Report 1:

Here we are on June 16, 2009 and the Yankees are coming off a very important game. AJ Burnett Pitched very well, seemed to have great command of his fastball which leads to his effectiveness with his breaking ball. When a pitcher has command and velocity with their fastball it leads to confidence and sharp bite to their breaking ball. AJ had these two things working well.

With that said the bats did some serious damage on Sunday off arguably one of the most dominant pitchers in the game today. He was pounded for 9 earned runs the most ever in this career. They made Santana throw a lot of pitches and they were able to lay off his changeup in key spots. His velocity was down between 88-91 mph which made his fastball more hittable, he usually stays around 94 mph.

I’ll be the first one to say it that the Yankees tend to play down to the competition at times. We have the Nationals coming in for a three game set at the Stadium. The Nationals have 16 wins and it would be completely unacceptable if the Yankees lose a game! I look at this series as a turning point to the season. The Yankees are 0-8 against the Red Sox and unbelievably just 2 games behind them for first place. The Yankees must win the games they should and it starts tonight.

CC is on the hill and look for a dominant performance that CC needs and the Yankees. It would be huge for the team to have back to back quality starts from their two key free agent signings. I am very confident that CC will shut the Nationals down. The key factor is how the Bats respond to a wild hard throwing pitcher who they haven’t seen before. The Yanks have a history of struggling against pitchers who fall into that category. Particularly when it comes down to pitchers they haven’t seen before.

Keys to the Game:

1. CC establishing his fastball to both sides of the plate and not over use his changeup, which will keep his off-speed pitches very effective.
2. Clearly the Nationals have a pretty thin lineup, so do not let Nick Johnson or Adam Dunn beat you. Johnson is a very patient hitter who will not get himself out by chasing bad pitches so concentration is critical during his at-bats especially if runners are on base. Dunn on the other hand is a free swinger who shoots for the fences every at-bat, look for plenty of sliders to be featured to Dunn from CC.
3. Stay Patient at the plate against Martis and look out over the plate early in the count and don’t try to pull the ball.