

Being an Indians fan this season is about as fun as drinking Drain-O, except with much worse side effects. In his standard Monday edition of The B-List, Buff breaks down the Indians weekend series against the Brew Crew, which saw them get swept in a very painful fashion. My advice to you is to start drinking heavily.



Doofus, doofus, doofus, My feet are made from clay. Doofus, doofus, doofus, Like doofus I will play.

-- Cleveland Indians Chanukkah song

1) They call me Mister Westbrook

Sometimes it's easy to tell when a pitcher is
"on:"

R Weeks struck out swinging C Koskie struck out
swinging C Lee struck
out looking

Gee, is that any good?

In the second inning, Jake needed help, but
in the third, two more Ks. In the fourth, 3
straight groundouts. Fifth, 2 groundouts
and a K. In all Westbrook produced 22 outs
by pitching (Gutierrez hosed Bill Hall at

home, and Westbrook picked him off, which marks a very Clevelandesque day on the basepaths for Mr. Hall), and two were in the air. That's ... well, that's really, really good. Five hits, no walks, and just one unearned run thanks to Wickets Broussard, and that's a real gem by Westbrook. Any time you drive in more earned runs than you give up, you have to consider that a successful outing.

2) Move us to the NL!

Much is made of our excellent first-base platoon, hitting somewhere in the .325-.330 area and being the top-hitting position on the team. Well, make that second-best hitting position: each of the three Cleveland pitchers went 1-for-3, including a double by Westbrook, with 3

aggregate RBI. Sure, Byrd stranded a couple in scoring position, but so did Gutierrez and Peralta. Sabathia is a credible enough hitter that he was left in to hit for himself ... and *then* was replaced on the mound by Ferd Cabrera. Given the supply of available pinch-hitters, this was a perfectly good strategic move: this says more about our bench than anything, but Sabathia really is a pretty good hitter (his stats from previous years of interleague play validate this).

3) False accountability

I appreciate Paul Byrd claiming that his bad pitch to Prince

Fielder in the 6th was the difference in the game. And sure, it would have been different entering the ninth inning up 3-2 instead of tied 3-3. But we lost 6-3, guys. And if you want to say that Wickman would have done a better job closing with a lead than Betancourt did trying to preserve a tie, you might want to pull up a box score from Saturday night's game. Byrd's game was Pretty Good (3 runs in 6 IP), but Byrd didn't leave all twelve of those guys stranded on base, he didn't ground into any double plays,

and he certainly didn't give up any three-run jacks. It's better to focus on what you could have done better than to point fingers, so he has that going for him, which is nice, but ... I dunno, it just rings a little false so say, "I blew the game with that one bad pitch." (It certainly was a bad pitch, though, I'll give him that.)

4) True accountability

When the Indians pursued Trevor Hoffman in the off-season, I blanched,

because I thought he was too expensive for too little a payoff. I wasn't even that thrilled about bringing Really Big Bob back, because I thought we had enough in-house alternatives to close. How hard can it be? Three bloody outs. Jake Westbrook can get three bloody outs. Paul Byrd can get three bloody outs. Give the ball to Raffy or Ferd and

let's move on. Now I find out that Ferd has to put someone on base before he believes he's really in a baseball game, and Raffy can only pitch effectively in innings whose number ends in a consonant, and RBB has blown up into a parody of himself who walks the first couple guys and then continues to suck.

This is not entirely fair. Heck, it's not even remotely fair. Wickman was terrific for the first two months, with a clean save record and the only reliable guy out of the 'pen. He was, really. But that's two games he flat-out blew out his sizable posterior, and I'm frustrated. So sue me.

(And the wind
whispered, "Rafael
Perez.")

5) A pond choked full with ducks

How can you get
thirteen hits, three
walks, and a wild
pitch, knocking the
opposing starter out
after three innings, get

to face both Jeremi
Gonzalez (ERA: 7.36)
and Dan Kolb
(seasons removed
from flukitude: 1.5),
and score ***three runs?***
Three! We made
Brian Shouse look
good (I live in Texas, I
know this to be false)!
We made Derrick

Turnbow look like Jake Westbrook!

Aw, hell, I know how: we're the Indians.

6) Nice wheels!

Grady Sizemore hit a triple off Gonzalez and also stole a base. That's fast.

7) Silver Lining

Dept.

Perhaps Jhonny Peralta's toughest days are behind him: all he did in the three-game series was go 8-for-13 with two doubles and a

home run. He didn't walk, and he struck out in every game, but 8-for-13 is 8-for-13.

8) Nice hose!

Franklin Gutierrez did not make

much of an
auspicious
appearance,
collecting two hits
in the three
games, but he did
gun down Bill Hall
at the plate,

which deserves a
rousing,
"Eh."
(He gets more
when he climbs
over the
Mendoza Line.)

9) Managerial

**Head
Scratchers
Aaron Boone
second?
Twice?
Tim Laker on
the roster?
(Three more**

stolen bases,
including one to
spherical Prince
Fielder.)

Pinch-hitting
Broussard for
Laker with

Sizemore
coming up at
the top of the
order pretty
much begged
Ned Yost to
bring in

Shouse: Laker
had a hit and is
hitting .308 in
(very) limited
duty, do you
want Laker
facing Kolb or

Broussard
facing Shouse?
Ugly.