Jake Westbrook was ROCKED in his first start as an official multi-mega millionaire last night, as the Pinstripes took the Indians behind the woodshed for a 10-3 beating. In today's B-List, Buff hits on Jake's start, the Indians poor defense, the return of Victor Martinez, and he also sings "The Ballad of Oldberto". Let's get 'em tonight Sowers!

FINAL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	**R**	**H**	**E**
Indians (6-4)				1							0	1
Yankees (6-6)				2							6	0

W: C. Wright (1-0) L: Westbrook (0-2)

Steve:

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TCF management

Grumble, grumble.

1) My suck runneth over

Jake Westbrook struck out a batter.

Really, you're going to make me analyze that start? What is there to analyze? Westbrook threw meatballs and the Yankees hit them a combined distance of three round trips to Prague. This is analysis?

In all comic seriousness, once it was obvious that the umpire was not going to give Jake the low strike, Westbrook was rendered largely moot: a sinkerball pitcher who can't throw a sinker for strikes up against a patient lineup that will wait for strikes is pretty much the cigar salesman from the 20-134 Cleveland Spiders. Westbrook gave up 8 runs on 8 hits, including home runs to Mientkiewicz, Alex Rodriguez, and Posada. He also walked two, threw 33 strikes in 64 pitches, gave up a double to Damon, and sucked entire tectonic plates. It was bad. Let's move

on.

No, wait, let me say one more thing here: in case you're wondering about the strike zone, consider the strike-to-ball ratios of the other pitchers last night:

Davis: 20:16

Cabrera: 16:14

Hernandez: 14:13

Mastny: 10:8 (!!!!)

Chase Wright: 61:53

Bruney: 8:7

Myers: 16:10

Britton: 4:5

Now, what are the odds that NONE of the pitchers (except arguably Myers) was the least bit accurate? Nine pitchers, and they ALL have off nights, control-wise? I find that slightly

incredible. Still, Westbrook was the only one of the nine to seize giant rocks and begin sucking the life out of them, so there's something to be said for actually having more than one effective pitch.

2) The Elephant in the Field

The Indians practiced badness both subtle and overt in the field last night. In the "overt" category, Andy Marte had two different kinds of routine bollix (muff, errant toss), while Josh Barfield fell for Doug Mientkiewicz' Triple Dog Dare to attempt to turn a double play with his eyes closed immediately after eating french fries with his throwing hand. At least, that is the best explanation I can come up with for the throw he unleashed in the bottom of the 7 th inning. Truly spectacularly bad.

However, in a more subtle (and serious) vein, it is worth noting that as much as I appreciate Ryan Garko's bat and his effort to improve defensively, there were at least two balls hit past his vicinity that a first baseman with greater quickness, athleticism, and/or instincts turns into outs. Bobby Abreu's shot in the first was hard-hit, and would be a non-trivial (perhaps even difficult) play for a right-handed first baseman (like Garko, or in fact Blake or Martinez), but Garko didn't come within a car length of making that play. There was another ball that simply went by him as if his reflexes do not exist. I'm way, way over on the "bat over glove" end of the spectrum when it comes to first base, but Garko did not do much to help his cause to play every day last night.

3) The Ballad of Oldberto

What kind of karmic maelstrom have I called down on this poor guy? The Indians have played 10 games, and already the guy has lost a game by hitting a batter with the bases loaded, gotten spiked committing an error, and now gave up two unearned runs without yielding a hit. If you want to induce a double play, Oldberto's not a bad choice … as long as immediately after he throws the groundball-inducing pitch, he is replaced with someone else … and so are all the

other infielders.

Now, Hernandez got himself in the jam: after striking out Posada, he walked Cano on four pitches (pretty much the only thing I'm asking you not to do as a late-inning relief pitcher), was victimized by a Marte error, and walked Mientkiewicz after starting 0-2 (and he only fouled off on two-strike pitch; this was not some heroic Spartan stand by Mientkiewicz). But the ersatz double play ball to Damon should have gotten him out of the inning unscathed: instead, Barfield's Nuke LaLoosh impression turned an 8-3 laugher into a 10-3 laugher, except without the laughter.

He may have pitched poorly, but he deserved better. (On the other hand, so did we.)

4) The prodigal sons return

Victor Martinez settled back into his rightful places behind the plate and in the cleanup spot: I had read that he was expected to play, but I did not expect him to *catch*. Travis Hafner greeted Martinez' return with a solo home run of rookie left-handed Chase Wright en route to a 2-for-4 night. Martinez' night at the plate was a bit more mundane, taking a 4-AB collar but driving in the first run of the game on a groundout.

I might rather have seen Martinez get his feet wet as DH or even 1B, but if he can catch the whole game, the offense should be better.

5) The other offensive plusses

Casey Blake went two-for-four, including a double, and scored a run.

Andy Marte raised his average from “pathetic” to “lousy” with an RBI single. This single ended a stretch in which Cleveland hitters were 0-for-28 with runners in scoring position.

6) I’m sorry, would you repeat that?

Certainly.

Andy Marte’s RBI single in the 4th inning ended a stretch in which Cleveland hitters were 0-for-28 with runners in scoring position.

OH FOR TWENTY EIGHT? THAT’S PHANTASMAGORICALLY BAD!

Seriously, how freaking atrocious do you have to be to get NO hits with runners in scoring position for the equivalent of four Washington Nationals games? Besides being the Washington Nationals, I mean. Man, that’s shitty.

7) Managerial Head-Scratchers

I’m gonna give ex-catcher Eric Wedge the benefit of the doubt on this one, but I can’t be the only person wondering why Victor Martinez (who appeared to be still laboring with the quad)

was catching in the 8th inning. As mentioned earlier, I'm not entirely sure why he was catching in the FIRST inning, but again, I'm willin' to play the Ignorant Schmoe card here.

Although thrilled with the overall performance of the bullpen, I'm not entirely sure why Jason Davis didn't just take the whole bullet after we spotted the Yanks the 8-1 lead. Yes, we scored a couple more runs and might have come back, but it's not like Davis was laboring. He was a starter, right? Why not give him a Nick Masset-like four or five innings rather than burn through Cabrera *and* Oldberto *and* Mastny? Sowers better have a helluva start tonight.

8) The Unimportant Trio

The number of crucial, high-leverage innings pitched by the trio of Jason Davis, Ferd Cabrera, and Tom Mastny has been somewhat … er … "low" this season for whatever reasons Mr. Wedge is hiding from me, but it certainly isn't because they've stunk. Davis finished Westbrook's second inning and added two quality innings of his own, giving up a hit and a walk in 2 1/3 scoreless innings of work. This lowers Davis' ERA to 1.80 and makes me grudgingly admit his quality. Cabrera showed that he can get people out without striking them out: although this disappointingly lowers his K/9 ratio to human levels, he too threw 2 scoreless 1-hit 1-walk innings. And Tom Mastny recorded two quick strikeouts (Abreu, Rodriguez, 9 pitches: Rodriguez' three strikes all swinging) before getting squeezed on Giambi and needing an eighteenth pitch to retire Some Guy Nieves on a popout. All told, this trio has pitched 14 1/3 innings, given up 1 earned run, walked 6, and whiffed 14.

In contrast, Oldberto has appeared in 6 games, pitched 4 official innings, has given up 5 hits and 6 walks, has struck out 2, and has given up 3 earned and 57 unearned runs. I have a recommendation at this point.

9) Dee-fense!

Nice 1-6-3 double play started by Davis.