In today's B-List, Buff points out that Jason Stanford's start had more substance than the box score would indicate. He also questions whether Aaron Fultz is being used correctly, questions whether there is a correct use for Trot Nixon, waxes poetic on David Dellucci, and invokes the Thimper Rule. More enjoyable than watching certain unnamed relievers pitch, it's the B-List's version of last night's 9-6 loss to Philadelphia.

FINAL SCORE				
Phillies (37-34)	3	0	1	0
Indians (41-29)	0	1	0	2

W: Kendrick (1-0) L: Stanford (1-1)

Jason Stanford deserved better, but then, so did I.

1) Closing the book ... on your thumb

The record will show that Jason Stanford gave up 6 runs on 6 hits in 6 2/3 IP, walking one, hitting two, striking out 3, and giving up a titanic solo shot to Ryan Howard, who will on occasion hit a home run.

What the record WON'T show is that Stanford actually pitched a lot better than

this. In the first inning, Stanford gave up three runs on a pair of singles, a hit batsman, and a two-run double by Pat Burrell. However, Jimmy Rollins reached on a "bunt single" that involved Stanford making a poor throw to Garko at first. Chase Utley was hit by something more akin to a gust of air rushing past his jersey than a baseball. Ryan Howard's "single to right" is true if Ryan Garko's glove counts as part of right field. And Burrell's double, although off the wall, would have held Howard (not a fast runner, although admittedly not Garkian) at third had it been played more decisively by Grady Sizemore. Mike Rouse also made an error, but that was ultimately harmless, as Wes Helms flew out to end the inning.

Stanford showed remarkable composure after that, though, giving up an infield single which he erased on a double play, giving up the homer to Howard in the third, then retiring the next 11 hitters in order to reach the 7th inning on the wrong end of a close 4-3 deficit. Through six innings, Stanford had thrown 73 pitches, 56 for strikes, and gave up 4 runs on 5 hits, no walks, and a hit batsman. With a couple better plays in the first, Stanford's second start would have been as impressive as his first: arguably more impressive in that the Phillies hit better than the Marlins.

In the 7th, though, Stanford had Jayson Werth 0-2 before walking him, then struck out Helms and got Carlos Ruiz to fly out. One more out and Stanford probably hits the showers with 7 quality innings behind him. Instead, Rollins beats out an infield single, and then in the worst pitch of the night, Stanford hits Shane Victorino with an 0-2 pitch. Instead of getting out of the inning, Stanford's night ends with the bases loaded and two outs. Who are you, Cliff Lee?

Now, consider this plea :

Do not let Aaron Fultz come into the game with the bases loaded. Please. I'm begging you. Please. I will commit a crime. Please. Don't. Think of the children.

Look, I'll keep this simple. Aaron Fultz isn't a matchup lefty. He isn't. I know you want him to be. I know that's how you want to use him. He's not. It's just not true. He's a relief pitcher, a multi-out guy, a guy more comfortable starting an inning than coming in with runners on. He's pretty good in that role. He's really crappy in this one. I don't understand why this is hard. Your job is to put the players in positions in which they are most likely to be successful, and this is not it. Stop doing it. Stop it. Stop it stop it stop it stop it stop it.

Now, as a lark, I checked Chase Utley's left-right splits, since he's a left-handed hitter:

vs. right: .310/940 AVG/OPS
vs. left: .336/1.003 AVG/OPS

Not a big difference, but ... hey, look at that, there is no actual platoon advantage. Now, it's entirely possible that Fultz was the guy Wedge wanted out there as the guy most likely to retire a batter with the bases loaded. Hey, some people think the

Earth is sitting on the backs of giant turtles, too. That's about how well-founded I think that assertion is.

Fultz gave up a two-run single, turning a 4-3 ballgame into a 6-3 ballgame and putting a lot more pressure on the already-challenged offense (see below). He got Howard and pitched another scoreless inning, but so what?

Anyway, Stanford pitched well, and if he's designated for assignment after this so that we can keep some of the other guys on this roster, it would be a shame.

2) For the astute reader

You may see a disconnect between me griping about bringing in Aaron Fultz just days after griping about NOT bringing in Aaron Fultz on Friday. Admittedly, this column is about the visceral experience of being a fan, day by day, and will spout contradictory views within days of each other, especially when it comes to relief pitching, the most volatile aspect of the game.

But this is not one of those cases: Aaron Fultz is actually quite a good relief pitcher when he is asked to go an inning or two from

scratch. Had he been brought out in the ninth inning Friday, he would have been in the situation in which he's been most effective, and the situation would be suited for him as well. In last night's game, the matchup was about as perfectly poor as possible.

So, I'm not promising Complete Internal Consistency over the course of an entire season ... but in this case, I'm covered.

3) Gark smash!

Just as a player who goes 0-4 is not slumping, a player has to have more than one good game to be declared "out of a slump," especially when said slump encompasses over 30 at-bats. However, Ryan Garko had an encouraging 3-for-4 night with a solo homer, a pair of singles, and 2 RBI.

The home run in particular was a nice piece of hitting: after fouling off several 1-2 pitches, Garko worked the count to 3-2, then homered to left on the next pitch. I mention this because as often as not over the cold streak, it wasn't just the Garko wasn't getting hits, it was that he looked thoroughly overmatched while not doing so. Garko is a good enough hitter with enough pedigree to believe that he will hit again: he's not

the .340 hitter of earlier in the season, but somewhere in the .280-.300 range is perfectly reasonable to expect.

4) Requiem for a hamstring

I have not spoken very kindly of David Dellucci's performance, because David Dellucci's performance to date has sucked rocks. This is nothing against the *guy*: heck, I like Danny Graves the *guy*, I just don't want him on the *mound*. And I stand by this: I may have been a bit theatrical, but it's fair to criticize the performance of a player.

This having been said, I'm rooting for David Dellucci the *guy* after he apparently pulled a hamstring trying to beat out a double play grounder. It looked like he pulled the hamstring, then dove at first base in one of those "adrenaline overrides brain" moments that separates professional athletes from computer programmers. Since he was carried off the field and is now on the DL, I have to assume the injury is reasonably severe.

I certainly don't care for a corner outfielder who hits .234 or

sports an OPS under .700. Hey, look, we already have another one ... no, wait, two! (Trot Nixon, .653, Franklin Gutierrez, .635) I'm not going to sit here and tell you that's acceptible performance because David Dellucci is such a Great Guy (which I wouldn't know anyway). I'll say this, though: I haven't seen a credible source ever complain that Dellucci dogged it or coasted or didn't play hard, and I can appreciate that and wish him a speedy recovery without getting sappy enough to tell you I'm going to miss his bad hitting and lumbering defense. Best wishes, Dave.

(By the way, Dellucci's beating the relay allowed Cleveland's third run to score.)

5) Blue Moon Special

Mineral Mike Rouse got a hit!

6) Not Special Whatsoever

Trot Nixon came to the plate in the bottom of the ninth with runners on second and third in a 9-6 ballgame and two outs. Nixon had walked and scored a run, but was otherwise 0-for-3

on the night. The next hitter was Garko., who was 3-for-4.

Garko finished the game 3-for-4.

I hate to say this, but Trot Nixon has that pleasant golden brown color and crusty aroma normally associated with heated slices of bread at breakfast. His OBP of .329 isn't very good, but at least it's higher than his slugging percentage of .325. THREE TWENTY FIVE! Let's put this in perspective: Josh Barfield slugs .341. Jason Michaels (Jason Michaels!) slugs .468! Let's put this into a slightly different perspective: it sucks! Aaah! Aaah! Aaaaaaaaaah!

7) Because I can

Jhonny Peralta went 3-for-5 with two runs scored and an RBI. As interesting to me was HOW he did it: two singles and one fly out were to right field, and just when you thought Peralta had become Mark Teahen with the inside-out swing, he doubled in the ninth with two outs and a runner in scoring position to deep left.

Peralta's approach at the plate is so much better than last

season, and it is a tremendous boost to the offense.

8) Wait a minute, what was that?

Jason Michaels slugs .468!

Michaels pinch-ran for the injured Dellucci, then calmly banged out two more hits, including a two-run single with the bases loaded in the 8th. With two outs. Michaels is now hitting .290/.350/.468. You want to talk about a better approach at the plate than last season, Michaels may actually trump Peralta in this vein. Heck, at least I knew Peralta was capable of hitting (he had in 2005).

There's a danger here in that Michaels might become an everyday player again with the injury to Dellucci: the only ready outfielders to call up are right-handed as well, since Shin-Soo Choo is on the DL with an elbow injury. It remains to be proven that Michaels can carry this improved approach through playing every day, playing against all pitching. But it'd be hard to claim that Jason Michaels hasn't at least lived up to expectations, if not flat-out exceeded them.

9) Oldberto must die

Thumper Rule.

10) Department of Corrections Dept.

Yesterday I claimed that C.C. Sabathia techincally leads the Indians with a 1.333 OPS. Although this is true of Indians on the active roster, Jeremy Sowers had a 2.000 OPS when he was sent down (1 single in 1 plate appearance), and given both Sowers' performance and the lack of interleague play, he's likely to end the season this way (although Sabathia may get another shot, hitting a homer or something).