



Michael Brantley had a couple big hits and 4RBI as the Indians continued their hot play with a 5-2 win over the Orioles in Camden Yards Monday night.

Brantley's 2-run single off O's starter Zach Britton in the 6th inning put the Indians ahead for the first time all night, and his 2-run bomb off Orioles reliever Darren O'Day gave the Tribe bullpen some much needed (as of late) and much appreciated (by all of us watching) breathing room. Through five innings Britton had dominated the Indians hitters despite having been called up from AAA Norfolk just recently.

Ubaldo Jimenez (6-4) bobbed and weaved his way through 5 1/3 uneven innings to get the win. The righthander threw 99 pitches in those 5+ innings, 65 for strikes, and scattered 8 hits while walking two and striking out six. More accurate would be to say that Orioles RF Nick Markakis and C Matt Wieters scattered a couple of Jimenez pitches to the deepest parts of Camden Yards as their respective solo homers accounted for all the Orioles runs.

Rich Hill, Bryan Shaw and Joe Smith got the game from Jimenez to Vinnie Pestano in the 9th and Pestano recorded his 4th save of the season. Pestano quickly got two outs in the 9th before making it interesting but he induced a line drive to Mike Aviles at SS to end the ballgame and move the Indians to 39-36 on the season.

Between the Lines

~ I guess it's all about managing expectations when it comes to Jimenez. If you can get past the

point where all you see is the Indians top two prospects (at the time) being exchanged for Ubaldo then you can likely come to terms with the fact that he's pretty much a 5th starter at this point for the Tribe. I don't say that to be demeaning. Rather, my expectations simply aren't that high when it comes to the U. He went 5.1 pedestrian innings last night, wasn't dominant in any of them, didn't retire the side in order in any of them and often times threw some real soft slop up to the Orioles hitters. That's not confidence-inducing stuff. But he did manage to give up only two runs and keep the Indians close until the offense figured out Britton.

That's pretty much the text book definition of #5 starter and that's fine with me if Corey Kluber and Zach McAllister continue to give the Indians #2 and #3 starter outings.

~ If i were an Oriole, White Sox or Royals pitcher I might be a bit nervous at facing the Indians in the next couple weeks. Not only have guys like Jason Kipnis and Michael Bourn been hot lately, bt Nick Swisher and Mark Reynolds looked a lot better with a bat in their hands the last couple days than they have in weeks. Swisher had a couple hits last night and seems to be on the road to recovering from the sore shoulder and the suckitis that's plagued him for the last month or so and Reynolds had a base hit and a couple walks last night as well. That tells me these guys are seeing the ball better than they have in a while and that could mean the return of a few 10 or 12 run outbursts.

~ Never thought I'd say it but Vinnie Pestano has me longing for the less stressful days of Chris Perez in the closer role. I either need Perez back in that spot or I need to eat from Perez's mail box to keep myself calmed down. For all the folks who screamed about a possible Perez trade making sense and Pestano taking over the 9th inning, well, be careful what you wish for. I'm not saying Pestano isn't ultimately that guy, but it'd be far better to see him in that role from the beginning of spring training as opposed to as a result of an injury during the season. Messing with those bullpen roles is risky business once they've been determined. I'll be happy to see Vinnie back in the 8th inning for the remainder of the season because it simply makes the Indians a better, more dangerous team than if Perez isn't a part of it.

~ Justin Masterson (9-5, 3.48) faces Chris Tillman (8-2, 3.71) in a 705pm start tonight.