

## The B-List: 6/27

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}  
Tuesday, June 28 2011 1:15 PM -

---

*Coming off a discouraging three-game sweep at the hands of the defending champs, the Tribe went to the desert to face the surprisingly-adequate Diamondbacks and their more-surprising Ace Ian Kennedy. While Kennedy largely kept the Indians at bay, he couldn't reckon with the clutch duo of ... Travis Buck and Lonnie Chisenhall? Vinnie Pestano blowing a lead? Orl y Cabrera with the game-winning homer?*

*This script is terrible!*

*No one will believe this nonsense!*

*Go get me the real recap!*

*Damn interns ...*

**FINAL**

[1

[2

[3

[4

## The B-List: 6/27

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, June 28 2011 1:15 PM -

---

5

6

7

8

9

**R**

**H**

**E**

**Indians (41-36)**

2

0

0

## The B-List: 6/27

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, June 28 2011 1:15 PM -

---

0

0

2

0

0

1

5

9

1

**Diamondbacks (43-37)**

3

## The B-List: 6/27

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, June 28 2011 1:15 PM -

---

[0]

[0]

[0]

[0]

[0]

[0]

[1]

[0]

[4]

[6]

[0]

W: R. Perez (3-1)

L: Putz (1-2)

S: C. Perez (19)

## The B-List: 6/27

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}  
Tuesday, June 28 2011 1:15 PM -

---

It is hard to believe I am more excited about the Lonnie Chisenhall Era than I was the Jack Hannahan Era.



### 1) A Tale of Two Mitches

Mitch Talbot could have gotten off to a better start.

He walked the first hitter, Kelly Johnson, despite the fact that Johnson hits .207. He then, in rapid succession, went for the Pitcher's Cycle, yielding a triple, single, and double within the span of 7 pitches.

Four of the pitches were strikes, and three were translated into hits.

## The B-List: 6/27

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, June 28 2011 1:15 PM -

---

After a groundout, Talbot had fully squandered his 2-0 lead and fell behind 3-2.

Then a funny thing happened: Mitch Talbot became unhittable.

I wish I could tell you a tale of adjusting to the high desert air. Hell, I wish I could tell you a tale of adjusting to the high *dessert* air.

I wish I had more scouting and analytic skill.

What I \*do\* have is the results of the next five innings, counting the first four hitters as "inning zero:"

1<sup>st</sup>: 3 batters, 3 outs

2<sup>nd</sup>: 4 batters, 3 outs, 1 walk

3<sup>rd</sup>: 3 batters, 3 outs

4<sup>th</sup>: 3 batters, 3 outs

5<sup>th</sup>: 3 batters, 3 outs

Technically in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, the leadoff hitter reached on an error, but was doubled off on a liner up the middle snagged by Asdrubal Cabrera. Other than that, the most

## The B-List: 6/27

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, June 28 2011 1:15 PM -

---

dangerous threat Arizona was able to muster against Talbot was the threat of a nosebleed due to dry air.

Talbot was lifted for a pinch-hitter in the top of the 6<sup>th</sup>, or he likely would have gone another two or three innings: he had only thrown 71 pitches through 5 and hadn't allowed a hit in what amounted to 5 full innings of work.

Now, I hate making attributions about someone's "character" or "intestinal fortitude" or "not being LeBron James" based on a single performance. Talbot settled down and pitched well after getting shellacked for four hitters.

He did a good job.

I guess it's understandable that he could have fallen apart and become, say, Infuriausto Carmona.

On the other hand, he's a major-league pitcher: the process of becoming a major-leaguer largely weeds out guys who aren't able to "settle down."

More importantly, though, once he made whatever adjustment he did, if he actually did anything at all, Talbot was really quite good. I'm not sure if Talbot will ever be a reliable, clockwork-excellent pitcher, but his margin of error seems at least as big as that of, say, Josh Tomlin. And when he's "on," he can be really effective.

## 2) A short digression on the DH

My team plays in the American League and has had a DH for almost as long as I've been an actual, thinking fan (I was 8 in April of 1973 when the DH came into existence). While I appreciate the National League game and don't blanch at watching pitchers hit as much as some people I know, I do prefer the AL game because my team plays there.

And, of course, at a number of times during my fandom, the Indians' offense has really depended on a player who was really only qualified to DH.

I'd rather watch good players hit than bad players hit, and I think that the overall increase in quality of pitcher-batter matchups more than outweighs the marginal gains in strategic interest of double-switching and hyper-bunting and Bartolo Colon looking seriously inept.

It's a personal opinion, and one I'm not real keen on arguing about.

But one of the understated benefits of the DH is that I get to watch more innings by starting pitchers. I prefer starting pitchers to relief pitchers. Sure, it's fun to watch Vinnie Pestano or Jonny Venters or Craig Kimbrel pump gas for an inning.

It's neat to see the Mike Venafroes of tomorrow.

I don't dislike relief pitchers.

But I really prefer the game-long adjustments that the starter and the hitters have to make to each other as a result of having multiple trips through the lineup.

He got him on a slider away last time, will he challenge him with it again?

He pounded him in on the hands last time, can the batter adjust?

He struck him out from the windup, but now that there are two guys on, how will his stuff translate?

## The B-List: 6/27

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}  
Tuesday, June 28 2011 1:15 PM -

---

This is the kind of thing I enjoy watching through a game.

And I would REALLY have liked to see if Talbot could have gone another time through the lineup.

Of course, I totally agree with the decision to pinch-hit for Talbot. I said so last night on Twitter, and I'll say it again here. Of  
COURSE you pinch-hit for Talbot.

It's a one-run game.

There are two outs and guys on base.

Hafner vs. Kennedy is a pretty good matchup for Cleveland.

You have the best bullpen in the American League.

Talbot isn't any good at hitting (although he comported himself reasonably well, he wasn't going to be a good RBI bet there).

Of COURSE you pinch-hit for Talbot.

But that's exactly the point: the NL game (and, I grant, the game as originally designed: I'm not insensitive to this) tilts the expected win values to remove your pitcher because he cannot hit. And my pitcher ... well, dammit, my pitcher was pitching really well.

I understand that this is part of the decision, the charm, the intrigue, the voobely foofraw, but for one exciting moment of pitcher-batter confrontation, you cost me two or three innings of actual intrigue.

### **3) This having been said**

I'm pretty sure Talbot could have struck out just as effectively as Hafner did there.

### **4) Welcome to the club!**

Lonnie Chisenhall was so nervous that he laced the first pitch he saw the other way for a fly out.

He then exhibited these nerves in such a way as to double down the line in his next plate appearance.

And then, faced with the insurmountable pressure of a tie game with a runner in scoring position, Chisenhall understandably wilted and smacked a 1-1 pitch into right for an RBI single.

I am not worried about Lonnie Chisenhall.

### **5) Orly Smash!**

Say whah?

### **6) Augured in**

I have certainly done my share of complaining about Joe Smiff's recent outings, insofar as it seems counterproductive to allow two baserunners per inning, but last night, Smiff showed exceptional command of his stuff, throwing 17 of his 21 pitches for strikes and retiring all 4 hitters he faced. Even better, all four outs were groundouts, suggesting that his arm slot combined with his natural movement is effectively forcing right-handers to beat the ball in a downward plane. (It bears mentioning that the one hitter who had seven fouloffs against Smiff was the left-handed Miguel Montero.)

## The B-List: 6/27

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, June 28 2011 1:15 PM -

---

### 7) Mortal after all

After getting ahead of Kelly Johnson 1-2 with three straight pitches on the inside corner, Vinnie Pestano tipped his hand and threw the following pitches:

Inside corner, foul  
Inside corner, foul  
Inside corner, foul  
Inside corner, foul  
Inside corner, ball  
Inside corner, foul  
Inside corner, ball

The next pitch was on the outer half of the plate. It was actually pretty good, but Johnson was better and smashed a triple to the deepest part of the ballpark.

The lesson here: pitch Kelly Johnson on the inside corner and wait for him to die.

## **The B-List: 6/27**

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, June 28 2011 1:15 PM -

---

### **8) Ho Hum Dept.**

Chris Perez threw 6 strikes in 7 pitches, recording a single and three outs for his 19<sup>th</sup> save.

Asdrubal Cabrera hit a home run. (This may not have been a home run at sea level, but hey.)

Raffy Perez faced one hitter and struck him out.

Cord Phelps made an error.

### **9) Expressions of Concern**

## The B-List: 6/27

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, June 28 2011 1:15 PM -

---

Mike Brantley collected three strikeouts last night in a Size Five Collar. In his last six starts, Brantley has struck out in five of them, a total of 8 times in 26 AB.

He is hitting .242 in June and .176 over the past week.

Hey, Mike: we already have one Grady Sizemore.

Two is excessive.

Carlos Santana drew a walk and struck out twice. With a .225 AVG and a .357 OBP, I am concerned that Santana has become a smaller, weaker Adam Dunn.

10 HR is nice, but not quite up to Dunn's NL standards.

.357 is a nice OBP.

I swear, if you take one more called strike three to end a game, though, I will personally convince Adam Dunn to sit on you.

### 10) Department of the Unlikely

The game-tying single in the 6<sup>th</sup> was roped by Travis Buck.

## The B-List: 6/27

Written by {ga=stevebuffum}

Tuesday, June 28 2011 1:15 PM -

---

The three Cleveland hitters to get a hit with a runner in scoring position were Buck, Chisenhall, and ... Tofu Lou.

The only player on either team to collect a 2-out RBI was Orly Cabrera.

Willie Bloomquist is in the major leagues.