



There's a lot of people on board. I hope there is more after last night. If you aren't, you probably just aren't that big of a baseball or Indians fan.

That's okay... But for those of us who are here and living with this team in the now. Boy, there's some magic, you can definitely feel it.

**WHITE SOX - 4 | INDIANS - 5**

**W: Bryan Shaw (6-3)**

**L: Addison Reed (5-4)**

## [BOXSCORE](#)

GIAMBI!

He said it better than anyone could have put it... This is the stuff you dream about.

If you turned off the TV after Chris Perez's meltdown...ehhh. It would be hard to blame you. But have ye no faith? The White Sox were probably thinking in the absolute back of their minds, "What is going to go wrong here, because we haven't touched this team all season?"

**Jason Giambi**, that's what.

You know, a win is a win. The Indians would have had the same lead in the standings had Perez saved the game. [They're still at 87](#) . There wasn't an extra win tacked on for how the Indians ended up winning this one. But it sure does feel like it.

*"That had to have been, by far, one of the more emotional wins that we've had," Indians first baseman Nick Swisher said. "Especially considering where we are in the running. If you lose that game, man, you never know what's going to happen. We're in that position right now where we've got to win out. We've got to win."*

Swisher said he almost started crying. To go from the satisfaction of winning another game to the immediate shock and despair of NOT winning that game, to the quick turnaround of absolute-100%-only-winning-the-World Series-would-make-the-high-even-higher-high, is just...incredible. The shot of energy and ultimately the feeling that this team has something special on their side, no matter the situation, is an added win. Because you don't know what kind of momentum and confidence booster that gives this team going forward. They're going to come out today and feel unstoppable, and they should when they play a team like Chicago.

And they're going to play better ball from the start of the game. Not saying they would have

come out and not played well if Perez would have saved it and made it drama-free. But there's now this extra "magic" that goes along with this team as they finish out this regular season.

And you want that magic on your side. Because after Michael Brantley's single that allowed Giambi to come up with that situation and hit that home run, I wouldn't be shocked if there is a little pixie dust in the bats or on the field, or on the baseballs the Indians are playing with. The ball hit the lip of the grass. It should have been a grounder to second base. But it hit that little lip and gave it just enough of a bounce to go over Beckham's glove.

And then... Big G, Big Gone.

*"Yeah, I ran into it," Giambi said with a grin. "God. There's nothing more special. That's what keeps you coming back every year."*

He ran into it? He said he was trying to hit a groundball to short, because he knew if he could get something into the outfield, Brantley would score and the game would be tied. That situation arose when Brantley stole second without any sort of contention. That is the tying run and they let him into scoring position.

And that is just another small thing that broke the Indians way. If Brantley doesn't do that, Giambi may be altering his approach, and he may not be hitting what he hit into the deep of the night.

And the Indians may have not won that game, which is a sad story I wasn't looking forward to writing.

Mainly because I'm genuinely a fan of the guy who would have been responsible for the sadness. Instead of a story, he's a secondary footnote of what happened last night. Fans may put it aside, but they haven't forgotten. They remember that Chris Perez gave up two solo shots in that inning and almost shattered the hopes and dreams of his fan base. Detroit game was bad enough, this would have ripped their guts out.

It would have ripped it out and stomped on them, because it would have demoralized them. A loss to the White Sox? When you had it in hand? Oh hell no. Not with a playoff spot on the line.

Look, I'm not going to sit here and make excuses for the guy. I've been accused of doing it before. I don't make excuses, I state my opinion based off the game that is played on that field. I'm not very much a stats-heavy person. I'm very much logical, this is something you probably know if you read me often enough.

I'll leave it at this though. Is Chris Perez with this team next year? No, but it has nothing to do with him blowing this or any other game. It has to do with the salary he will be making. I think the Indians would have liked it if he didn't blow this game, because the better he looks, the more value he has for them to get something out of.

But this team and a lot of other teams view him as a legitimate closer. Someone who can come into the ninth inning and slam the door. You are completely biased if you think he cannot do that. He's blow five saves this year, which is about the standard for a closer in blowing games. They happen.

I'm not saying what happened last night should have happened. I saw someone say it last night on Twitter, and I kind of agree with them. This is simply not a game you can blow. The fact of the matter is, he did and he's going to get raked through the coals for it. It isn't as much as it would have been, not nearly, because of Giambi's heroics. But it also wouldn't be nearly as bad if he was taking to the media. That's a decision and a choice he made, and he'll have to live it that. We've talked about it before, and my personal stance is, who cares?

He blew the game, what more is there to say? I know, there's that "respect" factor and having your teammates back and not letting them answer for your failures. But do we all think that he doesn't know he failed? The people that booed last night, I'm not going to antagonize. I've been over the booing here before too. It's not something I choose to partake in. If you wanna do it, fine, go ahead.

But I don't boo. I'd rather come back in the bottom of the ninth and cheer on the guys to get the

job done rather than sulk and get mad about the game possibly being blown. It's cheesy, but like the saying goes, there's no use crying of spilled milk.

There's no use crying over a game you haven't lost yet.

### **Random Notes...**

Lots of little things as we move forward here and away from the main storyline. One-A has to be Ubaldo Jimenez and his continued brilliance. Big Uey went out and gave his team six-plus. He walked three hitters, which was odd, but he was also getting squeezed at some points. He still struck out seven and gave up two off five hits. Another solid outing from him. He'll go again on Sunday if the Indians are in a position where they need to win the game to make the playoffs.

Michael Brantley's home run in the seventh inning. Oh my gosh! The Indians wouldn't end it there of course, as Kipnis would come up later and get a run knocked in to take the 3-2 lead. But OH MY GOSH what a freaking hit. It is completely overshadowed by Giambi's blast because it won the game, but Brantley's tied the game before it was won. The man went 3-for-4 and is arguable the Trib'es hottest hitter right now. Clutch.

So in that situation where Brantley was on base and Gomes and Aviles both had opportunities early on to get the job done, something was clear to me, and I said this on Twitter. Gomes and Aviles both swung at some really ugly pitches. They looked as if they were trying to do too much in that situation and go for the hit that would have won the game. They wouldn't have swung that way at pitches they swung at if they weren't.

Then you watch Giambi go up there and he's saying that he's just trying to hit something into the outfield and he does that. Hopefully those two guys were taking note, as was everyone. You go up in those situations and you just try and do what you can to get the job done. Yeah, hitting a home run gets the job done, but proves the point that if you go up there trying to hit a home run, you probably aren't.

That is why Giambi is on this team. If you want to say "the best players need to play and be on

this team" then fine. But you need a guy like Giambi. Because a guy like Giambi is going to help those players be even better and when you get into situations like these. Experience matters. Bet your bottom dollar that it does. The Indians wouldn't be here without him.

Curious times when Drew Stubbs came in to play center field and Matt Carson moved to right field. Usually Tito is taking Ryan Raburn out for defensive reasons late, but when both Stubbs and Carson come in, something is up. **Michael Bourn** officially left the game [with a sprain in his right wrist](#). On that exciting bunt single that turned into him getting to second base on the Santiago wild throw, Bourn slid into second and jammed the wrist.

*"I should be OK," Bourn said. "If you see me come out, then you know [something is wrong]. I'm not going to come out for just anything. But I didn't want to cost the team, with a ball out there hit to me and I couldn't really throw like I wanted to. I should be fine. We'll see what happens tomorrow."*

To tell you how severe it is, he didn't undergo an X-ray or an MRI, so he should be fine. The plan is to check him today obviously, but if he doesn't miss any time, than it shouldn't be a big deal. He kept playing after it happened in the fifth, but left when it got stiff on him.

Credited with the win after coming out and getting the final out of the ninth inning after the Perez mess, Bryan Shaw pitched in his team-leading 73rd inning. He's at 72.1 completed innings in 68 games. If there's one thing he's done all year for this team it is eat innings. When you are talking about the end of the game situation, his name doesn't usually come up, but it should. Obviously, you like what he does and he has good stuff. Perhaps good enough to be a ninth inning guy. It wouldn't disrupt the flow of the order. Not going to suggest it this year because again, Francona is not changing things in the back-end, but something to think about going forward into next year.

### [THE RACE FOR THE WILD CARD]

How big was that win? Super huge in terms of staying pace. Right now the Rangers have the benefit of playing the same team the Indians did last weekend, so you know they're racking up the wins. They barely scrapped by Texas, so right now, winning is huge. Even though we

assumed 89 wins would get it done (Indians two away from that with five to play), right now, there's pressure to win every game, especially with Tampa dominating this "tough" schedule they have.

The Rays send the Yankees one game closer to packing, while Toronto combined with the Indians win officially knocked out the Baltimore Orioles from the fun. Kansas City is still alive despite losing to Seattle, but another loss for them and the Bronx Bombers and you can officially call this a three-team race, even though that's what it is right now. Kansas City would have to win out and the Rangers and Indians would pretty much have to lose out for the Yanks and Royals to have a chance, and well, TB looks unstoppable right now.

The new goal should be 90 wins, because even though they're finishing up against Houston today, Texas may have a difficult time sweeping an Angels team that is playing good baseball as of late. Obviously, right now, you want them to split and make it easy, but provided that they take care of Houston tonight, they'll need three wins to reach 90 in four games. The Indians have an extra game to get to 90. The odds are in their favor, so it's just a another day, another must-win.

### [RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Another day, [another round of bullpen carousel by Tito](#) . After Perez's exit, Francona went to two different relievers just to get one out. After Marc Rzepczynski hit a batter, he turned to Shaw for the final out. He's using this bullpen to the max and it is awesome to watch him work and pick matchups and come up with the right combination nearly every time.

*"There's been a couple games that have been spread out -- sometimes in the wrong direction -- but we haven't had to go to guys and we've kind of used it two-fold," Francona said. "We've gotten guys like Josh Tomlin a couple innings that were important for him. C.C. Lee has got some much-needed experience. Blake [Wood] got an inning or two coming back from his surgery that will get him going for next year.*

Can you imagine if the regulars had to pitch even half of the 20+ innings the September callups had to pitch? Sure, it may be a few outs here and there, but those add up as you can see. Their 2.18 ERA over the course of time in September wouldn't be as good as it is (and is probably

better when you take out Perez's bombs) if they were pitching more.

Speaking of added help... There's something to be said for how hard the guy has worked to get back, just to give his team a few innings down the stretch. Certainly **Justin Masterson** has hopes that the Indians make a run and he can make a return to the rotation, but everyone will certainly

[take a few innings of relief](#)

where this team can get them from him.

*"I'm not above anything that would take place -- however we can help the team. We want to make sure that, although I feel good, will we still be great over three, four, five, seven, eight innings. That's ultimately how I like to do things, go as deep as I can. So we want to make sure we're in the right position for that, so we're not hurting our team when it comes time for something like that."*

Masterson made the joke that because there are 100 people in the bullpen now, he'll have to sit in the bathroom. But you can bet that now that Tito has use of this horse, he's going to go to him for a few innings here and there. He's someone you trust, and someone you know can relieve having done it before.

Tito did say that a return to the rotation is not out of the question this season, but that the team would have to "play for awhile" for it to possibly happen. Masterson is not far removed from starting a game, but you have to get a good amount of innings out of him in a start in the postseason if you make it that far. He'd be a perfect guy to pair up with Danny Salazar if need be or any other starter that may need it, so it's a nice luxury to have if you can't have him fully in the rotation.

Masterson pitched in another simulated game on Sunday in full uniform with his manager standing behind him watching him do his thing. Today, he's available out of the pen. Tito said he may not use him today, but if not today, Thursday so he can get some work in. You better believe you'll see him in the next day pitch.

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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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