

The B-List: 6/10

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}
Wednesday, June 10 2009 7:00 PM -

Well, that was bad. A 9-0 shellacking at the hands of Gil Meche and the Royals. And the return of The Evil Carl Pavano. In today's B-List, Buff talks about why Pavano regressed after several quality starts in a row. He talks about the solid outing for Jensen Lewis and the return of Joe Smith. And begs for a night off for Kelly Shoppach, who is struggling at the plate and behind it right now. **FINAL**

	1	2	3	4
Royals (25-33)	0	1	0	4
Indians (26-35)	0	0	0	0

W: Meche (3-5) L: Pavano (6-5)



If you are reading this, you are likely a fan of either the Cleveland Indians or the Kansas City Royals: thus, your chances of rooting for a bad team are 2 in 2.

This will be a short column because I don't think there's much "analysis" required.

1) A Carl Pavano only Big Jim McBob and Billy Sol Huron would love

There isn't much "spin" here: Pavano gave up 9 runs on 11 hits in 4 2/3 innings, including three multi-run homers. Pavano is at his best when ... well, when he's not sucking. Here, he was not at his best.

One striking thing about the game was that it wasn't like Pavano was falling

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behind hitters and getting into trouble, where he'd have to groove a pitch just to get it over (cf. Lackey, J.). The first hit of the game was on an 0-2 count. In fact:

DeJesus single: 0-2 count
Teahen walk: was a 1-2 count
Callaspo single: was 0-2, single on 3-2
Pena double: 1-1 count

Here we pause to contemplate the absurdity of giving up a double to the wall to Tony Pena Jr., whose insistence on using a live octopus instead of a bat has lowered his batting average by well over 5%.

Butler double: 2-2 count
Guillen homer: 1-2 count (after starting 0-2)
Callaspo single: 1-2 count (after starting 0-2)
Olivo homer: 1-1 count
Bloomquist single: 2-0 count
Guillen single: 0-2 count
Teahen infield single: 0-0 count
Callaspo homer: 3-1 count

Of the 11 hits (I only included the walk to show Pavano had an advantageous count and squandered it), six of them came on two-strike counts. Pavano actually consistently got ahead of hitters, then ... blew it. I don't know if he was trying to be too fine or his ball didn't sink or what, but consarn it, that's pretty infuriating.

This start was such an outlier that I don't consider treating it as a significant event to be productive.

2) Blue Moon Special

Jensen Lewis threw 3 1/3 scoreless innings, giving up a single hit (a single), walking NOBODY, and striking out FOUR. It's possible that the Royals were coasting, but Lewis pitched very, very well and deserves a lot of credit for it.

The one warning is that Lewis threw a first-pitch strike to 4 of the 11 hitters he faced and only 27 strikes in 46 pitches. This is not very good, but it *is* pretty bad.

3) Welcome back!

Joe Smiff pitched a scoreless inning, striking out a hitter and giving up a double to David DeJesus. It was a good spot to get Smiff back into the swing of things, but I would hope that in a real close game situation, Smiff's exposure to left-handed hitters is severely limited. I would go so far as to say that if he is facing a right-left-right combo, he should walk the lefty. Lefties are hitting .375 off Smiff with a .625 SLG: admittedly this is in 9 PA, but they've hit .309 and slugged .454 off Smiff in their collective careers.

4) Nice hose!

After Pena's double in the 3rd, he took third on a groundout and tried to score on a fly ball to right.

Shin-Soo Choo plays right.

Tony Pena was out.

In addition, Alberto Callaspo was gunned down by Kelly Shoppach trying to steal second: Shoppach has only caught 8 of 31 basestealers this season. After getting a good early start to his career with percentages of 36.7% and 36.1% in 2006 and 2007, his 2008 was poor (21.3%) and his 2009 isn't much better (25.8%). Sure, the samples are smallish, but for a guy who was supposed to make us feel better than Victor Martinez wouldn't have to catch so much, Shoppach hasn't made me feel much better.

(Admittedly, he actually makes me feel a WHOLE LOT better in 2009, in a season where Martinez has allowed a preposterous Bardesque 25 of 28 to steal, a robust 10.7% caught stealing percentage. His "catcher's ERA" suffers from chronic exposure to Fausto Carmona, though.)

5) Here's a thought

Kelly Shoppach: batting .204/.331/.363

Chris Gimenez: batting .333/.400/1.000, can ostensibly catch

How about a day off for the Shopper?

6) On a night of limited opportunities

You know who reached base? Mark DeRosa, that's who!

7) Sotto voce

Jhonny Peralta reached base twice.

Luis Valbuena got a hit AND stole a base.

8) Managerial Head-Scratchers

Ryan Garko hits Gil Meche. He bats .321/.333/.536 off him.

Ryan Garko made a plate appearance. As a pinch hitter. After Gil Meche left the game.