

Morning Rundown: Indians Fall to Sox, But Seeing Lefty Success

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Saturday, April 13 2013 11:55 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, April 16 2013 11:36 AM



If you follow me on Twitter, you know I've given up on my quest to find Mark Reynolds a nickname. I'm sure something will come along, at least all my brilliant ideas do when I'm not trying. Which means, I have no brilliant ideas, because I'm always trying. See what I did there?

Reynolds has reached rock star status in my mind. The guy hits some incredible bombs at the most opportune times. Granted it is only two weeks, but the man is quickly endearing himself to Cleveland. Which is all the more reason he needs something cool to call him by. I mean, Mark is so plain and boring. And with a regular last name like Reynolds? Come on now.

Until that happens, I <3 reynolds="" will="" have="" to="" do="" i="" could="" just="" add="" a="" y="" on="" the="" end="" like="" tito="" does="" for="" everyone="" swishy="" bourny="" stubby="" heheh="" yany="" haha="" reynoldsy="" yeah="" that="" doesn="" t="" work="" span="">

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W: Jake Peavy (2-1)

L: Brett Myers (0-2)

S: Addison Reed (4)

[\[BOXSCORE\]](#)

Do not look down on **Brett Myers** for his start against the White Sox in this one. Of course, if you just look at his line, six innings, two runs off six hits and one walk with four strikeouts, you would be impressed and hopeful that maybe Myers can be a functioning member of those rotation.

But if you were to watch the game, you might be a little mad that Myers surrendered the lead in the sixth. Never mind the fact it was a 1-0 lead and it was in a game in which Jake Peavy was on.

Peavy didn't walk one, struck out 11 (we told you the Indians would have those days), and made one mistake. And it was on the first pitch to Michael Bourn. Without that mistake, Peavy goes seven scoreless and Myers isn't even in that position.

Myers pitched well, he made one mistake as well. And it came after he had his one walk of the game. Other than that? His breaking pitch was working, he worked the zone, he looked really good. He [looked like the veteran pitcher the Indians signed him to be](#), and then some. He made a mistake and unfortunately it cost him the game. And it is worth pointing out that the mistake was to Paul Konerko, someone who is no stranger to hitting mistakes or beating the Indians.

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"It's easy to tell somebody to have confidence," Francona said. "But once you do it and you feel good about yourself, the idea then is to grow off of that and continue to do that. I'm sure it helped. It should. He threw the ball very well."

You couldn't have expected for him to be perfect could you? It's a shame that it had to end that way, but you couldn't have asked for more from him and if he can give more performances like that this year, the Indians may be fine after all. A quality start is all you need, especially with the lineup that we saw on Saturday.

This was all Jake Peavy though. The man was spot on. Just as the White Sox could do nothing about Justin Masterson on Friday, it was all Peavy on Sunday. It just happens. You tip your cap and move on, especially since the Indians not only won the series, but also battered around that ace of the Sox on Saturday.

Random Notes...

Going into the game, the Indians were 5-1 [when their starter lasts at least six innings pitched](#) and winless when (0-4) when they don't. Obviously, Myers went six so that turns to 5-2, but it goes to show you that the starter going six is big in a victory or not.

Half the hits, the lone run, Michael Bourn ladies and gentlemen, the Indians offense on Sunday.

Bourn's leadoff home run was shades of Grady Sizemore, who is second to Kenny Lofton with 29, but actually, according to Tom Hamilton, [through Waiting for Next Year's Scott](#), only Bourn and, wait for it....Matt Lawton...have ever hit a leadoff home run on the first pitch in Progressive Field. Yes, Matt "My Kid's Bike is Better than Your Kid's Bike" Matt Lawton.

Nick Swisher has hit in 20 consecutive games at Progressive Field, dating back to his run with the White Sox in 2008. Incredible, three teams, several years. And it isn't like he has spent the entire time in the National League either. Granted he finished up with the White Sox and went onto the Yankees, not a division rival, but he was there every year. It's the longest streak in park history. Michael Young 20.

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Lonnie Chisenhall deservedly got an error in the sixth when Keppinger reached to lead off the frame, but it was not an easy play. The ball took a weird hop. He's no Hannahan, but he's also would have had to make an amazing play to make that play an out.

Jason Giambi, 0-for-4 but [best walk-up music in a long time](#) .

Ryan Raburn got picked off at first. [We also found out he is severely balding](#) .

[HEADED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION]

I just need to continue to make this point, especially [since the evidence continues to mount](#) .

The numbers of the two lefty horses the Indians have faced the past few weeks, prior to 2013, against the Indians...

David Price: 5-0, 7 ER, 22 H, 7 BB, 43 K, 2 HR (38.1 IP)

Chris Sale: 2-0, 8 ER, 25 H, 10 BB, 37 K, 3 HR (34.1 IP)

And in the one game they pitched against the Indians this season...

David Price: 0-1, 8 ER, 10 H, 3 BB, 3 K, 2 HR (5 IP)

Chris Sale: 0-1, 8 ER, 8 H, 2 BB, 3 K, 2 HR (4.1 IP)

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First, look how dominant the two guys were, especially Price. He has insane numbers against the Indians in his career prior to this year. So insane that in one start, essentially everything was doubled. The amount of home runs he gave up, the amount of runs, hits even.

And if you think Sale was good against the Indians in just three starts, look how amazing Price was in a few more.

And in just one week, the Indians have completely dismantled the body of work those two gentlemen put up against the Tribe. Why? Probably because for once in their careers, they faced an Indians lineup that had more than two or three right handed hitters in it.

Sale against left-handers in his career: they hit .220 with just three home runs in 396 at-bats. He has walked just 22 lefties. Price? An incredible .198 average with 10 home runs and 51 walks in 706 at-bats. That's 1 home run every 70 at-bats. Compare that to the one home run he gives up every 35 at-bats against right-handers. These guys feed off hitters who hit from the left side.

Nick Swisher (.324, 1 HR, 10 BB in 37 AB) is one of the few guys who has faced Price more than 20 times and has had success. Look at this:

Asdrubal Cabrera: 3-16

Shin-Soo Choo: 2-14

Michael Brantley: 1-10

And Travis Hafner, the Indians would completely avoid using Hafner (or he happens to be hurt) every time Price pitches against the Indians. But those are the numbers of those three gentlemen against Price in their careers. All hitting lefty.

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How about Sale?

Asdrubal Cabrera: 5-21

Shin-Soo Choo: 1-14

Michael Brantley: 1-12

Jason Kipnis: 4-12

Travis Hafner: 2-7

These are the main guys the Indians have featured in their lineup the past few years. All hitting left-handed against Chris Sale and David Price. And look at the results. They can't hit those guys! That is why they've had so much success.

Put a few right handers in the lineup and look what happens. Now part of it might have just been some bad games. Sale didn't look quite right, David Price quite wasn't hitting the zone. But you have to applaud both the approach the Indians took against those two guys in the particular games, and the lineup the Indians are able to put out.

Instead of Shelley Duncan (bless that man), Lou Marson, and Jose Lopez, the Indians backups that hit right handed that are put out there are Ryan Raburn and Mike Aviles. And these are guys just replacing someone like Kipnis against Sale or Brantley against Price. That isn't even considering the fact that guys like Choo and Hafner are not the middle of the lineup guys, Swisher and Reynolds are.

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[Has acquiring these guys solved everything?](#) No, but it has at least made the Indians much more viable against left-handed starters. Granted, you don't see them everyday, like Manny Acta would like to point out, but you see them at least once, sometimes twice a week and the really good ones have killed the Indians in the past.

The results have been clear, aside from batting around those aces. But check out how consistent the numbers look prior to Sunday's game against the White Sox, something I tweeted out during the game.

Indians V LHP: 42-175 (.240), 7 HR, 15 BB, 34 K

Indians V RHP: 41-170 (.241), 7 HR, 20 BB, 50 K

Think that's awesome? According to Bastian, those lefty numbers lead the American League. Who would have even thought that?

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

What's helping these situation is not only Mark Reynolds, but the fact that Reynolds gets to hit with runners on base. He's making things happen and is incredibly dangerous down in the lineup in those situations. Think about it. This is a guy who just absolutely crushes strikes. If you throw him a fastball, he's hitting it a long way.

By the Indians getting on, they're forcing pitchers to throw Reynolds strikes. They have to! [And Reynolds is making them pay](#)

. If Reynolds was hitting a little higher, like fourth or third, he wouldn't be having this success. It's those guys that get the tough pitches and the ones getting pitched around because there is no one on base. So credit where the Indians are able to put Reynolds in the lineup and the lineup ahead of him for getting on and making it difficult for him.

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"It's been fun," said Reynolds, who signed a one-year contract with Cleveland this past offseason. "Every time I'm at the plate, I have somebody on base -- it seems like that. I've just got to keep doing my job and driving those guys in."

One guy that is being used to being driven in, did so on his own on Sunday and counted for the Indians lone run. Then he exited late [after getting stepped on trying to beat out a base hit](#) . **Michael Bourn** left with a cut on his right finger that required stitches.

"It shouldn't take too, too long," said Bourn, who added that he would surely miss Tuesday's series opener against Boston. "I'll probably be in a little bit of pain for the next day or two. Other than that, I should be fine."

He can't play with the stitches, but they shouldn't need to be in long, depending on the severity of the cut. The good news in my mind is the fact that he didn't break anything. Any sort of broken bone in a finger or the hand is bad news. So he's probably out for the Boston series, on the low end. Hopefully that is it. [You can see the cut in this image](#) .

I'd venture to guess Giambi gets some more time in the absence of Bourn, with Stubbs in center, Swisher in right, and Reynolds playing first. I'm sure it will be a match-up thing.

Carlos Santana ended up missing the entire weekend series (or so about) against the White Sox due to the left thumb injury that forced him out of the Tuesday game against the Yankees. The good news is that he didn't miss two Yankees games and he will probably be back when the Indians return to action on Tuesday. Given the fact that he hit in the bottom of the ninth on Sunday, I'd say things look good for him returning.

The Indians [had plans of potentially playing him on Saturday](#) , but after Santana went out and took swings in the cold weather, they all decided that it was best to not push it. Francona said not to read into Santana being pulled from the lineup and that he didn't suffer a set-back, and that it was simply a decision before the game to avoid the weather conditions.

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He then went on to mention that Monday's off day would make it really easy for them to just hold off for one more game and get him two more days of rest. So he's essentially been out a week, but has really only missed three games, which is a really good thing for the Indians.

Santana even said that Tuesday [would be a good day for him to return](#) , but that's Santana's word, not the Indians. We'll see, but I would assume if there's no issues moving forward, he'll be back. He looked great in his at-bat, almost ripping one gone and then working the walk. As if he never left. The one issue was gripping and swinging the bat, so if he was able to hit, you have to imagine he's good to go.

The other injury that has suddenly come into focus is the elbow soreness that has been felt by **Jason Kipnis**

"He doesn't even know when he did it," said Indians skipper Terry Francona. "He thought the last time he might have slept on it wrong, because it didn't hurt last night and it was a little tender this morning."

Hey man, I had this soreness in my shoulder earlier last week and I had no clue how I did it. Everyone says I slept on it wrong, but that's what everyone says when you tell them you don't know what you did to it. Kipnis was out of the lineup on Saturday and Sunday. Francona said it made sense to give him a rest against the tough left hander in Sale and get a bat like Raburn in there, and hey, it paid off. I'm sure the extra off day reasoning was why Kipnis also sat on Sunday, and should be back there on Tuesday, provided he doesn't sleep on it weird again.

Scott Kazmir may be [on the verge to make Saturday's start](#) , the next time the Indians will need a fifth starter. He'll make his first rehab assignment start on Monday with the Clippers, which lines him up for Saturday's start. Let's all hope that goes right.

For those of you keeping up on what Trevor Bauer is doing in Columbus, his debut was a well-pitched game. And for those of you keeping track, good news, we actually have quotes. Yes, this is how big Bauer is, he's going to be followed like this. He's an attention grabber.

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Bauer pitched well, [going six innings and striking out nine hitters](#), allowing just a solo home run as his lone blemish. he did walk three and give up four hits, but the strikeouts...the strikeouts! Perhaps that is difference between the Major and highest level of the Minor Leagues. Maybe all those strikeouts Bauer was tallying up came on the same types of pitches he was throwing against the Rays a little over a week ago.

Or maybe he just had his stuff. Or maybe it has something to do with Bauer "permeating his curveball." Yeah I don't know what that means.

"I decided yesterday I was going to throw a good curveball and, thankfully, it was there today," Bauer said. "I watched video from last year to find out what was working best then and it seemed like I should work on permeating my curveball more. I've been focusing on a lot of other stuff lately, but I spent about 15 minutes visualizing my pitches, with most of that going to the curveball, and it seemed to work."

Anyway, it's good Bauer got back on track in his first Columbus start. He talked more about the "changes" he is trying to make and how it will work into a big change for him on the mound. Bauer picked up the win in a shortened first game of a doubleheader and [will now continue in a rotation that will feature](#) Carlos Carrasco, Daisuke Matsuzaka, and Corey Kluber moving forward.

If you want a little more Bauer, [check out a video from Next Level Ballplayer](#) where they sat down with Bauer to talk about mechanics and pitching and his "explosive" training regimen.

I've ALWAYS had an issue with cell phone service at Progressive Field. There are times that I cannot get anything I'm trying to access to load. I watch the game, don't get me wrong, but I'm also on my phone, whether I'm looking something up or sending out a tweet here and there.

To be fair, I think I've had issues at other stadiums and arenas as well. But I go to Progressive Field more than any sporting venue, so when I have issues, I'll remember them more specifically. [The reception was an issue on Opening Day in an irritating way for fans](#). Maybe it was the mass-number of people, as everyone was trying to access the closest cell towers.

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You can take the "You're there to watch the game" mentality, and you are. Trust me, I don't ruin my experience by being on my phone the entire time like some people may do. But if someone goes out, you wanna know what's up and Twitter is an easy way to find that out. In an age when controversial calls are not replayed in the stadium, you want to know from people watching on television what actually happened. I've done it on more than one occasion, or at least tried to sometimes, and it is frustrating when things don't work.

TD on WFNY makes a good point though. As much as the Indians promote the use of social media, it is pretty sad when the local service doesn't even work well enough to gather enough pictures or tweets to post up.

The opening series was dampened not by the cell phone service but the rain, which claimed two games and my productivity on the blog this week. Let's be honest, [not only was the bullpen tired out](#), so was I. The canceled games gave me a chance to take a little break, which was needed with the amount of things I have going on right now. If you held tickets to either of those games though, congratulations. If you didn't, congratulations, you have a chance to see the Yankees. The [Indians have all the logistics on that here](#)

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The two games will be made up as a part of a doubleheader next month, taking place on May 13th, a Monday. And this is one of those traditional doubleheaders that starts at noon. Not this day-night stuff. One game ends, the next one starts just about right after. That's the way it's done. We need more of these actually scheduled in baseball. Of course that will never happen, but it should.

We joke around about how annoying it was to have Austin Kearns around, but best wishes to the former Indian as he [was taken to the hospital and diagnosed with an irregular heartbeat](#). That is not cool at all.

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Nino is in full baseball mode here and on [The Tribe Daily](#), his own Indians blog. Don't miss all the fun, photoshopped Indians players, and LOLTribe ridiculousness.

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