

Series Preview: Twins at Indians

Written by {ga=pup}

Monday, May 14 2007 7:00 PM -

Finally, back to some good old American League Central baseball. Where the teams know each other, hate each other, and fight with each other like old school high school rivals. If you stare too long at a home run, you are going down. When one of yours goes down, you put one of theirs down. Then the umpires warn both benches, and someone else still goes down. There's no shortage of drama when the Indians and Twins get together. Cris Sykes previews the series.



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The Tribe will "welcome" the Minnesota Twins to Jacobs Field tonight, and the team still assuredly harbor some issues from the last series in Minnesota, when Johan Santana (yes, of impeccable control) took target practice on Travis Hafner and Victor Martinez. Will retribution come this week? Be sure to tune in to the games on SportsTimeOhio, and join us on [The Cleveland Fan's Indians Message Board](#), where the in game threads participation has been growing quicker than Barry Bonds' head in the late 90's.

Paul Byrd vs. Ramon Ortiz, May 15,2007

Paul Byrd will enter the series opener in the top ten in the AL in earned run

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average with a 2.84 mark. Maybe that splitter he developed really does work?

Byrd is 2-1 so far, but has pitched well enough to have three more wins. For his career, Byrd has won six games versus the Twins and lost three. The biggest obstacles in the Twinkies lineup will be Justin Morneau and Luis Castillo. Morneau, the reigning AL MVP, will bring a .476 (10-21) career average against Byrd to the plate with him. Luis Castillo, a slap hitting singles hitter has managed to hit Byrd at a .478 (11-23) clip. On a positive note, Byrd has had very good success handling Torri Hunter, holding him to a .171 (6-35) average.

Ramon Ortiz got off to a pretty hot start for the Twins, going 3-1 with a 2.57 ERA in his first five starts. Fortunately, for the Indians, Ramon Ortiz has returned to planet Earth and has allowed nine earned runs in ten innings pitched over his last two starts. Unfortunately for the Indians, Ortiz has been very tough against them in his career. In his five career starts against the Indians, Ortiz has a 3-1 record and has only allowed eleven earned runs in 45 innings. Only one of those starts has come in the last three years, and it accounts for his lone defeat, while pitching for the Cincinnati Reds. The only Indian with any kind of history is Trot Nixon and it is not good. Trot has two hits in twenty-four at bats against Ortiz.

C.C. Sabathia vs. Carlos Silva, May 16,2007

Oh, C.C. Why must you tease us? Why can't you just step up and take this ace role and run with it?

Sabathia will start game two of the series with a record of five wins against only one defeat. C.C. has been hurt in each of his last four starts with one bad inning ruining an otherwise great performance. In his last start, Sabathia (currently ranked second in the AL in strikeouts) gave up one run in the first six innings, before imploding in the seventh and allowing five runs. This will be the Carsten Charles' 22nd career start against the Twins, and he has seven wins, seven losses and seven no decisions.

For the Twins, right-hander Carlos Silva will oppose Sabathia. Silva will enter Jacobs Field with a very fine 3.00 ERA, but it has only been good enough to get him two wins in his seven starts. He has yet to allow more than three earned runs in any of his starts in 2007. This will be

the second time this season for Silva to face the Indians, as he got a no decision in a start earlier at The Metrodome. Silva worked five innings, allowing three earned runs and struck out a season high six Indians hitters on April 23. What you would expect to be the top five in Eric Wedge's batting order on Wednesday (Sizemore, Blake, Hafner, Martinez and Nixon) have a combined career average of .443 against Silva, in 124 at bats.

Fausto Carmona vs. Johan Santana, Thursday May 17, 2007

If there is ever a day to play hookie from work and head down to the Jake, this is it.

Fausto Carmona will be taking his 4-1 record to the bump on Thursday afternoon to face Minnesota. Carmona ended his drought of 15 straight decisions being chalked up in the loss column in an earlier start against the Twins, by going seven and two-third innings allowing only two earned runs. Since that start, Carmona has been as tough to score on as just about any pitcher in the AL. Carmona has won his last four starts, pitching 30 innings and allowing six earned runs.

The Twins will counter with Johan Santana. The Indians touched up Mr. Cy Young for four earned runs over seven innings in his first start of the season against Cleveland. This is the game that Johan decided if he can't get Victor and Pronk out, he might as well bury fastballs into the middle of their backs. Santana is seven and three in his career against the Indians, holding an ERA of 3.21 and 130 strikeouts in just over 123 innings.

Up Next: The Battle of Ohio versus Cincinnati