



The Indians only played half of the four games scheduled for this week's series against the Yankees because even Mother Nature was tired of watching the Tribe's starting pitching. Maybe it was just Bob Feller doing a lot of crying. In any event, rain washed out the final two games of the series against the Bronx Bombers, who are still bombing away despite the losses of Derek Jeter, Mark Teixeira, Alex Rodriguez, and Curtis Granderson to injury. There was still some small semblance of good, a lot of bad, and a s-ton of ugly.

We'll start with the good, because it will take the shortest amount of time to write. Although it was not enjoyable to have two days without baseball, the Indians really needed that first night off. The second night off due to rain seemed a little superfluous, but the team needed a day to take a break. Without the services of Carlos Santana and the team slated to use their seventh starter in nine games on Wednesday, the rain was a blessing.

As far as any good that happened on the field, those moments were few and far between. The atmosphere before the Home Opener on Monday was incredible. The stadium was packed, the people were loud, the weather was quite good, and excitement and optimism radiated through the 41,000-plus in attendance. More on that later, but it was great to see the ballpark full and hear the roar of the crowd for Michael Bourn, Nick Swisher, Mark Reynolds, and Tito Francona when they were introduced.

It was good to see Carlos Carrasco back on the mound and his velocity in tact. Prior to the injury in 2011, Carrasco's average fastball velocity was 92.5 mph. On Tuesday, he averaged 93.6 and touched 97 on a couple of occasions. Obviously the end result of his start left a lot to be desired, but command is usually the last thing to return after major surgery.

Carlos Santana did not break anything when he left the Home Opener injured. It was a definite "oh shit!" moment, as it was an 11-3 game entering the eighth inning with Santana still in the

game. The injury happened in the ninth of an 11-6 game. Lou Marson would have been in the game had it not been for his neck injury, but he was only to be used in an emergency situation, which is exactly what happened. The Indians dodged a huge bullet there, especially with the way Santana has been swinging the bat.

The last bit of good belongs to Brett Myers. His stat line clearly wasn't good, allowing seven runs and 11 hits in 5.1 innings of work, along with three more gopher balls. But, he sucked it up and took the beating that he knew was coming when Carrasco left because of the ejection. If Francona had known that the next two games would have been rained out, Myers wouldn't have endured that kind of beating. But, he seems to have taken it well. Don't read too much into the stat line. He had no interest in being out there and it showed. The Indians weren't touching up Andy Pettitte for seven runs anyway, let alone 14.

Plenty of bad and ugly to get to now, unfortunately. I'll start with the Carlos Carrasco ejection. The only reason I don't label this "ugly" is because there really is a grey area. Lewis Pollis over at Wahoo's On First [gave a reasonable defense](#) (includes video) of Carrasco's "I slipped" argument. As Pollis notes, Carrasco looked off balance. Furthermore, Carrasco's fastball registered 91 on the radar gun, which is well below the velocity he had been sitting at for most of the game.

Now, it looks really bad. Carrasco had just returned from a suspension for intentionally throwing up and in at Billy Butler back in 2011. The knock on Carrasco has always been his makeup. Those questions will forever linger now. Not only has Carrasco been labeled a loose cannon, his reputation is going to really hurt his ability to pitch inside to hitters.

I can't help but wonder what the outcome would have been if the home plate umpire had been any of the other three umpires. Tim McClelland, Jerry Meals, and Marvin Hudson are all veteran umpires who have dealt with this situation before. It just so happened that rookie umpire Jordan Baker was behind the plate. He, inexplicably, threw the ball back to Carrasco before ejecting him, leading to quite a bit of confusion. Francona came out in support of Carrasco, which was a rather telling development, since Francona had to be well aware of the previous suspension. In some ways, it almost looked like Francona was lecturing Baker, who nodded and listened more than spoke.

In any event, what's done is done and Carrasco now has an even worse reputation around the league.

I mentioned that there would be more on the Home Opener atmosphere. Ubaldo Jimenez sucked the energy right out of the crowd with his first inning performance. Right from the first pitch, an 84 mph fastball, Jimenez was a mess. That's not a new development, as Jimenez has been a mess since the Indians acquired him. But, that was the worst possible start. I'll have a lot more on Jimenez in my View from the Porch column tomorrow.

The Indians got three gift runs to tie the game up, with some perfectly placed balls in play and a ball that hit the second base bag, but it was clear that Jimenez was going to take a beating. He did. Matt Albers and Rich Hill made it worse. The Indians haven't won a Home Opener since 2008.

Overall, the series with the Yankees was ugly, from the games to the weather. Joe Girardi, rightfully, [lashed out](#) at Major League Baseball and their schedule makers for scheduling the Indians and Yankees in April. The two teams only play once in Cleveland and have very few mutual off days. Girardi believes that both games will have to be made up as part of a May 13 doubleheader.

The schedule is something that I have had a long time problem with. The Indians should only play in warm weather cities, domes, or against the AL Central in April. It's asinine to put the Indians or any other team in a logistical nightmare with a rainout or two. Remember 2007 when the Indians had to make up four games with the Seattle Mariners? There are only a few off days during the MLB season and every one of them is precious.

With this recurring interleague BS, the Indians could have played in Atlanta in April instead of in late August. The hope was to play night games because the Yankees are usually a big draw. The Tigers and Blue Jays had day games scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday and were able to fit them in. Wednesday's game in Detroit featured a rain delay of two hours and 29 minutes prior to the start and was finished in the rain around 7 p.m. It was scheduled to start at 1 p.m.

The saddest part is that this is a problem every year with at least one team. A very easy-to-fix problem at that.

It's a long season, but the first two home games took some of the life of the casual fans. The diehards will be around all season, but the casual fans who filled the ballpark for the Home Opener were treated to a really ugly first impression. Some have already jumped ship and are counting down the days until the NFL Draft. Others are teetering on the bumper of the bandwagon. Some, to their credit, have given the team a longer leash.

The starting rotation was a problem all along and it showed itself in the first two games. Of course, taking the two starts into context, one was Ubaldo Jimenez, who we know is a mess, and the other is Carlos Carrasco who was making his first start in 615 days. Like I said above, Brett Myers knew what was going to happen when he entered the game and lacked focus.

All in all, with a tumultuous start, the Indians are 3-5 and now start play against the Central Division with a weekend set against the Chicago White Sox. Hopefully there will be some more good things to discuss on Monday.