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No, today it's time to ([once again](#)) acknowledge and extol the accomplishments of one Grady Sizemore, who blasted his 30th and 31st HR in a game Monday night in which the scoreboard could have read "Sizemore - 2, Tigers - 1"; for a portion of time as Grady's contributions outweighed those of the entire Detroit club.

In leading the way to another victory, Grady became the 25th player in MLB history to go [30-30](#) , and only the 2nd in Tribe history (Joe Carter being the other) to achieve the feat. The accomplishment in and of itself is a shockingly amazing feat, just by virtue of how rare it is, made even more impressive when you consider that there are 32 games (or about 20% of the season) still remaining on the schedule.

So whatever your preferred method of adulation may be, now would be a good time to get to it:

If you're a golf clap kind of guy, let's hear that polite acknowledgement of greatness.

If you're still in the "Wayne's World" mindset (that movie was made 16 years ago, people) and prefer the "We're Not Worthy..." bow at the waist, get those arms up and start bending.

If you're a bit more subdued and prefer the hat tip, it's time to raise your thumb and forefinger to the brim of that cap.

If you're a female and want to pretend [you're at a Tom Jones concert](#), it's time to see Center Field at Progressive Field littered with some of Victoria's Secrets.

However you publicly acknowledge that greatness is present before you or however you show respect, please look towards our Center Fielder the next time you're at Progressive Field when he hustles out to the green expanse that he occupies and acknowledge away...because he's earned it.

Because, perhaps not so surprisingly, in a season so full of disappointments and "what-ifs", where we all focus on the volatile bullpen and the fluidity of the rotation and deal with the inconsistency of numerous position players, Grady somehow flies under the radar as almost a given and most fail to properly recognize it on a regular basis. We take his steady contributions at the plate and in the field for granted because you know you're going to get maximum effort out of him (the ultimate "grinder" if there ever was one...just with immense talent), solid and spectacular defense in CF, and steady numbers throughout the season at the plate.

As we all sit and wonder who is going to play 3B or RF or 2B in 2009 or whether the team will "sell high" on Shoppach, what becomes overlooked is that Sizemore's name remains in permanent ink on the lineup card. It's almost like a discussion of the Cavs' starting five that either starts with "Well, there's LeBron...obviously" or LeBron's name simply isn't included because there's such an assumption of his presence and his greatness.

How is the way that Grady is perceived much different?

It could be argued that EVERY single position for next year is in some sort of state of flux...except CF. There's no debate, there's no conjecture, there's no "but...maybe" involved. It's Grady - every game at full capacity.

Why is it so easy to take what he does for granted?

Consider for a moment his numbers by month:

March/April

.847 OPS, 5 2B, 1 3B, 3 HR, 13 RBI

May

.826 OPS, 5 2B, 1 3B, 7 HR, 16 RBI

June

.970 OPS, 8 2B, 1 3B, 9 HR, 16 RBI

July

1.115 OPS, 6 2B, 1 3B, 8 HR, 18 RBI

August

.778 OPS, 4 2B, 1 3B, 4 HR, 18 RBI

Until the month of August (which still isn't over and, if Monday night was any indication, could still be "salvageable" in terms of maintaining his frighteningly consistent numbers), Sizemore has put up steady production across the board, including [a July](#) that put him in some pretty rarified air in the AL, made even more impressive by the fact that he's also contributing SB and Gold Glove defense.

How impressive, exactly, in terms of how he looks against the rest of the AL?

Well, there's a statistic (invented by Keith Woolner...who happens to now be employed by the Tribe) that is nearly universally accepted by baseball people (at least those that acknowledge the importance of statistics in the evaluation of a player) in terms of putting one hard number on a player and how valuable he is, compared to other players.

It's known as VORP (or Value over Replacement Player) and is best described [here, by the creator](#)

. Essentially, it attempts to determine how much a particular player contributes in comparison to an "average player" or "freely available talent". It assigns a number that is easily comparable to measure a player's value against other players with one number.

Confused?

Don't be, and don't try to figure out what that number means...just know that people smarter than you and I calculate it and use it to compare and evaluate players using the same criteria and with the same factors instead of looking at 40 different numbers (BA, OBP, SLG, HR, etc.) and attempting to accurately compare players, apples to apples.

Turning off the overhead projector, let's go back to Grady and compare how Sizemore ranks with [other players in the AL in terms of VORP this year](#) :

Alex Rodriguez - 57.6
Grady Sizemore - 57.2
Ian Kinsler - 54.8
Aubrey Huff - 51.0
Milton Bradley - 51.0
Carlos Quentin - 49.2
Kevin Youkilis - 47.5
Josh Hamilton - 47.4
Brian Roberts - 46.8
Justin Morneau - 43.9

What do those numbers mean exactly?

Unless you're ready to jump into some high-level math, don't concern yourself with it...just know that those numbers are the ones that decision-makers in MLB look at

instead of Batting Average or RBI.

So, according to VORP, Grady's the 2nd most valuable position player in the AL - behind only A-Rod.

Is your appreciation growing yet?

If you thought he was in some rarified air in terms of July production, how about that list...or how about the fact that he's accomplishing all of this having turned all of 25 at the beginning of August?

And maybe that's the most impressive thing that Sizemore is accomplishing, as he's maturing as a hitter to awfully impressive levels at an age when most players are still entering MLB or going through an adjustment period to MLB pitching.

For some fun, let's see how Sizemore's career is progressing compared to another LH OF who some people may have heard of:

Age 22

Sizemore - .832 OPS, 22 HR, 37 2B, 11 3B, 81 RBI, 22 SB
Player A - .821 OPS, 25 HR, 34 2B, 9 3B, 59 RBI, 32 SB

Age 23

Sizemore - .908 OPS, 28 HR, 53 2B, 11 3B, 76 RBI, 22 SB
Player A - .859 OPS, 24 HR, 30 2B, 5 3B, 58 RBI, 17 SB

Age 24

Sizemore - .852 OPS, 24 HR, 34 2B, 5 3B, 78 RBI, 33 SB
Player A - .777 OPS, 19 HR, 34 2B, 6 3B, 58 RBI, 32 SB

Age 25

Sizemore - .915 OPS, 31 HR, 28 2B, 5 3B, 81 RBI, 34 SB (stats through 126 games)
Player A - .971 OPS, 33 HR, 32 2B, 3 3B, 114 RBI, 52 SB

Who is Player A, you ask?

Um, that's [Barry Bonds](#) ... when he was still playing just a couple of hours southeast of Cleveland and prior to his "unexplained" head expansion.

Forgetting for a moment what transpired with Bonds' career when the new millennium dawned, let's remember what everyone has always said about Bonds. All together now..."He was a first-ballot Hall-of-Famer before he started (allegedly) juicing."

Well, Grady's right with him in terms of progression as a hitter - even distancing himself from Bonds in terms of power at his tender age.

OK, have you ordered that Sizemore jersey yet?

It's a safe bet to get some heavy use for a good amount of time as, in case you've forgotten, SuperSizemore's club option for 2012 for \$8.5M is pretty likely to get picked up...unless the Indians re-negotiate with their young CF to add more years and more guaranteed dollars to his deal.

Even if they don't...2012?!?

Seriously...can any of us even grasp what he'll be doing a full FOUR seasons from now?

As if this whole thing isn't impressive enough, how about the fact that Sizemore has started to assume a leadership role on the team with the likes of Sabathia, Blake, and Byrd donning new polyester? Maybe it's his quiet demeanor, maybe it's the way he's always conducted himself in the dugout, and maybe it's just pure speculation to think that Sizemore deferred to those veterans in terms of leadership while each was on the team.

And I know that this is based on nothing tangible, but this team just FEELS like it's become Grady's team - feeding off him, looking for him now in the dugout to be that guy on the top step or having someone's ear.

For whatever reason though (and with Victor and Pronk also shelved), the Indians have put up these records since moving their veteran players:

Since CC trade: 27-16 (.628 winning percentage)
Since Blake trade: 19-10 (.655 winning percentage)
Since Byrd trade: 10-3 (.769 winning percentage)

Don't ask me to explain that (and, obviously, 13 games a season does not make), but Grady assuming a leadership role and these young players taking their cues from him and following his example certainly can't be dismissed out of hand.

With the season winding down and [Grady's projected numbers](#) looking like they could enter

[an even more exclusive club](#)

if he keeps up his pace, 2008 will go down as a "lost season" in many aspects of the Indians as a whole...but not for Sizemore.

When it's all said and done, 2008 will represent the year that "what he could be" matured into "what he is" with room for growth. And that, for Tribe fans, is something that should not be taken for granted or simply assumed. It should be something admired, respected, and enjoyed every night.

Grady doesn't take a day off or go into cruise control...why shouldn't your appreciation of him follow his example?