



*In a stunning development that confounds sabermetricians of all ages, it turns out that you CAN score runs if you DO get a hit with two outs and runners in scoring position. In today's B-List, Buff tempers his enthusiasm of Justin Masterson, lauds the clutch hitting of Lonnie Chisenhall and Asdrubal Cabrera, and falsely attributes the 3-2 win to a single play executed two different ways. He would poke fun at Adam Dunn, but that has too much of a cruelty vibe.*

### FINAL

1

2

3

4

5

6

## The B-List: 4/22

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, April 23 2013 2:05 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, April 23 2013 2:43 PM

---

7

8

9

R

H

E

Indians (8-10)

0

1

0

0

0

## The B-List: 4/22

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, April 23 2013 2:05 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, April 23 2013 2:43 PM

---

0

0

2

0

3

6

1

### White Schmux (7-12)

0

1

0

## The B-List: 4/22

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, April 23 2013 2:05 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, April 23 2013 2:43 PM

---

1

0

0

0

0

0

2

5

1

W: Masterson (4-1)      L: Thornton (0-1)      S: C. Perez (3)

I wouldn't know Dylan Axelrod from a Member of Parliament, but I will say that I was once the same size as him ... and unless he begins worshipping at the Altar of Doughnuts, will never be again.

### 0) Administrative Note

If anyone out there is looking for AP matching software, I have a very serious recommendation. The recommendation will involve running away at top speed. I will avoid giving you the name of the software in a public forum. Anyway, the column is short.

### 1) Curb Your Enthusiasm

Justin Masterson won his 4<sup>th</sup> game on the young season by tossing 7 innings of 4-hit ball. His ERA stands at 1.85 and marks a nice rebound from his loss to the Red Sox. For the second win in a row, the Indians scored the go-ahead run after Masterson had ostensibly pitched his last inning (that is, he didn't pitch more: whether he would have isn't knowable, but it's probable).

There are the usual cautions: Masterson walked 4 hitters in those 7 innings, which isn't any good. He threw only 56% of his pitches for strikes, which is frankly lousy. And 8 of his 15 batted-ball outs came in the air, which is simply weird.

But one factor that probably deserves more play is this: the White Sox offense is (currently) awful.

What's the line for a decent hitter? Maybe a .250 AVG? That's not too high a bar, right? The White Sox lineup last night featured 4 hitters who meet this threshold, and one of them is Jordan Danks, who is 2-for-7. Their cleanup hitter hits .101. That's one-oh-one. The ChiSox used two catchers during the game. NEITHER of them hits as high as .225.

Well, maybe you're New Skool and want to look at OBP. What's a decent OBP? Maybe .335? I mean, we're not talking All-Stars here. Three thirty-five. We find ... three. Three hitters. And one is still Danks. How about .300, sort of the Mendoza Line of OBP? The leadoff hitter ... doesn't meet this (.256). The #2 hitter ... doesn't meet this (.167!). The cleanup hitter ... .151. The ageless Paul Konerko ... doesn't meet this (.297). The White Sox are left depending on Alex Rios, who is experiencing a biannual career rererejuvenation at .300/.380/.571, and Conor

Gillaspie, who somehow manages to misspell both his names and is otherwise a famous “failed prospect” from the Giants system. (Alexei Ramirez is doing okay, but “okay for a shortstop,” which isn’t really the same thing as “truly productive.”)

Is Chicago’s offense likely to improve? I have to think so. Al De Aza isn’t a .256 OBP guy, and if he is, he won’t bat leadoff all season. Nobody hits .101 in the cleanup spot all year. Konerko is well-documented as producing the instant I believe he’s Really Done For Good This Time You Betcha. I have a hard time believing that Jeff Keppinger is really their second baseman (Gord Beckham got hurt). But at least in April 2013, the White Sox are 26<sup>th</sup> in the majors in runs, 27<sup>th</sup> in AVG, and 29<sup>th</sup> in OBP. While you can choose to believe that part of this is because they had to face the Mighty Masterson twice, that’s still only twice in nineteen games. Occam suggests that it’s more likely that their poor performance is Masterson-independent. Anyway, 2 games in 5 (Masterson facing the ChiSox) is a lot more significant than 2 in 19 (the ChiSox facing Masterson). Masterson has pitched well, but he’s also faced something less than a Jaywalkers Row.

### 2) Ho Hum Dept.

Vinnie Pestano threw 10 strikes in 14 pitches in a perfect inning of work. He currently holds the title for Least Surprising Plate Appearance of the Year by striking out Adam Dunn.

Chris Perez gave up a hit in the 9<sup>th</sup>, but struck out Konerko looking and retired two other batters for his third save.

Mark Reynolds and Drew Stubbs struck out.

### 3) One Play, Two Executions

In the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, Justin Masterson hit starting catcher Hector Gimenez with a pitch, and Gimenez was replaced on the basepaths by Blake Tekotte. Masterson then walked Danks on four (!) pitches to put runners on first and second with no outs.

The first pitch to Al De Aza was a ball, and Carlos Santana zipped a throw to second to pick off Tekotte. On the next pitch, De Aza grounded into a double play and the inning was over.

In the top of the 8<sup>th</sup>, Drew Stubbs beat out an infield hit and took second on Mike Brantley's walk. On a planned play, Matt Thornton whirled to try to pick Stubbs off second with a 2-2 count to Jason Kipnis, and threw the ball wildly into center field. Stubbs and Brantley both advanced, where they could be driven in by Asdrubal Cabrera's two-out single up the middle and gave the Tribe the final lead.

So, in a sense, the game came down to executing a play in which a player tried to pick a baserunner off second base. The team that executed the play properly ... won.

### **4) Captains Clutch!**

The Indians scored three runs because they went 2-for-6 with runners in scoring position. Lonnie Chisenhall's "double" scored a run, and Cabrera's single scored the other two. Both hits came with two outs.

In related news, Chicago went 0-for-4 with runners in scoring position and did not win the game.

### **5) Let me say This about That**

Chisenhall's double landed in FRONT of the left fielder. (It took a crazy hop past him.) I don't want you to think of this as a well-hit ball.

### **6) The Perils of Depending on Game Logs**

## The B-List: 4/22

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, April 23 2013 2:05 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, April 23 2013 2:43 PM

---

*Drew Stubbs grounded into fielder's choice to catcher, Mark Reynolds out at home.*

I am pretty sure I'm glad I did not see this play.

### 7) Terror on the basepaths!

The Indians stole THREE bases while being caught only once. Kipnis, Stubbs, and Cabrera each stole second off a variety of pitcher/catcher combinations. (Mike Brantley did not.)

Tekotte, on the other hand, was ... less successful in his baserunning stint.

### 8) Encouraging signs

Chisenhall has a modest four-game hit streak, with 2 hits in 3 of those 4 games. A productive Chisenhall would go a long way toward making this offense credible.