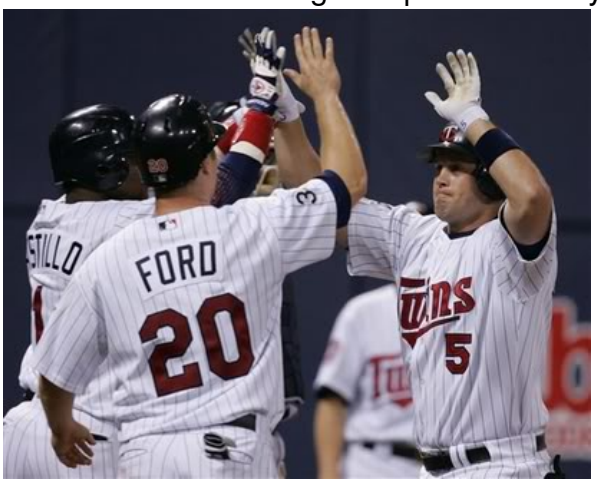
Johan Santana I can understand. But getting completely shut down by Carlos Silva? In todays B-List, Buff has an epiphany about his boy Cliff Lee, and also manages to see his already seething hatred of the Minnesota bullpen swell to new proportions. And of course, he has some comments on another Tribe bullpen melt. Buff also asks a great question. Why is Jason Michaels still hitting in the two hole?



Oh, for Pete's sake, how many times do I have to watch the same damned game?

1) Epiphany!

Cliff Lee is an innings-eater.

He is not an Ace. He is not a #2 starter. He is Just Some Guy who will dependably give you 5-7 innings of quality work. He doesn't get hurt, he rarely completely bombs, he'll give you a no-run outing now and again. He is what I thought Paul Byrd was.

Now, his extension is still a good idea. He is less expensive than Paul Byrd and gives us consistency in the rotation for a while. Last time I checked, you needed at least four starters (and I think the odds of Inertia Man changing from a 5-man rotation to a 4-man are somewhere between "meteor strike" and "quantum tunnelling"). He's left-handed, which is always a bonus in my book. And his name is easy to spell, always a plus for columnists.

It was a pretty atypical outing for Lee in one regard: three guys hit infield popups (all to second). He induced 7 ground ball outs, including a double play (and an inning-ender that would likely have been a second had there not been two outs at the time) and struck out 4 in 5 innings. (The other out was a "caught stealing") Now, Lee scattered 8 hits, including a pair of doubles, so he was not dominant or anything, but the positive GB-FB is kind of a new thing to Mr. Lee: this sort of inducement helps reduce the number of flies that carry over the fence, so I'll take it. A 75:29 strike-to-ball ratio doesn't hurt, although, naturally, the guy he walked scored. By the way, for all the impressitude I've shown toward the Indians waiting out pitchers, Minnesota swung THRICE at Lee's first offering, including watching SIXTEEN first-pitch strikes go by. ALL FIVE hitters in the first inning did this. Remember when I made fun of Jason Johnson when we did this to him? I am not going to follow that inference about the respect Cliff Lee commands around the league.