

Morning Rundown: The "Clutch"drubal Show Continues

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Tuesday, May 24 2011 5:16 AM - Last Updated Tuesday, May 24 2011 6:43 AM



WOW! I'm not sure I have any words left to use at this point.

May 23rd, 2011

Boston Red Sox - 2

Cleveland Indians - 3

W: Joe Smith (2-1) L: Daniel Bard (1-4) S: Chris Perez (13)

[\[BOXSCORE\]](#)

At this point, I feel like I'm playing a video game. I feel like I'm controlling the Indians and I just simulate much of the game until I get to the end and I'm losing. So I take control of my suped-up **Asdrubal Cabrera** to win things. Yeah, I went into player editor, and I improved his stats to match "real life." Okay, so he's slightly better than he is in real life.

I'm being dead serious right now. I've run out of things to say about him. Really, what is there

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left to say that hasn't already been said? Heck, about this whole team and this run? I think we've got to a point where this just seems like a fairy tale. Is this team really this good?

We keep waiting for them to take a dip, but they've still yet to lose more than three games in a row. They just don't lose. If the Indians were going to be good and surprise us, no one could have possibly imagined they'd do this.

THIS... This.. Whatever you can call this... This is just unreal. Unreal to a point where you have to wonder when and if it's going to end. You don't want it to though. No one does. I'm enjoying this throughly. The best part though. THIS, whatever this is, it doesn't feel like it's going to end anytime soon.

I said this last month at a point where people were telling us Indians fans not to get too excited about "this" because it wouldn't last. So I'll say it again. Screw that, get excited.. And even more so now, enjoy it. This is going to be a fun ride, so enjoy all the moments like these.

Moments like Cabrera, clubbing that double and just immediately knowing he just untied the game. He could barely contain himself. If Cabrera had hit that over the fence, he may have hopped around like Sammy Sosa or stood and stared like Manny Ramirez. Cabrera put his hands up and you could tell he was excited.

And of course his teammates were. This is just incredible how this team doesn't just win in general, but wins at home. Four loses at Progressive Field? Are you kidding me? Two streaks of two losses around two incredible winning streaks. And just an incredible magic that has got to a point where it just doesn't seem right to call it "magic" or a miracle. [It's more of the norm at this point](#)

"I don't think there was ever a doubt on the team if we could do this or not," Masterson said. "I think you'd have to answer that question, if people are going to start believing. We're just going out and winning ballgames."

Michael Brantley said that Cabrera's hot bat is firing up the rest of the team. Maybe in

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Brantley's subconscious when he was up at the plate, his brain was telling him who was on deck. And if he could just get a hit or find a way to get on, he could bring up the guy who could make things all better.

Of course Brantley's hit was probably more key than Cabrera's, because not only did it give the opportunity to Asdrubal to win the game, it first and foremost tied the game. It's worth mentioning that Brantley is awesome too. Acta said that Cabrera is the guy you want at the plate. If you could pick a second guy, it would be Choo. But if I could pick a guy to hit before them to get on, I'd take Brantley. I don't think people are quite up on the season he's having.

Speaking of great seasons. **Justin Masterson** did it again. He got to a point where he had to come out, throwing 112 pitches will do that, so he couldn't finish the eighth to be in a position to win, but every time out this kid is a stud. If the Indians would have went on to lose this game 2-1, it would have certainly not been Masterson's fault. Masterson has gone less than six innings just once this season and that was against Tampa when he gave up four earned.

He's gone at least seven innings in six of his 10 starts. And he's given up two ore less runs in eight of 10 starts. Incredible.

And really, he did get that third out in the eighth, the umpires just didn't see it that way. So in theory, Masterson should have got out that inning, and should have got that win. But the team won and that's all that is important.

As for that situation where Masterson was covering first and the call didn't go the Indians way. It forced Acta to come out and argue and when he didn't hear what he wanted, he got himself ejected. Masterson said it was great to see him fired up, which makes me wonder if Acta just pressed another button that worked. It's probably so.

"He never heard what I got to say," Acta said. "What I wanted to say is you don't make calls based on players' reactions, on the guy going back. You make calls on what you see and what happened. I became a little mad just because he walked off on me. I think that's disrespectful."

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Anyway, the sequence in the eighth... If we are going to break it down. It happened without Acta. So it was up to Tim Tolman to man the button pushing. Whether it was Tolman pushing the buttons or Acta doing it telepathically through Tolman, you could argue pinch-running Adam Everett for Jack Hannahan is a little over-zealous. Do you really need to run Adam Everett for Jack Hannahan?

I'll say this in an answer to that. Everett ended up scoring on Brantley's hit. So... Who cares? If Everett was the slight difference, then button pushed correctly.

Santana pinch-hit for Lou Marson and popped out, so that was one button pushed that didn't work. But really, in the end, Tolman or Acta through Tolman with mind control didn't need to push any buttons, because Brantley coming to bat was all they needed. The order being where it was needs no button to be pushed. It's Boston's misfortune that Clutchdrupal came to the plate in that inning.

Is it fair to call him Clutchdrupal when he isn't just clutch, but, collecting his hits all the time? He's 8-for-9 in his last two games. The guy can't be retired! He drove in two of the runs last night, even stole another base. He's doing not just whatever he needs to do, he is doing EVERYTHING he needs to do.

It feels like I keep saying the same thing. So maybe I should just stop. Because in the end it just keeps coming back to the greatness of Cabrera lately. This team is good. They're super hot, and it's all because of Cabrera and his hotness.

We said it would be great if Choo and Santana heated up... Well, that would be nice, but right now, Cabrera is carrying this offense. So they can take their time if they'd like.

Random Details...

With that rain coming down, I bet Chris Perez sensed the need to retire the side in the ninth as quickly as possible. He did that, but it was an adventure, quite like it has been the past few times out. Why Perez is channeling the Indians' spirit of Joe Borowski circa 2007 or Bob

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Wickman is beyond me, but right now he's getting the job done, so who's to complain?

Masterson's game was a mixed bag. He collected just three strikeouts, got nine groundouts, five flyouts. His walks were to Adrian Gonzalez (left-hander) and Pedroia (not a left-hander).

Is Austin Kearns waking up? Is he realizing that this may be his last week if he doesn't do something? Perhaps. He had another game in which he didn't prove to be useless.

The lineup looked scary. Acta may have got to a point where he decided that it's time to make changes. LaPorta was hitting fifth, while he won't hit there all the time, it looks like he'll at least hit above Cabrera from now. That makes sense.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Grady Sizemore passed his first test, feeling fine after some agility drills he took on Monday. He will now test himself on Wednesday in running the bases. If that goes good, he could be activated Friday when the Indians play Tampa Bay. You have to love the mood Acta was in, giving us quite the quote.

"After that," manager Manny Acta said, "the next hurdle will be he's probably going to have to beat the onion in the hot dog race for us to consider activating him."

Just don't race ketchup. He cheats and we don't want him cheating against Sizemore, because anytime that dog is around, there's a clothesline from Slider involved.

Before we put **Alex White** to bed for a few months, Manny Acta says that [he's in the mix](#) from here on out when he returns.

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"He has put himself on the map," Acta said. "Obviously, when the year started, he was behind a few guys down there. That's not the case anymore. He could be in the mix if anything comes up here."

I found interesting to read White say that he didn't regret staying in the game after suffering the initial blow. He said he had to adjust and "find the zone" with a different "size" to his finger. I'm not sure how that's a good thing, other than the fact that he actually got out of the jam. I guess it's good for confidence, but generally, I don't want a former first round pick out there pitching with a finger issue.

No one needs to tell you that Cabrera's game on Sunday [was rare feat](#) . But only two shortstops did what Cabrera did in getting five hits, two blasts, five RBI in just five at-bats. The other time was in 1960 when Roy McMillan did it.

There is an incredible three part series up at Indians.com and MLB.com that is a must read. Jordan Bastian and Anthony Castrovince have combined on the three stories to highlight a whole lot concerning what has been a remarkable run in the first quarter of this season. They breakdown the team, in terms of how [it was constructed](#) and assembled, as well as [the timeline that started](#) all the way back in 2008 up until now, and the [buttons being pressed right now](#)

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[RAFAEL PEREZ TWEET WATCH]

I click on Perez's account, watch the little birdy and see things spin and just wait for "Raffyperez53 hasn't tweeted yet." I may be devastated if that ever goes away.

Days Without a Tweet: 5

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You can follow Nino on Twitter @ [TheTribeDaily](#) where he tweets about Clutchdrupal's greatness. You can also read more Morning Rundown and other features at his blog, [The Tribe Daily](#)

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