tears that were borne out of her having a game she had discovered and something in common with her dad seemingly pulled out from under her and taken away suddenly and cruelly.

But she has come to understand that the season starts again every spring and that I'm still here every night where I'll always be. She's become a bit more hardened to the nature of the game and players coming and going. She's become very appreciative of the feeling that a ninth inning win can bring and in the value and the beauty of a

well-turned double play. In short, she's become an educated and die-hard Indians fan.

And that's what makes last night's sudden death of a dream all the more difficult to take. Because those tears weren't from a child who had just lost a toy. Those were the tears of a true-blue Indians fan mourning a lost opportunity and a chance to share greatness in some small way. And while it was difficult to try and explain to her the concept of perspective while she was wearing the jersey of the Indians catcher who was crying in his own dugout, I did my best.

And I promised her tickets to Opening Day 2008.

Because that's what we do here in this city. That's who we are.

And I've raised a baseball fan. Those tears tell me there is victory in defeat.