

Tribe Comes Up Small in Biggest Game of '13

Written by {ga=riverburns}

Tuesday, July 02 2013 11:31 AM - Last Updated Tuesday, July 09 2013 1:55 PM



Nobody trusts the Indians. Blame Manny Acta, Shelley Duncan, or the big free-agent, Casey Kotchman. They're not with the Indians any more, but we all know by now that early success translates into very little, and the aforementioned gentlemen, among others, wore these Indians uniforms as history unfolded. What's the value of history, if not to learn from our mistakes, and many mistakenly believed in the Tribe after hot starts in 2011 and 2012. Fast forward to early July in 2013, and you have better names and a theoretically better team, sitting just 2.5 games behind a first place Detroit team that happens to be in Cleveland for a 4-game set.

So, you have yourself a big series, and no way better to set the tone than with Justin Masterson, who has really made himself a home at the corner of Ontario and Carnegie, where he was 6-1 at home entering Friday night's action. To increase the odds for the Tribe in this series opener, Jim Leyland was going with Rick Porcello, who has struggled this season for sure, and has been a train wreck in his last two starts. With the stars aligned perfectly, the Indians were somehow star-crossed in a 7-0 drubbing in front of 40,167 people who did not come to see (notorious umpire) Joe West in action.

The Tigers got things going early with the bottom of their lineup. Ramon Santiago, the #9 hitter in Leyland's lineup, gave Detroit a 2-0 lead with a bases loaded single. After Masterson through the most feared part of the lineup, a struggling Victor Martinez smacked one past the bag at first with one out in the away half of the second inning, but he was held to a single after Drew Stubbs played the carom off the side wall perfectly, and was retired at second on a Jhonny Peralta ground ball. With two outs, the Tribe ace surrendered a walk and another single to set the table for Santiago. An Austin Jackson whiff ended the inning and limited the damage, but that would be all the damage needed to do in the home team on Friday night.

Tribe Comes Up Small in Biggest Game of '13

Written by {ga=riverburns}

Tuesday, July 02 2013 11:31 AM - Last Updated Tuesday, July 09 2013 1:55 PM

Things would not get much better for Masterson, who gave up 6 runs on 7 hits to the first place team from Michigan. In the third inning, Andy Dirks led off with a double, putting a runner in scoring position for Miguel Cabrera, who made it 3-0 with an RBI single. Masterson worked a 1-2-3 fourth, but the "5 and fly" theme of this staff that has frustrated fans to no end this season was in play while Detroit beat them into submission before the Braves of the Cuyahoga could get the third out in the fifth inning.

It was a pair of former Indians that put this game away and ended Masterson's night faster than you can say "Al Albuquerque". Too many free passes gave the Tigers too many chances, and first it was Victor Martinez, who showed little sign of his 2013 struggles, that made Masterson pay with a sharp single to right field, to make it 4-0. If the game was still in question at that point, it wasn't after Jhonny Peralta's double made it 6-0, which sent Masterson to the showers. Rich Hill struck out Don Kelly on 3 pitches, for one a rare out with runners in scoring position for the Tigers. Detroit was 5-for-10 with runners ready to score on Friday night.

It might as well have been 26-0 at that point, considering how the Cleveland bats made Porcello into Bob Gibson, registering only 6 hits in their biggest contest of the season. Only one was for extra bases, a Lonnie Chisenhall double in the fifth inning, the only hit of the inning. Carlos Santana hit the ball well, going 2-for-4 on Friday, the only Indian to notch more than a single hit. Santana's second knock came in the ninth inning, off Bruce Rondon with Michael Brantley on first, setting up the the closest thing the Tribe had to a scoring threat. Mark Reynolds and Chisenhall both went down swinging, cementing the shutout for the Tigers.

Speaking Al Albuquerque, he made a cameo that Detroit fans would consider nice, setting down the top of the Tribe order, all on swinging strikeouts in his inning of work. Despite having to work over 4 innings, Terry Francona's bullpen was spared the labor, with Rick Hill setting down every batter he faced and a good three innings of mop-up work from Joe Martinez. In the seventh inning, a battle of Martinez vs Martinez occurred, with Victor reigning victorious with his second RBI single of the night, boosting his batting average to .242 on the year.

The Indians will try this thing again on Saturday at 4:05 ET. Anibal Sanchez will get the ball for the Tigers, after a less than desirable rehab start, while the Indians counter with Carlos Carrasco seeking his first win of the season.

Tribe Comes Up Small in Biggest Game of '13

Written by {ga=riverburns}

Tuesday, July 02 2013 11:31 AM - Last Updated Tuesday, July 09 2013 1:55 PM
