"Brevity is the soul of wit." - W. Shakespeare"Verbosity leads to unclear, inarticulate things." - D. Quayle
"That sucked." - S. Buffum

1) On a scale of one to suck ...

It seems kind of pointless to single out any one pitcher, at bat, or even inning in a 18-run 21-hit shellacking, but it's safe to say that turning a 4-run lead into a 3-run deficit in the space of one half-inning is probably not considered "happy and peppy." Perhaps you are most impressed with Jake Westbrook's "Game Score" of 6. Perhaps you are most impressed by Matt Miller and Rafael Betancourt each allowing two more baserunners than outs and giving up a two-run homer apiece. Perhaps you are most impressed by Danny Graves' mullet. The problem was not throwing strikes, or getting squeezed, or severely windy conditions. The problem was an excess of *suck*.

2) The bright spot

Jason Davis is rapidly growing on me. Here are Davis' eight pitches:

Ball, Strike (foul), Strike (swinging), Strike (swinging), KStrike (looking), Strike (swinging), Strike (swinging), K Fly out to left

(ostensibly a strike)

Call me nutty, but I thought the game was still winnable at 13-8 and was "disappointed" when Wedge replaced Davis with Graves. (By "disappointed," of course, I meant "induced into an expletive-filled tirade during which I shaved my cat's head with a spoon," but "disappointed" sounds more urbane.) Anyway, I'm actually looking forward to seeing more of Jason Davis, which is something I did not expect to be saying in April.

3) "What target?" Captain Aardvark, Yossarian's plump, pipe-smoking navigator would say ... "I don't think we're at the target yet, are we?" - J. Heller

Okay, here's the scenario: Jake

Westbrook is not sharp. I mean, he's not awful, but he *is* laboring. He's given up 6 hits in 4 innings and needed a double play to bail him out of the third. His strikeout numbers could charitably be called "low." (They could uncharitably be called "zero.") It'd be nice for Jake to get the five innings in, qualify for the win, and bring Davis in as the Julian Tavarez Bridge Role Guy. However, the team win is more important than the Jake win. (I think even Jake would be okay with that.) Six hits later, Wedge FINALLY gets off his can and brings in Miller. Who also stinks, but this isn't really

the point: it's not fair to use hindsight to say "he should have brought in Davis because Miller stunk," but it's perfectly fair to say "he should have brought in someone way earlier because it was clear that Westbrook needed to get lifted pronto."
Leaving Graves out there to take a beating ... hey, everyone has a role. It's the Westbrook thing that irks me.

4) I'm a doctor, Jim, not a pitching coach!

Matt Miller's elbow does the

Chad Fox Commemorative **S proing!**
(Actually, I could probably use "Memorial" there, as Fox is not dead, but his elbow has been for a while.) Raffy Betancourt's "upper back" makes some noise I'm unfamiliar with. Jason Johnson, who's not even pitching, has a blood sugar episode on the bench. Danny Graves suffers inflammation

of the hair. Gil Mota contracts scurvy. Ladies and gentlemen, your 2006 Beefalo Bisons!

5) Lost in the shuffle

The offense produced nine runs on 14 hits and 3 walks. Jhonny Peralta went deep, hopefully breaking out of his early powerless slump. Aaron Boone hit a home run to confirm the Blind Squirrel

Theory. Victor Martinez went deep in a disappointing 1-for-4 night (only *one* hit? I'm kidding about the disappointment.) Kelly Shoppach got a meaningless hit, but one fraught with meaning (it meant, "Kelly Shoppach got a goddam hit! Woo woo!"). Todd Hollandsworth padded his average with 2

more hits but the worst strikeout I've seen since John Kruk faced Randy Johnson. The only guy without a hit was Ramon Vazquez, and even he hit the ball solidly.

6) If I know one more thing than you, I'm the expert

Ben Broussard draw a walk off John Halama

that went like this:
Preposterously bad swing at a slow curve"Fastball" inside "Fastball" inside
Ludicrously bad swing at a slow curve "Changeup" low

"Somewhat fast but still rather slow ball" inside While I credit Broussard for working a walk off the lefty, I have to wonder what brand of oatmeal Halama uses to fill his skull. There was no way Broussard could

hit that curve. None. Completely hopeless. And he never threw it again.

7) You put up with it, but it needs to be mentioned

Brian Roberts stole second and third, meaning Victor

Martinez has thrown out exactly nobody. That's 13 straight for those counting at home. (Westbrook was not particularly helpful.) Note that Kelly Shoppach would have to throw out

twelve base stealers every game to make up for the difference between Vic's bat and his lack thereof, but the fact remains.

8) Condolences

Scott Elarton is 0-4 after pitching

pretty well last night. Enjoy your cash, dude!