Okay. Who amongst you predicted that as of May 22, 2011 that the Indians would have the best record in baseball, that they'd do so with the disabled list featuring nearly half of their 2011 salary expenditures and that they'd have survived the injuries to Travis Hafner and Grady Sizemore thus far in part because Asdrubal Cabrera has hit more home runs and has more RBI than Albert Pujols?

That's what I thought.

But that's exactly where the Indians (and Hafner, Sizemore, Cabrera and Pujols for that matter) stand after the Cincinnati Reds came into Progressive Field for the first round of interleague games this season and were unceremoniously swept in the those three games. They were swept when a player making his major league debut dropped a pinch hit drag bunt Friday night to win that game, a player who hadn't homered this season hit a late inning 2-run home run Saturday to give the Indians 2-1 win in the middle game of the series and when Cabrera went 5-5 and hit two home runs in a 12-4 laugher on Sunday.

That's how it's going right now for the Indians. They're seemingly taking on water every day with

another key player getting hurt and hitting the disabled list but the guys getting called up or taking on expanded roles are baling the water fast and efficiently enough to keep the ship not only afloat but ahead of the rest of the flotilla in the American League.

It also appears that the fans are starting to buy in. I know it was interleague play and that a number of Reds fans came up for the weekend but the series drew 100,000 people over the weekend. The weather was good, there were fireworks Friday and the club is gaining steam. That's the biggest three game draw in a couple years.

Friday's game was eerily similar to last Friday's game when Travis Hafner sent a huge crowd home happier than fireworks and cheap hot dogs would normally call for with a walk-off 2-run home run. We talked about why that was so important coming after a couple losses and in front of a crowd that needed to be thrilled to maybe come back.

Well, this weekend it was Ezequiel Carrera who was called on to pinch hit with two outs in the bottom half of the 8th inning. There's nothing like making your major league debut in that situation and in front of 35,000 people. All Carrera did was put down a perfect drag bunt on the first pitch that he beat out while Shin-Soo Choo scored what would be the game winner.

It may have actually been a more stunning at bat than Hafner's from the week before in that probably no one in the building was expecting Carrera to bunt there, least of all the Reds and Dusty Baker. Regardless, after two losses in a row to Chicago heading into the game and with the Reds being one of the National League's elite teams who were playing well, losing that game would have put a damper on the excitement the club had built and it would have extended their losing streak to three games. Carrera's heroics came just two innings after the Indians collected their first hit in the game and after they had erased a 4-0 deficit with a couple hits and about 36 straight walks or hit batsmen by the Reds.

I've been to a ton of baseball games down at Progressive Field and the old stadium and that win Friday night was electric and it was as important as it was unlikely heading into the 6th inning without a hit. Most folks stayed and watched the firework show afterward (and the Indians truly do a remarkable job with those displays) but I couldn't help but ignore the actual fireworks and just look around the park. People were truly thrilled and seeing that building and most sections filled with fans in the glow of the fireworks show was a treat for me.

There's something happening here.

I honestly don't know if sustainable or not given the crippling number of injuries to critical players but there is definitely something happening here. The one reason that it may actually be sustainable and that the Indians might be able to withstand these injuries is their pitching.

Plainly put, their bullpen is having one of those magical years. And when you're bullpen is dominant your team wins. From the continued development of Chris Perez to the stinginess of Tony Sipp and Rafael Perez to the unexpected brilliance from Vinnie Pestano this team's bullpen is giving away next to nothing. Games aren't getting away from the pen, 2-1 deficits aren't becoming 5-1 deficits and the pen is either giving the offense a chance to come back or is securing a lead and locking it up.

That's going to be how it continues too, if it's to continue. The rotation took another hit Friday when Alex White left after the 3rd inning with an injured finger. White will surely miss the next 8-12 weeks and may well be done for the year. A lot of Indians fans hear 'finger' and think immediately of the once highly touted prospect Adam Miller who hurt a finger to the point it derailed his promising career.

Being there Friday and seeing White react to the injury you could tell he was affected. You could tell he was scared and the hope was that it was more of a shock and a reaction by a kid who hadn't experienced anything like that and maybe overreacting. But that wasn't the case. White finished the inning and was done for the night. I'm wondering if the injury resulted from White's wide grip on his split finger pitch. He gutted through the rest of the inning getting a pretty good lineup out with nothing but fastballs, but the impressive rookie will now be shut down.

I guess the good news is that Mitch Talbot is set to return for the Indians and he was pitching well when he went down with elbow soreness too. But the depth of the organization is less deep today than it was a couple months ago and the Tribe needs health and luck as much as anything else right now.

An extra dose of luck where Grady Sizemore is concerned might be worthy of an extra thought or prayer if you're a believer in such things. Sizemore is set to come off the DL next Friday but,

and this is concerning given Sizemore's sliding-related injury history, there are questions as to whether he'll be ready and able to resume his season at that time. Bone bruises suck. They are painful and depending on their depth they can take a while to resolve. But they typically shouldn't scare a fan base like they do in Grady's case.

You're in the Right Spot

I spent Friday night in the press box for the first six innings. The highlight of the night was the Reds' staff requesting that their windows be open. At that point I jokingly tweeted that the lid to the coffin had been lifted. But there's some truth to it.

Most fans would likely believe that the press box would be a wonderful place to watch a game. And while the view is fine there's a definite case of detachment from the ticket-buying crowd. I'm not telling you anything you probably didn't already know given the first rule n a press box is you don't cheer. There's objectivity required and the guys in the box are doing their job in trying to capture and relay information to those seeking it.

But what's striking in many cases is the lack of energy or enthusiasm toward doing that job. I listened to a couple of people in the box discuss and compare prostate surgeries and I've seen as many laptops looking at CNN.com or Yahoo! Business pages as I have sport-related pages. What's striking as well is the realization that for many or most up in the press box that this is their grind. It's a job and it's a job that's evolving while many of the people doing it are reluctant to evolve with it. Newspapers are dying, reporters are responsible for arranging their own travel and they are spending the majority of their time away from their families. Many would assume being around the ballpark would be invigorating and a dream job. But that's not the impression you'd have sitting up in the box. There are exceptions. Guys like Anthony Castrovince and Jordan Bastian work hard and they've adopted the newer mediums that are available for them to entertain and inform their readers and Twitter followers. These guys are part of the new breed of reporters and they do their jobs really well.

You can also 'see' that they enjoy their jobs in the words they write.

At the end of the day though, if you're looking for coverage that comes from people as passionate as you are about the Tribe, you need to sources other than the newspaper guys.

You’re not going to get much emotion from them and games like Friday night and last Friday night are all about the emotions they generate. That’s one reason Tom Hamilton is held so dearly in Cleveland. He emotes and he wears those emotions of a game in his voice.

The point is that if you’re looking for a recap to a game you’re watching or just watched then newspaper guys are great. But if you’re looking to attach emotionally or seeking someone’s perspective who has a tie to the team’s performance and lives and dies with each game like you do, well, you need to be here reading guys like Paul Cousineau and Nino Colla and Adam Burke, etc., etc., et al.

Do the Right Thing

It was nice to see the basketball Gods smile down on the Cavaliers this past Tuesday when Cleveland drew the first and fourth picks in next month’s NBA Draft.

Now Chris Grant needs to make those picks count and he can easily and clearly do so by selecting Kyrie Irving with that #1 pick. That’s not a bandwagon opinion either. Irving, even before the college season started, was a #1 pick candidate and was being talked about as potentially the best player available in the 2011 draft.

This draft may not feature immediate, high impact talent but Irving stands out even more because of that. He is quite likely the surest thing in the draft and the Cavaliers are in dire need of the playmaking ability he’ll bring.

I have no idea who will be available at #4 that’s worthy of the Cavaliers’ affection but they could do worse than Irving at #1 and a big man at #4. It might be a big reach at #4, but if a guy like Bismack Biyombo was selected with that second first round pick I’d be good with it. Biyombo is 6’9” and 245lbs and he’s a center. That might sound strange but his wingspan is 7’7” so his length is actually fine for the position. Some scouts have said that he has a mean streak and is a physical player in the mold of 4-time NBA Defensive Player of the Year Ben Wallace. That’s in part because his offensive game is lacking but the same scouts also say that if he can develop a bit of an offensive game his upside is Oklahoma City’s Serge Ibaka.

If the Cavs get a playmaking point guard in Irving and they can get a young, nasty defensive center in Biyombo then I'd be thrilled.

If at anytime I hear the name Kemba Walker after hearing "With the _____ pick in the 2011 NBA draft the Cleveland Cavaliers select…." well, the Weekend Wrap that follows the draft is going to come with parental warnings.

You got a gift Mr. Grant. Cash it in, make it count.

I need twitter followers to validate my existence and feel better about myself. Help a brother out by going to https://twitter.com/Peeker643