Night and day; that's how Scott Kazmir describes where he's at as a pitcher, now versus what he was in his time with the Angels. For Kazmir, this wasn't about vengeance of any sort, just another start for a one-time phenom trying to crack a starting rotation.

He caught up with some old friends before Monday's game in Goodyear, but when game time came, it was all about shutting down the Angels.

And, shutting down the Angels is exactly what he did in his first 4-inning start of the spring. He threw four scoreless innings against his former team on Monday, which is nothing new, since he has yet to allow a run to cross the plate on his watch through 8 innings of work thus far, over the course of 3 outings.

Refusing to be the "crafty left-hander", Kazmir is still striking guys out; all four Angel Ks were of the swing-and-miss variety.

He was able to keep his pitch count down early, facing the minimum through two, thanks in part to a Howie Kendrick ground ball to Lonnie Chisenhall, which began a 5-4-3 double play to neutralize a Mark Trumbo lead-off single in the second inning. There was even more trouble in the third, when the Angels had two runners in scoring position with two out, but a lazy fly ball to Drew Stubbs took care of that.

"I don't even want to look at that right now. I'm just focused on what I need to do everyday," Kazmir responded to the biggest remaining question of camp, about the open 5th spot in the rotation, "(I'm) just going to continue to get better".
Kazmir also told media members, who cover both his current and former team, that he felt good going 4 innings for the first time and that his focus is on throwing strikes to get ahead of hitters.

Kazmir hasn't exactly been un-hittable this spring, but he's picked his spots not allowing hits, he allowed three on Monday, to turn into runs. "(He) threw all his pitches," Terry Francona commented, "attacked the zone." And, that's just the thing, by staying in the zone, the strikeouts are up and the walks are down; Andrew Romine's third inning walk was the first Kazmir had issued in big league games.

He did walk a batter in a March 6th "B" game, but he also struck out 5 in 3 innings against mostly minor league bats.

Kazmir noted that the "B" game appearance was all about working on his slider, which he didn't throw a lot on Monday.

"They had a good lineup today," Francona said of the Angels starters, which included Josh Hamilton, Vernon Wells, Howie Kendrick, and Trumbo
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"That was a good test for him, I thought he did real well."

Unfortunately for the folks who care about the wins and losses in these Arizona games, Jered Weaver did real well too, striking out six and not allowing a run on three hits over 4 innings on the bump for Mike Scioscia. Weaver's ability to dominate is no secret, but after giving up back-to-back hits to Michael Bourn and Michael Brantley to start his day, he found himself in a zone.

The Indians did appear to have something going after Brantley, back in left field for the first time since having his forearm stitched up on February 25th, singled to move Bourn over to second base with nobody out, but Jason Kipnis's flyball to right field wasn't deep enough to sacrifice his center fielder over to third. Weaver got Nick Swisher and Jason Giambi on strikes to end the first, then resumed his domination in the third, when Chisenhall whiffed to start the inning.

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