We just got the press release forwarded over to us. Jake Westbrook to the 15 day DL with a rib cage strain. Up from Buffalo? Ben Francisco. Who stands no chance of being the starting pitcher for Saturday's nationally televised game with the Yankees. A game that we now need a starting pitcher for. Paulie says Aaron Laffey will be on his way here to start that game, and that either Jason Michaels or Andy Marte is likely to be waived when that happens.

In a surprise move, a starting pitcher for the Tribe hit the DL today...but his name wasn't Carsten. **Jake Westbrook was placed on the 15-day DL with a rib cage strain** - this just after going all 9 innings of Saturday's game in Minnesota without a hint of any kind of injury. In his place, the Indians promoted The Ben Francisco Treat - but it's not too likely they'll be asking him to throw every 5th day, so follow the logic on this announcement and what it likely portends.

With Westbrook's injury, Lee and Byrd obviously move up in the rotation and can pitch with their regular rest this week thanks to Monday's off day. So the pitching schedule will look like this:

Tonight - Sabathia
Wednesday - Carmona
Thursday - Lee
Friday - Byrd

Saturday's game against the Yankees (nationally televised, no less) is where the Indians will need a replacement starter for the rotation. As mentioned here

previously, Aaron Laffey (who pitched last Saturday's game for the Herd, the same day that Westbrook pitched against the Twins) has proven by his performance in Buffalo that he should be ready to step into the spot vacated by a starter (surprisingly Jake, not C.C.) due to injury.

Until Saturday, though, the Indians have time to determine what player is not long for the 25-man roster, being effectively replaced by The Frisco Kid today. In effect, instead of promoting Laffey today, the Indians get themselves another position player and (unless Francisco is sent down on Saturday, which I can't even get my sometimes-circular logic to buy) have about four days to jettison a player on the 25-man roster, either via trade or being designated for assignment.

The two most logical candidates would be Jason Michaels (which **was addressed here**
) and Andy Marte, who the team has shown no interest in playing to this point. If it is indeed Michaels, then I suppose being late to the party is better than never arriving at all. However, if it is Marte, then the Indians' brass better have some hard data and reasoning as to why Marte was never given more than the 57 at-bat tryout that he went through a year ago before deeming him unworthy of sticking in an organization without many other viable 3B alternatives for this year, and certainly next year after being so universally highly thought of when being traded from Atlanta to Boston, then to Cleveland - all for MLB talent.

Is placing your second best pitcher (thus far this year) on the DL the preferred method of shaking up the roster? Absolutely not, but if the injury brought all of the simmering ineffectiveness to the surface in terms of the team having to make a move, in addition to having the luxury of buying a couple of days to figure out who just drew the short straw, consider the first domino felled.

For now, we'll hope that Westbrook's injury doesn't have the same effect that the oblique strains had on his 2007 season (or that of C.P. Lee last year) and wait, with baited breath, to see how (or is it if?) Francisco is ingratiated into the lineup as well as waiting for the news of which position player is on their way off of the 25-man prior to Laffey's start Saturday against the Bronx Bombers.