

A win! Would asking to actually win a series be too greedy? In today's B-List, Buff Daddy comments on the Indians explosion from the 6-8 holes in their lineup, and the Yankees unwillingness to pitch to Pronk. He also takes a closer look at Cliff Lee's performance yesterday, and speculates on what the loss of Casey Blake will mean to this team.



Sure, it makes sense to struggle offensively against the guys with the 4 ERAs and hammer the guy with the 3. Especially with the mighty 6-7-8-9 hitters.

1) Department of Corrections Department

It was not general nitwittitude for Eric Wedge to replace Casey Blake with Eduardo Perez in right field Wednesday, and Blake was not suffering from liver flukes, but rather a strained oblique muscle. This will prove to be an enormous challenge for the Tribe, in that Blake's replacement is Todd Hollandsworth (Challenge 1, replacing the .310 hitter with the .180 hitter) and Jason Michaels pulled up lame as well (Challenge 2, replacing the .277 hitter with a potted plant).

I apologize for conjecturing a parasitic infection for Casey, although in my defense, the oblique muscle is in the same area as the liver.

2) My Favorite Player is both stingy yet generous!

The good news: Cliff Lee gave up only 5 hits in 6 2/3 innings; in fact, it was 3 hits in 6 innings

before the Banana Effect took place.

The bad news: 3 of the hits were home runs, including a solo shot to Bernie Williams, who is roughly fifty-three years old and slightly weaker at this point than Stephen Hawking.

The good news: helped by the fact that Lee only walked one hitter, all three homers were solo shots and Lee won his fifth game. In addition, Lee stopped imitating Chuck James and induced more ground balls than flyouts; each time he's managed this he's been effective. I'm not drawing (induce more ground balls) any big, important (induce more ground balls) conclusions from this (induce more ground balls) limited sample, but (induce more ground balls) I'm just saying that (induce more ground balls) Lee might consider (induce more

ground balls) a modification (induce more ground balls) of his pitching approach (induce more ground balls).

Basically, in innings 1-6, Lee was C.C. Sabathia, and in inning 7 he was Guillermo Mota. I have a preference, if you were wondering.

3) Balancing the pyramid on its point

Until the ninth inning, the top five slots of the order took a collective 0-for-17 collar, although Hafner did draw two walks and Broussard one more. Meanwhile, the bottom four slots in the order ended up 10-for-18 with 4 doubles, 1 homer, a walk, and a

stolen base. (The stolen base was by Belliard, surely a sight to behold: perhaps he rolled and picked up steam on the way.)

Many thanks and kudos to the 6-7-8 hitters, as Boone was only included to grab 1 double in 4 plate appearances.

Hollandsworth in particular disrupted an entire family of blind squirrels out in the "hitter's black" portion of Yankee stadium, only the 21st guy and first Blind Squirrel to accomplish the feat.

4) Taking lessons from the master

Fausto Carmona came in for Lee in the 7th and fanned Andy Phillips. In the 8th, though, he managed to load the bases with none out on a double, walk, and HBP. Then, after three straight balls to Jason Giambi to run the count to 3-1, he induced Giambi to ground into a weird fielder's choice (Jeter

overran the bag? Wasn't he forced out?) to give up a run, let Cairo steal second, and then struck out K-Rod and Posada to escape the inning.

Reports are that Carmona credited Bob Wickman after the game for "showing him how it's done." (Wickman allowed a leadoff double, but didn't

bother balking him to third
or walking anyone as is
his customary practice,
possibly because it was a
getaway day, or possibly
because he was too
swelled with pride at
Carmona's
Wickmanesque
performance.)

**5) Discretion is the
better part of valor**

But not of playing left field, apparently, as Jason Michaels reportedly sprained his ankle trying to catch Bernie Williams' home run blort in the 7th inning. This allowed us to end the game with an outfield of Hollandsworth,

Sizemore, and Perez, rendering the Indians' outfield either the Chicago Cubs or San Francisco Giant Old Guys. Reports are that Franklin Gutierrez will be called up to replace Blake. Or Michaels. Or Eric Wedge's stomach lining.

6) You, you get nothing and like it
Travis Hafner was offered several pitches to hit, and grounded the best two to second base. Otherwise, pitchers generally treated Hafner's strike zone

like the Stanley Cup playoffs and avoided it with great aplomb. Hafner has now walked nine thousand times this year. I do not know if this will impress the All-Star voters.

7) Having a heart

attack from Not Surprise

Three Yankee relief pitchers had ERAs under 3.00. In fact, Smith and Myers have ERAs under 1, although Myers is the kind of guy who

comes in and
throws horrific junk
to a single
left-handed batter
as often as not.
These three
pitchers combined
to pitch $2 \frac{1}{3}$
innings, and gave

up zero runs. One Yankee relief pitcher has an ERA of 8.46. He gave up 2 runs in 1 1/3 innings.

Admittedly, Ron Villone let one of Small's runners

score, but why is Aaron Small on this staff? 8.46 is really bad. Jason Davis was better than that, and he got sent down. (Not that I'm advocating this for

the Yankees,
whom I want to
suck: I actually
advocate more
Aaron Small. In
fact, I have a
fever, and the only
cure is More Aaron
Small.)