



Yesterday was another beautiful day for baseball in the Arizona sunshine. It was about 79 degrees in Goodyear, but there was a nice, cool breeze blowing all day so it was never too hot.

The day started at 1pm with Columbus and Akron taking on the Brewers minor league affiliates in Goodyear.

Despite my best efforts to watch two baseball games at once, I ended up concentrating a little more on the Columbus game due to the rosters.

Columbus basically trotted out their opening day roster, with the exception of Juan Diaz at SS and Chun Chen doing the catching. And since Chen is one of my favorite players in the organization, I was perfectly happy to see that. The Columbus lineup was as follows:

1. Zeke Carerra, CF
2. Jason Kipnis, 2B
3. Lonnie Chisenhall, 3B
4. Wes Hodges, 1B

5. Chun Chen, C
6. Matt McBride, DH
7. Juan Diaz, SS
8. Donnie Webb, RF
9. John Drennan, LF

Both Kipnis and Chisenhall had solid days at the plate for Columbus. Kipnis went 3-5 with a stolen base and a couple of runs scored. He was robbed in his first AB by a great diving catch by the Milwaukee CF. I had him timed at 3.35 from 1

st

to 2

nd

base on the steal, which is a pretty solid time.

Chisenhall went 2-3 with an RBI.

Matt McBride also collected a pair of hits for the Clippers, and Chun Chen had an RBI fielder's choice.

Chen wasn't tested behind the plate, but did show a 1.89 pop time throwing down between innings.

Joe Martinez started on the mound for the Clippers, and threw two solid innings. Zach Putnam came in for an inning of relief, and really struggled.

He gave up a long HR, walked a batter, then gave up a single and back to back doubles before finally recording an out via strikeout.

At that point, he had reached his pitch count limit so they mercifully turned the inning over.

Putnam was up in the zone all day and his signature splitter just wasn't splitting.

Josh Judy came in to settle things down with a quick 1-2-3 inning, and turned it over to Paulo Espino.



In the Akron game, reliever Cory Burns worked a scoreless 1-2-3 inning that featured two strikeouts. Interestingly, Burns was working exclusively from the stretch and did not show off his signature hesitation windup. Not sure if that's a permanent change for Burns, or if the coaching staff just wanted him to work on his delivery. Definitely something to monitor though, as that would be a huge change for Burns if it is permanent.

Roberto Perez threw out another running trying to steal (yawn). At this point, it's news if someone actually manages to swipe a bag on the defensive stalwart.

In addition to that though, he stroked a double to deep left field in the only AB that I saw for him.

If he can continue to walk, play defense and hit just a little more, Perez is going to have a long, long career as a backup catcher in the Show.

I overheard minor league catching coordinator Dave Wallace talking with Manny Acta about Perez, and both men are very impressed with his defense.

There's no doubt that Perez is the best defensive catcher in the system.

The major leaguers took on the reigning champion San Francisco Giants in Goodyear at 7pm

yesterday. Newly-crowned 5<sup>th</sup> starter Josh Tomlin got the call to start for the Tribe. Tomlin gave up 5 ER on 8 hits in 5 IP.

He did strike out 5 hitters, and walked just one.

Some people just can't handle good news.

Tomlin gave up two long home runs, one to San Fran's top prospect Brandon Belt, and one of the longest home runs I've ever seen to prospect Roger Kieschnick who hit a ball completely out of Goodyear stadium to RF in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning.

Chad Durbin relieved Tomlin to start the 6<sup>th</sup>, and immediately set out to make Tomlin feel better about his outing. Durbin recorded just one out, and gave up 3 ER on 3 hits and two walks.

Durbin has struggled to get untracked this spring, as he's now given up 6 ER in 4 innings pitched.

Remember, Durbin got to camp later than most, and might still need some time to stretch his arm out and get up to speed.

For some good news, Grady Sizemore started in CF and showed signs of returning to his old self. He was tested twice in the OF, and came up just short on both



plays. The first test was on a long drive over his head to CF. Grady went back on the ball pretty well, but appeared to hesitate just a little as he got on the warning track and couldn't quite come up with the catch. I'm

actually glad he didn't go all-out and lay out for the ball, as it was an extremely difficult play to begin with and there's absolutely no reason for him to get hurt in a meaningless spring training game so soon after returning.

The second play was a bloop single that he came in on and dove for, but just couldn't quite get to.

He looked like vintage Grady coming in on the ball, and dove without hesitation.

In addition to the two plays in the field, Sizemore ripped a double down the RF line and slid into second base with no trouble.

It was very, very good to see Grady back on the field and playing close to 100%.

It was even good to see him ground out to 1B, but in true Grady fashion sprint all the way through the bag.



Carlos Santana got the start at 1B for the Indians last night, and had a solid game at the plate and in the field. He was charged with an error on a throw in the 1<sup>st</sup> inning while trying to turn a double play, but the throw wasn't that bad and Asdrubal Cabrera could have caught it covering 2B.

I was actually surprised that Santata was charged with the error instead of Cabrera.

He did a nice job smothering a couple of tough grounders later in the game, keeping the ball in front of him and flipping to the pitcher covering for the out.

In addition to the defensive plays, Santana drilled a HR to deep right field in the 4<sup>th</sup>

inning, his second of the spring. The picture to the left is Carlos right after making contact with the HR. Santana is primed to break out in a big way in 2011, and I wouldn't be shocked if he made the AL All Star team come July.

The Indians made some cuts from minor league camp today, releasing Omar Aguilar, Jeremy Johnson, David Roberts, Julio Ramirez, Juan Aponte, Kevin Rucker, Joel Torres Trent Baker, Vidal Nuno, Casey Gaynor and Taka Nakamura. Best of luck to these guys as they will now try to catch on with another organization to try and keep the dream alive.