

Masterson Struggles; Bats Alive in Win Over Sox

Written by {ga=riverburns}

Friday, March 01 2013 7:15 PM -



Wherever the Indians bats have been since Monday, they found their way back to Goodyear, Arizona on Friday. Matt Carson and Mike McDade both found the deepest part of center field, and succeeded in depositing baseballs there with a couple of runners on, en route to a 9-7 victory over the visiting White Sox. The looming news of the day was all about the Tribe's closer, who was the topic of some bad news today, but the Indians still had a ball game to play.

It was a battle of the aces, as Terry Francona sent his Opening Day starter Justin Masterson to go up against Robin Ventura's left handed reliever-turned-starter Chris Sale. Both pitchers made it through the first inning relatively unscathed, but Masterson got into some trouble when a few of his sinkers turned into rise balls.

Masterson, who was working some change-ups into his usual repertoire of fastballs and sinkers, claimed that every single hit he allowed came on a bad sinker. He and the skipper both appreciated what the sinker was doing when it was effective.

He refused to blame the Arizona air for when things didn't go right, and pointed out that, "When they were good, guys were swinging over the top of them." When they weren't good, the White Sox were hitting them very far. Da yan Vicedo got into one of those risers, and hit it as far as I've ever seen anyone hit the ball in four plus seasons at the Goodyear Ballpark, to start the second inning.

For a moment, it looked as though the wheels were about to come off, Hector Gimenez kept the

Masterson Struggles; Bats Alive in Win Over Sox

Written by {ga=riverburns}

Friday, March 01 2013 7:15 PM -

wheels turning with a line drive single to left, then Brent Morel hit one out to left-center. It landed on the berm, not nearly as far as Vicedo's shot, but it counted for two runs, just the same.

The White Sox sprayed three singles in the third inning to notch another run, which meant the hook for Masterson.

Preston Guilmet threw one pitch in relief, but got Morel to ground into a fielder's choice to end the inning with minimal damage.

In the other dugout, Chris Sale threw two and two thirds innings for Ventura. He struck out three, gave up two hits, and walked a batter before the White Sox opted to have Jeff Gray pitch to the right-handed hitting Marson to end the 3rd inning.

Scott Kazmir continues the uphill climb towards coming back, after being out of the big leagues a year ago. He has Francona's endorsement, which goes a long way towards getting some innings. The Tribe's skipper just loves the way the balls coming out of his hand this spring. As Kazmir will tell you, the hitter will tell whether what he's doing is working or not.

On Friday, White Sox bats told everyone that Kazmir was throwing the ball well. In two innings pitched, he allowed a hit and struck out three.

The former Tampa Bay Ray and American League All-Star says he was drained mentally, but seemed to regroup and find his mechanics with a year in the Independent League.

The Indians got on the board with an RBI single in the fourth inning from Ben Francisco, which came right after Mike Aviles kept the inning alive with a double over Vicedo in left field. Cord Phelps added a single, to set the table for Matt Carson, who hit the ball at the batter's eye, to the deepest part of the Goodyear Ballpark, above the 410' sign on the wall.

That erased the 4-0 lead the visiting White Sox had coming into the inning.

They took the lead in the home half of the fifth on an RBI groundout off the bat of Carlos Santana. Lou Marson drew a one-out walk, moved over to third on Mark Reynolds double off the wall in left center field, and came home when Chicago reliever Leyson Septima got the Indians DH to ground out to short to make it 5-4.

Masterson Struggles; Bats Alive in Win Over Sox

Written by {ga=riverburns}

Friday, March 01 2013 7:15 PM -

David Huff starred in "A Tale of Two Innings". The sixth inning was a disaster for the word "go" for the Indians 2006 1st-round pick. Huff

allowed a single, a four-pitch walk, and an Earl Weaver special, the 3-run dinger, courtesy of Marcus Simien, the 21nd #83 to hit a round-tripper on Friday, after Carson's bomb in the fourth.

That gave the White Sox a 7-5 lead, but it was short-lived.

Mike McDade answered in the bottom half of the frame with a monster shot of his own into the center field batter's eye, and the Indians had scored three runs on their first hit of the inning, after Ben Francisco reached on an error and Cord Phelps walked. Roberto Perez flew out to end the inning, but the damage was done; the Indians reclaimed the lead, 8-7.

Huff bounced back, and threw an essentially flawless 7th, save the drama of a four-pitch walk to Andy Wilkins. He fixed the problem he caused by picking Wilkins off first, then getting DeWayne Wise to ground out to end the inning on the next pitch. For his efforts, he was the pitcher of record, and recorded his first win of the spring.

Ezekiel Carrera came in to run for Carlos Santana after a bases on balls, and like a good neighbor, and provided the Indians with an insurance run in the eighth. It was all his doing; first a steal of second base, then he had to improvise.

White Sox catcher Josh Phegley caught him wandering too far off of a second base with Chris McGuinness at the plate Josh Bell made his second error of the game at third base, mishandled the throw, and Carrera scored on the ricochet to make the score 9-7, which stuck.

Matt Capps worked a scoreless 8th and Joe Martinez followed suit in the 9th for his first save in Cactus League play. Matt Langwell was also scheduled to pitch, but never got the call.

The news of the day was Chris Perez and his strained shoulder muscle. He'll begin a throwing program in 7-10 days, but Terry Francona said after the game that he does not know about Opening Day, and to set a date for his return at this point would be creating an artificial deadline.

The Indians will be back at it tomorrow in Goodyear, as they take on the San Diego Padres. Th

Masterson Struggles; Bats Alive in Win Over Sox

Written by {ga=riverburns}

Friday, March 01 2013 7:15 PM -

e first pitch is at 3:05 ET; Ubaldo Jimenez will get his first start of the spring.

Bud Black will counter with Edinson Volquez for the Padres.