

## Morning Rundown: Five and Fly, Jimenez Can't Escape; Indians Drop Series

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Friday, June 28 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Saturday, July 06 2013 12:12 PM

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The last time our Tribe has won eight games on a road trip was 1998. Really? 1998? That's a long time ago. Like when Jason Kipnis had the first inside the park home run on Wednesday since Jhonny Peralta in 2010. Like, that isn't anything. I remember that.

Do I remember 1998? Heck no, bro. But it looks like we're gonna have to remember it awhile longer, because Indians fell just short of that eight game win mark on Thursday as their road trip game to an end.

**INDIANS - 7 | ROYALS - 10**

**W: Luke Hochevar (2-1)**

**L: Bryan Shaw (0-2)**

**S: Greg Holland (19)**

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

There was the first five innings.

And [then there was the rest of the game](#) .

I don't know what it is about five innings with **Ubaldo Jimenez** this year, but, he's a regular Paul Byrd.

Even the first five are dicey. But when you get past that, forget it. It's either meltdown central or remove before meltdown sequence initiates.

*"Up to that point, boy, [Jimenez] was pretty good," Indians manager Terry Francona said. "And then he ran the count full to Cain. He saw eight pitches and he whacks one. That kind of got the ball rolling. Now, we're into the bullpen pretty early."*

I mean, you can understand Terry not wanting to go to the pen in the sixth if he can avoid it. But at what cost? You have a five run lead, the team has been kept off the scoreboard, do you really want to let them get their momentum going?

The guy loses it. I mean, a walk is a walk, but walking someone with two outs is different than with no outs. You put the first two guys on to start the inning by walking them, something is wrong. You need to be yanked.

I know it puts the bullpen in a bad spot having to go four innings, but that's why you kept Joe Martinez right? He can give you some innings if it ends up being needed down the road. Throw your guys out there before things get back.

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I'm not second guessing Francona at all, I'm just wondering if he has been following this Jimenez script so far. I mean even Ubaldo admitted it.

*"I just lost the strike zone," Jimenez said. "And then after that, a tough play at first base."*

He lost the strikezone. Not "I couldn't get calls" or "I was just missing" or "they put up great at bats". He lost the strikezone.

Now that's not saying that When Cody Allen comes in with two guys on that he isn't going to give up five runs or anything. He came in and gave up a solo shot to tie the game up. But he would have been facing different hitters and eventually, he settled down. There was no settling Jimenez down. Felt like Tito should have went into damage control before he tried to save his bullpen, at least when you are dealing with the enigma that is Uh-bald-o.

And about that bullpen. I know a lot of people are bashing it pretty hard right now. They give up the lead (after Jimenez puts the Royals as close as he did), got the lead back, gave it back up again, and then let the Royals pull ahead by three. But I don't think you can pin this one on them at all. Of course they need to do better. It isn't normal for **Joe Smith** to walk the leadoff guy and give up a bomb quite like that. It happens. An anomaly, if you will.

*"We didn't get the job done," Indians reliever Joe Smith Said. "It leaves a bad taste after, if you look at our record, a good road trip. But it should've been a really good one, especially going in to play Detroit."*

But yeah, they need to do better than the six runs they gave up. Especially when the offense is coming back to support you like that. But let's remember the only reason they were put into that position in the first place. So lay off them for this one. As a whole, the bullpen needs to get better. But there is talent there. There are pieces in place. And now that the roles can be defined with Perez back at the end, Pestano and Smitty holding down the set-up roles, the rest of the staff can fall in line.

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That isn't to say they don't need help though. Rich Hill is definitely not cutting it as the only left-handed option. So if the Indians want to contend, they may be making a move to sure up that spot, or else they could run into some issues. But the pen has pieces, and it will be fine. Just let them get going. Let them get hot as Tito said the other night. They will help this team at some point, they have to.

### Random Notes...

Man did the Indians have Shields number on this one. Nine hits? The guy is usually much better than that, but he just didn't seem to have it. Credit him for getting into the sixth. It wasn't looking like he was going to even make it that far.

Part of that equation was Drew Stubbs, who hit a two-run shot in the second inning off James Shields to give the Indians a 3-0 lead. He'd later chase Shields from the game with a two-run single in the sixth. An excellent game for Stubby.

Also putting up a great effort was Michael Brantley, rocking out four hits, a run batted in and a run scored. Not bad in the cleanup role. Carlos Santana knocked in two more runs off two hits as well as he creeps back up the leaderboard in that category for the Indians.

It wasn't a wild pitch, but Carlos Santana had his fifth past ball of the season. Just a day after [Francona praised him for improving behind the plate](#). He has been behind the plate for the most wild pitches in baseball. Coincidence? No.

Jason Kipnis continued both his streaks. He is now up to 15 straight games with a hit and 35 straight games on base. Keep it rolling Kip. He seems to be getting it out of the way early in the game too.

The Indians almost pulled off a great series win and highly successful road trip without Nick Swisher in the finale. Due to the late game, Francona sat Swisher and started Cabrera at DH. Cabs mini hit streak since returning from the DL ended with an 0-for-4 game.

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Quietly Matt Albers is putting up scoreless frames for the Indians. He went all of June without surrendering an earned run and hasn't surrendered one since May 28th against the Reds. Maybe he can start being trusted again?

### [RANDOM RUNDOWN]

It really matters none that **Jason Giambi** is hitting just .208 overall this season. The guys batting line simply does not tell the story. When runners are in scoring position, he is hitting .360.

For as much as he plays, I'll take a .200 average if all those hits are coming in meaningful spots. [Francona agrees, sort of](#) .

*"He doesn't have to hit .300," Francona said. "When guys are on base, I think he's a better hitter. I think that's just years of [experience]. When he sees guys on base, very few times has he left a guy on third with less than two outs. That really gets under his skin. He doesn't like that."*

If he doesn't get a hit, he comes up with a great at-bat to work a walk. Further that, his OBP with runners in scoring position? .438. Where there is a will, there's a way. Giambi has 22 hits this season. Nine of them have come with runners in scoring position and he's made nine of those hits count.

He's had 126 plate appearances this season. And 32 of them have come with a runner in scoring position. 59 of them have come with a runner on period. To cap it off, Bastian has a great statistic of players with at least 125 plate appearances. He has an RBI for every 4.82 at-bats, which ranks sixth in the American League.

That tells you all you really need to know. He produces. Average be damned overall. The average when it counts is what makes him valuable.

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The Indians [are first in all of baseball](#) of going from first to third (or home) on a base hit. I'm not sure who keeps that stat or how you even think to keep it, but there ya go. That's pretty neat.

Michael Bourn [returned to the club on Wednesday](#) , just in time to be a part of that whole rain delay debacle. And he thought he was going to get an early night with no baby to worry about. To make room, the Indians sent down **Nick**

**Hagadone**

, which means they chose to keep

**Joe Martinez**□

around.

*"We've got to make another move Saturday for Carrasco," Francona said. "So obviously Nick was going to have to go at some point. Taking that into consideration, just to cover every single base, if [starter Scott Kazmir's] back did act up on him, we've got Joe [Martinez], who has been starting [in Triple-A]."*

For now... Martinez is probably gone tomorrow when the Indians need to make a move to call up Carrasco. They probably don't need an eight-man bullpen now though. Then again, crazy stuff could happen again, so cross your fingers I guess?

All is right in the world as **Jason Kipnis** took [home the AL Player of the Month honor](#) . Player of the Week, Month, [likely Bro of the Month](#) , and next... All-Star, right? We'll find out soon.

Kipnis' inside the park home run on Wednesday was the first since 2010, as I noted earlier, for the Indians. It came sadly at [the expense of an opposing player](#) really hurting himself. Look, these concussions are not cool. Ask Corey Koskie, it pretty much cost him his career. Justin Morneau? Hasn't been the same dominant hitter since. Aaron Hill almost lost his career to it.

Hopefully Alex Gordon is okay and he is able to get back out there relatively soon. That was a nasty spill he took. It was very big of Kip to apologize to Salvadore Perez, but it wasn't his fault

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and he simply didn't know Gordon was out when he was celebrating.

Finally, **Zach McAllister** will throw another bullpen session today. The big hurdle will be throwing a breaking ball because of the sprain to his finger. Hopefully all goes as planned and he can continue the process.

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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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