Just slightly over one year ago, on June 11, Carlos Santana was unleashed to the MLB universe. A wave of hype followed behind him as he slashed his way from Columbus up to Cleveland one June weekend against the Nationals.

From there, it was a foregone conclusion that Santana possessed the talents that would quickly make him one of the top catchers in the game. He homered in his second game and rode that wave of hype all the way through August 2 when he was taken out at the plate by Ryan Kalish, ending his season.

Santana hit .260 in those 46 games with six homers, 22 RBI, 23 runs, and a .401 on-base percentage. It set the stage for him to take those numbers a step further in 2011 after he proved he fully recovered from his leg injury.

But 2011 has been a struggle. He's had his ups and his downs, but there is still much left to be desired in his performance his numbers thus far.

THE SUBJECT - Carlos Santana

THE PROBLEM - Lack of production in the fourth spot in the order.

Santana was thrown into the fire last season, right from the start he was hitting in the three spot. Manager Manny Acta had plenty of faith in him and his bat to be in the middle of the order right out of the gate.

But he had some protection. He had the All-MLB production of Shin-Soo Choo around him for a decent portion of his stint in 2011. Even a semi-productive Travis Hafner and somewhat feared Russell Branyan flanked him at times.

He also was new. Pitchers were unaware of Santana and what kind of damage he was capable of. What he liked, what he laid off, what he would do up at the plate. There was plenty going for him.

Santana hit third for the first month or so he was in the lineup. Towards the end before he was injured and when Choo returned from his disabled list stint, he was moved to fourth with Choo taking over third because Asdrubal Cabrera also returned, occupying the second spot.

The switch-hitting catcher toyed with the right-handers, crushing them to the tune of a .314 average with five of his six homers. He was a walk-machine, carrying a .443 OBP and even a 1.002 OPS.

This year, it has been a little sobering. He's occupying the fourth spot in the order. After a short stint lower in the order and a streak that seemed to get him back on track, Santana is back in the clean-up spot. He's producing, but not up to the hype. There is more to be desired.

THE EVIDENCE - Numbers that are important

Santana - Pitches Seen

2010: Fastball - 48% Slider - 10.7% Cutter - 7.2% Curveball - 10.1% Changeup - 21.1%

2011: Fastball - 54% Slider - 10.3% Cutter - 5.6% Curveball - 9.0% Changeup 18.4%

Here you can see that the only real difference is the increase in a number of fastballs he is seeing this year. However, compared to some of the other hitters on the squad, he's seeing more off-speed.

Santana - Slider: 10.3%

Hafner - Slider: 16.6%

Choo - Slider: 14.0%

A. Cabrera - Slider: 9.1%

Santana - Curveball: 9.0%

Hafner - Curveball: 10.5%

Choo - Curveball: 10.4%

A. Cabrera - Curveball: 10.0%

Santana - Changeup: 18.4%

Hafner - Changeup: 10.5%

Choo - Changeup: 11.8%

A. Cabrera - Changeup: 12.6%

Santana sees less sliders than both Hafner and Choo, but more than Cabrera. He sees less curveballs than all three, but he sees way more changeups than all three. But here's the thing with all of that. Santana doesn't see a lot of strikes to hit and hasn't the past two seasons. He sees an average of one strike per at-bat and a little over half of the pitches he sees are strikes.

Strikes per PA

2010: 1.2

2011: 1.0

Strike Percentage

2010: 54%

2011: 53%

That 53 is about seven percent less than someone like Shin-Soo Choo, just to put it in perspective. Jose Bautista sees 54 percent strikes, but he has no problem clubbing them to kingdom come.

But Bautista sees 2.4 strikes per appearance, unlike Santana, who sees a whole 1.4 less than Bautista. Simply put, Joey Bats sees fewer pitches because he's busy clubbing most of them. Santana is more of a patient hitter.

Santana swings at 15 percent of the pitches he sees outside the zone. Continue with our Bautista comparison, Jose swings at 27 percent. However he makes contact significantly less, 63 percent to Bautista's 73 percent.

There's that discipline for Santana. He's selective. But he doesn't have the coverage someone like Bautista does.

So what can we deduct from all of this?

THE VERDICT - Santana needs help.

With Hafner

26/105 (.248 AVG), 3 HR, 13 RBI

Without Hafner

19/88 (.215 AVG), 4 HR, 13 RBI

So it isn't that drastic, but he does hit a little better with Hafner in the lineup.

But the biggest thing is Shin-Soo Choo. Santana is getting on base, that's evident. It may not be the .400 clip he was last year, but how can you argue with a .367 on-base percentage and 43 walks, which ranks fourth in all of the major leagues.

He's behind juggernauts like Bautista, Joey Votto and the feared Miguel Cabrera. If he had someone ahead of him, he would see more strikes. It's simple as this. Santana sees a lot of pitches, because he walks a lot. But he doesn't see many strikes because the guys around him, Choo, aren't hitting the strikes they are seeing. So why give Santana anything to hit?

Santana is not in a position to do anything with the strikes he does see, because a lot of them are offspeed pitches. He's a patient guy, so he won't swing at the fastballs early on the count.

So that's why he has the low average.

Okay, but riddle me this. Where's the production with guys on? He's hitting cleanup, but he only has 26 RBI.

He does have a problem with guys on base. He's hitting just .200 in 90 at-bats with runners on base. Even worse is the .180 average with runners in scoring position. There's no defense for that, other than to look at the previous numbers and realize he's probably getting the same treatment. He's got 16 walks with runners on base, which is 37 percent of his walks. That's more than one-third of his walks in nearly half of his at-bats. That's because 47 percent of his at-bats come with runners on.

There may be no defense for that. Maybe he's simply too patient. Where as one-third of his walks have come with runners on base, a little over half of his strikeouts have come in that

situation. So half the time he comes up, he comes up with runners on. And half of the time he comes up in that situation, he strikes out.

So what can be done here?

THE SOLUTION - Find Choo or Be Aggressive.

That's really option one. Find Shin-Soo Choo and return him. If you have a Shin-Soo Choo hitting in front of Santana, than he's going to get more opportunities or the team will avoid him completely, not even giving him the opportunity to strike out.

And you have to figure when Travis Hafner gets back to hit behind Santana, the strikes will be a lot easier to hit.

But Santana and the Indians simply can't accept that idea and hope for it to happen.

What needs to happen is a little bit of an adjustment. You don't want to radically change Santana. They've already adjusted his mechanics and his swing by eliminating the toe-tap timing mechanism in his stance.

But perhaps Jon Nunnally and Manny Acta may want to push Santana to be a tad bit more aggressive. He's seeing 53 percent first pitch strikes, which means that they are offering to him. Santana can keep his approach; it's great, especially with nobody on.

In more run-scoring opportunities though, he should expand his selection early on. If he's getting 53 percent first pitch strikes, he is getting an opportunity to hit earlier in the at-bat. He should probably try and take advantage of the opportunities.

You don't want Santana to ruin what he is all about. The last thing you want to do is damage your young hitter's future. But an alteration to his approach, an adjustment, something is may be needed. Baseball is a game of adjustments after all. And while Santana's problem isn't completely his own, the team would be better off if he made a slight adjustment.

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You can follow Nino on Twitter @ TheTribeDaily where he tweets about Santana's adjustments. You can also read more features like the Morning Rundown and others at his blog, The Tribe Daily .