

**Title:**

World Series In Russia - Huh? What?

**Word Count:**

511

**Summary:**

As we watch the Astros choke or White Sox perform valiantly depending on your point of view, I am reminded of my baseball experience in Russia.

**Keywords:**

world series, astros, white sox, russia, baseball, yankees, dodgers, los angeles, new york

**Article Body:**

As we watch the Astros choke or White Sox perform valiantly depending on your point of view, I am reminded of my baseball experience in Russia.

**World Series**

I always find it interesting that most of our professional sports call the championship round the World Series or some similar variation. Clearly, there are games being played elsewhere, so how can it be the world championship? With baseball, the arrivals of Ichiro Suzuki of the Seattle Mariners and Tadahito Iguchi of the White Sox certainly suggest baseball in Japan must be of a high quality. Perhaps more interesting is the fact that some sports aren't even acknowledged in other countries as I found out in Russia.

Siberia does not have cable television nor can one pull up anything other than CNN. This made watching the World Series a bit difficult. Resorting to my usual tactic, I started hitting up my students for inside information on any parents that might own a satellite dish and could get the games. To my astonishment, not a single person knew the World Series was on or much of anything about baseball. Nobody had even heard of the Yankees! A few students had heard of the Los Angeles Dodgers, which was unbearable for a person from San Diego. It was time to set these innocents right!

The classrooms I taught in were pretty large. Everybody stand up! Desks were moved to the walls, books were placed in the appropriate places and the rules were written on the board. Forget constitutional law, we were going to play some baseball!

Institutions of higher learning are sacrosanct in Russia. It is serious business where deep thinking occurs, everyone studies like mad and the teacher is obeyed at all costs. For example, the students all stand up from their desks when a teacher enters and leaves the room. Serious stuff.

The game was proceeding nicely. Everyone was getting the hang of it, the rolled up paper ball was surviving and the broken desk leg would've put any bat to shame. And then the Dean walked by the door. And stopped. And stared.

The University Dean, Tatyana, was a great person and I liked here a lot. In turn, I am pretty sure she thought I was a raving lunatic, but didn't seem to mind since the students enjoyed my classes. Alas, I thought I had crossed a line with the baseball game.

The Dean opened the door and entered the room. Simultaneously, students looked for places to hide and I tried to come up with some reason why playing baseball was critical to the education of future judges. Tatyana took the bat from the hand of a student, looked at and stared at me. It was one of those stares where you could tell she was considering sending me back to San Diego. There would be no chance of explaining this one away.

After what seemed like minutes, but was probably five seconds, she did the last thing I expected. She took her stance.

The game was on!