

Contrary to reports, Shin-Soo Choo did not miss Michael Brantley's high five in this picture. This column is a heck of a lot more enjoyable to write when it doesn't



follow a Chris Perez blown save, but it will happen. I would be perfectly content with Chris Perez converting 85% of his save chances this year. The Indians head to Minnesota having split four games with the upstart Royals and a first place 13-6 record.

**This week's results:**

**4/15:** Baltimore 2, **Cleveland 8**

**4/16:** Baltimore 3, **Cleveland 8**

**4/17:** Baltimore 2, **Cleveland 4**

**4/18: Cleveland 7**, Kansas City 3

**4/19:** Cleveland 4, **Kansas City 5**

**4/20: Cleveland 7**, Kansas City 5

**4/21:** Cleveland 2, **Kansas City 3**

**Record: 5-2, 40 runs scored, 23 runs allowed (RS: 5.71/game; RA: 3.29/game)**

**Tribal chiefs:**



**Josh Tomlin:** 13.1 IP, 11 H, 3 R/ER, 1 BB, 8 K

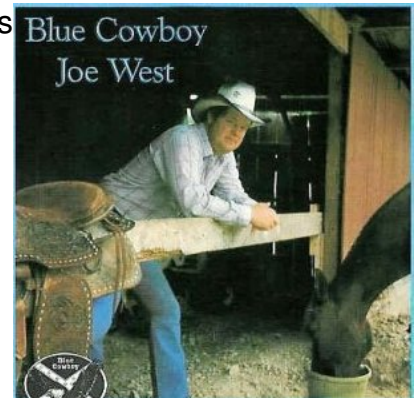
**Grady Sizemore:** 8-for-19, HR, 3 RBI

**Michael Brantley:** 7-for-21, 0 HR, 0 RBI

**Justin Masterson:** 13 IP, 10 H, 3 R/ER, 6 BB, 6 K

The Indians scored 20 runs over the four games against Kansas City, yet I feel completely unsatisfied with the offense. Either that's the point that we are at this season or I am really hard to please. For long stretches of time, the Indians offense looked dormant and inept in this series. However, when they got some confidence rolling through the lineup, they put up crooked numbers. Of the 37 innings in the series, the Tribe scored in 11 of them and did not hit a single home run in Kansas City. 12 of the 20 runs came in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning or later.

The series was the complete opposite of how the Indians played in their first 13 games. Questionable defense, playing without the lead, and a boatload of walks



hampered the Indians. That said, they managed to split the series thanks to some timely hitting and a couple of very good starts. Part of the walk parade was thanks to a quartet of the most incompetent umpires in the league. Cowboy Joe West should do himself a favor and focus on his music career. It needs plenty of focus. After Wednesday night's game, I listened to a sample of his mega-hit "Blue Cowboy". Somehow, listening to his music was more infuriating than watching him call balls and strikes.

Looking at the tone of my column thus far, I realize that I sound downtrodden and frustrated with a week where the Indians went 5-2. Being at the point where I can nitpick a winning week is fantastic. Last year, there was a culture of losing on the field, in the clubhouse, and with the

fanbase. Now, we're all pissed off when they lose a game. Apathy no longer reigns supreme. The bandwagon is slowly filling up again. It's great to be at this point.

Shin-Soo Choo has a hit in 12 of his 19 games. He's hitting .203. If he gets 550 at bats, he is on pace to strike out 156 times. The Indians are 13-6. At some point, Choo will begin hitting the cover off the ball and all will be right again. For now, the Indians entered Thursday's game leading the league in batting average. To reiterate, their best hitter is hitting .203.

Along the same lines, Carlos Santana is slowly coming around. Santana has walked five times in his last four games, adding four hits. Teams have given him the Atkins Diet of Breaking Balls and his plate discipline looks like it is starting to adjust. He is laying off more frequently and starting to hit mistakes with more authority. To reiterate, Carlos Santana is 14-for-65. Shin-Soo Choo is 15-for-74. That is a combined 29-for-139. The Indians entered Thursday's game leading the AL in batting average.

Grady Sizemore's return to the lineup was quite eventful. He homered in his second at bat and added a double later in the game. He has not had the chance to



steal a base yet, but he has tested that knee to make a diving catch in the Kansas City series. A 75% or better Grady Sizemore is a million times better than the Burns platoon in left field. The only concern with Sizemore in the lineup is that with Brantley in LF and Sizemore patrolling CF, there are tee ball teams with better arms in the outfield. I wonder if we could have Choo run behind Grady on flyballs, have Grady run the option, pitch to Choo, and then have Choo throw people out.

