Erik Cassano weighs in with his thoughts on the Indians thrilling 2-1 game two win for us this morning, and in doing so, makes several excellent points. Erik says this is the type of game the Indians would have lost in August, and the offense did everything in their power TO lose this game, letting Andy Pettite wriggle off the hook inning after inning. Erik also says that Fausto and Raffy Left were boys that became men Friday night, and that the CC/Fausto duo is without question the playoffs best 1-2 pitching punch.

Assorted thoughts on Friday's 2-1, 11-inning, Game 2 win over the Yankees...

1. This is the type of game the Indians would have lost in August. Utterly stymied by Andy Pettitte, who wriggled off the hook time and time again, Indian hitters began pressing, expanding the strike zone and getting themselves out. I thought the Yankees would inevitably pull the game out after Grady Sizemore tripled to lead off the sixth inning, and was left stranded after Asdrubal Cabrera grounded out, and Travis Hafner and Victor Martinez struck out.

2. The offense did everything in its power to lose this game. The credit for the win goes almost entirely to two men -- or maybe boys who became men last night: Fausto Carmona and Rafael Perez. Carmona was simply amazing in holding the Yankees to one run on three hits in nine innings -- and one of those hits came on an infield single as Bobby Abreu beat out a slow-arriving Jhonny Peralta throw from short.

C.C. Sabathia battled through five innings Thursday night in his own amazing effort. Carmona, however, almost made it look easy. Perez relieved to start the 10th, and faced the minimum in his perfect two innings of work, though Jorge Posada provided a heart-in-mouth moment as he flied out to the wall in right in the 10th.

All told, Sabathia and Carmona looked every bit like the best one-two pitching punch in this year's playoffs. They are the primary reasons the Indians are a win

away from their first ALCS trip in nine years.

3. One of the best parts about Friday's game? The Indians used only two pitchers, while the Joe Torre pretty much had to fire all of his bullpen bullets in the span of four innings. Joba Chamberlain allowed the tying run to score when Sizemore scampered home on a potentially bug-induced wild pitch in the eighth inning. The way Tribe pitchers were hurling, the tying run was all the offense needed to weather two innings of Mariano Rivera before breaking through against Luis Vizcaino for the winning run in the 11th.

Saturday's off day allowed both managers more leeway with regard to using pitchers, but if Torre was using Rivera in a non-save situation on the road for two innings and 38 pitches, you know A) he was desperate to win the game and B) he isn't exactly brimming with confidence in the rest of his bullpen.

4. Much has been made of the bugs that descended on Jacobs Field during the later innings. I suppose a plague of insects reminiscent of the Book of Exodus descending on Cleveland's ballpark during a nationally-televised playoff game doesn't do a lot to erase the image -- certainly in the minds of sophisticated New Yorkers -- that Cleveland is anything more than a hick town that considers bug zappers a form of entertainment. But today, I consider those six-legged specks an ally.

Us country folk out here in Ohiya, we can deal with our assorted varmints, pests, 'skeeters and icky-crawly things. Heck, we know that a roller coaster ride at Cedar Point during bug season can give you your recommended daily allowance of protein in the form of swallowed Canadian soldiers. New Yorkers, on the other hand, might be able to hail a cab from six blocks away, but when it comes to bug swarms, they are totally grossed out.

The proof was on the field. Indians players came prepared with bug spray. The most you ever saw out of a Cleveland player was the occasional swipe of the face or flinching of the arm. A trainer had to get a bug out of Kenny Lofton's eye.

The Yankees, on the other hand, looked like they wanted to run into the clubhouse and take showers to wash the icky bugs off. If there is a more humorous moment than Yankee trainers dousing Chamberlain with bug spray out on the mound, I haven't seen it yet. The best part: The spray made the bugs stick to Chamberlain even more.

Joba, you're from Nebraska. You should know a thing or two about bugs. Your air-conditioned, jet set lifestyle in New York has made you go soft.

5. The worst part of LeBron's decision to flaunt his Yankee colors in our faces during Game 1? The anti-LeBron signs and shirts were out in full force for Game 2, for all the New York media to see and begin, once again, penning columns about LeBron's inevitable departure to the Knicks or Nets in three years.

When LeBron signed his extension last year, all the LeBron-to-New York hype finally died down. But then LeBron had to make an anti-Cleveland spectacle of himself at Jacobs Field, and the predictable backlash was evident Friday night. From the more extreme (a "No LeBrains" sign hanging from a railing in right field) to the more conservative (a man wearing a "Wrong hat LeBron" t-shirt), our internal quibble with our resident basketball superstar is now the nation's dirty laundry.

I don't think LeBron is a mean-spirited person, and I sincerely don't believe he meant to vilify himself to Cleveland fans on any large scale. Twenty-two year old kids wear Yankee gear to Jacobs Field all the time just so they can get some drunkard in a Pronk jersey to scream "Jeter is A-Rod's ass-bitch!" at him, or something to that effect. But those 22-year-olds aren't 22-year-old worldwide basketball superstars who play for the team in their own backyard.

LeBron was trying to get a rise out of us, but as a superstar, he has to understand that different rules apply to him. Everywhere he goes, he represents the cities of Cleveland and Akron, and more importantly, the Cleveland Cavaliers -- who have a nice "Good Luck Tribe" banner hanging from The Q.

Whether you meant to or not, LeBron, you were mocking Cleveland fans Thursday night. They might have been dressed in Tribe colors, but they are your fans, too. I think they deserved better than have the first legitimate superstar in Cleveland in 40-plus years show up to, in essence, thumb his nose at them. It doesn't look good for Cleveland, and it doesn't look good for the Cavs. This should go all the way to the top. Dan Gilbert should tell LeBron that he just embarrassed the city and gave the Cavs organization a public relations black eye with his little "Go Yankees" stunt during the Tribe's first playoff run in six years.

Anderson Varejao and Sasha Pavlovic still without contracts. Eric Snow having knee surgery. Shannon Brown involved in a nightclub scuffle. And now this. It

seems like the Cavs are just amassing bad karma hand over fist right now. I'm starting to get a bad feeling about this coming season. But that's another column for another time.