

## 2010 Indians Lasting Moments: First Half

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Thursday, October 14 2010 1:00 PM - Last Updated Thursday, October 14 2010 7:41 PM

---



*This is part one of a two part series on the Indians 2010 season.*

-

Every season, regardless of outcome, has its ups and downs.

For the Indians in 2010, there are probably way more downs than ups and those downs are probably equal to a bottomless pit.

Still, if this team is going to move forward from what they've learned in 2010, they need to have learned their lessons from specific moments in time.

It's also good to remember the good times, just for the sake of not having a totally bad taste in your mouth.

## 2010 Indians Lasting Moments: First Half

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Thursday, October 14 2010 1:00 PM - Last Updated Thursday, October 14 2010 7:41 PM

---

These are the lasting moments of the Tribe's 2010 season. Some are good, some are bad, and others have a need for perspective after the fact.

### April 2<sup>nd</sup> - Spring Training Ends

The Indians started spring on a high note and ended it with a 19-9-2 record, the second best win percentage of all 30 teams and best in the Cactus League.

Beyond the record, all the key parts to the 2010 offense were doing things worth getting excited about. Shin-Soo Choo and Travis Hafner were knocking in runs, Matt LaPorta looked to be just about ready for 2010 performing better than expected, Asdrubal Cabrera was hitting, and most importantly Grady Sizemore was healthy.

Mark Shapiro went as far as to say that Sizemore had looked better than he's ever seen him.

On the pitching side, Fausto Carmona looked unstoppable, Mitch Talbot started out real hot to gain control of the fifth rotation spot and thanks to a late push from Carlos Carrasco, David Huff nabbed the fourth spot.

The one downside was an injury to Kerry Wood that forced Chris Perez into the closers role and some shaky looking bullpen arms outside of Rafael Perez.

### April 5th - Opening Day @ Chicago

A sense of hope for 30 teams in baseball is always prevalent on this day. Sure it means all of nothing if a team loses their first game since there are 161 left, but a 6-0 shutout at the hands of the White Sox is a harsh realization that there are 161 games left.

## 2010 Indians Lasting Moments: First Half

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Thursday, October 14 2010 1:00 PM - Last Updated Thursday, October 14 2010 7:41 PM

---

More than anything, Mark Buehrle staked claim to play of the year before any other nominees got a chance to step up. Lou Marson is still perplexed.

### **April 8<sup>th</sup> - Tribe wins series, Perez notches two saves**

A few days later, after that sobering realization that this is going to be a long year, that glimmer of hope returns. Fausto Carmona showed signs of life and Chris Perez notched his second straight save in place of Kerry Wood.

Grady Sizemore comes alive with three hits and three RBI, including an insurance run in the 11<sup>th</sup> inning when he doubled home Asdrubal Cabrera.

### **April 11<sup>th</sup> - Perez implodes, Tigers sweep**

A few close losses in the Tigers could have been wiped clean after Luis Valbuena (of all people!) took Justin Verlander downtown with a grand slam and Jake Westbrook put forth a winning effort.

But then double the Perez, double the trouble as they collectively give up five runs. More spectacular was Chris' ninth inning implosion that led to walking Johnny Damon with the bases loaded to tie it and uncorking a wild pitch to end it.

### **April 12<sup>th</sup> - Home Opener**

It was the first crowd of the year and also the largest. Another hopeful performance by Fausto Carmona was stalled by a stalemate offensively. Chris Perez returned a day after his implosion to put two hitters on without recording an out.

## 2010 Indians Lasting Moments: First Half

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Thursday, October 14 2010 1:00 PM - Last Updated Thursday, October 14 2010 7:41 PM

---

Jamey Wright (remember me?) was the ultimate goat after he threw a pitch that was screaming "hit me" as it crossed the plate and crashed into the bat of Nelson Cruz.

### April 18<sup>th</sup> - Sweeping Sox

Fausto Carmona improved to 2-0, Chris Perez notched his fourth save (all against Chicago), and everyone was asking the same question: Can we play Chicago every day?

### April 28<sup>th</sup> - Don't bunt on me

One pitch, one bunt, one run, one irate reliever.

Locked in a stalemate with the Angels, Manny Acta went to his closer Chris Perez with two on and two out. Up to the plate strolled Howie Kendrick with a thought that bench coach Ron Roenicke (in charge, with Mike Scioscia tossed) put into his head: Don't dismiss the idea of bunting.

Bunt Kendrick did with the defense playing back and Perez not expecting such a move. Little did Chris know it wouldn't be the last time a bunt foiled him and his Tribe.

### May 5<sup>th</sup> - Still looking for number five, thanks Baby Louie

Chris Perez was sure to notch his fifth save, and finally his first against a team other than the White Sox, when the Blue Jays entered the ninth down two runs thanks to a Luis Valbuena double in the eighth.

Little did Perez or any one else know that what Luis Valbuena giveth, he can also taketh away. Aaron Hill reached safely to bring his team within one after Valbuena let a routine game-ending

## 2010 Indians Lasting Moments: First Half

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Thursday, October 14 2010 1:00 PM - Last Updated Thursday, October 14 2010 7:41 PM

---

grounder roll right through his legs.

One hitter later, Adam Lind clocked one to left field, the Tribe was behind and to make sure everyone remembered what he had done, Valbuena committed another blunder before the inning ended.

### **May 7<sup>th</sup> - It never happened and it never will**

One of the most significant moments of this past season never officially happened. All for the better for David Huff who got smashed early, but when you look back at 2010 stats and see a big goose egg in Grady Sizemore's home run column, try to remember that wasn't the case.

Sizemore wasn't shutout; it was on this day that the soon-to-be injured center fielder hit his first home run of the season, but because of the game getting rained out before five completed innings, it wasn't official. Less than two weeks later, Grady was placed on the disabled list and his season was over.

### **May 11<sup>th</sup> - Win for Westbrook**

The last time Jake Westbrook won a game was April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008. With some help from Russell Branyan who hit his first and second home runs of the season, Westbrook finally got back in the win column against Kansas City.

### **May 15<sup>th</sup> - Salute The Kernal!**

One of the bright spots of the Indians first half was Mitch Talbot, the rookie acquired from Tampa Bay for catcher Kelly Shoppach, who paired up with Carmona to give the Indians a decent tandem in the rotation.

## 2010 Indians Lasting Moments: First Half

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Thursday, October 14 2010 1:00 PM - Last Updated Thursday, October 14 2010 7:41 PM

---

Talbot went eight strong against Baltimore but was staring down a loss after two solo home runs to Ty Wigginton and no run support. That was until the ninth inning when young and bright eyed closer Alfredo Simon came in without a blemish on his record.

Shin-Soo Choo would bring the club within one with a single and set the stage for wonder-signing Austin Kearns to deliver a shocking blast to left field of Camden Yards. Four runs later Mitch Talbot had enough run-support for six more Ty Wigginton home runs and his fifth victory.

### May 17<sup>th</sup> - It must be a west coast thing

It shouldn't shock anyone that Joe Maddon would pull something of sorts. Not only because he's an innovative manager but because he learned from the likes of the team who had already done something similar to the Indians earlier.

After yet another valiant effort from Fausto Carmona, the Tribe found themselves in yet another close one. Chris Perez blew the lead, though not the save with Kerry Wood (who would collect his first save later that week) back for ninth inning duties.

Jason Bartlett ended things in the 11<sup>th</sup> with more of a traditional type of a bunt, but still a no-doubt frustrating way to lose in walk-off fashion.

Perhaps what is forgotten in this game was the fact that the Indians lost their shortstop for an extended period of time when their old shortstop tried to bite off more than he could chew.

With the infield shifted, both Jhonny Peralta and Asdrubal Cabrera dove up the middle in an attempt to field a ground ball. The result was neither getting to the ball and Cabrera riving in pain as his left forearm suffered a break at the hands, or body, of Peralta. Rookie Jason Donald would make his debut a day later and save a struggling Valbuena from demotion.

## 2010 Indians Lasting Moments: First Half

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Thursday, October 14 2010 1:00 PM - Last Updated Thursday, October 14 2010 7:41 PM

---

### May 29<sup>th</sup> - It must be a Joba thing

David Huff was back in the clubhouse just a few hours after the fact, but for a few moments, the struggles on the mound became irrelevant. Huff lay motionless in the middle of new Yankees Stadium after a line drive off the bat of Alex Rodriguez struck him in the head.

Huff would make a remarkable return to the mound his next time up in the rotation, but the hit to the head was just one of the many hardships that the 2009 wins leader for the Tribe dealt with. After winning 11 games his rookie year, Huff lost 11 in 2010 and has fallen out of favor under Acta.

The game wasn't over after Huff went down though. The Tribe battled back not only once against CC Sabathia, but twice. Unfortunately a stretched bullpen couldn't keep up and the Yankees got out to a 10-4 lead by the fifth inning. But again, the Indians couldn't be held back on this day.

As they've made a habit of in the past, the Indians put down Joba Chamberlain in the seventh inning with an unlikely cast of characters. Lou Marson would start the scoring with a double and soon enough would repeat the act later to bring his team within one.

Jason Donald would put the Tribe ahead for good and the Indians would pull out yet another improbable victory over Chamberlain and the Yankees.

### June 2<sup>nd</sup> - The Not-So-Perfect Game

If the teams the Indians were playing didn't create these storylines, how ever would the Indians stay relevant?

Guilt by association, but the Indians claimed the spotlight for one night when umpire Jim Joyce called Donald safe at first, instead of making him the 27<sup>th</sup> out of what should have been a

## 2010 Indians Lasting Moments: First Half

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Thursday, October 14 2010 1:00 PM - Last Updated Thursday, October 14 2010 7:41 PM

---

perfect game.

Armando Galarraga will probably be remembered for a long time for missing out on history, but Jason Donald will forever be the answer to a very cool trivia question.

### **June 9<sup>th</sup> - Master of revenge**

He had to outduel former teammate for most of the game, but Justin Masterson's up and down season probably had one of his highest ups against Boston. Masterson tossed a shutout against his former club in an 11-0 victory, but it wasn't until the eighth that the Indians busted out offensively.

Masterson won his second game of the season and it was one to savor because it would be nearly a month before he'd win again, which would be a recurring theme for Justin in 2010.

