

## Morning Rundown: Tribe Put Tigers On Notice With Series Win

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Friday, May 10 2013 11:00 AM - Last Updated Monday, May 13 2013 7:30 AM

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Indians fever...Be a believer...In the Cleveland....INDIANS!

First place say whaaaaat?

You just get that feeling, especially after beating Justin Verlander on Saturday, that it didn't matter that the Indians hadn't led for a single pitch of Sunday's game until the top of the 10th inning. That club was going to find a way to take this series and send out the opening salvo to Detroit.

Statement made.

You're not taking the AL Central without a fight Detroit. Put up your dukes.

**INDIANS - 4 | TIGERS - 3**

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**W: Joe Smith (1-0)**

**L: Darin Downs (0-1)**

**S: Cody Allen (1)**

### [\[BOXSCORE\]](#)

The resiliency of this club. Not just to come back and win this game, but to come back and win this series after losing the first game, and having to face Justin Verlander in the second game to boot, is pretty incredible. There's no quit in this team and with the talent to make it happen, good things keep occurring.

As long as I've watched the Indians, there have been few spurts where I've felt that the Indians haven't fought incredibly hard or had that "fighter's mentality" sort of way to play. Now not only do they have that sort of thing, they've got talent that makes games and series like these possible. The fighter's mentality and the killer instinct.

And to go one step further, they show that quality during the game with the ability to get that two-out knock. All of the Indians runs came with two-out hits. In fact, they came away 3-for-6 in that category and as you may have noticed during the game, they lead the American League with two-out RISP average. No team is better in that department and that will win you a lot of games when you can consistently get that hit.

Let's talk about the ones that tied and won the game though specifically. Tito used all his bullets late, calling on Michael Bourn to hit for Raburn to lead off the ninth. And they always say good base stealers can steal a lot of bases. Great base stealers can steal bases when it counts. And Michael Bourn stole second base when it counted. A few hitters later, Michael Brantley comes through with the big two-out hit.

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An inning later Tito used the other bullet in chamber. After Cabrera lead off the inning with a double, Darin Downs wanted not piece of Carlos Santana. Fine that's okay. With two outs and Cabrera now on third after a Swisher ground out, Mark Reynolds and his pink shoes [were asked to do it again.](#)

*"I thought it was a good pitch," Tigers catcher Brayan Pena said. "It was down. Especially a power guy like him, you're always trying to keep the ball down, trying to get him to hit a ground ball, not to lift anything up. It just got the hole and it was a base hit."*

And it was a win. Tito said the shoes were ugly, I would have to second the motion. They look silly, but he got the job done wearing them and it made for a nice story. I mean, we should have figured that he simply wasn't going to sit on the bench wearing those things. They had to be a story and he made them a story with his big hit.

The other two-out knock came on a Jason Kipnis double in the third inning. Just a half a frame before in the second, Brayan Pena homered off starter Zach McAllister to give the Tigs a 2-0 lead. So credit to the Tribe for coming right back with a few runs. Kip's hit was nice, simply going the other way with an outside pitch down the third base line. The umpire seemed to have a wide strikezone and that seemed to befuddle the Indians the first time through the lineup since the team went 1-for-9 against Rick Porcello the first time through.

So tie game. Great, you kind of felt that they were going to fight for Z-Mac in this one and that could have been enough for awhile. That was until the fourth when Chisenhall made a horrendous throwing error that set up a rough frame. Despite giving up the third run on a sac-fly, Zach showed how much he's grown by maneuvering out of that inning with just the one run given up, especially since he had to face both Miguel Cabrera and Prince Fielder with the bases juiced.

And that is perhaps the stark difference between why the Indians won this series and the Tigers didn't. The Indians got three big time hits with runners in scoring position and two out.

The Tigers? Pena hit the two-run shot after a leadoff single. Cabrera and Fielder failing with one two outs and the bases juiced in the fourth were just two of the many RISP opportunities the Tigers had but squandered. And Fielder, who came up empty twice in the two-out RISP

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situation was one of four hits the Tigers didn't get in the clutch.

You have to hand it though to McAllister for that inning. He buckled down and got through it and even though it forced him to throw a lot of pitches, he managed to get through a few more to put in another quality start, despite not having his best stuff.

*"I battled. I didn't feel like I had my best stuff," McAllister said. "I was definitely happy with the way I battled against a good team like this."*

Remember what I said about good and great base stealers? Well McAllister has always been an okay starting prospect. I think he's now graduated from being a capable fifth starter to someone who can possibly be a reliable rotation member on a good team. Because those guys don't get faced with situations like he faced in this one and come out alive. He's showing some incredible growth in just a few months and that moment right there sticks out as one of his best. It's one thing to go out and shutout the Athletics one night at home. It's another to throw six gritty innings and get out of a situation that your defense put you in against perhaps the deadliest 3-4 combo in the American League.

Respect.

### Random Notes...

Of course there was some drama at the end of the game when the Indians took the lead. Because it happened with two outs, the Indians had to be warming up a few different guys. If you have a lead, Perez is your guy, if not, you go another direction. Chris Perez [started warming up, then stopped](#). And then did not come out to start the 10th.

He didn't come out to get the second out either.

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Or the final one. And then the speculation started. Is he hurt? Is it because there's a double header tomorrow? Do the Indians hate him?

Okay no one asked that last one, but hey.

Turns out Francona went to Perez to ask him to be honest about how he felt having had an intense save the night before and then looking at a quick turn around. Perez, was actually honest.

*"Missing a day here is better than missing two months," Perez said after the game. "I might've pitched in the past. ... I always want to pitch. I always want to be up. But I felt a little better today knowing we have good arms down there."*

Good for Chris putting the team first in that situation. Also putting his health in front. As he even admitted, he might have not done that in the past.

So it was Rich Hill that came out to face off against the left-handed Prince Fielder. Career numbers? 3-for-12 with a home run. Nothing overwhelmingly brilliant, but it is a left on left matchup and Hill [has been completely nails](#) against lefties this year. What's more awesome? He's destroyed right-handers. 1-for-12 against him this year after he got Victor Martinez on Sunday.

Dirks hit him up for a home run on Friday, which wasn't just his first home run blemish of the year, [but the first lefty home run blemish since 2009](#). 2009! Francona says he constantly called Hill this offseason, urging him to sign with the Tribe. Usually you don't really credit the manager with free agent pickups, but you can give all the credit to Tito on that one. Hill is working out fantastically. Rafael Perez? Tony Sipp? Whatever.

And then the first major league save for Cody Allen. The first of what could be a whole heck of a lot if he has the makeup. He certainly has the stuff.

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More importantly, it gives me another reason to once again bring up the fact that we need to be calling him Cody "The Loose Cannon" Allen. Two reasons. One, it rhymes, so it's perfect. [Two, because of this.](#)

That is all..

Since we're praising the bullpen, you need to give the best shout out to Bryan Shaw, who pitched two marvelous shutout innings in relief of McAllister. Who knows if the Indians have this chance without him going out there and doing that. Too bad you can't pick a reliever to give a win to, because he probably deserved it a little more than Joe Smith, who was great in the ninth, but Shaw got them through that early on and kept them in it.

Ryan Raburn looked incredibly pissed after Porcello pegged him early on. Like someone dumped his bowl of cereal or something.

Yan Gomes was 3-for-4 and it seems like he does nothing but hit. And throw people out. And call a great game behind the plate. And oh you know, just be awesome.

Reynold's pink shoes weren't the only new pink thing in MLB games on Mother's Day this year. There was pink sleeves, pink lapels, and pink stitching on the baseballs. Incredible.

### [DON'T TALK ABOUT IT, DON'T EVEN BREATHE ABOUT IT]

Part of me just wants to ignore whatever it is **Ubaldo Jimenez** is doing. Not watch his starts, not pay attention to anything he does, not even acknowledge him on here.

It's like walking into a shop with glass trinkets all around. I don't want to do it just out of overly cautious concern about knocking something down and seeing it shattered to pieces. Don't hand me that baby, because I just don't want to take a chance in dropping it. Oh, you want me to congratulate Ubaldo on his performance? No thanks, I'll just jinx him anyway.

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Poor guy can't win. Gets bashed when he's bad, gets ignored when he's good. This is what it has come to though. It is like Ubaldo is a glass baby. I don't want to touch him out of fear he shatters to pieces. [So I'm just gonna go over here and forget he exists](#) .

*"I've been able to go out there for the last three or four games and compete," Jimenez said, "and give the team a chance to be close on the scoreboard. I think it's all about my mechanics. The last three games I've been able to repeat my mechanics on every pitch."*

Just keep doing that. I'll acknowledge you at the end of the season.

### [RANDOM RUNDOWN]

It's going to be **Trevor Bauer** on Monday in [the second game of the double-header](#) against the Yankees. He'll get recalled for the one game using that 26th man rule, which is so good for the Indians in this current situation with Pestano out and the bullpen a little thin and an extra-innings game the day before.

It seems a little crazy to be using a top-flight pitching prospect like Bauer as your spot starter in these situations, which he has been used quite frequently in just a month and a half of work. But the Indians have actually broached the subject with Bauer and made sure it was something he is comfortable with.

*"Chris was just down there the last three days and visited with him for a pretty long time," Francona said. "Part of the conversation was, I think he asked, 'Do you think this hinders your development?' Because that's the last thing we want to do. And he was all on board with this. As long as he can handle it, I think it's good for his development, as long as he doesn't view it as an interruption."*

To me, I don't think Bauer is going out there and pitching any differently. It seems like he knows he is out the adjusting stuff and figuring it out. Perhaps as if he knows he is a "reconfiguration

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mode" that needs to be completed without interruption. So if the Indians are willing to deal with that on the major league level in a spot-start basis, doesn't seem to be bothering Bauer.

I guess you can count me as not the only one who noticed **Scott Kazmir's** velocity increase. The Indians noticed and even went back and looked. Pitching coach Mickey Callaway says Kazmir [hasn't hit the mid-90s fastball in a game](#) since 2009. Kazmir noted that he started pitching angry after he gave up that lone home run in the sixth.

*"Those were some angry throws right there after that home run," Kazmir said. "I feel like a light bulb went off with how I was throwing it, how I was behind the ball and getting through it. Hopefully I'll keep it going."*

Hey as long as he isn't hurting himself, he can throw angry all the time. He doesn't have to hit that consistently though as we've seen before that. If he's sitting around 91-92, he's going to be effective because of the way he's moving the ball around and throwing his secondary stuff.

Bourn being back in the lineup this weekend let the Indians flash that potent order to the fullest with Bourn leading off, Kipnis following and so on and so forth. Terry Francona [admitted he was being "stubborn"](#) with Jason Kipnis and Asdrubal Cabrera early, saying he wanted to split the lefties. Now he has Cabrera hitting third because he thinks that's where those two guys are more comfortable hitting. You know both will say they don't care, but just looking at it makes more sense, lefty/righty split be damned.

Bourn was out of the starting lineup on Sunday for a day off coming off his layoff and with a double header on Monday, so **Michael Brantley** was atop. Just need to mention these stats as a "tip of the cap" for Brantley during Bourn's absence. Hitting leadoff this year, Brantley was sitting at .310/.356 with a .772 OPS, 12 runs and two steals. He did a great job filling in and a big reason the offense was able to take off while Bourny was out. That needs to be mentioned.

The two hurt pitchers, **Brett Myers** and **Vinnie Pestano** [resumed throwing this weekend](#) . Myers on Saturday to Lou Marson and Vinnie Pestano on Sunday back in Cleveland. Myers will

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be with the team in Philadelphia, his old stomping grounds, to throw around the team. Obviously Vinnie takes less time in his return program, but we'll see how they progress this week.

**Lonnie Chisenhall** is struggling. He had that horrendous error that led to the extra run and put a lot of undue pressure on McAllister on Sunday, and Rick Manning even mentioned that he thinks the offensive struggles are now creeping into the way he plays defense.

Hey, that could be the case. Chisenhall was hitting well earlier in the season and Tito had been more likely to use him against a left-hander here and there. But with the way Reynolds is playing and now with Bourn back, I think you can pretty much guess that [Chiz sits when a lefty pitches](#). And when there's a situation late, he's going to get yanked.

*"He's just gotten himself into a little bit of a rut," Francona said. "You see him getting fastballs that he's normally all over and he's fouling them over the third-base dugout. ... He's a couple games away from being nice and respectable."*

*"A little bit," Francona said. "Early in the season, I didn't want to pinch-hit for Lonnie, because I thought I want to let guys kind of play, get their feet wet and not look over their shoulder. Now that we're into the season a little bit, I think you can start doing some things off the bench a little bit more."*

First off, Francona did something that I've KILLED Acta and Wedge for for years. Taking a guy like Chisenhall out of a situation late in the game. You gotta do it sometimes, let them try and get the confidence, or establish the proof that they can get it done, especially with a young team. But this is a winner right now, so I don't blame Francona for now switching up his methodology and going with the matchups that make sense.

Secondly, Chisenhall is still young. He needs to play at this level, so there's no reason to be sending him down. He has nothing to prove at Triple-A and if you do that, you are only furthering his development and potentially risking him to be damaged. Let's not turn him into Matt LaPorta. Let's let him stay up here and hit. He can do it at this level, he just needs to go back and make an adjustment like all major league hitters have to learn to do.

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The beauty? The Indians can afford to do this. Why? For one, they can most definitely sit him against lefties with all the options they have, getting guys like Giambi, Aviles, or Raburn more than just backup time. And they can afford to see him figure things out otherwise because he's hitting eighth in a loaded lineup that's producing.

Guys are going to struggle. It happens. Lonnie is going through a growth stretch. He'll be better for it if the Indians let him go through it and take his lumps. As I said, there is nothing left for him to learn in Triple-A. He needs to learn how to re-adjust to major league pitchers adjusting to him. This has to happen. He can't make defensive blunders like the one on Sunday though. That was downright atrocious.

Credit to [Terry Francona for saying something](#) that a lot of us in the Cleveland Indians amateur blogging community have been saying for sometime. Maybe now some people will listen.

*"Everybody keeps talking about, 'Let's get back to where it was in the '90s.' That's not fair. The city's not where it was in the '90s. These people have hit some hard times. I don't show up and rate our fans by attendance. I want our team to play good baseball. I know that when I walk around downtown, which I do a lot, people are excited and they're friendly."*

This is not the '90s, that's never going to happen again. So there's two people that need to get over that. The ones who are not attending because of it, and the ones who are blaming those people because of the '90s. I used to be in that latter group. I get it now. It isn't the 1990's, the glory days are over, the Browns are back and the Indians are not the top draw.

I think the 8, 9, 10-thousand number crowd draws are a little poor. But at least it isn't some of the 5, 6-thousand number draws we've seen. I understand it. I don't like it. Those are unacceptable. But early on it's going to be around 10,000 for the most part. As Francona would also note. It's cold and school is still in session. People are graduating. There are other things people are doing and occupied with. Things will pick up.

The only thing that I can now sit here and hope for is that things pick up a little more than last year because of the team's enthusiasm and the way they are playing. It has to be a little more

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real last year.

But I guess I'll let those fans that want to wait be the judge.

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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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