

In today's B-List, Buff examines yesterday's 10-3 win over the Cardinals, who have promptly dropped seven straight since getting Albert Pujols back. Buff hits on Grady and Pronk's apparent fast track to the All-Star game, and wonders aloud how the hell Wedge got invited. Buff also looks at Cliff Lee playing with fire, and fires another couple shots across Franklin Gutierrez's bow.



Admit it, you don't feel sorry for Tony LaRussa.

1) From now on, it's 30 days hath September, April, and November, while June gets 61 and May gets the wazoo

Cliff Lee's May was a month to forget: 6 starts, four losses, and only one outing in which he gave up fewer than 5 runs (4, which is still technically less than 5, although still technically Not Very Good). Cliff Lee's June is slightly better: 5 starts, 4 wins, and zero outings in which he has given up *as many* as 5 runs (he gave up 4 in the no-decision, but had "help"). Thus I support his motion to modify the calendar in Garfieldesque fashion: Mondays may stay, the month of May may not.

Lee continues to depend on inducing people to **just** miss hitting the ball solidly, inducing his first ground ball out with two outs in the bottom of the 4th. Mind you, inducing Albert Pujols to ground out with two men on base is a Very Good Thing, but he was the TWENTY-FIRST BATTER. Twenty batters came to the plate, and ZERO

grounded out. Lee induced as many batters to foul out to the catcher as he did induce ground ball outs. Isn't that weird? I mean, I don't even know how to look that up, but it seems significantly weird.

Anyway, he struck out five, including the side in the second, and only walked two, but when you allow 10 baserunners in 6 innings and have to depend on getting Albert Pujols out with a runner in scoring position, it seems like you're depending on a fat tightrope, and I'm not sure they make 'em any more.

2) See, the key is *more* forward momentum than upward momentum

Although I applaud St. Louis' ability to hit the ball straight up, it turns out that it is more effective if the fly balls are given some impetus to do some forward travelling as well. Just as Grady Sizemore (HR). Or Travis Hafner (HR). Or Todd Hollandsworth (HR). Or Franklin Gutierrez (2B). Or Victor Martinez (2B). Or Jhonny Peralta (3B). Or Travis Hafner again, in case he mumbled the first time (HR).

The Indians clubbed twelve hits, and more than half were for extra bases. With fifteen baserunners, we left only five on base, which usually warrants some sort of "duck" reference, but in this case, simply notes that Jason Maquis di not have "it"; last night, unless "it" is "badness" or "ineffectiveness" or "leprosy."

3) I laugh in the face of danger!

Yadier Molina is one of the best catchers in the majors (if not *the* best) at throwing out base stealers, and sure enough, Grady Sizemore (12 of 13 coming into the game) was gunned down in the first.

However, he did not let this bother him (too much), as he was able to snatch one of Molina in the seventh. Of course, we led 7-2 at the time. Some danger is more dangerous than others.

4) Blue Moon Special

Franklin Gutierrez got a hit!

5) Snide Expression of Disbelief Special

Franklin Gutierrez got TWO hits!

6) Running a reference into the ground

Franklin Gutierrez got an EXTRA-BASE hit! (His first, lifting his SLG over his BA for the first time in his career.)

7) Either very clever, or very thoughtless

Cliff Lee is not a good major-league hitter. By "not good" I mean "Bartolo

Colon." He can't hit. This is not a tremendously important skill for an American League pitcher, so we give it no more thought.

Still, Lee came to the plate in the third with no outs and Gutierrez (who got a hit!) on first,

which would almost seem to DEMAND that Inertia Man have him bunt. He did not, and struck out instead.

Lee came to the plate in the fifth with no outs and Gutierrez (who got an EXTRA-BASE hit!) on

second, which would almost seem to SCREAM STRIDENTLY that Inertian Man have him bunt. He did not, but advanced Gutierrez on a groundout anyway. Now, my guess is

that Cliff Lee is a lousy bunter. Again, no big whoop, but this would mean that:

a) Eric Wedge realized the skill set of the player b)

Adjusted his strategy accordingly

Which, by my last
count, would make
... hm ... carry the
three ... **one**. Good
going, Eric!

**9) Managerial
Head Scratchers
Ozzie Guillen
named Eric**

Wedge to be a coach for the All-Star Game. Most people I have discussed this with (notably Mickey Ferguson, the first I saw

articulate it) have suggested this is a Machiavellian ploy by Guillen to attempt to keep Wedge in his job as Cleveland Manager, thus

making Guillen's
job easier. I
would not put it
past Guillen. It
still boggles my
mind.

**10) Preferring *ef
ficient***

efficiency

In a very real way, giving up one run in a four-hit inning is pretty impressive. It is even more

impressive when
facilitated by
inducing Albert
Pujols to ground
into a double
play.

In an even more
real and

immediate way,
though, a
four-hit inning is
also Not Good.
Fausto Carmona
settled down
and retired the
side in order in

the 8th, but he
sure looked like
Jason Davis
there for a
minute.

Speaking of
efficient, Ferd
Cabrera retired

the first two
hitters in the
ninth on 6
pitches, one of
which was a
ball. He then
proceeded to

throw five more
strikes ... in *elev
en*

itches ... to get
the last out after
a walk. Leading
by seven runs, it

is almost
inconceivable
that you would
walk someone,
much less Scott
Spezio. Throw
strikes!