On the good side, David Huff pitched 6 innings, 5 of which were scoreless, and struck out 6, walked 1, and gave up no earned runs. The bad news is, the unearned runs count too, and Huff lost his 7th game of the season to the BoSox. There is an old saw about hitting a knuckleball being like catching a butterfly with chopsticks, or eating soup with a fork, but the Tribe looked like they were trying to eat butterfly soup with chopforks or something. Anyway, they lost. This can't have surprised you a whole lot.

FINAL

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

R

H

E

Red Sox (35-25)

0

0

0

3

0

0

0

0

0

3

9

1

Indians (21-36)

1

0

0

0

0

0

1

0

0

2

4

1

W: Wakefield (2-4) L: Huff (2-7) S: Bard (2)

Congratulations to Tim Wakefield, who becomes the all-time leader in innings pitched as a

Boston Red Sok. In a moving ceremony, the umpires stopped the game and awarded Wakefield with a real chin. Wakefield, ever the class act, will not use it until he passes Cy Young for the all-time Red Sox victory total, or until he figures out how to put it on, whichever comes first.

1) Remembering the Posnanski Treatise

Consider this: in every inning in which Trevor Crowe did not make an egregious error, David Huff allowed no runs and recorded either a double play or a strikeout. In fact, in those five innings, Huff nabbed 5 strikeouts, 4 of them swinging, and held the Red Sox to 0-for-4 with runners in scoring position. Better yet, in those 5 innings of work, he allowed one walk and 4 hits, only one of which was for extra bases. I certainly get on Huff's case, but generally speaking, this was a pretty good outing: 6 Ks overall and one strike shy of a pure 2:1 strike-to-ball ratio.

So it's that much more disheartening that in the Inning of Doom™, Huff completely lost control of his anal sphincter and gave up a brisk double-single-single-double stretch after Victor Martinez reached second on the aforementioned error, which resulted in the three runs the Red Sox scored on the night and the game was functionally over, as the Indians' offense was feeble, but also lame.

There are mitigating factors here, of course, not the least of which is that Boston's hitters are quite talented in their own rights. Kevin Youkilis is hitting .324, and his double drove in the first run. David Ortiz' .247 looks terrible overall, but he hit .143 in April and .363 in May. Of course, he did enter the game on an 0-for-17 skid, and can't hit lefties (.186/.294/.256), and Huff is left-handed, and Ortiz was hit on the hand in his last series, and affects local tides, but … okay, yeah, that's a bad job. Shoot, the ball he hit actually hit Luis Valbuena's glove.

But Adrian Beltre is hitting .333, and Bill Hall …

… okay, stop right there.

You can't give up an RBI double to Bill Hall on a 1-2 count. The man hit .192 in April and .220 in May and hits .208 against lefties. They're not booing you, they're pelting you with rocks and garbage.

Did Huff lose his focus in that inning? I suppose there is evidence of that. But giving up the double to Youkilis … hey, the man has 16 doubles and slugs .608. He's good. And the single from Ortiz was kinda bad fortune, and Beltre is hot.

The one thing I will say for certain is that the current method of calculating Earned Runs is stoopid. If you give up double-single-single-double, SOMETHING is your fault. I know the error was made with two outs, but let's say that was the third out and you started the next inning on that stretch. That's two earned runs, yeah? That's a stoopid rule.

Anyway, Huff did a lot of things well in this start. The Red Sox can hit, and he largely kept them quiet. Three of his six innings only had three batters, one had four, and another five. He wasn't constantly in trouble like Carmona, he got 9 swings-and-misses, and kept the ball in the park. According to what I want to see from Huff in terms of positive signs, he by and large gave me these things. I can't get too upset there.

2) Return of Son of Legend of the One-Man Show, Part 2

The Indians had four hits. Half of them were by Shin-Soo Choo.

The Indians had six baserunners (H + BB only). Half of them were Shin-Soos Choo.

The Indians scored two runs. Half of them were by Shin-Soo Choo.

The Indians had 10 total bases. Four of them were by Shin-Soo Choo.

The Indians struck out eight times. None of them were by Shin-Soo Choo.

3) Dunk Smash!

This having been said, the reason the Tribe had a legitimate shot to win the game in the late innings was because Shelley Duncan yanked a knuckleball down the left-field line for a solo shot. Sure, he struck out twice and never reached base any other time, but a home run is the most valuable offensive action, and Duncan performed it.

4) Credit Where Credit is Due Dept.

Travis Hafner, 0-for-10 against Tim Wakefield in his career, coming in off the bench ice cold in a one-run game in the 8th inning, laced a double to chase Wakefield. That's after starting in an 0-2 hole immediately after the leadoff pinch-hitter showed him nothing more than how to strike out efficiently (three pitches).

Hafner hasn't had the best season, but that's gotta be a tough thing to hop up an do cold.

5) Confirmation bias

One of the things you have to be careful of when analyzing data is to make sure that you're not susceptible to over-interpreting things that fit your preconceived notions. That is, you might think that Grady Sizemore can't hit left-handed pitching, then pick out one game in which he goes hitless against a left-hander and say, "See? What did I tell you? I am a genius!" based on three trips to the plate. That's not even a sample, that's noise. And it conveniently leaves out the last time he faced a left-hander, when he got a single and a double. The larger the dataset, the more confindent you can be about whether something is a real effect or just a random fluctuation.

So when I point out that in Jensen Lewis' first inning of work, he recorded a 1-2-3 inning, while

in his SECOND inning of work he gave up a single and yielded a .500/.500/.500 hitting line, does this mean I am guilty of "confirmation bias?"

No! I am a goddam genius! Stop using Jensen Lewis for a second inning!

6) Better than it looks

You can look at Tony Sipp's brief line and conclude, "Same old Tony, didn't even record an out, he's completely lost out there." Sure, he pitched 0.0 innings and walked the only batter he faced.

However, David Ortiz is an experienced hitter and fouled off FOUR full-count pitches before getting ball four … with a runner on second and first base open anyway.

So while you'd rather Sipp could find a way to polish him off, that's not nearly the Bad Tony we've been seeing craning his neck to see where the three-run homer is landing. I'm not gettin' too upset over that one, either.

7) Nice work if you can get it

Chris Perez came in with two men on and got Beltre to ground into a potential inning-ending double play on an 0-2 pitch. He then got J.D. Drew to fly out (admittedly, WAY out), then recorded three outs on four pitches in the 9th (he needed two pitches to hit a batter for a total of six, but hey).

Perez had trouble with walks and throwing strikes early in the year (10 walks in 21 1/3 IP isn't any good), but in his last 10 outings, he's walked 2 (against 8 Ks) in 9 2/3 IP. Except for the one truly horrendous outing against the Yankees, he's given up 1 runs on 5 hits. He seems to have rebounded from his early-season troubles, although he's still got a real max-effort delivery that makes watching him difficult sometimes.

8) Possible potential possibility

In the past few games, it seems like we've had a SIGNIFICANT number of "fielder's choices" with a runner on first where a ground ball to an infielder results in one out instead of two. I haven't seen all of these live: are there a lot of slow rollers? Diving stops? Jason Donald and Luis Valbeuna have the chemistry of Kevin Costner and Madeline Stowe in "Revenge?" What gives?

9) Box score follies

Tim Wakefield gave up exactly 4 hits for the Pitcher's Cycle: one single, one double, one triple, one homer. I have to think that's not very common (in that a pitcher gives up one cycle and no other hits).

Eight Indians struck out and none of them were Russ Branyan. One of them was Shelley Duncan, who struck out in the 9th on ball four, which isn't very easy to do. (Bad call. Woof.)

10) Meaningless Scrubeenie Head-Scratchers

Anderson Hernandez fought his way onto the roster at the expense of the hurt Mark Grudzielanek, and responded with a pinch-running steal of third base.

Except …

He didn't do this with one out, where there is a huge advantage being on third instead of second. He did this with TWO outs, when there is no advantage whatsoever, and being thrown out would suck such enormous rocks as to constitute plate tectonics.

I mean, no, it didn’t matter, and who cares, but … what is going through people’s heads here?