

Six losses in a row. Three to the Royals and three to the Tigers. Buff angry. Looking for a bright spot, he did supply me with a new quote of the day in this column. "Danny Graves designated for assignment. I will miss him in the same way political cartoonists miss Dan Quayle."



Another mixed bag for the Indians this weekend: the offense sucked on Friday, but then **sucked** on Saturday, and then to change things up, it *sucked* on Sunday. There are many flavors of suck, although, truth be told, they all taste pretty sucky.

1) My Favorite Player is a banana!

Go to the store and buy seven bananas. Make sure they're just *slightly* green: nobody wants to eat a green banana.

The first banana on the first day is a little bit off: it's not quite sweet enough, and a little firm, but it's still edible.

The second, third, and fourth bananas are damned good. Bananas are high in potassium, you know.

The fifth banana, well, it's starting to get black spots on it, and it's a little soft in places. It's still edible, no problem, but the apples are starting to look pretty good in the fruit bowl.

The sixth banana is not very attractive. You get lucky now and then and it ages better

than most sixth bananas, but it is rapidly going to the dogs. It is time to reconsider buying so many damned bananas at one time.

The seventh banana gets tossed without even peeling it. It is a disgusting mess, not even a fruit any more, but rather an odious collection of bruises, spots, mealiness, and general unpleasantness that should be discarded almost without exception.

And this is Cliff Lee's pitching. Now, how many times are you going to throw away the seventh banana when the sixth banana is only good half the time anyway?

2) Rain, rain, go away

Actually, the rain's no so bad.

"Tigers, Tigers, go away" would be more appropriate. Although at times, the Indians' version appeared to be, "Brain cells, brain cells, go away." We need a new rhyme. How about, "Brain cells, brain cells, come the fuck back?" Given a choice of the three, I'd rather have brain cells, rain, and no Tigers, or brain cells, Tigers, and no rain. Rain, Tigers, and no brain cells was not a particularly satisfying experience, quite frankly.

3) Singling out Casey Blake

How many times was Casey Blake singled out for his performance last season? I can't remember another player more consistently vilified, since Aaron Boone got some passes over the summer. Well, all Blake did was pound two homers Friday, get a hit Saturday (one of five for the Indians, total), and stroke another hit to go with a pair of walks (one intentional, no one wants to

face Blake with runners on base, after all) on Sunday. How does this single Blake out? Because he was the only consistent offensive force the whole bloody weekend. Only Sizemore and Boone reached base in all three games, although each did it without the benefit of a hit in one of the games. Ed Perez got a hit in each of the two games in

which he played, but his egregious misplay lost Sunday's game virtually single-no-handedly, so no soup for him.

4) Baseball is a game of inches

Hafner's drive to the wall looked like it might win the game Sunday, but it didn't.

Eduardo Perez looked

like he would play first base Sunday, but he didn't.

Jhonny Peralta looked like he hit a foul ball, but he didn't. For a guy with such a big, round head, the internal workings seem to be less functional than you'd expect.

Perez and Hafner
thought they would go
to second base Friday,
but they didn't. Okay,
maybe baseball is a
game of *feet*
sometimes. Yards.
Furlongs. Parsecs.
(Boo.)

5) It's the pitching,

stupid

Well, except when it's not. The only truly weak performance was Lee in the seventh inning of Friday's game: Johnson crusied Sunday until Perez botched the

play, and if Sabathia throws more games in which he goes 8 innings with 10 Ks, 1 BB, 6 H, and a 74:38 strike-to-ball ratio, is anyone going to complain a whole lot? Oh, by the way, the bullpen? 6 IP, 3

H, 2 BB (neither by Gil Blundermota), 5 K, 0 R. I am oddly sanguine about the relief pitching with Cabrera back to form, Betancourt returning soon, and the Mullet getting the wazoo.

However, it has been determined that scoring zero runs is not as conducive to winning as you might expect. Or *exactly* as conducive,

depending on how many neurons fire.

6) Adventures in managerial head-scratching

Jason Michaels got three hits

Friday. He has raised his average

to .287, and although he is not the most powerful tool in the shed, he is looking more comfortable at the plate.

Ninth inning

Saturday. Aaron

Boone walks to lead off.

Sizemore comes into the at-bat 2-for-4, being one of the few guys this weekend who reached base.

Ferd Rodney is
throwing gunk.
Smoke, but gunk.
He threw exactly
zero strikes to
Boone (he would
finish a sterling
save with 6 strikes

in 15 pitches,
which is
Mota-esque). So,
to recap: you are
down one, you
have a man on
base, the pitcher
is struggling, you

have a speedy
leadoff hitter up,
followed by a
2-hitter who struck
out against
Speedball Maroth
but has been
handling faster

stuff.

Naturally, you
bunt on the first
pitch.

Look, this is not
Part Nine

Thousand of my
running diatribe

against the
Value of the
Bunt. I hate
bunting, blah
blah blah.

Everyone is tired
of hearing about
this. I'M tired of

hearing about it,
and I'm a very
self-centered
guy. But until
Rodney throws a
FIRST STRIKE,
shouldn't you not
bail him out by

giving away an
out? Isn't that
just
preposterously
dumb? Let's say
you let Rodney
throw: either he
continues to

scattershot
around the plate,
or he finally
starts grooving
the ball: the man
is like thirteen
years old, it's not
like you have the

Crafty Veteran
out there setting
Sizemore up.
He was throwing
gunk! Let him
continue! I can't
go on.
Anyway,

Hollandsworth
did not look
good replacing
Michaels: I
understand the
point, but
pinch-hitting is a
tough way to

make a living,
and Michaels
isn't bad against
righties this
season.

By the way,
after
Hollandsworth,

Peralta saw five
pitches. He
swung at zero.

One
was a strike.

**7) Ducks in my
eye!**

We left 8 on
base Saturday,
including 4 in
scoring
position. We
left 11 on base
Sunday,

including six in
scoring
position. Six! I
will now pierce
my tongue
with a paper
clip.

**8) Silver
Lining Dept.**
We turned
three double
plays on
Sunday, and a
total of five

over the
series. I like
double plays.
**9) Get the
Hands Team
out there!**

We
committed
three errors
Friday and
now lead the
American

League. I am
less partial to
errors.

**10) Now that
the wino has
staggered**

**off, it turns
out this
gutter is
pretty comfy
Minnesota
took two of**

three from
Chicago to
waft into
third place in
the AL
Central. I

had left them
for dead,
which made
for a surreal
experience
as they

waved on
their way by.

(They still
smell bad,
though.)

11) Ode to a

Mullet
Danny
Graves was
designated
for
assignment.

I will miss
him in the
way political
cartoonists
miss Dan
Quayle.