The best daily Tribe article on the net spends some time today giving credit where it is due, throwing daggers at most everyone else, and also gives us a look at what the Tribe lineup will look like after the Ben Broussard trade.

1) Throwing hard vs. missing bats

For a guy who throws 95+, C.C. Sabathia has always been a guy with a surprisingly low K rate. Off the top of my head, I think it's hovered in the 6.5 range, which is Nothing Special. That doesn't make Sabathia a bad pitcher, just a perplexing one.

Sabathia's "contactability" came into play yesterday, as he only struck out three in 7 innings. This by itself doesn't mean much, but consider the following sequence:

Marcus Thames: Strike (foul), Strike (swinging), Foul, Ball, Foul, Ball, Foul, Foul, Ball, Ball, M Thames walked

Craig Monroe: Strike (foul), C Monroe doubled to left

Magglio Ordonez: Strike (foul), Ball, Strike (foul), Ball, M Ordonez doubled to deep left, M Thames and C Monroe scored

Carlos Guillen: Strike (foul),C Guillen singled to center, M Ordonez to third (*he subsequently scored on a double play*
)

Since this was pretty much the ballgame, I focused on this. Sabathia threw 11 pitches that were nominally in the strike zone. Of the 11 pitches, exactly ONE did not make contact with a bat. Now, these guys are free swingers, I am not expecting a lot of called strikes. And this is the sixth inning, the third time up for these guys, who form the titular heart of the Detroit order. But all those foul balls ... man, I got to watch that inning, and Sabathia simply wasn't fooling anybody. There's something to be said for "pitching to contact," and Sabathia did induce three double plays, but that something to be said is, "Stop doing it." In all, the Tigers fouled off THIRTY-FIVE PITCHES; they had SEVEN swinging strikes. I have no idea if this is significant or unusual, but it *sounds* terrible. Of the three walks Sabathia yielded, two of them came after a batter fouled off a two-strike pitch.

Compare this to Justin Verlander: 12 swinging strikes, 18 foul balls. This doesn't count all the strikes looking. By the way, while I'm here, Jhonny Peralta's swinging strikeout in the 5th with two on was probably the worst I've seen by any batter not named Bartolo Colon. Truly awful.

2) Questionable strategy

In the inning above, Craig Monroe was thrown two identical highish inside fastballs, the second of which he turned on a hammered to the wall. This was the same pitch he hit for a double (to the same spot) in the first inning. I realize that everyone has a scouting report, but there are times when you have to question a slavish dedication to it, or at least whether your guy can execute the plan.

By the way, Magglio Ordonez had struck out roughly thirty-six times in the series, including 4 times on Monday. Not one of those strikeouts came on a highish fastish meatball on the inner half. There's a situation where you might want to have looked at the film a little.

3) Joltin' Joe!

Joe Inglett *blasted* a ball, a *moon shot* that ... okay, that's not true, but he did hit his first home run.

I am not in a big hurry to see Ron Belliard come back, unless it means the end of the Ramon Vazquez Era.

4) Box Score Follies

Cleveland's first seven hitters: .307, .270, .304, .311, .321, .303, .326.

If you'd told me we had that offense at the beginning of the season, I would have said we were on a pace to top 900 runs and would be doing well in the playoff chase.

We got 5 hits.

Note that one of those averages is a Small Sample Size Special (Inglett), one is a career gork who has left the building (Broussard), one is a semi-gork that has fallen (Blake), and the worst bats second.

5) Raffy does his part

... to look like an actual Trade Asset. 2 IP, 32:9 strike-to-ball ratio, 2 H, 1 K, 0 R. We'll miss you, Raffy.

(Please?)

6) Adventures in General Managing

Eddie Moo

Gets the wazoo

While Benny Broo

Gets traded for Choo

Hey, I'm a Peter Mastny pimp from way back (to the winter): I have no idea how a guy that big strikes out that few, but I like his minor-league numbers and would like to see if he can do something at this level. Sending Mujica down tells me a couple things:

a) They'd like him to work on something specific

b) They aren't trying to showcase him for a trade

Point (b) distinguishes him from ... every other reliever whose last name doesn't start with "C".

Meanwhile, the Ben Broussard Era ends on a 1-for-4 day and a .321 average. Broussard played over his head (in my opinion) at the plate this season, but below his feet in the field (7 errors, generally weak coverage). I enjoyed watching Broussard enjoy his career year this season, and he seemed like a genuinely good guy, but he was expendable as a first baseman with limited power and a stainless steel glove. Shin-Soo Choo has some things going for him and is an intriguing option: apparently he will start immediately in a "four man weave:"

LHP: Shoppach C, Martinez 1B, Blake RF, Choo LF

RHP: Martinez C, Blake 1B, Choo RF, Michaels LF

This makes Michaels play ... only when he shouldn't, which is an interesting decision. However, I think it speaks to the long-term prospects of seeing Jason Michaels as an everyday player in Cleveland. We'll see.

The report is that the PTBNL in the deal is actually someone interesting: Seattle has some pitchers they've bollixed the development of, so that's what I'm suspecting.

7) Managerial No-Win Situations

With runners on first and second and nobody out, the announcers speculated about whether Jhonny Peralta would be bunting. Their consensus: Peralta, as a premier hitter in the minors, probably never learned to bunt. Given the way Cleveland hitters have "bunted" this season, it was probably an accurate reflection.

More to the point, though, the reason to bunt the runners over is so that the next player can drive them in, or at least hit a sacrifice fly.

The next hitter was Ramon Vazquez.

There was no doubt in my mind that Peralta would not be bunting.

8) Let's turn two!

As mentioned earlier, Sabathia was able to escape potential damage by inducing a couple timely double plays. In all, Cleveland turned four of them (one induced by Betancourt), which speaks well of an infield defense that has been ... er ... "not so spectacular" this season.

Detroit turned one. It was hit by Ramon Vazquez.