Yesterday's game had something for everybody: Justin Masterson continued his mastery of getting clobbered by left-handed hitters, Asdrubal Cabrera continued his mastery of making outs, and a fan got involved in making an play on a ball hit down the line to save a run … for TEXAS. Way to go, doofus fan! In today's B-List, Buff details how the Indians could have stolen a game in which they were outhit 15 to 5 … but predictably, did no such thing.

FINAL	1	2	3
Rangers (5-3)	1	1	2
Indians (2-6)	0	0	0

W: C. Lewis (2-0) L: Masterson (0-1) S: N. Feliz (2)

Desultory.

1) Dept. of Microcosms

In the first inning, Justin Masterson faced five hitters. The two left-handed hitters got a single and a double, and he gave up a run. The three right-handed hitters struck out swinging.

This is a bit of an extreme example, but it still has the hallmarks of a Justin Masterson start:

a) Left-handers pound him

This season, lefties are hitting .500/.500/.714 off Masterson. And he hasn't even faced a lineup with more than three lefites in it: Chicago's lefties are what we stats guys call "lame-assed," and Texas really only has one who's worth a damn. Josh Hamilton is off to a fine start,and sure enough, Hamilton laced a double and a single off Masterson.

But Julio "Ethelred" Borbon is Texas' answer to Mike Brantley: he is speedy and athletic and will be a fun player to watch once he actually, you know, learns to hit major-league pitching. The man is hitting .103/.103/.103 … and that's AFTER he got two hits yesterday (his second and third). Note: Borbon leads off. With a .103 OBP. And Chris Davis, for as amusing a player as

he can be with the Russ Branyan Swing and all, is hitting .207/.281/.310 on the season … and that's AFTER he went two-for-five with a pair of doubles off Masterson.

If you're counting, lefties went 5-for-6 in their first 6 plate appearances against Masterson. They ended up going 5-for-8 with a sacrifice. Three of the hits were doubles.

b) He is tough on righties

Righties are now hitting .194/.242/.290 on the season, and that's after allowing a solo shot to Nel Cruz. Cruz has a home run in SIX of his EIGHT GAMES this season, so giving up a homer to Nel Cruz is no cause for humiliation. Overall, though, righties went 4-for-18 against Masterson, and two of the hits (both singles) were by Elvis Andrus, an underrated hitter.

c) He will strike out hitters at a good clip

Masterson struck out nine Rangers last night in 6 innings, giving him 14 in 11 IP thus far.

Each of the 14 hitters Masterson has struck out is right-handed.

(Note: Masterson collected a total of 15 swings-and-misses on the night. That's a lot more than … anyone else in the rotation is capable of.)

d) He doesn't hurt himself with walks

Masterson didn't walk anyone, and has only walked 2 on the season.

e) He keeps the ball down

Masterson recorded 8 ground ball outs and ZERO fly ball outs. It's hard to say he didn't give up any fly balls when, of course, one travelled over the wall and three doubles were socked, but hey, a 8:0 GO:FO ratio is a nice thing, generally speaking. (With 8 GO and 9 K, Masterson's 18th out was catching Josh Hamilton trying to steal third.)

This is a pitcher who can survive in the majors, and it's not impossible for Masterson to develop something that is more effective against left-handed hitters. The strikeout stuff is great to have. He generally keeps the ball in the park and it's hard to put a real, sustained rally on him without a string of lefties in your order. Until he develops that pitch, though (and until then, I recommend approaching lefties as "unintentional intentional walks"), he's really more of a mid-rotation innings guy than anyting else. For a 25-year-old guy in his second year of real major-league starting, that's a pretty valuable commodity. But 9 hits in 6 innings is kind of a lot of hits.

2) A contrast in styles

Matt Treanor is really more of the backup catcher, and it's obviously way early in the season, but consider this: the Rangers had SIX guys in their lineup last night with an OBP of .433 or higher. FOUR of them have batting averages over .400. Nelson Cruz is slugging 1.172. One point one seven two!

The Indians had FIVE players with an OBP UNDER .300 (six under .322). They have two players who slug even FOUR HUNDRED. They have FOUR players with an AVG below the Mendoza Line.

Texas' 3-4-5 hitters slug .538, .545, and 1.172.
Cleveland's 3-4-5 hitters slug .556, .345, and .333. That's the HEART of the order. Or maybe the Impacted Wisdom Tooth of the order. (No, wait, that's the part with Tofu Lou Marson in it.)

3) Well played, sir!

With the bases loaded in the bottom of the 6th, Mike Brantley laced a ball down the line with two outs. Because the speedy Luis Valbuena was on first and was running on the two-out hit, this looked sure to plate three runs.

And then, Sooper Genius McDorkenstein decided that really, grabbing the ball from the stands with a glove was the most helpful, well-reasoned, rewarding thing he could possibly have done. I mean, how often do you have a chance to get a ball at a game? Okay, well, since there were only 10K fans there and a foul would rattle around the empty seats for a while, probably a decent enough chance, but how often do you have the chance to catch a LIVE ball at a game? Not so often, right? You've GOT to make that play! So it cost your team a run. In a two-run game. It's not like it had a bearing on … I mean … you see …

… okay, yeah, it's EXACTLY like that. You are a bonehead, sir. A charlatan and a cad. Also a dipshit. Congratulations! May I sign your ball?

Dear dipshit,
You suck!
Sincerely, I Hate You

4) Randy Myers Jr.

I'm not going to pretend that I understand or can predict what will happen in any given Tony Sipp outing any more than I can predict the weather in 2015, but I will say this: the man has nasty stuff. Where it's going is merely a *surprise* for the hitter, but it is downright *shocking* to Sipp himself.

Consider this: Sipp now has 6 Ks in 3 2/3 IP. That's great. He struck out the side last night. Also great.

On the other hand, he has faced 8 left-handed hitters this season. None has gotten a hit. Five have reached base. Yes, of his 4 walks, ALL FOUR were against left-handed hitters … which is supposed to be the subset he is exceptionally tough on because of his slider. Whereas only 2 right-handed hitters in ten have gotten a hit … but of course, one of them is a homer.

Anyway, Sipp can really throw the ball, but I'm hoping he's not a finished product, because this guy here … *this* guy drives me ***crazy***.

5) Squander Ball!

After Brantley's RBI "double" in the sixth, there were men on second and third with two outs. Asdrubal Cabrera then grounded out to second.

In the 7th, the "three lefties in a row" strategy called in Darren Oliver, who then hit Grady Sizemore and yielded a solid single to Choo. We're thwarting that strategy, yes sirree bob! Then Travis Hafner grounded into what SHOULD have been a double play but produced only one out, and then Jhonny Peralta showed him how it is done by breaking his bat on a full count to ground into a REAL double play.

In the 8th, Matt LaPorta struck out swinging on Strike Six accoring to ESPN's Game Log, then Marson and Brantley drew two-out walks after a flyout. With two men on, Neftali Perez came in and threw two pitches out of the strike zone to Cabrera, the second of which he lifted into center for the third out.

In the 9th, we only put one runner on base and he wasn't in scoring position, so that hardly qualifies as a good "squander."

6) Sotto Voce

Could Asdrubal Cabrera suck any harder from the leadoff spot? He is now hitting

.231/.250/.231 and had made outs in his last fourteen plate appearances in a row. Huzzah!

7) A Bedtime Story

Once upon a time, there was a team that was thoroughly dominated by Colby Freaking Lewis.

And that's how I knew they sucked.

The End.

8) Heroic effort squandered

Aaron Laffey was very effective in his first inning of work, retiring three of the four hitters he faced in the 7th, giving up a single to hamilton.

In his second inning of work, Laffey fell victim to the Arbitrary Suck Field surrounding Progressive Stadium, and after two quick outs, gave up a seeing-eye bleeder and a broken-bat infield single to second.

Elvis Andrus then unleashed what looked very much like an RBI single to center, but Asdrubal Cabrera made a fully-horizontal diving stop of the ball to keep Matt Treanor from scoring, a run-saving play if ever there was one. Terrific play.

And then Laffey somehow managed to give up a two-run single to Ethelred Borbon and the whole thing was wasted, much like the entire evening.

9) By the way

Did I mention that not only is Borbon left-handed like Laffey, but that he can't actually HIT?

10) Terror on the Basepaths!

Two more stolen bases off Tofu Lou: Borbon and Andrus.

However, Marson DID catch Hamilton at third, so huzzah.

And, not to be left out, Marson STOLE a base of his own. Woot!

11) The Ballad of Joe Smiff

The first pitch was a ball
The second pitch was an out
And then his night was done
No fourth line comes to mind

12) The power of plate discipline

The Indians drew 8 walks and forced the Rangers to throw 193 pitches spread across five pitchers. It didn't make a damn bit of difference.