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A Perfect Portland Day for a Soccer Game



Rain, rain and more rain. On a recent Saturday a heavy clouded fall rain was paired with our local object of obsessive fan love; the Portland Timbers. The match brought out the essential Oregonian in everyone in the stands, we were all uniformly wrapped in Gore-tex, rally scarves and Timbers green.

I am a soccer fan from way back. I played as a kid all the way through to a career ending college knee injury. Despite the sad and abrupt end to my playing days, I still love the sport and have been thrilled to watch Portland turn into, "Soccer City, USA." The Portland Timbers have grounded our city in a European style of soccer fandom. I can always tell it's a game day when I

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see folks around town sporting Timbers jerseys and that very particular shade of Timbers forest green.

That rainy Saturday, we brought our four-year-old and brand new soccer player son with us to Providence Park. Being a weather conscious mama, I layered the kid with a wool sweater and his raincoat, topping off the outfit with his SE Portland T-Ball hat and my own Timbers Army striped scarf. He was ready for the weather and ready to cheer on the home team. Well, almost ready. He didn't take a nap before the 3 pm kickoff and fell asleep on the drive over to the stadium. Even though an afternoon game should have been a perfectly timed outing for our family, the lack of a nap hindered a bit of our fun towards the end of the match when he was ready to go but his soccer fan parents were still enthralled by our favorite team.

Luckily for us our seats, like the majority of seats in Providence Park were under the stadium overhang. We were dry when we first sat down and remained so throughout the match. The pitch however, looked a big like a shallow, slippery lake. The players seemed to slide an extra distance as they attacked the ball and skated along the turf surface. I was thrilled to be safe under the overhang and felt a bit sorry for the fans in the few areas in the park that were exposed to the elements.

We cheered. We tried to chant along with the Timbers Army who take up one full goal line side of Providence Park. We intentionally chose seats as far away from the Army as possible because I was concerned that their loud chants could affect the little guy's hearing. As it was, he did request his noise cancelling headphones from the loudly cheering fans after we scored.

We enjoyed the bad stadium food. The game didn't quite hold the kid's attention for the full 90 minutes but I did get an opportunity to explain the finer details of the game like what are yellow and red cards, both of which the Timbers opponent the Philadelphia Union earned during the game. I also taught our son about the off sides rule, my nemesis as a player. The Timbers won, 2 - 1 and we marched out of the stadium with springs in our steps. It was a quintessential Portland day because we all know that rain and soccer always mix well together.

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