

## Morning Rundown: Tribe Settling Into a New Klube

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Saturday, June 08 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Friday, June 14 2013 8:15 AM

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It sure wasn't easy. When you are just starving for a win, and are so close to it, that's when it seems to be the toughest. Once the game got to the seventh inning, it seemed as if the Indians had to work extra hard to keep the Rangers at bay and hold onto their lead, even though it was a 4-0 lead.

With a team like Texas though, in their own ballpark, a 10-0 lead isn't safe.

**INDIANS - 5 | RANGERS - 2**

**W: Corey Kluber (4-4)**

**L: Derek Holland (5-3)**

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

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But there was absolutely no denying **Corey Kluber** on this night. That guy was incredible. And the Indians are going to need more of that, especially with Zach McAllister down. Kluber stepped up to the plate and did something not a lot of Indians pitchers have been able to do.

Go into Arlington and pitch really really really well. [The Klube was locked in.](#)

The worst thing Kluber did all night? Walk the nine-hitter who's hitting his weight. Yeah he ended up giving up a run, but Kluber was downright awesome all night. His efficiency early on and through the fifth inning was incredible, something I can't really remember in terms of when it happened last. So, really, that's great.

When the smoke cleared, he gave up six hits and walked three, but he managed his pitch count and never seemed to be in any bad danger, allowing him to go as deep into the game as he did. Through the first five innings, he was averaging nine pitches per inning. NINE PITCHES PER INNING!? That's crazy talk.

And that's having two rocky starts to both the first and the second. He gave up two singles and a walk within the first four batters of those two innings. But the double plays were his best friend and then after that, Kluber was even more amazing.

Starting with the ground ball double play in the second, Kluber recorded nine straight groundball outs from the second through the fourth. His biggest friend was the double play, as he was able to record your typical groundball double play, but he also had a few unorthodox ones, including a huge one in the sixth that included an outfield assist from Michael Brantley.

With runners on first and second and nobody out, a fly out to left by David Murphy prompted Leury Garcia to tag up from second to try and go for third. It is Brantley, so I can understand wanting to test his arm. However from left field? Brantley's throw was right on the money for where Reynolds was standing and Mark was able to make a tag and swooping tag all in one motion from receiving the ball to get Garcia at third.

Kluber gets the final out, threat eliminated and it seemed like from that point on, it was Kluber's

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night and nothing was going to get in the way of that.

He seems to be growing up through this season. He has his moments, good and bad, but he also has established some sort of consistency when he is good, which is far better than anything you can ask for out of a guy they called up to spot start. This guy has a spot in the rotation for the rest of the year if you ask me. Let's see where he takes us.

*"He's getting better right in front of our eyes," Francona said. "For him to go out there today and kind of shoulder that responsibility, we're really proud of him."*

This was a huge turnaround from last week's start in New York. But here's the thing with that. Despite getting jumped early on in that game, he fought through it. Kind of like he did in the early going in this one. Only this time he got a few lucky breaks and got the plays he needed with the double plays to erase any sort of threatening damage, and it let him go as far as he did.

*"It's unbelievable," Reynolds said. "Every time he pitches, we know there's a chance that we're going to win. Just the fact that he throws strikes and keeps us in the game. I think the best example of it was in New York, when he gave up six early and then held them down the rest of the time. A lot of guys would've mailed it in. He stayed out there and battled all night. I think tonight he got rewarded for it."*

The cool thing? This is his home state, so Kluber had a bit of a homecoming and he didn't disappoint. It was a bit hot last night, so you would think Corey is used to that type of thing. He said though he's become unaccustomed to it because he's been away so long.

Heat aside, Kluber mastered the situation really well. For awhile it looked like he was going to take this thing the distance and go for a complete game shutout, until he ran into some issues in the eighth, giving up a run. Plus with the aforementioned Texas heat, I'm sure it was a heavy 104 pitches that Kluber threw.

Fun to note though that 69 of them were for strikes, which gives him a 66% strike percentage for the game. It was something that Kluber and Gomes were mindful of when they went out with

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their game plan. Usually a strikeout pitcher, The Klube went on with a different plan of attack.

*"We kind of talked about how they're a really aggressive team," Kluber said. "We kind of used that against them a little bit. I was expanding on them and getting them to chase some pitches, and getting soft contact."*

And that's being a pitcher.

### Random Notes...

Normal off-day for Michael Bourn, scheduled precisely on the day where the Indians face a left-hander, so Drew Stubbs can ascend up the lineup to the leadoff role. Method to the madness.

The offense though worked well without him. Stubbs' hit was a two-run base hit in the fifth inning that was pretty much put into play by Holland's errant throw trying to pick off Mike Aviles at first. It put the runners on second and third and Stubbs didn't wait for two outs, singling to bring them both home.

Remember how we mentioned Mark Reynolds was sans RBI this month? Well, he's on the board with his 2-for-4 RBI night. He also didn't strikeout for the first time this month.

Everyone in the starting lineup had a hand in this, as everyone hit, which is really good for the offense to do as they try and break out of this funk. Reynolds, and Mike Aviles had two hits each, and the other big thing was the baserunning. Aviles, Kipnis and Brantley all stole bases later in the game. With one extra-base hit out of the 11 hits they had (no home runs in Texas?), those steals were needed to get that traffic moving.

How about the top of the lineup? While they all had hits, knocked in runs, or scored runs, Stubbs, Kip, and Swisher all struck out twice. That accounted for virtually all the strikeouts,

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except for one by Aviles.

What a stressful ninth inning that was with Joe Smith. It didn't feel like it was going to be one of those victories you could just assume because of what has been happening with this club. So he gives up a run, and in the process, makes it very stressful with guys on base and a three run lead.

### [RANDOM RUNDOWN]

We saw **John McDonald** come into the game last night at third base in the late innings, marking the first time in nine years, wow, that he stepped foot onto the field in a Tribe uniform. The Indians got to activate their new acquisition on Tuesday, sending out Juan Diaz back to the minor leagues so he can get regular playing time. McDonald [mean while effectively fills the void left by Aviles](#) in his new starting role.

*"He'll back up everywhere," Indians manager Terry Francona said. "Johnny Mac has been through it. He can catch the ball wherever you put him. When he's not playing, he'll be an outstanding influence. Anybody that's been around him for two seconds, he just brightens up everybody's day."*

In other words, he'll play the infield. And he'll play it very well. As Johnny Mac said himself, he's been in this role all his career, backing up at third, short, and second and just expected to play great defense. He said it was exciting to be back in Cleveland and I'm sure it brings a bit of a full-circle type feeling on for him.

What's crazy about all of it with the former Cleveland 12th round draft pick, is that when he was a player in his first stint with the Indians, he played with a veteran by the name of Sandy Alomar Jr, now the bench coach for the Indians.

Everyone's just getting so old, or maybe they're just all younger. Who knows.

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There was a nice little bit on MLB.com about **Carlos Carrasco** and how the staff talked to him about "owning up" to things. Sounds kind of a like [a much needed pep-talk to some floundering](#) around.

*"He's got to pitch in," Callaway said. "He was doing that in Triple-A and he kind of got away from it the other day. We had a good conversation about it and I expect that he's going to start pitching in a little more. We talked about it. He had a little anxiety pitching in just in case he hit somebody and gets thrown out of the game."*

He has to also just pitch, period. But here's the thing. Yeah they might be looking at him a little more, but these umpires should have a good idea when Carrasco is doing something on purpose and when he accidentally hits someone. So, argument not accepted.

Richard Justice of MLB.com has a nice story on Terry Francona and [how he's the right guy for Cleveland to get the job done](#)

. I'm not being smart when I say this, but I don't think we needed to be told that. I think it's this shared feeling among us all. The Indians got themselves a winner, the right guy.

*"He stays the same," Bourn said. "He lets us know he believes in us. He wants us to keep on pushing, and he's going to be with us the whole way. It's easy when it's going good. When we were rolling, we weren't thinking. We were just playing."*

In the piece though, Francona said there's two things he tells his team with the recent struggles. One of them? Grind.

As in, grind out the tough spots. Swisher used the word in describing his knee soreness (more in a bit), and now Francona dropping it. Where's Wedge when you don't need him?

**Nick Swisher** has [been bothered by some soreness](#) thanks to fouling off a pitch off his knee

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over the weekend. But according to him, he's going to keep playing because "he's already taken enough days off." Hey Swish, as long as you don't hurt yourself further.

In other injury news, **Chris Perez** threw off a mound yesterday and will be at it again on Friday. That could lead to a rehab outing, which means we could see CP back in the bullpen really shortly. Or so we think at least.

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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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