

## Masterson Sets the Tone Early in Shutout Win

Written by {ga=riverburns}

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The Indians were firing on all cylinders on Wednesday in a 4-0 win over the Los Angeles Dodgers in Goodyear, Arizona. Tribe manager Terry Francona was extremely pleased with his team's performance on the field, on "a good day, all the way around."

Justin Masterson, making his third appearance of the spring, "set the tone for a really good day," according to Francona. He got better as the day went on; after giving up a single to Alfredo Amezaga, the first batter of the day, Masterson got Skip Schumaker to bounce one to Mark Reynolds, who turned the double play, setting up a Yasiel Puig strikeout to end the inning.

Things only got easier for the Tribe's Opening Day starter after that; he survived two base runners, after hitting Jeremy Moore on a 3-1 pitch and giving up a single to Elian Herrera, by way of inducing his second double play in as many innings. He got Brian Barden and Jesus Flores on strikes to start the third, then had the sinker working for 3 ground balls, including a single by Puig that was negated by a Juan Uribe 6-4-3 double play to end the his day after four innings.

It's March 6th, but Jason Giambi generated his first bit of offense of the spring, even though Francona was emphatic about how he likes the former Yankee's approach at the plate and that they aren't, at all, concerned about batting averages at this point. Mark Reynolds double off the wall in right field missed by a home run by a matter of inches to lead off the inning.

He moved to third base on a Yan Gomes single to left field, but Gomes found himself on second base with a good bit of hustle, when he caught the Dodgers napping on the throw back to the infield.

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"To me, that's good baseball; that's inspiring," Francona said of Gomes, who came to the Tribe in the offseason from Toronto. "That lifts a whole ballclub. I know its only March, but that's the way you play."

Giambi hit one to the warning track in left field, which brought Reynolds home from third on the sacrifice fly for the Indians first run of the day. Matt Carson kept it going, with an single that scored Gomes from 2nd base, and then stole a base with Lonnie Chisenhall at the plate.

Ryan Rohlinger flew out with two runners on to end the inning, but the Indians took a 2-0 lead, which gave Masterson the win, his second of the spring.

Giambi's presence at the plate was a little more pronounced in a 5th inning that the Dodgers and relief pitcher Matt Palmer would sooner forget. The fun all started after a 1-out walk to Jason Kipnis; Palmer tried to pick him off first, but his throw got a lot more of Kipnis's helmet than his first baseman's glove. Kipnis took second on the error, and Terry Francona had seen enough of his starting second baseman, lifting him for pinch-runner Nate Spears.

Spears got in on the fun, when Palmer committed his second throwing error of the at-bat and Spears took third base.

Spears scored on a single by Yan Gomes, who went 2-for-3 to bring his Cactus League batting average up to .412 (not that Francona thinks about that stuff). Giambi notched his first hit of the spring on what appeared to be a routine fly ball to center field, but Herrera lost it in the sun.

Gomes scored on the play, which made it 4-0, and that would stick as the final score.

Dodgers starter Hyun-Jin Ryu threw three solid innings, but didn't fare so well when Don Mattingly sent him out to pitch the fourth. The Dodgers southpaw from Incheon, Korea was moving right along, through a full 3 innings, before getting the hook before registering an out in the fourth inning. He had yielded just one hit and struck out five, including getting the Indians in order on strikes, all looking, before Reynolds double that lead off the 4th inning.

The Tribe's bullpen was outstanding for the Indians on Wednesday, especially the lefties. Rich Hill worked the 5th inning, "pitched himself into the middle of a bind, then pitched himself right

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out of it,” in the words of Francona.

It began with a walk to AJ Ellis to start the inning, then a Jeremy Moore single, and the Dodgers had runners in scoring position with one out, but Hill bounced back to whiff Barden and Flores.

Nick Hagadone struck out two in a scoreless 6th. Scott Barnes, who was as good Francona’s staff had seen him, worked an inning and a third of scoreless ball.

“He was so efficient,” the Tribe manager remarked.

Francona went into a little more detail, with regard to Hagadone.

**“(Hagadone) threw the ball great. When he attacks the strike zone with that stuff he has, it’s exciting. (He) just has to attack the zone. I don’t care who’s hitting, his stuff is so good.**

**He creates such an angle; when he harnesses that and he command that, it’s going to be exciting.”**

Francona was unable to provide an update on reliever Frank Hermann’s elbow, but we were told to expect an announcement in the morning. The Indians are back in action on Thursday in Goodyear, where they’ll take on the Giants. T

he first pitch is at 3:05 ET/1:05 AZ; Ubaldo Jimenez will be the one throwing it.

Bruce Bochy will counter with Tim Lincecum for the defending World Champs.