

Morning Rundown: Rude Return for Talbot; Time to Move Sizemore

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Thursday, May 26 2011 5:17 AM - Last Updated Thursday, May 26 2011 8:37 AM



Remember how I said fun can't be had every night? It can't be had every day either. It also can't be had when you are getting pounded into dust.

May 25th, 2011

Boston Red Sox - **14**

Cleveland Indians - **2**

W: Jon Lester (7-1) L: Mitch Talbot (1-1)

[\[BOXSCORE\]](#)

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The only thing different about the final score of this one compared to the last one, was a one in front of the four on Boston's side of things.

Okay so that's a big different thing. You almost have to wonder what there really is to discuss?

Mitch Talbot was bad. From the first batter. From the second batter. Yeah, pretty much when the first inning ended, the game did. The Indians offense could have scored seven runs, that wasn't improbable. But what was improbable was Talbot, or the bullpen, or Andy Marte, coming out and going the next eight innings without giving up another run or two.

And that's exactly what happened. Why leave Talbot in? Why waste your bullpen in a meaningless game? Why not let Talbot continue to throw and get work in when he's missed an entire month-plus and this was his first game back?

Talbot needed to stay in and pitch some more. So he did give up eight runs and he did give up 12 hits. So he did only go three innings. But he made 74 pitches. He got what he needed in, [even though it was painful](#)

"It was rough," Talbot said. "I wasn't making my pitches, first off. I wasn't hitting my spots, but it was almost like even if I was, they were still going to find holes somewhere. It was just kind of one of those days."

I need to make one more point on Talbot. Don't destroy him yet. I said this after the first game when he looked not so good. He came out and pitched well against the Angels the next time out. Is Mitch Talbot the best pitcher on this staff? Is he going to have games where he looks bad? No and Yes. And finally, I ask... Is Mitch Talbot on this team in two years?

Probably not, but who knows. He likely won't be as a member of the rotation and I'd even venture to say he isn't in the rotation come next season. Whether he's in the rotation of another

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team or in this team's bullpen, there are more pitchers in this system with more upside and potential. You look at a guy like Josh Tomlin who probably has less baseball stuff than Talbot (you can't argue that Talbot's changeup is one of the best, if not the best on this team), but a lot more control and consistency. That guy has a chance to stick around regardless of his upside. Talbot is a guy you sell high on if you get the chance in the offseason and have options to replace him.

Talbot, unfortunately doesn't have that chance to stick around this team. But for right now, with Alex White out for a few months, Talbot is going to have to be in there and it would be rash to jump him right now after just one start off the disabled list. Even if it wasn't his first start off the disabled list, you need to give him the benefit of the doubt.

Here's something important. This team separates their games. They've done it with their wins and their losses. It's a reason they've gone on to not lose more than three games in a row and not be swept at all. A day after stunning Boston, they go out and lose. A day after going out and getting destroyed, I'm almost sure they'll come out and forget all about it. 14 runs is only one win. It is very cliché in baseball, but it's the truth and it's something this team understands.

And Manny Acta was very adamant about his team's character in regards to that aspect.

"They're not going to give up," Acta said. "That's their character. That's what we've got here. These guys are not going to lay down. Whoever lays down is probably going to be laying down somewhere else in the future. We don't want people like that around here."

A tough couple of pitchers up once again in Tampa Bay, but it isn't anything this club isn't used to.

Random Details...

Frank Herrmann was worrisome. If this is our long-relief option, I think I want Justin Germano back. I love Frank "The Tank" and everything he represents as a smart-guy undrafted free agent that could probably have a nice cushy job following up his dreams to pitch in the major

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leagues. But he may not be the guy for this bullpen. Another reason this team needs another right-handed relief option.

Shin-Soo Choo committed two errors, his second and third of the season. No one is going to argue that Choo has one of the best arms in the league from the outfield. But he's had a rough season in the outfield in terms of routes to the ball, plays off the wall, or just any sort of fielding the ball in general.

This is the second time that Manny Acta has played his "B" lineup of three or more backups against Jon Lester this season. Of course last time Lester was facing Carmona and it was the bullpen that ended up taking the loss in a 1-0 game.

Lou Marson hasn't recorded a hit since May 7th against Los Angeles. That's five games, two against Boston here this week, where Lou Marson of 2010 has reappeared. Marson was great in April, showing himself as a capable backup to Santana.

This month, aside from his first game against Oakland where he had three hits, yuk.

[WHERE TO SIZEMORE?]

The test was to run the bases and yet we don't really know if he passed. We can assume **Grad y Sizemore**

did though. Manny Acta made it sound

[very likely that he'll be back](#)

. He wasn't ready to say they'd be activating him and putting him in Friday's lineup, but Acta believes they are expecting him to be ready to join the club "sometime" this weekend.

"I'm not going to give you the date," Acta said. "We haven't made the decision. We're expecting him to join us for the weekend, but the weekend stretches all the way from Friday through Sunday."

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Sizemore says everything went well and he had no issues running.

Now that we've got that out of the way, let's get into this discussion.

Michael Brantley is showing he can hit leadoff over a long stretch of time. In the first spot he's hitting .308 in 28 games with 20 runs scored. So he's capable.. But here's the thing.

Grady Sizemore needs to hit lower in the lineup. This argument has nothing to do with the one I had originally when Sizemore first came off the DL when I wanted Brantley continuing to hit in the leadoff spot. This argument has everything to do with the lineup needed him to hit lower. Brantley first, Cabrera second, and then with Hafner out, we need someone else to give us some punch. If you want to slide Choo down to the cleanup hole and put Sizemore in the three spot, or you want to hit Grady cleanup, either works for me. But this lineup needs him to move down.

I understand he brings a different dynamic to the leadoff role, but I'd much rather have Sizemore hitting third or fourth and Orlando Cabrera hitting 6th than Sizemore hitting leadoff and Brantley or Orlando Cabrera protecting cleanup hitter **Carlos Santana**.

The time is now. This isn't "do it because we should do it" this is a "do it because we need to do it" type of a deal.

If I had my choice, I'd slate things like this:

Brantley, Cabrera, Sizemore, Choo, Santana, LaPorta, Duncan/Buck, Cabrera, Hannahan

If you want to put the veterans of Buck and Duncan ahead of Santana and LaPorta, I don't think I'd object. You can see Acta's confidence in Santana [starting to waver](#) , especially with him sitting out two times now.

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"I'm concerned," manager Manny Acta said on Tuesday night, "because I do want a guy like him to produce. He did look like he was coming out of it and he has scuffled a little bit as of late.

"He's still hanging in there with over 20 RBIs and six home runs and all that, but we feel we can get more out of him."

It would take pressure off Santana. It really would. It might also help out Choo, who isn't seeing a whole lot of fastballs these days. If he had someone like Sizemore hitting behind him or in front of him. He might see more favorable pitches.

This doesn't have to be permanent either. When Hafner returns, if you want to move things back around and put Sizemore back in the leadoff spot, that's fine. But right now, this lineup needs him in the middle.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

The subject was brought up to me on Twitter, so since we have nothing else interesting to talk about because of the game, and the time seems right, it might be best to address it.

How much longer before we start calling some people up to aid this offense? Things certainly don't look too awesome when you are running out a bottom of the order comprising of Lou Marson, Jack Hannahan, and Adam Everett some days.

Lonnie Chisenhall's bat may look a bit better a third, hitting in the seven or eight hole over Jack Hannahan, who had two crucial strikeouts in Tuesday's game.

Cord Phelps, who's having quite the few first months in Columbus, would look really nice filling in regularly or even starting at second over Uncle Orlando, who could boot Adam Everett off

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and make a much stronger bench out of it.

So is it time? I don't think it is quite yet... But if this team gets Grady back and the offense sputters and continues to only get minimal production because one guy, Asdrubal, is hitting, then maybe you have to reach for a spark. Santana is certainly not sparking anything of much lately.

There's some more national attention given to the Indians, this time by ESPN. Finally, right? Jerry Crasnick looks [at the two trades Cleveland made with Seattle](#) to pave this current team's success. What's funny is to see Shapiro admit that when he acquired

Shin-Soo Choo

, he and no one else thought Choo had the potential he's displaying now. We joke all the time about how stupid Seattle looks, but I'm sure if they thought Choo had the potential, they wouldn't have traded him for Ben Freakin' Broussard.

And of course that's what Bill Bavesi, Seattle general manager at the time said. Bavesi doesn't seem to be that upset about his mistake. But he seems a little disrupted about dealing **Asdrubal Cabrera**

for Eduardo Perez. And Tim Kurkjian has a

[great piece on A-Cab](#)

, rehashing the conversation Uncle Orlando had with him in batting practice about swinging for the fences. What strikes me is a quote from Adam Everett though. I think we take for granted, that even though he seems to be become a leader on this squad, he's still very humble and respectful to his elder teammates, willing to learn from them.

"He was always a good player, but this year, he is as good [a shortstop] as I've seen in a while," said Indians backup shortstop Adam Everett, 33, who is with his fourth major league team.

"When I got here this year, I know I wasn't a threat to his position, but he introduced himself to me and told me he was glad I was here. I was very impressed by that."

He says it's too early to be answering questions about himself, but that's one thing Orlando is talking to him about. Becoming more vocal with the media comes with being a leader and a star on the team.

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[RAFAEL PEREZ TWEET WATCH]

Rafael Perez hasn't tweeted yet. What? You were expecting otherwise?

Days Without a Tweet: 7

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