

Morning Rundown: Tribe Walk Their Way to Five Straight Road Wins

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Sunday, June 30 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Friday, July 05 2013 8:19 AM



So this is what First Place in July feels like?

INDIANS - 6 | ROYALS - 5

W: Cody Allen (3-0)

L: Tim Collins (2-3)

S: Chris Perez (8)

[BOXSCORE](#)

Morning Rundown: Tribe Walk Their Way to Five Straight Road Wins

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Sunday, June 30 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Friday, July 05 2013 8:19 AM

KC's Luis Mendoza should be extremely happy with his four innings and four runs. Given the way he was pitching, he should have been splattered against the wall, scrapped off, and splattered again.

Both situations in which the Indians scored against him, in the first, and then again in the fourth, could have called for more runs. To have the bases loaded with one out in the first and the fourth, and walk away having only let up four runs?

The Indians really let him off the hook and made the game closer than it should have been. Thankfully they won, or else that would have been tragic.

But here is the great thing about **Jason Giambi** and **Jason Kipnis** both hitting into those double plays earlier in the game.

When it came down to it in the seventh, and the Indians had once again walked to load the bases up with one out, Giambi and Kipnis would redeem themselves. Giambi's double to score Kipnis [with two outs in the seventh turned out to be the difference in the score](#) after Pestano gave up a run in the eighth.

That's what you call redemption.

"The guys are swinging the bats unbelievably right now," said Kluber, who allowed four runs in 5 1/3 innings in a no-decision. "It seems like every time they're put in a hole -- whether we put them in a hole or a team comes back after we've already had a lead -- they're so resilient."

And you can also call it resilient after the way the game turned out. A 4-0 lead should have been plenty the way **Corey Kluber** was pitching. At least until something happened in the fifth inning.

Morning Rundown: Tribe Walk Their Way to Five Straight Road Wins

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Sunday, June 30 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Friday, July 05 2013 8:19 AM

What's made Kluber so good, when he's been good, is the fact that he doesn't walk people. You saw what happened in that fifth inning though when he started walking people. He fell behind hitters, and while the first few hits were actually scrappy garbage hits that just happen and you have to deal with, they ended up hurting him when he couldn't find the zone against Alex Gordon.

When you are sitting 3-0 and the bases loaded, what do you think a hitter is going to look for? Even if his fastball has some movement, like it did last night, it better damn well be a slider or else that pitch is going to get crushed the way Gordon crushed that ball over the right field wall.

Never mind that he was throwing strikes to the first two hitters in Moustakas and Lough. They just happened to put swings on two of those strikes to find a home. Then Kluber starts pressing and he walks Johnny Giavotella and you can just sense a little bit of pressing from him.

Something I don't think we've really seen from him all year. He started being careful, too fine, and he was overthrowing pitches. He did it to Giavotella, he did it to Dyson, and he certainly did it to Alex Gordon to run the count 3-0.

And then the game was tied...what?

That to me is the shocker of it all. Kluber was set to cruise through that game, give the Indians seven solid innings, leave with the lead, hand it over to the bullpen, and five straight on the road for the Tribe.

That's baseball for you. This game produces strange things.

There's another aspect to this game that stood out to me.

And it seemed to be the return of the Bullpen Mafia. Like, for real, we can call them that again.

Morning Rundown: Tribe Walk Their Way to Five Straight Road Wins

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Sunday, June 30 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Friday, July 05 2013 8:19 AM

Kluber exits in the sixth, Allen and Hagadone finish it off and the next inning the Indians score. A lead you say? 1-2-3, Smith-Pestano-Perez for what seems like the first time this season.

And although Vinnie labored and gave up a run, the trio came through. Tito talked about them "getting hot" now that they're finally aligned and everyone is healthy. I sure hope that is the case. The starting pitching has really carried the team well most of the year. It has been the bullpen that has been spotty for the Indians. The bullpen! The aspect of this team that we thought we could all count on.

But now that injuries have healed, guys are settling in, it seems like this aspect of the team is one you can now count on again.

And boy if the rest of the club continues to play that way, I'd feel a lot more optimistic about this team than I did a few days ago.

Random Notes...

Speaking of "that's baseball" how about the line on **Carlos Santana**? 0-for-1 with two RBI and three walks and no runs. How often does that ever happen? A guy knocking in runs by walking and not scoring at all. The first one in the first inning really was the one that set the tide in the right direction though, because he started the count 0-2.

"That was awesome," Swisher said. "He took a bunch of sliders down and in. Mendoza, that's his thing. He's got a good slider, good bite on that. That's the at-bat that really stands out to me, man. That really got us going in the right direction."

Or how about on the flip-side, Nick Swisher 3-for-4 with a walk, and no runs or runs batted in. He got on base four times and didn't score and none of his hits knocked in a run.

Morning Rundown: Tribe Walk Their Way to Five Straight Road Wins

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Sunday, June 30 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Friday, July 05 2013 8:19 AM

Talk about weird. The Indians really let a lot of opportunities go. When you bust out nine hits, eight walks, and get hit by a pitch, you probably figure a lot more runs would be scored than six.

I have to just wonder though, even though he redeemed himself and came up with the hit that made the difference, what was Giambi swinging at 2-0 with the bases loaded? He of anyone should know to just sit up there and take until you see a strike. He swung at another ball. Mendoza was not hitting the zone to save his life and that could have been the opportunity that the Indians had to break the game open. I know that is what he was trying to do with a hit, because he's probably figuring 2-0 fastball.

But the way he was throwing the ball, I wouldn't count on him even hitting the zone with that.

Nonetheless, he came through, so it is a moot point, but that at-bat is what you'd expect from someone like Chisenhall, not Giambi.

Kipnis's hit streak is up to 13 and he's reached base in 34 straight games dating back to May. And honestly, he had one at-bat in that game between his 34 game streak and two more games in which he reached base, so you could really say 36 games in which he has actually had multiple opportunities. Either way, he remains hot.

Asdrubal Cabrera has a hit in each of the games he's played in since his return from the DL.

The one guy without any sort of action in this one was Drew Stubbs, who struck out three times and was 0-for-4. At least Mark Reynolds knocked in a run after being hit by a pitch.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Wondering where **Brett Myers** is? Yup, a setback. After making an appearance for Akron last Thursday, Myers was slated to make another on Monday. That [was scheduled for two innings](#)

Morning Rundown: Tribe Walk Their Way to Five Straight Road Wins

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Sunday, June 30 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Friday, July 05 2013 8:19 AM

until there was some discomfort in his throwing elbow during his warm-up.

"The scan came back good, which is good. It's just now we've got to figure out the plan," Francona said. "It kind of is what it is. He's got a lot of wear and tear. When we get back home, we'll sit and talk to him and kind of see how he wants to progress with it."

Francona says they hope that it is just a bump in the road and nothing more, but this is the what, second or third setback? Kind of concerning that this keeps happening, but really, nothing you can do.

In other injured pitcher news, **Zach McAllister** tossed 45 pitches in a side session yesterday. He will throw another on Thursday, so he seems to be progressing for a return this month, which will be much needed. Not sure whose spot he'll be taking but it could be

Carlos Carrasco

's.

Carrasco will be called back up from Columbus to start on Saturday against Detroit. He was returned to Columbus so the Indians can run with a deeper bullpen. The plan is for Carrasco to pitch at least an inning to stay sharp between the lengthy layoff.

Part of the reason for that is that the Indians are down a bench guy, sort of, with Michael Bourn out on paternity leave. That has Francona putting Nick Swisher in right field. It has been awhile since Swisher has been out in right, due to those shoulder issues, but with an off day and him not flipping between starts at that spot, it should be fine. Swish will be back at first when Bourn is back.

It would be a major upset if **Jason Kipnis** doesn't win AL Player of the Month for June. Kipnis took home [his second AL Player of the Week](#) honor for the month this past week. It would also be an upset if he doesn't take home [the June Bro of the Month award](#) as well.

Morning Rundown: Tribe Walk Their Way to Five Straight Road Wins

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Sunday, June 30 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Friday, July 05 2013 8:19 AM

Now Kipnis has to focus on carrying June over to July. But before he does that, can we just look at some of the things he did in June? [It was historic](#) .

"It's pretty cool to hear your name in the likes of some of the other ones and how many years it's been," Kipnis said prior to Tuesday's series opener against the Royals. "Any time you're in a sentence with Ty Cobb, more times than not, it's usually a good thing. More times than not. In this case, it's a great thing."

Ty Cobb? Don't worry, he didn't beat anyone up or anything. What Kipnis did was pretty special. He joins Cobb, and George Sisler as the only players in MLB history to put up a month in terms of his "slash line (average, OBP, and slugging)" and steal nine bases. I think it begs the question, what the heck has he been doing?

"There's been some times where I've wanted to pull the ball, but I've stayed with my approach and have stayed through the ball and have gone to left field. It's led to being a more consistent hitter in the last month. That's literally all it's been. It's been not wandering too far off the path that's working for me."

And some people wanted to send this kid down after his April. Give...Me...A...Break.

Finally, the Indians reportedly signed their first International Free Agent [with one of the top signing bonus pools available](#)

. One of the talents talked about is a 16-year-old by the name of

Junior Soto

, an outfielder from the Dominican Republic that the Indians have signed with a \$600,000 bonus. They have just over \$3 million dollars left with the Soto signing.

-

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.

Morning Rundown: Tribe Walk Their Way to Five Straight Road Wins

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Sunday, June 30 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Friday, July 05 2013 8:19 AM

[Follow @TheTribeDaily](#)