

## Morning Rundown: Mastey Busts Streak On Way to 8th Win

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Saturday, May 25 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Friday, May 31 2013 8:06 AM

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So the Reds starting pitching has been really good. They had gone pretty much the entire month of May without being saddled with a loss, just short of a few days at the beginning and now thanks to the Indians, at the end.

Despite the fact that he was coming off a shaky outing from last week, the Indians ACE did what ACES do. He busted a slump.

**REDS - 2 | INDIANS - 5**

**W: Justin Masterson (8-3)**

**L: Bronson Arroyo (5-5)**

[\[BOXSCORE\]](#)

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Terry Francona said [before the game that his team has passed](#) through the losing streak with flying colors, and that he actually felt better about his team, despite current struggles.

*"I feel every bit as good about our ballclub right now as I did 10 days ago -- maybe if not better -- because I've seen the fight they have in them and we're pulling together," Francona said. "There's some things that haven't gone right for us at the end of games and things like that. But I think we're going to be OK."*

If the first step of that was Wednesday's win against the Reds, then, yay. The Indians ended their mini five game losing streak with the 5-2 win over the Reds and set up the potential for them to split the series with the Reds later on Thursday.

The catalyst for that streak ending? Big Masty of course.

**Justin Masterson**, time after time, has battled with me over the fact that he can be the ace of the Cleveland Indians staff. I guess I just need to put it like this.

Right now, he's the Indians ace. He is. Is he the best ace a team could ask for? Look, there are many more consistent number one starters out there. But this is Cleveland's best pitcher, hands down. And he just went out there and ended a skid that had the potential to really take a toll on this club's psyche if it continued.

It wasn't the prettiest, but that is what the number one guy is supposed to do. Did he have his best stuff? I don't think so, but he was really sharp and locked in at points, which led to all the zeros he put up following the first inning home run to Joey Votto.

He dealt with traffic, four hits, four walks, and some other assorted baserunners you wouldn't immediately think of without looking deeper into the box score. But he worked through it and got a few big double plays.

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The biggest coming in the sixth inning, right before the Indians big inning that put them ahead. Essentially, [he won the game there before the offense did](#) .

Brandon Phillips leads off the inning with a good old Baltimore chop that you love when one of your players does it, and hate when one of theirs does. Then you have the Swisher error and a moment of jitters with Masterson hitting Todd Frazier.

Then he gets the come-backer right to him for an easy out at home and then to first, fly out with the next hitter, inning over, Masterson outing ends up brilliant, Giambi homers, Indians win.

*"That's unbelievable. That's all on Masty," Giambi said. "He changed the whole momentum of the game."*

In a nut-shell.

The pitch he got Xavier Paul to hit right back to him was so big. More often than not, opposing teams are going to get a run in those no-out, bases loaded situations. It's odds, ratios, percentages, everything, whatever. You just don't get out of those situations easily. When you do, it's crushing. So I'm sure the Reds were completely crushed when it did happen.

Which made it the perfect time to bust the game open and take control. Queue the big man.

Remember how people wanted to put **Jason Giambi** out to pasture at the height of his 0-for-22 slide? Yeah about that. This [cow is still grazing after two games now](#) where he's homered and knocked in four runs, should have been five after his double earlier in the game that Nick Swisher somehow didn't score on.

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*"I told them, 'God, I'm back,'" Giambi said. "Hopefully I can help the ballclub. That's the most important thing. Tito [Francona] really helped out. I was kind of going through that pinched nerve in my neck and he was like, 'Hey, just keep going up there and battling.' I don't care how old you are. It's nice for your manager to come up there and tell you you're OK."*

Oh yeah he's back. And he's now come up with some big hits in two straight games he's played in. Not just to tie the game on Monday with the pinch-hit home run, but to have the big separation shot against the Reds that put his team up by four. It was also the knockout shot for starter Bronson Arroyo.

*"I love it," Giambi said. "There's no greater feeling in the world than to be able to help contribute and help the ballclub out. It's exciting. That's what brings me back. Sometimes I wish I was still 25 or 26 years old."*

He can certainly still swing the bat like he's 25 or 26 years old once and a great while though, and he's a much more disciplined hitter than anyone else on the team. He may not always get a hit, but he's going to give you a great at-bat.

*"He's still every bit as intelligent a hitter," Francona said. "He has that presence when he's in the batter's box."*

Can we just appreciate this guy's at-bats? He gets in a 0-2 hole and somehow after a while he's back to 2-2, and then slugging a double to right field. Even when he was going badly, he doesn't have bad at-bats. He is up there, battling hard, taking pitches, fouling others off. He could have an 0-2 count and still have made the pitcher throw at least 6 pitches.

The bottom line? He makes a pitcher earn the out they get against him, every single time.

### Random Notes...

Before the sixth happened, you thought a big inning was going to get squandered in the fourth when the Indians pulled off back-to-back-to-back doubles. With one out, Swisher followed

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Cabrera to knock home a run, and then Giambi followed him. Swisher, for some odd reason, held up and then decided to go for home despite the bad break.

Not only was he out by a mile, a potentially big rally was killed. And it was then stomped on a batter later when Jason Giambi got thrown out at third on a WALK by Carlos Santana. Seriously, how does that happen? It will go down as a caught stealing, but was Giambi trying to steal? Did he think the Reds weren't paying attention and he was going to catch them napping at third? Did he think there was someone on first, so he was running regardless?

Turns out it was Tito's call, as Francona started the runner in that situation and he took the blame for that call. Thankfully though, Giambi made up for it with the home run and all is well in the world of Wahoo.

We saw the return of Mega Mark, trying to keep up with the Joneses (or the Davises) in the home run department. His batting average is starting to round out to what you expect, but he's still gonna hit those bombs and knock in runs.

And when it boils down to it, the offense was the middle of the lineup, like it is supposed to be. Your 3-4-5 guys go a combined 6-for-12 with all but one run batted in and run scored (Reynolds being responsible for both).

Bullpen back into form, minus the Pestano hiccup of course. Cody Allen was brilliant with his two strikeouts, Smith was as effective as you've come to expect. This is probably the configuration we're going to see a lot with Perez out in save situations. This was close enough to warrant that setup though.

### [RANDOM RUNDOWN]

The question we've wanted answered for a few days now, was kind of answered.

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Following the news on Tuesday of **Chris Perez** being shutdown for 5-7 days until re-evaluation, someone finally asked the Indians what they might do with their depth. Perez's shoulder issue is "mild tendinitis" and [not considered to be all that serious](#) and may not need much time on the disabled list.

*"Very [encouraging]," Indians manager Terry Francona said. "Structurally, he's good. We have some information about what's causing the impingement, so it's good news. We'll give him five days no throwing and then he'll be re-evaluated."*

So with that in mind and with the idea that Vinnie Pestano is going to be a-okay, what we really want to know is this. **Brett Myers**? Where's he going? Rotation? Bullpen? Outback Steakhouse? [Tell us Terry](#) .

*"As he comes back, we'd like to let him come back as a starter," Francona said. "Saying that, I guess if it ever got to the point where we thought he could handle being a reliever, maybe that's something we would look at, just out of common sense. But I think the best way for right now is to let him stretch out as a starter. As a reliever, you're dealing with different issues. You don't have to throw 80, 90, 100 pitches -- which is helpful -- but you also have to be able to bounce back. So, everybody's a little bit different, and it's our responsibility to figure out -- if it gets to that point -- what's best for him."*

Myers' scratched rehab outing has forced a little bit of a set-back, but the Indians want him to work up to enough pitches regardless. Tito said that they "fought him" on making another start because they need him to be able to give the team length from the start. So this decision is going to be delayed, perhaps long enough to where Perez is back. Then it becomes a "who gets the boot" situation with the rotation. Not the potential scenario that we were look at just a few days ago when the bullpen was melting down.

**Lou Marson** will be [starting his trek back to the majors](#) with a stop in Double-A Akron. He was with the Aeros on Wednesday and was [1-for-3 with a strikeout](#)

and two steals on him behind the dish. His rehab stint will shift from Akron now to Columbus on Friday. This however will be an extended stint though, as Marson has been out for quite some time and needs to slowly work his way back.

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*"You can't just send him out there four days in a row," said Francona, who is particularly concerned with Marson's defense. "We probably wouldn't do that here. As a catcher, you can't do that on a rehab. It just won't work."*

Plus this team has all the time in the world the way Yan Gomes has been swinging the bat and playing defense. If anything, it just gives them more time to evaluate him and decide on what their plan of attack is going to be when Marson is ready. Because the assumption would be, at least at this time, is that Marson is doing this rehab stint to return to the major leagues, not just stay in the minor leagues. They would option him out if that was the case.

Yes, the Mark Reynolds walk-up music is now ["Gutter to the Grail" by Trevor Bauer](#). The youngster's last rap was a little controversial with everyone thinking he was taking shots at Miguel Montero. This one is simply hilarious and fun.

And let's be honest. It's better than that crap Michael Brantley comes to the dish to.

Not going to lie, kind of disowned Shin-Soo Choo in the offseason. Cut ties with him with his trade, didn't really have any teary farewell words lined up for him. Thanks for your service, see you on the other side, am I right?

But it is kind of nice to see him again because he's a respectful guy and in the end, isn't a bad dude. I mean, I didn't like the whole "I want to win" stuff considering all he really wants is to get paid. I know he can't say that, but it is just the idea of not patronizing us with that stuff, as if there is a chance to re-sign him if the Indians suddenly start winning to his standards.

[So what's Choo up to now a days?](#) Well he's leading the world in being hit by pitches, sporting a real good on-base percentage as the leadoff man for a potent offense, and he's actually taking to the role of center fielder. Aside from those lovely mishaps I displayed here on the blog earlier in the season, he's made two whole errors all year.

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He also says he's taking things "one pitch at a time" this season. His manager calls him "Mr. Choo" and just recently his family moved to Cincinnati. And yet here he is, back in Cleveland.

*"I want to stay in the same area for a long time -- wherever it is," Choo said. "Kids need their dad. It's hard in the baseball season -- you spend six months away by yourself and six months you get together in the offseason. I want to stay in one area. But I'm not thinking about it. I'm not thinking about teams or cities."*

This is why... I just... The trade was for the better. Everyone is happy. Enough said.

Finally, nothing came of that Aroldis Chapman-**Nick Swisher** situation on the field on Tuesday and still nothing on Wednesday. Dusty Baker [said he "took care of it"](#)

and in regards to the Indians, Tom Hamilton became the big story after he said he'd like to see Swisher hit one off Chapman's temple.

It sounds kind of ruthless. But we love Hammy for that specific reason. He's pretty ruthless.

So I guess it's blown over, for now. It will be interesting to see if some chatter occurs if Chapman were to get into the game tonight though.

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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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