



*The Indians beat the Orioles in the opener of their series behind the strong hitting of Mike Brantley and the reticulated pitching of Ubaldo Jimenez. In today's B-List, Buff admits that "reticulated" is not actually an adjective that describes pitching, but he is not entirely sure that the standard adjectives apply to Ubaldo Jimenez' pitching. Or that Ubaldo Jimenez' actions actually constitute pitching. Basically, Buff doesn't know what the hell he's talking about. Read the column anyway. It's better than depending on Rich Hill.*

## **FINAL**

[1

[2

[3

[4

[5

[6

## The B-List: 6/24

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, June 25 2013 3:39 PM -

---

[7

[8

[9

[R

[H

[E

**Indians (39-36)**

[0

[0

[0

[0

## The B-List: 6/24

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, June 25 2013 3:39 PM -

---

0

3

0

2

0

5

9

0

**Orioles (42-35)**

1

0

0

## The B-List: 6/24

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, June 25 2013 3:39 PM -

---

[1

[0

[0

[0

[0

[0

[2

[9

[0

W: Jimenez (6-4)

L: Britton (1-2)

S: Pestano (4)

As a Texan, I beg you not to pay attention to our state Legislature. Not ask, *beg*.

### 1) Yes, but is it Art?

Did Ubaldo Jimenez pitch well last night? Yes. No. But mostly yes. But with too much no. Except more yes.

Look, not only can I not tell you whether I expect Jimenez to “keep this up,” I can’t even formulate a good description of what “this” is. Is Ornette Coleman’s music “good?” Is “Ambient 1: Music for Airports” good? Is “Naked Lunch”? Is “Ridley Walker”? Is Roy Liechtenstein’s art good? Is Karen Finley’s? Are parasitic wasps good? Is the asteroid belt good? When you push the boundaries of what is acceptable from an art form, the classical methods of evaluating the works no longer really apply. And then you get to questions as to whether something even HAS a standard by which it can be judged. Did Ubaldo Jimenez pitch well? This is like asking how judgmental your hamburger is, or if your cheese has too much pathos.

Giving up two home runs, each over 400 feet, is not good. Certainly we can all agree on that. Except that they were both solo shots, and mostly much ado about nothing. Mike Brantley produced as many runs with a ground ball off the pitcher’s mound. Of course, 8 hits in 5 1/3 innings isn’t very good, except that the Orioles hit 1-for-4 off Jimenez with a runner in scoring position, and didn’t score any runs except for the two solo homers. Jimenez walked two guys, but threw 65 strikes in 99 pitches, including 18 first-pitch strikes. 10 baserunners is too many, but most didn’t score. He got a TOTAL of TWO ground ball outs, but 6 of his 8 hits were mere singles. He got 7 swinging strikes but 23 foul balls. On one hand, the point of pitching is to chew through innings without allowing runs. On the other hand, you’d like to do so in a manner that suggests you’ll be able to do it again.

When I studied dynamical systems in grad school, the idea of chaos was characterized by “extreme dependence on initial conditions.” That is, generally speaking, with an “ordinary” function, if you start close, you end up pretty close. If you take a number and square it, then square it again, and go on 50 times, the error propagation isn’t too bad. A more mundane illustration:  $2^{50} = 1125899906842624$ , and  $2.0001^{50} = 1128718107438271$ . They’re different, but meh. In a chaotic system, it doesn’t matter HOW close you start: eventually, the two points end up an arbitrarily-large distance apart. You might THINK you’ve got the starting point nailed down, but if you’re even THIS much off, soon your predictions are TOTALLY WRONG. (This is why you can’t predict the weather next week. I mean, you can, but your prediction isn’t any better than just guessing “it’ll be like today.” Which, frankly, you can do in Texas. I digress.)

How will Ubaldo pitch next time? Who the hell knows? Not even God, I tell you. God invented quantum mechanics so He'd have some uncertainty in his existence. How judgmental is your hamburger? Which note in the twelve-tone scale is least purple? Jimenez won. Take it.

### 2) Mighty Mike!

The Indians accomplished very little against lefty Zach Britton through five innings, but in the sixth, Britton either began elevating his pitches or the Red Bull finally kicked in in the Tribe's collective bloodstreams and Britton faced five hitters without retiring a single one. The last hitter he faced was Mike Brantley, who took a 1-0 pitch up the middle to score two runners with the bases loaded and saddled Britton with the loss.

Not content with one two-RBI hit, Brantley also pasted a 2-2 pitch off reliever Darren O'Day, who had been called on to retire the right-handed Mark Reynolds. Because O'Day did no such thing, Brantley's clout was a two-run homer that provided the final margin of victory.

Interestingly enough, while Brantley posts near-identical OBPs against righties and lefties (.332 and .324 respectively), his power is almost exclusively a facing-righties affair. In 23 hits against left-handed pitching, Brantley has two doubles, while against right-handers, fully a third of his hits go for extra bases (14 of 50, including all 5 of his homers). And O'Day is just about the most extreme right-handed pitcher in the league, throwing from a slot that might be best described as "no-quarters."

### 3) Welcome back!

Nick Swisher's return from a shoulder injury was not entirely auspicious, in that it wasn't any good at all, taking a Size Five Collar with a whiff. Last night, he appeared more locked in, going 2-for-4 with a walk.

Swisher's season to date can hardly be called a "success:" his 33 walks allow his poor .236 AVG to translate into an acceptable .336 OBP, and his 7 homers and 14 doubles give him a .159 ISO, which isn't terrible for a right fielder. Unfortunately, Swisher is more of a first

## The B-List: 6/24

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, June 25 2013 3:39 PM -

---

baseman, and a .395 SLG is pretty lame for a player of that ilk. Unless he's a Cleveland Indian, of course. We have pretty low standard for slugging first basemen in recent years. On the other hand, Swisher has gotten some key hits and still has the most infectious smile on the squad. Long story short: please get more hits.

### 4) Shades of bullpens past

Jimenez left with one out in the 6<sup>th</sup> with a runner on first base. The bullpen proceeded to come in and not allow another baserunner until the 9<sup>th</sup>.

Each of Rich Hill, Brian Shaw, and Joe Smiff were perfect, recording three, two, and three outs respectively. In the words of Terry Francona:

*"When Rich Hill pitches like that, it complements our whole bullpen," Francona said. "He's thrown the ball pretty good the last few times out. Getting him on a roll will really help our bullpen."*

Indeed. There are two things I read into this statement:

- a) Boy, it sure would be nice if Rich Hill was good more often than he has been
- b) What MOOK saddled me with a #1 left-handed relief option of RICH HILL?

I may be reading too much into this.

### 5) Bob Wickman and Joe Borowski nod sagely

## The B-List: 6/24

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}  
Tuesday, June 25 2013 3:39 PM -

---

Ah, yes, the ol', two-out, walk the guy after having him 1-2, give up a single, lineout save. How I missed you.

(I didn't miss you.)

### 6) Managerial Head-Scratchers

Drew Stubbs, hitting .245/.301/.389 on the season, does not seem like he'd be the ideal choice to lead off. In fact, he did NOT lead off, batting 9<sup>th</sup> instead.

Against left-handed pitching, however, Stubbs has always been much better (.275/.345/.474 from 2010 to 2012, and .286/.391/.429 this season). For comparison, actual leadoff hitter Mike Bourn hits .296/.306/.324 off left-handed pitching this season.

Zach Britton is a left-handed pitcher.

Stubbs went 2-for-3 with a walk.

Bourn went 0-for-5 with 3 Ks.

Also, Mike Aviles and his .286 OBP hit second. Well, I mean, that's overall. With the platoon split, Aviles has a massive .289 OBP against lefties. So now I see. Never mind.

### 7) Nice work if you can get it

John McDonald scored on Brantley's two-run homer because he had pinch-run for Mark

## The B-List: 6/24

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}  
Tuesday, June 25 2013 3:39 PM -

---

Reynolds in the 8<sup>th</sup>. This was primarily because McDonald is the superior defender at 3B: at age 38, he's probably not actually *faster* than Reynolds.

McDonald's batting line of .053/.163/.079 continues to look like a typo. ESPN projects him to score 4 runs this season, so hopefully, you saw this one.

### 8) Ho Hum Dept.

Jason Kipnis lead off the 6<sup>th</sup> with his 19<sup>th</sup> double on the season and scored on Swisher's subsequent single. He now leads the team in slugging among players qualified for the batting title, and his .360 OBP trails only Carlos Santana.

### 9) Public Service for the Google Search Engine

Jack Zduriencik flew to Boston and distracted Tuukka Rask at the end of the third period. I do not believe it is possible to distract a Stanley Cup Finals GK from the stands, or the Flyers would win every year, and this statement is false. Fire Eric Wedge.