Buff hates the White Sox. So much so that a Twins victory, albeit over the Indians, is no longer repulsive to him. In todays B-List, Buff hits on that, Cliff Lee's frustrating outing, and the comedy of errors by Tribe relievers that followed. This IS the best daily Cleveland Indians column in existence.

At this point in the season, my primary goal is to see the Indians play well, but does it make me a lesser fan to be accepting of losses to Minnesota so that Chicago does not make the playoffs? I do not like the White Sox.

1) Department of Inefficiency Department

Cliff Lee threw 102 pitches, 66 for strikes, and gave up 1 run. He gave up 5 hits, but three were doubles, and walked two. That's not a bad game ... if you go six or seven innings. Lee went FOUR.

Here are Lee's pitch counts: 28, 31, 22, 21. So he was actually getting more efficient as the game went on. Too bad he was alreday exhausted. Look, you gotta figure you want to see somewhere around 15 pitches per inning: sometimes you get the lucky 5-pitch inning, sometimes you give up some hits and it stretches to 25, but it all comes out in the wash. Anything over 20 is kind of stressful. ALL FOUR of Lee's innings were like that.

The thing is, he got out of a couple jams pretty impressively: in the second, he gave up a one-out double and wild pitched Rondell White to third. He then loaded the bases with a walk and an HBP, and then induced a popup and a flyout for a scoreless inning. Scoreless is good. 31 pitches is bad.

"I was making quality pitches, but they kept fouling them off and the pitches added up," Lee said.

This is where **last week's admonition** gets repeated.

2) Department of Tremendous Inefficiency Department

Andrew Brown relieved the ineffective Brian Sikorski in the 6th. He got Jason Bartlett to fly out. Then he produced the following pitch sequence:

Ball, Ball, Ball, Ball (walk), Ball, Strike (looking), Ball, Strike (double), Int. Ball, Int. Ball, Int. Ball, Int. Ball (intentional walk), Ball, Ball, Strike (looking), Ball, Strike (looking), Foul, Ball (walk, run, shower).

The intentional walk (with runners on 2nd and 3rd and Joe Mauer at the plate, this is defensible strategy) skews the numbers, but overall, Brown threw 8 strikes and 16 balls. He faced five hitters, and the Twins swung TWICE, averaging one base per swing.

3) Department of Unfathomable Profligate Inefficiency Department

The game took 3 hours and 38 minutes to play. This is due at least in part to Eric Wedge's

Guillenization of the bullpen: the Indians used NINE pitchers last night, exactly three of whom were effective.

Pitches/strikes/hits/runs by pitchers who were on the roster August 20: 206/130/14/9

Pitches/strikes/hits/runs by pitchers called up since August 20: 12/12/1/0

Rafael Perez pitched to nominal MVP candidate Justin Morneau. He induced a routine ground ball to Joe Inglett, who hit the runner with his throw and retired exactly no one. He threw two pitches for strikes and is credited with pitching 0.0 innings.

Juan Lara pitched to nominal MVP candidate Joe Mauer. He induced a lineout to center to end the 7th inning with two runners on base. He threw four pitches for strikes and is credited with pitching 1/3 inning because we HAD to bring in Ferd to start the 8th.

Ed Mujica came in after Ferd had finished giving up his three runs on two taters and walking Phil ".210" Nevin on four pitches. He threw six pitches for strikes, giving up a hit a retiring two batters (Castillo a 3-pitch swinging K, Punto a first-pitch foulout).

Everyone else stunk. I do see why Davis was brought in to face the righties Hunter and White after Perez' stint (and, to his credit, got them both to leave the bases loaded, which is very nice from J.D.), but yuck. By the way, we also managed to hit two batters and throw two wild pitches as a staff, making Brown's performance seem almost mundane.

4) Ducks on the neighbor's pond!

Tribe pitchers were not especially efficient, but they did manage to do one thing well: leave Twins on base. The Twins left an almost unimaginable 16 men on base, TEN in *scoring position* . That means that in your average inning last night, the Twins left guys on first and second or first and third ... EVERY INNING. We single out the third inning, because the Twins only left one man on base and did not score. This makes the third the most effective inning by Cleveland pitchers.

Kudos to Lee and Davis for leaving the bases loaded.

5) Small Sample Size Theater

Andy Marte has now raised his home OPS by about 200 points by going 2-for-4 with a three-run homer to dead center. Of course, this raises it from "egregious" to "putrid" (.442), but it's a start. By the way, Marte has gone .313 (25-for-80) in his past 23 games, and more than half of those hits are for extra bases (12 doubles, 1 triple, 3 HR).

In a similar vein, if Juan Lara can pitch every inning of every game from here on out as well as he's pitched so far, I don't see how you can't give him the Cy Young with a WHIP of 0.33 and an ERA of 0.00.

6) Okay, I got the D, now where's the H?

In the past week, I've seen Aaron Boone, Casey Blake, and now Jason Michaels play designated hitter. This would be good if more than one of them could, in fact, *hit*.

Actually, this is unfair: Boone was chosen because he had ridiculous lifetime stats against the starter (and came through with a nice offensive game, I should add), and Blake is having a career year. The reason you want Jason Michaels in the lineup as your DH is ... is ... sorry, I got nothin'.

Michaels as DH: 0-for-5 with 2 Ks.

I guess the honest question is, "How bad does Franklin Gutierrez suck?"

7) The two-holed torus

Victor Martinez ruined an absolute Donut Order with a fine 2-for-4 night including the first RBI. However, surrounding him, Michaels, Ryan Garko, and Shin-Soo Choo combined to go 0-for-13 with 6 Ks (3 from Choo). 4 of these strikeouts (and all three of Choo's) were to a man named "Boof."

8) Inexplicable

Phil Nevin drew two walks.

Phil Nevin is hitting .214 and went 0-for-3 with a K against pitchers who threw strikes.

It's Phil Freaking Nevin! Come on!