

Morning Rundown: Canada Guy and Twins Defense Blank and Dazzle Tribe

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Thursday, August 08 2013 11:00 PM - Last Updated Wednesday, August 14 2013 8:38 AM



Nothing. I mean, just, nothing. You can't do a single solitary thing about good pitching and defense.

When you have them both, you are going to win games. They didn't even do much offensively. They got two big hits that scored all their runs and that was all the Twins needed. The Indians didn't play a bad game. The Twins just played a really good one.

INDIANS - 0 | TWINS - 3

W: Andrew Albers (2-0)

L: Danny Salazar (1-1)

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[\[BOXSCORE\]](#)

And those are games you can stand to lose, even if they are against a team that is out of any sort of playoff race and is not really playing for much other than to further the experience of their young players and build their team up.

Does it feel good? No of course not, but it feels a lot less painful than some of the losses last week when the team booted the ball around the infield and there was a whole lot of sloppy play going on.

This was a [beautifully executed game on the Twins part](#) and if you weren't an Indians fan, it would have been fun to watch because defensively, the Twins were on point. Some of the plays they made were fun looking. And it was all in support of a guy who doesn't have the best stuff, but seemingly knows how to pitch. More than that, he had impeccable control and an aggressive approach to throwing strikes.

You cannot do much facing a guy who throws 102 pitches in nine innings and throws 76 of them for strikes. Yes, that's 75% of the pitches he threw went for strikes. He fell behind very little, if at all, didn't even garner strikeouts, because he didn't need to.

"Unfortunately for us, that kid put on a clinic," Indians manager Terry Francona said. "He doesn't overwhelm you with stuff. He attacks the strike zone with all of his pitches, any count. He dominated the game with a fastball that I don't think ever touched 90."

This is just one of those nights where you tip your cap to the other guy, and you say good job and move on. How does a guy like that dominant? Well, hey, when you are an unknown you have that working for you. You have no game plan to follow in facing him. So he can take advantage of having the scouting report on you but you don't have it on him. Throw that in with some great control and a guy who was on his game and you have the nine inning complete game shutout that Albers threw in only his second start.

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There really were no chances. Two hits, Kipnis in the fourth and Gomes in the eighth. But that doesn't even count the many balls hit in the gap or through the infield that were tracked down by the outfielders and scooped up by the infielders before they could find grass. Albers was good, but his defense backed him up big time to attribute to the stellar contest. So as much praise you give Albers, throw some the defensive core some credit too.

Danny Salazar was only able to go four innings as he is on a strict pitch count. He threw a lot of pitches early and ran into some trouble in the fourth inning despite not giving up any runs in that frame. He made a few mistakes that cost him the three runs off home runs to Dozier and Plouffe.

"I thought [Salazar] was a little less crisp than he was last outing," Francona said. "I think the outing against Detroit, he was pumped up and got pretty deep into the game, so we did kind of want to keep him short. He had the long fourth inning ... We just thought, give him a little bit of a blow rather than grind through one more inning, because I don't have any doubt he could've gotten through it."

Salazar wasn't bad, but like Tito said, he wasn't sharp. He walked a few but still struck out five, showing you that his stuff was even there. Again, he just made a few mistakes to guys that took him deep.

Random Notes...

Albers? Herrmann? No not Matt and Frank. Weird that Twins have gentlemen by those names.

This is one of those games were you have no notes. Two guys got hits, no one walked, heck, no one even struck out. Yay Yan Gomes got a hit!?

What you can commend is the bullpen once again. After what they did on Sunday, they came right back on Monday and did the same exact thing. With Masterson leaving early, the pen was called on to give some length to the game and keep it zeros so the team could come back, which they did.

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And they did just that with different people completely. Marc Rzepczynski was able to give two scoreless to get the team in at least a more advantageous position in terms of pen usage. Of course Shaw and Allen got innings, but the credit goes to Zeps in getting the team through that.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Well, the meeting might have worked on Sunday, but it did not carry over, nor did the win on Sunday, in terms of momentum for the team on Monday against Minnesota. But this was not a players meeting, but rather the [big guy calling them together for a little pow-wow](#) . Manager Terry Francona felt like he needed to deliver a message to them himself.

"We have good veterans in our clubhouse that do a really good job," Francona said, "but sometimes I need to tell them how I feel. Sometimes you feel the need to explain things or to pick them up. That's me and the coaches' job, to have the barometer of how things are and try to do that right thing. Because the last thing you want to do is to say the wrong thing."

Who knows what Tito said, but I can't imagine it was of the "light a fire" under the team variety because he isn't that guy. I could see Manny Acta ripping people up in a meeting like that, but Tito? I think it probably took more of a refocusing theme.

And hopefully that wasn't just a one game thing. I think if anything, he did it to refocus them moving forward and that they'll be a lot better from here on out. The defense was getting bad, it just didn't seem like a team that was all that in the game on some aspects, mostly because of how the defense played. Little things were getting lost.

The team doesn't look sluggish, that's the thing. At least on Monday despite the loss. The opposing pitcher was really good, got some great defense, the pitching did what they could, no bad defense. It just was a game that a team losses every year, it happens. So, I think the meeting at least did that and put this team back on track mentally.

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Lonnie Chisenhall could really use an RBI or something of the sorts. He [has fallen out of it a little since August started with just two hits](#)

"When I came up, I was feeling good in the box," Chisenhall said, "and that kind of trickled away. We were winning games, and I was a little satisfied just winning games as a team. I've got more in the tank."

And yeah, you know, with Mark Reynolds gone it would really be nice if Chisenhall could step up a little more. Remember September last year when Chiz came back? He hit .257 in September with two home runs and seven RBI. But it wasn't that because he he was just as good in June, it seemed like a more patient Chiz. He garnered more walks, and just looked a lot more confident.

We need that confident Chiz up there swinging with authority.

Speaking of Reynolds, he cleared waivers and the Indians will be granting him his outright release, making him a free agent and free to sign with anyone of his choosing.

Terry Francona says that the extra rest **Scott Kazmir** should get due to being bumped back should help. Kazmir [has the added benefit of an extra day](#) on top of that due to Thursday's off day, which has also allowed them to get Ubaldo basically a week off.

"It gives Ubaldo two days and Kaz an extra three," Francona said. "[Kazmir] felt like these couple days have really helped him."

The way the pitching has been going, these guys need to produce, so if it takes a few extra days to get them composed and charged up for the next month and a half, then so be it. It can't be something they get a lot though, especially with Kluber down. Carrasco will be a nice way to give them this situation now, but he needs to go back to the bullpen and be serviceable in that

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capacity.

I mean, at this juncture you are even looking at a six-man rotation, which is just a little much.

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