

Morning Rundown: Lost in New York, Tribe Swept Away

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Thursday, June 06 2013 7:09 AM - Last Updated Thursday, June 06 2013 8:37 AM



I can't decide what is more painful right now. Trying to watch this Indians team, knowing that they just can't seem to get it going or my mouth. The Indians are not playing horrible baseball. Are they playing well enough to win though? Not on most nights. This three game series has been rough, because they've shown glimmers of hope that the game isn't over, but the glimmer lasts about one minute, or one inning. Whatever.

And then you have my mouth, which is exactly one month removed from having my wisdom teeth extracted. So can anyone tell me why I'm still experiencing pain and discomfort, that is even worse than when I originally got them removed?

Alright, a little bit of a personal note that I used to relate to the Indians, but you get how I feel right now. I'm writing about an Indians loss, while the side of my mouth is throbbing in pain. Why? I couldn't tell you, I guess I'm a glutton for punishment. I enjoy the misery. Which is more painful? I don't know, because right now they're both headaches. But here's the good news in it all.

I have a doctor's appointment today. And the Indians? They have an off day. So not only do they not lose today, they get to recharge their batteries, which I'm just going to assume is something that is much needed after 20 straight games, including one that ended at three in the morning. Ya know, just a little.

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INDIANS - 4 | YANKEES - 6

W: CC Sabathia (6-4)

L: Corey Kluber (3-4)

[\[BOXSCORE\]](#)

Pretty demoralizing when you are in a 6-0 hole after the first two innings, yeah? Oh you say the other pitcher is CC Sabathia? Eh, crud.

"We had to dig out of a hole," Francona said. "[Kluber] gave us a chance. That says a lot for him and his competitiveness. That's just a pretty big hole to dig out of with CC pitching."

The interesting part is that this wasn't your normal CC Sabathia. In fact, CC has had some rough patches this year and has seemingly getting to that point in his career when he can't simply blow it by people. Remember how good he was his Cy Young year in Cleveland? He was not only blowing it by people, he was pitching. And he was doing both really well. Now, it seems almost as if to remain good, CC knows he has to be more of that pitcher, relying on his breaking stuff and command. It got spotty at times, but to go nine innings? [He certainly did the job](#).

What didn't happen was a clean start from **Corey Kluber**. What did happen was a clean finish. After his rough first two innings, he went on to pitch four incredibly solid ones. And even the two bad ones were not all his fault. Still, he owned up to mistakes he made, even though he isn't sure what made the difference for him in from the third inning on.

"I just left a few balls over the heart of the plate a little bit too much early on," said Kluber, who ended with eight strikeouts and one walk in his six innings. "I don't know what the difference was -- I just didn't make those mistakes after that point."

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He made a mistake to Travis Hafner in the first, but it came after a ground out, an error, and a fly out. So in all reality, it should have never happened. The fourth still unraveled on him, but to dial it back and regain composure enough to get through the next four innings with just two hits given up? That was an excellent effort on Kluber's part. And really, when you look at it, both he and Sabathia gave up four earned runs. Kluber did his part, especially in the first. I'll take one walk, eight strikeouts, four earned. His defense let him down and while he made mistakes, he definitely did his part to keep his team in the game.

It just didn't happen for them. Yan Gomes' two-run shot was too-little-too-late. It just didn't happen. And that's really been a common theme for some of the recent losses. Interestingly enough, Terry Francona doesn't choose to see things in that way.

"You can ask me every which way you want," Francona said, "but my answer is always going to be the same, because that's how I feel. I can't change how I feel, and I don't have to force myself to do that. You play a game and then you move on. You make a mistake, you try to work to correct it. You figure out why you did it and move on. Every game is its own game, especially in our game. So much depends on the starting pitcher. I really don't value showing up up or down, depending on what you did the night before. That doesn't make much sense to me. If it helped us, I'd do it. But I don't see that happening."

Well, then, it's a good thing he sees things that way and that, as Nick Swisher said, that the club takes on the personality of their manager, because fans certainly do not see things that way. They like to lump things into one big mess. It's why we look at things based on a series and are completely mortified by the fact that the Yankees just swept our Tribe.

It's why every time we have a losing streak, we are the lowest of lows, and when there's a winning streak, the highest of highs.

Hopefully this team is taking on that mentality of one game is in its own instance and that things are being separated. Because if the team isn't thinking that way, these losing streaks may get longer and more frequent, and the winning streaks, won't really be streaks.

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Random Notes...

CC got to just about everyone on the strikeout front, except for Swisher and Santana. To make up for it, he got Bourn and Kipnis twice. Credit the Indians bullpen though, because after Kluber, they came in and shut things down. Despite walking the bases loaded in the seventh between Rich Hill and Matt Langwell, they got three outs, the third by Joe Smith who came into a lousy situation but got out of it.

Leadoff single and a wild pitch be damned, Vinnie Pestano settled down to get two strikeouts to end the ninth frame, and he threw a lot of fastballs. In fact he threw just two off-speed pitches to Youkilis. Everything else was a fastball and not once did he touch below 90, so that's good to see. The velocity is back.

Looks like Francona tried something different with Cabrera out, moving Brantley down (against the left-hander, most likely being the reason) and moving Swisher and Reynolds up. Mark can't consistently hit cleanup being the boom-bust type of hitter he is. He's fallen into a bit of a rut, which is fine, because he'll heat up again at some point, but those 0-for-4s from your four hitter are going to hurt.

I know I already mentioned it, but another home run for Yan Gomes, who is now hitting .293 in a backup catching role, and seemingly playing a lot more. With Cabrera down, I think he should probably be playing a lot more too, especially since you won't be DHing Cabrera. You can DH Santana or Swisher, play the other at first.

Like I campaigned for with Lou Marson a few years ago, he should definitely be playing against the left-handers. While he has a way better average against right-handers (.325, .333 OBP), he's actually a more dangerous hitter against the lefties. Four of his six homers have come off lefties, as well as both his triples. His slugging and OPS are both higher against lefties than righties, so really, he should be playing against both types of pitching (his split is about even in terms of games and at-bats), but definitely against the lefties.

Especially since the left-handed Jason Giambi has just 9 at-bats against left-handers. he's going to do his damage to the right-handers. You can almost pencil in Gomes against the lefty, making that somewhat of a awkward platoon.

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[THE PEREZ PACKAGE]

So the world was seemingly set on fire with the breaking news yesterday about **Chris Perez** "being arrested" for possession of drugs. Unfortunately, that story ended up being false, but as Pecker so eloquently stated to me on Twitter, where there's smoke, there's fire.

Pun intended.

Perez has not yet been arrested, but facts, key word there, facts, have emerged [in the incident that went down at Chris Perez's house](#) in Rocky River. Here are the simple facts.

A package, of what is being called a controlled substance, was delivered to Perez's home. Do we know what is the package? No, so don't jump to conclusions. Most think it is weed. And if it is, well, then it is. I think it would make him stupid for having it sent to his freaking house through the mail, but it certainly doesn't make him a horrible human being or a cheater at the game. Not defending, just being real. If it is that, he could be subject to a suspension, but I don't know if MLB treats the non-performance enhancing drugs differently than they do the performance enhancing drugs. You get 50 for the first PED violation, and it doesn't even have to be a failed test.

You are subject to 15-25 for your first drug related violation, but whether you actually have to take and fail a drug test is beyond me. So there's that.

Next fact, Perez was not arrested and has not yet been charged. In addition, the police say that there have been prior incidents at the same house, unrelated to Chris Perez. However that this package being sent to Perez's house also is unrelated to any of the prior incidents.

I think before the police do anything, they're trying to figure out who sent it to him and of course, figure out if Perez actually had it delivered. It would be wrong for us to assume he did and

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convict him on the spot. Even if we think he did do it, to spout off a story that has not been confirmed or proven yet is not fair to Chris Perez.

If he's guilty, roast him all you want. But right now, he hasn't been charged or arrested and the facts are still being uncovered. So until we know what really happened, it is best if we stop making up stories and scenarios and hold off on holding Perez's feet to the fire. Am I saying he didn't do it? No, I'm saying we don't know for sure if he did, so until he's arrested, don't spread untrue facts, regardless of who "said it on the radio" or tweeted it out.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

I really hate stories like that, especially in a sport I love. It makes me physically ill to have to talk about things like that, but it happens and unfortunately the past few years we've had it happen to a few of our players.

What I can do though is divert attention away from that isolate it to just that space. If you disagree with me, fine, go ahead and spread your gossip and hate. I don't jive to that tune. What I do jive to is the tune of baseball. Good or bad, mouth hurting or not, I'm here.

And while that reliever is on the disabled list, the Indians have to worry about the guys who are pitching. Terry Francona used **Nick Hagadone** in a huge spot on Tuesday and [may have been rewarded](#) with the turning of a corner for him. Hagadone even said it himself.

"That's huge for me to know that Tito's got the confidence in me to put me in that situation," Hagadone said on Wednesday."

He can say it, but hopefully he truly believes it. Saying it is one thing, but hopefully he'll use it next time out and the ball will start rolling the other way for him. Tito said the situation and coming through the way he did should help him immensely, especially for a guy who's really been struggling lately. Hags did mention last year's issues were tougher on him than what he's going through now, but we've seen the spurts. We've seen him go on a run that makes you

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think he should be the first left-handed pitcher out of the pen.

And he was in that situation on Tuesday. He came through. For the Indians sake, and the fact that Rich Hill is still in some sort of funk that can't be explained, it would be good if he was able to continue to come through.

Speaking of funks, mentioned Mark Reynolds earlier. Terry Francona has one again reiterated that Mark Reynolds' .182 average since Chisenhall was sent down is not a mark of his position switching. One would assume that, including Terry Francona, so he asked him.

"I asked him that, because I wanted to know," Francona said on Wednesday. "I do think it's more physically challenging. I think he's enjoying the heck out of it, and he told me if he needed a [day off], he'd tell me."

So, no? Look, he was hitting out of his mind in April. He had to come back down to earth sometime. What will happen is that he'll even things out and then get on a more consistent track coming up soon. Or he'll catch red-hot fire again and go through another cold streak. Maybe he's a streaky hitter in that regard. Maybe he just had one really good month and will even out at some point. Either way, it is not to be worried about. He certainly wasn't going to put up those April numbers in every other month of the season. It just wasn't going to happen. Reynolds will be fine. It has nothing to do with playing third base (but that can't be a season long thing, because he's a liability there), or anything else. He's just in a funk that he needs to find away out of himself.

Still no Brett Myers. He still has not resumed throwing, but the good news is that he could by the end of the week. Which means it still might be a few more weeks before we even consider him able to come back. I'd have serious doubts of him picking right where he left off with his rehab outing. He hasn't thrown a baseball in just over two weeks. He'll have to build up his pitch count once again, which means at least three starts, right?

If he's not even throwing right now, that will take a few sessions to get up there and knock off the rust. So yeah, it may be awhile. Dare I say July?

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By the time July hits, the rest of the Indians farm system will be up and moving because today starts the first day of the MLB Draft. The first few rounds get underway tonight at 6 PM. The first 10 rounds will be completed by tomorrow, and then the big bulk of the draft will take place on Saturday.

The Indians will not be very active tonight. They've got one big pick to worry about and that is the fifth overall slot. A slot they were able to keep because it was protected, despite the fact that they made two huge free agent signings in Nick Swisher and Michael Bourn.

It is the reason they don't have a second round pick or a supplemental pick that they earned. But the Indians are okay with that, because the trade off to get Swisher and Bourn was well worth it.

"As soon as we signed Swisher it was no problem whatsoever," Grant said. "And then to add the talent of Bourn, too? The type of player with a third pick compared to his Major League impact that you can have right away, we were completely on board with that."

So now the biggest focus can all be directed on the big fifth overall pick the Indians have on the first day. Save the rest of the concentration on Day 2 and 3. For now, who will the Indians go with?

As always, it is a "best player available" situation with the Tribe. They never really draft with intent on position need, because the MLB Draft is a different animal. It takes years to produce a talent, the needs are ever changing. The Indians didn't need a shortstop when they picked up Francisco Lindor, but they did anyway and they'll solve that issue when it becomes needed to solve.

The good news is that because the Indians no longer have two of their higher picks, they can forget a little more about the fact that there is a draft cap for signing bonuses. With not having to pay a second rounder, or that supplemental pick, they can not only be a little more aggressive later on, but won't have to worry more when making that high-bonus pick.

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So who are some names? The Bastian piece mentions Jonathan Mayo's mock draft slot of Colin Moran, UNC third baseman, someone Keith Law had going first at some juncture. They would like one of the big pitchers like Mark Appel (picked last year by Pittsburgh but declined to sign), but they might not be around to pick.

The Indians haven't really taken High School guys in the first, aside from Lindor, as of late, but they're aggressive later on in that regard. So it will be interesting to see what they do. They will take the best guy on the board though when they pick, it's just a matter of what their board looks like. Naturally, I would defer you to the expert, who in my opinion is TCF's own Al C. [He's got a great preview on the names](#)

the Indians are going to be looking at when their pick is up, and even before their pick is up.

Additional note, [check out this incredible list of draft eligible players](#) that have some family bloodlines. It happens every year. Michael Brantley has a cousin, Justin Brantley, eligible for the draft this year. Good luck to him!

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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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