

## Series Preview: Indians at Rangers

Written by {ga=pup}

Wednesday, July 18 2007 7:00 PM -

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Coming off a series loss to the White Sox, the Indians take to the road for their first away series of the second half, heading to Arlington for a four game set with the lowly Texas Rangers. The Rangers are in last place, are sans many of their big names offensively, and are rumored to be looking to move Eric Gagne, Akinori Otsuka, and Kenny Lofton in trades to contenders. Cris Sykes previews the series for us.



So I guess I owe everyone a reason for not posting previews for the first couple of series after the All-Star Break. There are two reasons. The first one has something to do with spending copious amounts of time in Atlanta visiting customers and being forced to remain in bars and entertain them until all hours of the morning for a week. That lead to finally getting home and the wife making me pay for all the time I missed with even more copious amounts of yard work and chores.

If you feel bad, raise your hand. Thanks Mom, you can put your hand down now.

The second reason is much better. The rumor I had been hearing of late was the best way to get a contract extension is to do a so-so job. It worked for Jake Westbrook, Travis Hafner and now Eric Wedge. Unfortunately, my checks come from The Cleveland Fan and not The Cleveland Indians so this theory proved to be unsuccessful.

The Indians will embark on their first road trip of the second half of the season when they visit the Texas Rangers at Arlington Park. The Indians come in struggling thus far in the month of July, alternating wins and losses in each game since the All Star Break. Since winning their first three games in the month, they

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have dropped four of their last seven. They have fallen two games behind the Tigers in the American League Central and their Wild Card lead has slipped to a single game lead over Seattle.

The Texas Rangers are pretty much playing for pride and to showcase talent for potential trades \*cough, cough Eric Gagne cough, cough\*. Or as the esteemed Bruce Drennan likes to put it, &quot;**WHY AREN'T THE INDIANS, MARK?**&quot;.

**Thursday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, 8:35PM**

**C.C. Sabathia (12-4, 3.78 Earned Run Average) vs. Kameron Loe (5-7, 5.49 ERA)**

If anyone has seen a six foot seven three hundred pound left handed pitcher wandering about, please inform him there is an imposter wearing his number 52 jersey for the Cleveland Indians.

And we would like him back, because this version reminds me of a bucket of yuck. To prove the disgustingness that can be associated with Sabathia, he made six starts covering 48 1/3 innings in the month of June and allowed 12 earned runs. In TWO starts in July covering 11 innings, he has allowed 13 earned runs. This better be a pretty sick run he is about to tear off.

C.C. made a start against the Rangers back on April 25, and it does not point to being a team he is going to turn around his fortunes against. The Rangers handed Sabathia his worst pitching line of the season

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(prior to the recent funk of course) in the game at Jacobs Field. As was his M.O. in the early part of this year, C.C. was undone by one inning where he channeled Jeff Juden for some strange reason. It was a five run sixth inning, highlighted by an Ian Kinsler three run home run.

Sabathia is 6-2 in his career against Texas, with a 4.72 ERA. That includes a 3-1 record with a 4.44 ERA in Texas.

Looking at Kameron Loe's overall numbers indicate a mismatch is brewing in game one of the series. If you look at his last start, it looks pretty bleak for Ranger Fan, even if he is in the White House. If you look at the stretch of games coming after he was recalled from AAA and preceding his last time out, it might not be quite the mismatch you might think.

The five game stretch between June 14 and July 6, Loe was as high as he has ever been (sorry). He worked 33 and 2/3 innings, allowing 29 base hits and six earned runs. He won four of those five starts, including victories over Detroit, Boston and the suddenly hot Cubs.

Kameron made a start back in the April series as well, taking the loss in a nine to four Tribe victory. He worked five and one third innings and allowed seven runs (six earned) on six hits. What was the most embarrassing part for Loe? He allowed a two-run home run to TROT NIXON! That will not help come contrace negotiation time for Kam.

**Friday July 20<sup>th</sup>, 8:35 PM**

## **Fausto Carmona (11-4, 3.77 ERA) vs. Brandon McCarthy (4-6, 5.59 ERA)**

If there is one member of the Cleveland Indians pitching staff that has not taken his last few starts off, it is Fausto Carmona. Since he took the beat down of beat downs a few weeks back, Fausto has won three consecutive decisions and allowed more than three earned runs exactly never. Scary stat update alert...Fausto is tied for ninth in the AL in complete games, with ONE. That means there are only eight starting pitchers who have completed more than one game. Forget Joe Dimaggio, where have you gone Bob Feller?

### **Thought provoking question of the day**

Where would the Indians be today if Cliff Lee and Jake Westbrook did not get hurt? Best responses get, um well probably nothing. But if they are amusing or factual or better yet both maybe we will run some of them in the next preview.

That is when you know I have run out of good things to say about someone, Fausto, when I start asking thought provoking questions.

Former Chicago White Sox starter Brandon McCarthy will battle the Tribe on Friday. You know, even though he is a former White Sock, I still hate him like he is a current White Sock. Just not as bad as that one White Sock, you know, the one who used to wear blue socks with his pants pulled up real high. Now he is just the fat guy, playing for the White Sox and wearing black socks. I can't believe how far I actually took that.

McCarthy has not won a game since late in the month of May. Of course he has only made four starts since late May, so maybe that isn't so bad. I am sitting here, going over a game log, looking for interesting twists and trends and what not, and to tell you the truth Brandon McCarthy is the mother of all fungal pitchers. He does nothing well. Poor strikeout rate. Gives up more than a hit per inning. Walks a guy every other inning. He doesn't even get

ground ball outs to weasel out of jams. In fact, he has allowed thrown to 86 batters with a man on first base and induced exactly three double plays this year. I really have no clue if that is a high ration or a low ratio of a dead on even ration, but it seems low to me and it is a slow day.

In his last appearance as a member of the Chicago Untanned Hookers, McCarthy beat the Indians and Fausto Carmona at Jacobs Field last September. McCarthy pitched five and one third innings allowing only an Andy Marte home run. That was the second hit the Indians got off him that day, but was still enough to get him yanked. How does that feel Andy?

**Saturday, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 8:35 PM**

## **Cliff Lee (5-6, 5.67 ERA) vs. Jamey Wright (3-2, 4.31 ERA)**

Somebody please tell Cliff Lee he is left-handed, therefore he should get left handed hitters out. He should at least equalize them. What he should not do is allow them to hit .337 with a .602 slugging percentage.

Back on July 1, I really thought Cliff was starting to turn things around. He had not allowed more than three earned runs in five consecutive starts and won three of them. It even got his record on the right side of five hundred. Then Crazy Cliff Lee returned. The guy that can look filthy one

inning, disgusting the next and then right back to filthy the next, that is Crazy Cliffie. He can strike out the side facing the middle of the order, and then get tattooed by the bottom third only minutes later. That is Crazy Cliff Lee.

In his last two starts, Cliff has allowed 12 earned runs on 16 hits while walking six more in only nine innings of work. Of course part of that is Fred Cabrera's fault, but Cliff still put those guys on base, so he gets a mudpie in the face as well.

Jamey Wright is the scheduled starter for Texas on Saturday evening. Texas newspapers have mentioned Wright as a

potential target for teams to acquire for the stretch run. Texas must have some good wacky tobacky. Wright is an injury waiting, no hoping, no begging to happen. When he is not injured, hi teams wish he was and when he is injured opposing offenses usually wish he wasn't.

This year, for example, he made a start in April, hit the 60 day DL before coming back. Since coming back he has managed to average nearly as many walks per game as Paul Byrd has on the season. Plus he gives up hits like he is Paul Byrd. Imagine that combo! Cliff Lee control with Paul Byrd ability to miss a bat.

**Sunday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 8:35 PM**

## **Paul Byrd (7-4, 4.50 ERA) vs. Robinson Tejeda (5-8, 6.68 ERA)**

Paul Byrd is an enigma. I do not want to like him, because I do not like his style of pitching. I like guys who can stand up there, tell you what is coming and there is nothing you can do about it. Instead, Byrd teases with you the "slowball", entices you with the "looper" and gets you with a changeup. Damn is that boring!

You want to know what else Byrd does though? He gives the Indians a chance to win almost every fifth day. He has made 17 starts this year and the Indians have gone ten and seven in those starts.

The interesting part is, in the seven losses, Byrd has probably pitched better than in most of the 10 wins. In three of those starts, he pitched a total 22 innings and allowed four runs. It would be very easy for Paul Byrd to be right there with C.C. and Fausto in the double digit win club.

The Texas Rangers are not a very good match up for Mr. Byrd. For his career, Byrd is only two and five against Texas, with an ERA over seven. He has worked 41 innings in his seven career starts. To make matters worse, Byrd is actually worse in Texas than overall. He has never won in Arlington, losing all four of his starts. In 20 innings, Byrd has

allowed 21 earned runs in Texas.

It is a good thing he is opposing Robinson Tejeda on Sunday. Tejeda has made 18 starts with the Rangers this year and since May ended has been about as bad as one can be. He left May with a three and one record and a nice little 3.82 ERA. Since, he has gone two and seven with an 8.23 ERA.

If sports gambling were legal in this state, I would be betting a lot of coin on the over in this battle. Unless it is over 18, then maybe I would think twice.

This will be Robinson's first career appearance against the Indians.

**Up Next: The Red Sox for Four at the Jake**