

Hockey and the Holy Roller



(Ericka and Jill at the Ducks game on Tuesday night)

I took my girlfriends, Jill & Ericka, to the Ducks game last week. We have shared season tickets and the same usual suspects surrounding us at every game we attend (except this mean guy who made fun of me—remember him? He was a onetime deal).

As we sat down to eat our Ruby's Tri-Tip Sliders—with horseradish mayo—the guys in front of us turned around and started a little conversation. "So, is it girl's night out?" the most cunning one asked us. "You girls here all alone? First game?" Said the another one, the leader of the group.

"I'm here all the time!" I quickly corrected him. "We're season ticket holders. I sit behind you almost every game with my kids."

At that, he craned his head all the way around and got a better look at me through his already blurry eyes. "Oh, yeah," he said vaguely, giving me the "beer-squint."

"We really tone it down when you're here with your kids," he said in a Eddy Haskell manner.

Smiling big, "Really? I couldn't tell."

But you know what? After the second period it was sharply obvious they HAD been "toning it down" for my kids. Ericka would roll her eyes at the back of their heads at every curse word and any insult thrown at the Kings' fans.

Not all the crowd is raucous. In fact, the guy that sits right behind us surely is a devout Christian. Throughout

every game he calls upon the Lord to help the team, "Jesus, we just need some defense here!" Or for Him to help the players, "Jesus! Jiggy, get some focus." But mostly he just meditates, trying to lay a cover of blessings on the team by repeating, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus" during the rough patches of the game.

The Ducks sure attract some Holy Rollers. Ericka gave this guy the eye-roll (slash) head shake at every outburst—her most potent form of shaming. As always, I had a good time and learned more about the game and, just as fun, the people around us made the game better. I love the Ducks fans!