



*The Indians retained sole possession of first place in the A.L. Central by coming from Not Behind to beat to Royals 6-5 behind the clutch Not Hitting of Carlos Santana and Mark Reynolds. In today's B-List, Buff notices that Corey Kluber was truly excellent until he truly wasn't, that Jason Giambi can still hit, that the back end of Cleveland's bullpen could be better, that Nick Hagadone's inaccuracy pales in comparison to Tim Collins', and that more than half of the Tribe's offensive innings didn't feature a double play.*

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## The B-List: 7/2

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Thursday, June 27 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Saturday, July 06 2013 8:37 AM

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**Indians (45-38)**

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**Royals (38-42)**

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“W”: C. Allen (3-0)

L: T. Collins (2-3)

S: C. Perez (8)

Like Richard Nixon, we no longer have Jeff Francoeur to kick around any more.

### 1) One drop of ink

Through four innings, Corey Kluber was magnificent, allowing two baserunners on a double and a HBP, each in a different inning. He racked up three swinging strikeouts and generally made the Royals look like so many Miami Marlins. Kluber was coming off a terribble start against the Orioles last week in which he coughed up 7 runs (6 earned) on 11 hits, so this was a welcome return to form, as he'd allowed a total of 4 runs in the three starts before that, including a pair of 8-inning gems against Washington and Texas.

Unfortunately, the form he ended up returning to (returned returning to?) was that of Balmer in the fifth, because after a pair of singles, Kluber walked rookie Johnny Giavotello on 5 pitches before finally getting an out. With a chance to still get out of the inning with a good pitch, Kluber instead threw four rotten ones, three for balls and one that Alex Gordon lined over the wall for a game-tying grand slam.

Kluber's been a revelation this season insofar as he's proven he can be a legitimate major-league starter, but he's not exactly ready to be a consistent front-line starter. While he did hit a season-low 3.58 ERA a couple weeks ago, right in Justin Masterson territory at the time, it was only a month-and-a-half ago that he was up in the mid-fives (5.40). And while his 10 home runs allowed isn't terribly frightening, it does bear mentioning that he's given up multiple homers in 3 of his last 9 starts.

The first four innings were very encouraging though, so we'll go with that.

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

Cody Allen "earned" the win by throwing three pitches and recording an out. While I acknowledge that there were two men on base at the time, he recorded ... one out. I woulda given that win to Joe Smiff, who got three. Teapot tempest, to be sure, but just once I'd like to see the Official Scorer take advantage of his power and award the Win based on his discretion

instead of the arcane “accepted formula.”

### 3) Work that has been gotten, but wasn't as nice

I would NOT have given the win to either of Cleveland's nominal “back end” relievers, Vinnie Pestano nor Chris Perez. Pestano did get David Lough to ground into an inning-ending double play with runners on the corners, but the obvious rejoinder is that Pestano had PUT those runners ON the corners in the first place, and the one on third had already driven in a run. In his last 8 games, including five as Official Closer, Pestano has given up multiple hits four times, more than one baserunner five, and only two of his innings (Pestano only pitches One Whole Inning) have been perfect. His WHIP this season is 1.44, which is preposterously bad for a back-end guy and pales in comparison to last year's 1.10 or 2011's 1.05. I like Pestano a whole lot more than most relievers I've seen since Days of the Raffies, but he sure isn't having a good 2013. I will say this: after blowing his first attempt, Pestano did reel off 6 straight saves, and held the opponent scoreless in his other two outings (holding a 5-1 lead against Houston and a 19-10 lead against the ChiSox). I may want a more 2011 or 2012 version of the results, but the fact is that Pestano DID hold the fort with Perez on the shelf.

Perez, meanwhile, gave up a hit and a walk of his own, but got out of the inning without allowing a run and recorded his 8<sup>th</sup> save. This is pretty much what I expect Chris Perez to do and can't express any great disappointment in it.

### 4) Thumper Rule revoked

When you come into the game and walk your first hitter on four pitches, you have not executed properly, Nick Walkadone.

### 5) Compared and contrasted

Walkadone's performance was twice as good as Tiny Tim Collins', because he walked only one of the two batters he faced. Also, his guy didn't score, while both of Collins' did, although that wasn't really under either guy's control. On the other hand, given that Walkadone threw 4

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strikes in 9 pitches and Collins three 3 strikes in 11 pitches, it could be argued that there wasn't ANYTHING under either guy's "control."

### 6) Clever and Cleverer

With the bases loaded in the first inning, Carlos Santana quickly fell behind 0-2 to Luis Mendoza. Making Job look like an impulsive teenager, Santana then calmly watched Mendoza miss the strike zone four times out of five (he fouled off a 2-2 pitch) to "drive" in the first run of the ballgame.

Santana's teammates credited his plate appearance for setting the tone for the whole rest of the game, and sure enough, the Indians sawed through five pitchers who threw a collective 165 pitches en route to walking EIGHT guys. It should be noted that only the top half of the lineup was particularly inspired, as none of the bottom four hitters drew a walk. They did strike out six times, which is kind of like chipping in, as long as the definition of "chipping in" can be expanded to include "making a negative contribution." (Note: Jason Giambi's ultimately-game-winning hit did come out of the 7 slot.)

Of course, Santana's crafty cleverness had nothing on Mark Reynolds', who used his skillful aplomb and veteran guile to cleverly get hit on the shoulder in order to drive in the game's second run. In fact, it could be argued that Reynolds, needing only two pitches to drive in his run, was 3 1/2 times as efficient as the profligate Santana, who needed seven.

### 7) Ask and ye shall receive

With three hits last night, including his 16<sup>th</sup> double of the season, Nick Swisher extended his modest hitting streak to 4, and is now hitting .290 since his return from resting his shoulder. I asked for more hits, and now I have them, and I'm happier than I was. I am still not as happy as Nick Swisher is all the time, but I consider that the asymptotic limit I shall never reach.

### 8) Credit Where Credit is Due Dept.

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Carlos Santana drove in two runs without getting a hit (bases-loaded walk, sac fly).

Asdrubal Cabrera drove in a pair of runs with a clutch bases-loaded single off Aaron Crow.

Bruce Chen threw two perfect innings of relief to lower his ERA to 2.08. He induced as many swings-and-misses in six batters as Allen, Smiff, Pestano, and Perez did *combined* in *fourteen*.

The Indians had five full innings in which they did not ground into a double play.

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

Jack Zduriencik cheats at Words With Friends by using his name on a Triple Word Score. I do not believe Words With Friends allows this, and the statement is untrue. Fire Eric Wedge.