

In the latest installment of The B-List, Buff takes a look at the much needed solid start from Cliffie, Honny's three run blast off Wakefield, and the rough night for ex-Indian Josh Bard in his attempt to handle said knuckleballer.



1) My Favorite Player shows consistency!

Boston is a pretty patient lineup, all things considered, so I'm not too bent out of shape about 4 walks in 6 innings, especially when combined with 4 hits, 1 run, and 7 strikeouts. Last year's decreased K rate looks like an aberration, much more in line with 2003's (in an admittedly puny sample) and 2004's (33 starts worth). And it wasn't like he was completely wild, throwing 62% of his pitches for strikes.

Lee pushes his ERA under 3 and has yet to give up a fourth run in a start this season. Of course, he's only seen the seventh inning once in five starts, too: throwing 110 pitches in 6 innings will do that to you. Still, despite pitching with some runners on base, he largely throttled the BoSox lineup, which is nice to see. The Scott Elarton extreme flyball nonsense appears to be out of Cliff's system as well. I'm all for that.

2) One good swing

Tim Wakefield pretty much made the Indians' hitters look silly except for one pitch. Which, of course, produced thrice as many runs as Boston did all game. That's one of the issues with a knuckleball: one flat pitch, and you're left with a 68-MPH meatball, which Jhonny Peralta deposited over the wall for a three-run homer. Sadly, the

Indians were unable to keep up the pace to score an infinite number of runs, but with Lee and an unusually effective bullpen, the game was essentially over after three batters.

Wakefield did put some more runners on, most of whom ended up in scoring position one way (steal) or another (passed ball), but the only other extra-base hit off Wakefield was a double down the line: hit up the middle, it's a sharp single to center.

3) Wait a minute, you mean they can do that?

Jason Davis and Bob Wickman combined to allow two baserunners in three innings, shutting out the Sox the rest of the way. Davis in particular looked really locked in, inducing 5 ground ball outs. He didn't strike anyone out, which still scoobies me for a guy who can dial it up in the mid-90s, but he looked comfortable. It may be that Davis is a guy who can pitch better in low-pressure situations than high-pressure ones: this doesn't make him worthless or even

particularly unusual, but it does mean that Inertia Man will have to leverage his innings appropriately, and how many have faith in THAT?

Bob was Bob. No save for you!

4) Screw three, there are only Two True Outcomes!

Wile E. Mo Pena showed his essential Wile E. Mo-ness in smacking a home run off Lee (and there wasn't much doubt about it, either) and whiffing twice. Baseball Prospectus speaks of the Three True Outcomes (walk, strikeout, HR), but it looks like Pena isn't terribly interested in the first. We missed the opportunity to see him "flash the leather" in the

outfield, where by all reports he is a joy to watch in an Incaviglian sense. An outfield with Pena and Manny Ramirez has the potential to be one of the most hysterical of all time, especially when Pena is shifted to center. Dustan Mohr was so distracted by being surrounded by Manny and Mo that he struck out twice in two ABs. No word as to whether he will be changing his name to Jack.

5) Hey, we've got one of those, too!

This is the guy we wanted instead of Mota? Manny

Delcarmen was ... well,
eminently recognizable as a
Cleveland-calibre relief pitcher.

**6) There but for the grace of
God go I**

Kelly Shoppach was spotted
in the runway dancing an
elaborate jig with a bottle of
champagne and an
accordian.

Tough night for ex-Indian
Josh Bard: 4 PB, 3 SB.

Not a happy camper.

7) Stein, go up there and let it hit you

Eduardo Perez got to play against the right-handed Wakefield, probably because a) Wedge doesn't want to mess with Broussard's swing and b) it hardly matters what hand a knuckleball pitcher throws with. Hey, he hit

the ball. Just not particularly well.

8) Around the horn

A pair of double plays for the Tribe last night, both 6-4-3. See, Cliff, it's hard to induce fly-ball double plays. Aren't the ground-ball ones handy?