What a performance from C.C. last night. I was lucky enough to be behind the dish for that gem. If you heard someone screaming "Punch him Gibbons!" every time Toronto's skipper went to the mound, that was me. In todays B-List, Buff hits on C.C.'s fine season, Wedge running Victor into the ground, and also cracks several Gustavo Chacin jokes.

It's a good thing Gustavo Chacin got a finger cramp in the 6th inning: it's a terrible thing to pitch as well as C.C. Sabathia did and lose to a guy *that ugly*.

1) Call me Ace

Sabathia has had a couple clunkers this season, but the stats speak for themselves: with a year's worth of data (going back to August 1, 2005), Sabathia is 19-9 with a 2.91 ERA. This isn't overly padded by last season's hot streak, either: his ERA this season is 3.22, his WHIP 1.20, he has raised his K/9 by almost 2 full batters over his "doldrum" period of 2002-2004, and averages 7 innings a start. His past 4 starts (and 5 of his last 6) have been at least 8 innings, he leads the majors with 5 complete games, and according to the (admittedly arcane) "Game Score" metric, last night's 4-hit 6-K, 0-walk win was only his FIFTH BEST game this season.

Sabathia seemed to lose a little concentration in the fifth, as the double by Phillips (after the solid single by Overbay) was the only ball hit really well off him. The other two hits were a bloop single and a ball that almost made it all the way to the pitcher's mound. The two runs were driven in by two balls that didn't leave the infield (the second a routine ground ball out). Let's put it this way: in the other 8 innings, he faced 24 batters. For those of you counting at home, that's the minimum. He did give up one hit in those 8 innings, but the guy was erased on a double play. He basically made **one bad pitch** (to Jason Phillips). Out of 114. (79 strikes) Speaking of concentration, in case you were worried about it, Sabathia was so rattled by Ryan Garko's error (dropping a foul pop) that he struck out Vernon Wells swinging. On the *next pitch*

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By the way, nice call-out of the bullpen: "I never look at the bullpen anymore. Not since I did early in the season and then gave up a bunch of runs. I don't look at Wedge, either." You might want to ask Vernon Wells if Sabathia looked tired in that last inning.

2) Speed kills!

In a sense, it almost killed *us*: it could be argued that neither Toronto run scores if their baserunners are slower (either Marte catches Overbay at home or Hill gets doubled up instead of the RBI fielder's choice). However, Joe Inglett probably doesn't force that error on Overbay without hustling down the line on the sacrifice bunt, and most other runners are thrown out at second on the diving stop by ex-Indian John McDonald.

3) My lapse was better than your lapse

It's hard to say that Gus Chacin could have pitched better: sure, he could have avoided the 435-foot ICBM (Inter Continental Baseball Missile) Travis Hafner hit in the 1st, but otherwise, he gave up one single and struck out 4. Well, except for that little problem with control in the 4th:

Travis Hafner: Strike (looking), Ball, Ball, Ball, Ball (walk) *Victor Martinez: Ball, Ball, Ball, Strike (looking), Strike (foul), fly out*

Casey Blake: Ball, Ball, Ball, Ball (walk)

Ryan Garko: Ball, Ball, Ball, Ball (walk)

For those of you still counting along, that is 15 balls and 4 strikes. One wonders if the mascot went into the tunnel at this point.

Bases loaded, one out: do we capitalize?

Jhonny Peralta: Ball, Strike (looking), Strike (swinging), Ball, Ball, Foul, Foul, Strike (swinging) (K)

Okay, I can't argue with the approach here: make him throw a strike, make him work ... Peralta got to a full count and battled, but Chacin was able to get something by him.

Hector Luna: Strike (foul), fly out

This, on the other hand, simply sucks. The man has walked three guys on 13 pitches and has started the last four guys off with a pitch out of the zone. Yes, maybe he got his groove back against Peralta ... but swinging at the first pitch is simply Very Bad here. I sneer at you, Hector Luna.

Anyway, like Garko's error, Chacin was so shaken by walking three guys in one inning that he ... never gave up another baserunner. (He's still a funny-lookin' dude, though.)

4) Yeah, you know, you go ahead, I'll get the next guy

Travis Hafner and Ryan Garko have similar lines in this game: Hafner was 1-for-2 with a pair of walks, a run, and an RBI, while Garko never actually made an out with 1-for-1, 2 walks, a HBP, and a run scored. The fellows behind them in the order went a combined 1-for-8 with 3 Ks and a collective 9 men left on base (not to end innings, just, that's how many guys were on base that they didn't drive in when they came to the plate). Probably not a bad idea to walk those guys (although one expects that League was not crazy about hitting Garko on a 3-2 count).

5) The return of Mighty Casey

Or, at least, the version of Casey Blake that has been mighty: Casey Blake got a single and drew a walk last night. This was Blake's first hit since returning from his latest DL stint.

Did you realize that Blake has a .910 OPS? That's crazy. Expecting him to do this again next year is bad oddsmaking, but you have to give it up for the guy: he's really produced *this* season. I could easily see him in one of those N-Man Weave situations next year where he gets 350+ AB without being the actual starter at any position.

6) The emperor has no shoes!

Hey, he's wearing pants and a shirt, but he's not fully-clothed: after going 0-for-3 against Gus Chacin, Grady Sizemore is hitting .212/.290/.392 against left-handed pitching. The power is impressive (in previous years, Sizemore couldn't hit left-handers in any way, shape, or form) with 6 HR, but .290 OBP out of the leadoff slot against lefties ... in a division with Liriano, Santana, Robertson, Rogers, Buehrle, Ledezma, and goofuses from Kansas City ... I'm just sayin', he's a work in progress.

By the way, Sizemore's overall OPS is so good this season, it's ... almost as good as Casey Blake's. What?! Is that a typo? .903 to .910 ... damn, Sizemore sure SEEMS like he's having a better season than Blake. Oh, yeah, that's because he is (with the runs and the doubles and the extra base hits and the not being injured and the defense and such). By the way, his 1.025 OPS against right-handers is pretty good.

7) I'm not tired!

This is my daughter at bedtime. Or my son. Or my other son. It isn't me or my wife. Go figure.

Anyway, I understand that ballplayers are competetive and that it's a long season and blah

blah blah, but although Victor Martinez has had two days off in the past two weeks, those are the only two he's had off since July 25. He hasn't been the catcher for all of them, but that's still a lot of game for a guy who does catch regularly (107 games this season). Since we're almost at the September mark, regardless of what Martinez' *says*, it might be a good idea to give him at least a day off every week. (By the way, last night's collar ended an 7-game hit streak, so it's not like he's baked or anything, I'm just looking to 2007.) Maybe find out if Garko can actually catch. Maybe find out if Shoppach can play TEN games in a month (9 in August thus far). Maybe recognize that 28 (which he'll be in December) isn't really that young for a catcher. Let him read a book in bed. Well, no, that never works. Anyway, more days off.