

Morning Rundown: Even Their Backups Are Good!

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Monday, May 20 2013 11:52 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, May 21 2013 8:01 AM



Unbelievable?

Indescribable?

Incredible?

Use words of awe, amazement, disbelief. There is this weird twist of joy, hope, and trepidation with this team right now.

We are joyful for what's happening on the field. We hold around the hope that this is for real. Yet we carry around the trepidation after what has happened the past two years.

I believe at one point last year, I told everyone, myself included, that it's just time to enjoy this. Set aside the trepidation and suspend your desire to buy in or cash out. Just enjoy what the Indians were doing.

I'm not going to do that this year. You do what you want. You take the approach you want to follow this team with as they enter the summer months. You can be hopeful, awestruck, tentative, not convinced, a straight-up believer, or you can just choose to enjoy it.

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[You can be excited.](#)

[You can choose to believe.](#)

Do what you want. I'm going to go ahead and buy in. If I get burned, so what. I'm not only enjoying what this team is doing, I'm buying into it. Hook, line, and sinker. I'm in the water.

MARINERS - 8 | INDIANS - 10 (F/10)

W: Joe Smith (2-0)

L: Charlie Furbush (0-3)

[BOXSCORE](#)

A game like this is why I'm in. This wasn't the sudden emergence of the rotation, Scott Kazmir went just three innings, and gave up five runs in the process. The bullpen couldn't keep the lead. There was no herculean effort from the man named Mega Mark, your three-hitter was 0-for-5 with three strikeouts.

This was a fight to the finish. It doesn't matter who the opponent is, when you win a game like this one, you have an incredible amount of fight and will-power. All those words up there, don't really seem to reflect what this team has been the past few games.

Invincible.

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They're downright invincible lately, they can't be touched. The fact that they just don't lose, regardless of the situation shows you with what kind of fire and energy this club is playing with. They're picking each other up, making everyone look good, and firing on all cylinders.

Who was it Monday against the Mariners?

Does it matter? Pick a guy. That's why this team has some staying power. That's why that if you want to go ahead and buy into what's going on here, you should have little trepidation. Forget last year, and the year before for that matter. This is a new team, a new manager, a new attitude, a new everything.

Just take a look at the 7-9 hitters in the lineup. You had Michael Brantley hitting third on Sunday, shifting all the way down to seventh in the order and that's with two backups in the game. Brantley moves down there, goes 2-for-4 with a walk and a pair of runs scored and literally sets the table for the 8-9 guys who knocked in seven of the 10 total runs in the game.

There's the unbelievable part. The 8-9 hitter? Seven runs batted in? Three home runs? Nine total home runs, 23 total runs batted in between two players who are largely backup bench players.

We may not be sure about Corey Kluber or the fifth starter.

[But I'm sure about this lineup and this bench.](#)

Yan Gomes has come in and made it even deeper and stronger. When you can solidify a backup catcher position? I mean what is this? It's almost an embarrassment of riches and it is awesome to be in this situation. Does any other team have a guy who can come in every fourth or fifth day and collect three hits, a few jacks in the process, and throw a few guys out on the basepaths?

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Don't go looking for that answer, it's a waste of time.

"He played a very good game," Indians manager Terry Francona said. "He threw the ball extremely well. His at-bats speak for themselves. It's very exciting."

It's very exciting? Shoot, it's incredibly amazing. I've never wanted to fall more in love with an Indians team than I do with this one. Every nook and crevice on this team that I look, I find something I like every day.

And just like that, [there's no "end in sight"](#) in regards to whatever it is that currently ails **Lou Marson**

. The Indians seem to be pretty content letting Marson's situation work itself out all by itself. Why disrupt what's going good at that point, right?

Marson is just hoping to get back on the field soon, but even said that he has not a solid clue as to when he could be back in action. In other words, the Indians are in no rush to get him back, so why would they press the issue of him rehabbing? To send Gomes back to Columbus.

No, because as long as Gomes is hitting the way he is hitting, he's not going anywhere anytime soon, regardless of Marson and his health status.

The other combo to that back end of the lineup against Seattle was Ryan Raburn, who hit the big three-run bomb in the second inning prior to Gomes' first blast. Raburn collected his fifth of the year, is right around the .300 mark, and has 14 RBI as a bench player. As a bench player! There's only 78 players in the AL that have more RBI. I wonder how many of them are starting regularly? Actually, don't wonder that. Raburn has 87 at-bats. The only one with more RBI and less at-bats is Pedro Florimon, who has the exact same number of at-bats and one more RBI.

If there's one thing he's doing, [it's making the most of his opportunities](#) .

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"Anytime I'm in the lineup, I'm amped," Raburn said. "I love playing this game. I love playing with this team. I look forward to every moment I get a chance to go out there and try to help the ballclub."

I'm getting to the point where I'm amped anytime he's in the lineup too.

So Gomes and Raburn, too regular non-regulars getting the job done. It really doesn't matter who, because it is quite clear that any guy that is given the opportunity to be the guy, takes it and runs with it. Down in the ninth? No problem. Down again in the tenth? Big deal. Just give this team a sliver of a chance and it is over, as demonstrated in three different games this series. The Mariners are shouting no mas, no mas. I can hear them all the way from their plane.

Random Notes...

As noted Gomes can throw and he did it twice in this one, throwing out Saunders and Ryan at different points in the game.

It helped out the Indians pitchers, who had to see the bullpen make up for the lack of presence in the rotation today. They needed something to happen after Scott Kazmir had to exit early on. It just wasn't Kaz's day. It is however Matt Albers and Bryan Shaw's days.

The two combined on four shutout innings with five strikeouts and a pair of hits. Without them, the game may get out of hand.

Of course there's going to be [a lot of angst and unrest for yet another](#) shaky Chris Perez outing. He walked a pair, gave up a solo home run, and I can already hear people. But you know what, he didn't blow the save, and both Pestano and Joe Smith gave up runs and leads as well.

So save your rants... Perez says he's going to take to the tape to see if he's doing something

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differently. But he's ultimately chalking it up to being in a bit of a slump and tipping his cap to the opposing hitters.

Jason Kipnis just couldn't let Bourn have the best series. Not only did Kip reach base three times, he scored a run and stole his ninth base of the year. Not only did he have quite the series he is having quite the month of May. In four against Seattle he collected two hits in every game, scored a run in every game and knocked in four runs himself. For May he's hitting .324 with a .386 on-base percentage, 6 home runs, 20 RBI, and 16 runs scored.

Along with Kipnis and Gomes, Nick Swisher and Michael Brantley had multi-hit games. As mentioned, the big guys in Reynolds and Cabrera went hit-less, but when you have a 1-9 lineup that can produce from any spot, you can get away with that and still score 10 runs.

Of course the Mariners defense once again did not come to play. This time they actually had credited errors in this one, three of them to be exact. Of course the big one was in the ninth with two outs and Seattle's closer Tom Wilhelmsen (bar keep, up up!) simply dropping the ball. He has no one to blame but himself on that one.

Even after those disastrous two games defensively for Seattle, they're still one of the best teams in terms of field percentage in the entire game, so the defensive mishaps are a little uncharacteristic.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Congratulations are in order for Justin Masterson, [who was named AL Player of the Week](#) .

"I think every pitcher's confident," Masterson said of how he's feeling lately. "They're confident in their abilities and when they go out there every time, there's no point in getting overconfident, because this game will humble you quickly. But, definitely out there, working with Carlos [Santana], we're putting down the right fingers and [we're] on the same page for the most part."

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Masterson is definitely pitching well as we went over on Monday. Being bestowed that honor gives the Indians two AL Player of the Week winners in just two short months of the season thus far.

Brett Myers will be back in Akron on Wednesday [making his second rehab appearance](#) . He's slated to go a little bit longer than the 50 pitches he threw (between the game and bullpen session) last time out, and that could pave the way for him to return to Cleveland.

Not sure what would provoke anyone to ask Yan Gomes what "he ate before the game", but his response was...different. Not that "what did you eat before the game" is a weird question or anything, I get it. I'm just not sure how we were lucky enough to get Gomes to answer that question and [answer it with one simple drink](#): beet juice.

Um, yuk.

Back to Chris Perez once more time, as this is a little out of the left field variety. The Indians closer has deleted his Twitter account, definitely a kill-joy to the people who actually enjoy his presence and like following him on Twitter. [WFNY has some more ridiculous tweets](#) that Cleveland fans posted in response to Perez in general.

This is why we can't have nice things people. Let's stop harassing athletes over Twitter, okay?

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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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