

Morning Rundown: Masterson Takes No-Hit Bid Into 7th; Tribe Say No to Garza

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Wednesday, July 17 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, July 23 2013 7:37 AM



Len Barker is still the man. The Indians will have to wait a little longer for a no-hitter. It looked as good of a chance as the Indians have had in a long time on Sunday into seventh inning.

You have to truly be un-hittable though, with a good mix of luck, skill, defense, and who knows what else.

INDIANS - 7 | TWINS - 1

W: Justin Masterson (11-7)

L: Scott Diamond (5-9)

[\[BOXSCORE\]](#)

Morning Rundown: Masterson Takes No-Hit Bid Into 7th; Tribe Say No to Garza

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Wednesday, July 17 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, July 23 2013 7:37 AM

Justin Masterson [did not quite have the right combo](#) .

But for awhile, he sure looked like he could do it. That was until Matt Underwood said something.

No, not really. It was until Brian Dozier had a blooper to center. One could argue Drew Stubbs should have dove instead of slide, but that's besides the point. It is hard to make a split decision like that when you are running as hard as Stubby was.

"Every time Drew goes after a ball, I think he's going to get it," Francona said. "He's so good that I always think he's going to catch it. He gave it everything he had."

After the no-hitter went away, Masterson was still in control and he could have gone for shutout number four.

But just as the defense has seemingly done all weekend, this time with Jason Kipnis' error.

But Mastey would wiggle his way out of that with just the hit and the run, cap it off with eight strikeouts and that was his game. Not bad for the 11th win and his first start out of the break, and not a bad way to get the Indians back on track and in the win-column, salvaging this series.

"That's what we can do," Masterson said. "You've seen the last couple games. We were just a little bit sloppy kind of all the way around. I think today is a nice one -- a little kick in the pants. Let's get it back together and really push."

Kick in the pants (Kickin' Pants!) indeed. And while the 3-0 lead was nice, Michael Brantley's big three-run triple was so big. It not only knocked the starter out of the game, but it pretty much sealed the deal. The way the Twins offense is, and the way Masterson was pitching, 6-0 can sometimes feel like 20-0.

Morning Rundown: Masterson Takes No-Hit Bid Into 7th; Tribe Say No to Garza

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Wednesday, July 17 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, July 23 2013 7:37 AM

So for Brantley to come up in the situation he did, runners in scoring position and two outs, and to come up like we've become accustomed to him doing, was no doubt just as big as Masterson's performance.

Random Notes...

After yesterday's game, the Indians have quite the number of runs going on right now. The pitching staff as a whole has been pretty good, the rotation especially. Not being the reason they lost the two games to the Twins, they're 5-0 dating back to July 7th with 66+ innings carrying a 1.91 ERA.

The staff as a whole has not let up a home run 83 consecutive innings over nine games. [Bastian notes](#) that this is the longest streak since 96 innings from 1992. Just go ahead and keep that one up.

Despite his error, Jason Kipnis has the big blow of the game in the third inning when he ripped his 15th home run of the season to left field. The ball bounced around but was over the fence. Opposite anyone? Kipnis was 2-for-4 with an additional RBI and run scored, and he walked. He also smashed some flowers.

Drew Stubbs got the start in the leadoff spot with the left-hander on the mound and he paid dividends with a hit and a walk. Always a good day when you can rest Bourn and get that.

Up until Masterson's hit, the only baserunner he had let up was Aaron Hicks, whom he hit in the third inning. He didn't even walk a guy all game and don't think he ever really came close, he was firing on all cylinders at one point.

Mark Reynolds walked (shocker) and scored a run, but goes hitless again. He struck out once, but actually put bat on ball in a situation you would have rather him struck out in. Following the Kipnis homer in the third Santana walked with one out. Reynolds ended any hopes to extend

Morning Rundown: Masterson Takes No-Hit Bid Into 7th; Tribe Say No to Garza

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Wednesday, July 17 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, July 23 2013 7:37 AM

the inning by grounding out into an inning ending double play. Come ON!

Any time you start Ryan Raburn and he doubles and gets two hits, I'll take it. Even if it doesn't result in runs or runs scored. Not his fault. He and Aviles were a combined 3-for-7 with a run and RBI. Bench depth.

I know Asdrubal Cabrera did not have the best series, but he's swinging a better bat. It's only a matter of time before things start dropping his way. He was robbed of a big hit in this one and on Friday he had some good swings on some pitches that the Twins defense simply made good plays on. He's close, I can feel it.

[INJURY RUNDOWN]

With the All-Star break come and gone, we have some updates as far as injuries go. And of course right out of the shoot, there are some new injuries to get nervous about.

Perhaps the best and most important news is about **Zach McAllister** and his return to a major league mound.

[It will be tomorrow](#)

Yeah, you read that right. After his six shutout innings last Thursday with the Clippers, McAllister is ready to return to the Indians and will be a much needed infusion into the rotation. It avoids the Indians having to make a call for a spot starter and lets their plan of attack unravel just as they would have hoped.

"We forced him to be patient," Francona said of McAllister. "We tried to press upon him the fact that, if he did this right, it's something you can move on from and continue his progression, trying to see how good he can get, as opposed to fiddling around with this thing and having a problem. He did a really good job. He was really honest. He worked his [tail] off. It's kind of exciting that he's back, ready to go."

Obviously with six shutout innings and no issues following the start, there isn't much you can say. He was able to throw his curveball no problem and if he can go six in the minor leagues, he

Morning Rundown: Masterson Takes No-Hit Bid Into 7th; Tribe Say No to Garza

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Wednesday, July 17 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, July 23 2013 7:37 AM

clearly is ready to return to starting at the major league level. It worked out real well for the Indians. That was the hope after Salazar made one spot start and it came through. That never happens.

Now, I would say that the rotation is lined up just like the Indians want it, with Kazmir, Kluber, Masterson, McAllister, and Jimenez all back and healthy. But the first two games back from break is already making that difficult to come true.

Both **Corey Kluber** and **Scott Kazmir** had some injury scares as their starts came to a close over the weekend. Kluber [felt some hip soreness](#) on Saturday against the Twins, so as a precaution, Francona pulled him after five innings of shutout baseball.

"I talked to [head athletic trainer Lonnie Soloff] during and after the game," Francona said. "I don't think this is anything that's going to [cost him much time]. We have the off-day coming, so if we need to buy him an extra day or two, we could. But I don't think anybody thinks it'll get in the way."

Two things, at least it isn't an arm/shoulder/elbow injury of any sorts. But it can still mess with you as you are driving off with your leg. Tito told Kluber he noticed an alteration to his delivery. Better safe than sorry.

The other thing is, Kluber could be pushed back because of an off day this week or completely skipped. So the Indians can play with that if becomes a larger issue than it already is. Right now, [he'll throw a side session on Tuesday](#) . He's slated to start Friday. As of now, that's going ahead as planned unless something comes up in the side session.

There is no issue with Scott Kazmir. Simply, the "scare" he put into everyone on Friday was nothing of the sorts. Francona and the training staff marched out to the mound on Friday in the sixth inning with two outs thinking there was a calf issue.

So, hopefully, the rotation can actually stay intact one time through.

Morning Rundown: Masterson Takes No-Hit Bid Into 7th; Tribe Say No to Garza

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Wednesday, July 17 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, July 23 2013 7:37 AM

If you are waiting for **Brett Myers** to be that arm in the bullpen the Indians add, keep waiting. Myers [has been shut down once again](#) and there is once again no timetable attached to his return. These words from Tito are quite troubling.

"He's down for right now," Francona said. "The hope is that maybe we give him another break and give him another shot at it. I know we're getting to that point in the year where it's getting tougher. But, to his credit, he wants to keep trying. As long as he does, we're OK with that."

If he's got some chronic elbow issues going on here, it may be just time to shut him down, because this is the third time now that they've shut him down like this. And this is the first time since they said he'd be coming back as a reliever. He doesn't even need to condition to go more than an inning. What's that have to tell you?

Nothing good.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Perhaps the Indians would have thought Myers as their own little "midseason trade" to help out the bullpen. But if Myers isn't going to be back anytime soon, they probably should consider the market and go after another reliever.

Especially with the list of left-handed relievers that could be available. [There is no shortage of them](#) and because they are A) relievers and B) play a well stocked position, it shouldn't cost the Indians too much in a swap.

The other position that is going to get talked about is starting pitcher, which of course the Indians could use, because you can never have too many starting options. Especially with your fifth starter can only pitch five innings. The most coveted guy right now is Matt Garza of the Cubs and while he could be dealt any moment, he is still on the market.

Morning Rundown: Masterson Takes No-Hit Bid Into 7th; Tribe Say No to Garza

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Wednesday, July 17 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, July 23 2013 7:37 AM

If you believe Paul Hoynes, [you will believe that the Cubs went to the Indians](#) asking for Lonnie Chisenhall in a potential deal for the right-handed strikeout pitcher. As they Indians should, they said no.

There's two big reasons you don't do that. One, Mark Reynolds has cooled off and isn't a good defensive third baseman anyway. The Indians need Chisenhall at third. Two, that deal is downright silly. Trading a guy who COULD be a fixture at third for a guy that will give you a little over two months worth of starts? What is that? 11? 12 if you are lucky? If he stays healthy too...

Garza is flat out going to be too expensive for the Indians. They are not in a position to be making a deal for that type of starter right now. If they could win the World Series with that single move, of course you consider it, but this is still a team that needs other pieces and has some more to prove before we can say that.

If they can get a starter, for a reasonable price, that is also under a little more control than a half a season, then of course the Indians should listen and consider. But the percentage chance of that happening is on a low end, so you might as well focus on the part of the club that could get improved through the trade market, and that as we mentioned is the bullpen.

The Indians can contend with what they have though, you better believe that. Does it give them their best chance? Of course not, the team could be improved. But Francona [is happy with the makeup of his team](#) right now and if this is the group of guys he has to go into battle with for the rest of the year, he won't have any issue with that.

"The one thing I never really want to do is, I don't ever want to press [Antonetti] to do something," Francona said. "I know he cares, but I also know that we have some prospects in our Minor Leagues that we don't want to lose, and I feel really strongly about that. I know he does, too. This is a good group to see how good we can get. When we play the game right, we can win."

If nothing happens, it is fine. Some want to add a bat, especially with the way Reynolds is

Morning Rundown: Masterson Takes No-Hit Bid Into 7th; Tribe Say No to Garza

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Wednesday, July 17 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, July 23 2013 7:37 AM

struggling, but I wouldn't give up on the big guy quite yet. I think he has something left in the tank here and if they stick with him, he might get it back going and be that "extra bat" you are looking for. Not to mention, Swisher has to start pulling his weight too.

Speaking of Reynolds, Terry Francona wants him to play, but it will have to be in spots for now. Part of that is sitting him in situations where he'd like to start **Yan Gomes** behind the dish, [which may be just about every time Scott Kazmir pitches](#)

"He's done such a good job," Francona said of Gomes, "and it seems like he got [Kazmir] on a roll. ... Unless something happens, we'll keep doing it. And we want Gomes to play."

And Gomes can hit. Look at it this way. Since the start of June, Reynolds has played in 38 games and has 20 hits with two home runs and just six RBI. That's a .156 average and one RBI every six games. In that same span, Yan Gomes has played in 18 games (20 less) and has 12 hits with one home run and six RBI. The average is just about the same, but he's playing part time and has just as many RBI. Oh and Reynolds has 58 strikeouts, which is scarier than that dude on the skyline over the Grand Canyon.

So that's how bad Reynolds has been. So bad, that Francona is going against the idea of not giving a pitcher a personal catcher.

"I've never been real big on doing that," Francona said, "because you kind of pigeonhole yourself with a lineup."

I guess 58 strikeouts in 38 games will do that to you.

Francona is also [considering toying with the lineup](#) because of the struggles of **Nick Swisher**. His cleanup hitter isn't really cleaning up, nor is he hitting very well. His consideration is to move Swish into the second hole, which would require shifting Asdrubal Cabrera around. Naturally you could bump everyone down, Cabrera third, Kipnis fourth, so on and so forth.

Morning Rundown: Masterson Takes No-Hit Bid Into 7th; Tribe Say No to Garza

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Wednesday, July 17 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, July 23 2013 7:37 AM

"There have been times where I've thought about hitting him second," Francona said of Swisher. "He's always going to have his on-base skills -- that never goes away. But I guess I keep falling back on, I don't want to move Kip. ... I think when you're in the cleanup spot, you get pitched a little differently. I think Swish is finding that out. I guess if somebody could handle it, I'd want him to be the one."

Or why not just bump Swisher down to the fifth spot in the order? Let him hit behind Michael Brantley, who has shown a penchant for actually cleaning up in situations where it is needed.

[Remember the statistics from the super long second half preview](#)

last week?

Well... We'll see, Bro.

-

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.

[Follow @TheTribeDaily](#)