The point has been brought up: who is more memorable to the lay fan: Harvey Haddix or Len Barker (David Cone, Dallas Braden, etc.)? Armando Galarraga threw a perfect game against the Indians last night whether it goes in the record books as such or not, but more to the point, you are more likely to remember this game than you are those of Braden or Halladay earlier this season. Is this game less "perfect" because of a missed call at first base? Yes, it is. And no, it isn't. And ultimately, it doesn't matter, because no one can take the PERFORMANCE away from Galarraga, who showed enormous class in the aftermath.

FINAL

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

R

H

E

Indians (19-32)

0

0

0

0

0

0

0

0

0

0

1

1

Tigers (27-25)

0

1

0

0

0

0

0

2

X

3

9

0

W: Galarraga (2-1) L: Carmona (4-4)

Cleveland can't even get no-hit properly.

1) Contractual obligation

Look, it's an Indians column. We start with the Indians.

Fausto Carmona pitched a terrific game last night. Through 7 complete innings, the only run he allowed was on a solo homer by Miggy Cabrera, who has 15 and is obviously no slouch. It is one thing to say that Carmona should be tough on right-handed hitters, but how about right-handed hitters who are posting a .351/.422/.670 line on the season? I mean, that's Albert Pujols at his best, minus a few walks. You give up a homer to Cabrera, you shrug and nod.

Otherwise, Carmona was largely brilliant: he recorded a 14:7 GO:FO ratio, but probably more importantly for long-term success, did not walk a hitter. Yes, he only struck out three hitters and gave up two more runs in the 8th (after it had become abundantly clear that Cabrera's homer was going to win the game in any event), but on the whole, Carmona was excellent. It should be noted that his 66 strikes in 96 pitches INCLUDED a 21-pitch 8th inning in which he struck out Cabrera, gave up an infield single, and was victimized by a preposterous throw by Shin-Soo Choo. Cabrera's homer was the only extra-base hit, and Carmona induced 2 double plays.

Fine game.

2) The Ballad of Armando Galarraga

Replacing Dontrelle Willis should not be a challenge,
The man's prime had passed, well before its time.
But Armando, sent down to recover
The one skill Willis could not find
Was sent to the mound to throw strikes.

His first two pitches flew wide of the mark,
But six of the next seven pitches were strikes,
And the Indians went down in order,
One, two, three for Armando.

Strike one looking
Strike two fouled off
Third pitch an out
Except for Russ Branyan taking a ball,
The second inning was simple and elegant
Ten pitches, nine for strikes, and the Indians went down in order,
One, two, three for Armando.

Strike one looking
Ground outs to short
Only a fly ball lifted to center
By Mark Grudzielanek
Foreshadowing future drama
But for now, the Indians went down in order,
One, two, three for Armando.

Armando, Armando, Armando Galarraga,
Indian killer of yore
Armando, Armando, Armando Galarraga,
Who knows what Armando still has in store?

Strikes in the fourth,
Eleven pitches in all,
The Indians went down in order,
One, two, three for Armando.

A three-ball count! Is he losing his touch?
Five pitches later, the Indians went down in order,
One, two, three for Armando.

Mark Grudzielanek, striking out swinging,
Two pitches for Redmond,
One pitch for Donald,
The Indians went down in order,
One, two, three for Armando.

Armando, Armando, Armando Galarraga,
Indian killer of yore
Armando, Armando, Armando Galarraga,
Who knows what Armando still has in store?

One pitch for Crowe,
Three for Choo,
Two for Kearns,
And the Indians went down in order,
One, two, three for Armando.

Look at strike one, ground out to short.
Look at strike one, strike out swinging.
Look at strike one, ground out to second.
Eleven pitches, and the Indians went down in order,
One, two, three for Armando.

Twenty-four up,
And twenty-four down,

The Indians are helpless, and the Tigers have scored
Two “insurance” runs, the most profligate imaginable
Armando does not need your help.

Mark Grudzielanek, who’d flied out to center,
Mark Grudzielanek, with a mighty smash,
Mark Grudzielanek surely ends the bid with a drive to the wall,
Except for one thing:
Austin Jackson will not allow this.
He is facing the wall.
He is running full speed.
He is Willie Mays and Bob Hayes.
And Mark Grudzielanek is out.

Mike Redmond, the consummate pro,
Mike Redmond, who knows pitching and pitchers,
Mike Redmond, with a mighty swing,
Mike Redmond pulls an outside pitch to ground out to short.
Mike Redmond owes me a dollar.

Jason Donald, in the minors a month ago,
Much like Armando Galarraga,
The melody sings and the harmony swings,
The ball rolls harmlessly to the right of the first baseman.
With an accurate throw, the sweet song is heard,
SKROOOONK SQUEAL GARGARGARGARGARGARG OOOOOOON SKRONK!
What in the hell is that noise?

And Armando, he who has been mightily wronged,
Smiles.
Simply smiles.
And retires the next hitter.

Armando Galarraga, a moment in history,
Preserved for all time:
The world’s first one-hit perfect game.