

Morning Rundown: Bumgarner, Affeldt Whiff Tribe

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Monday, June 27 2011 10:00 AM - Last Updated Monday, June 27 2011 9:16 AM



Jon Nunnally sure was the problem... How's that new voice working out?

June 26th 2011

Cleveland Indians - **1**

San Francisco Giants- **3**

W: Madison Bumgarner (4-9) L: Fausto Carmona (4-10) S: Jeremy Affeldt (2)

[BOXSCORE](#)

Not to be snarky, but it's true. What did that move really accomplish? The club has been anemic these three games with the bat. Granted you face a team like San Francisco, who has a wealth of pitching, you lose your best hitter who just seemed to be heating up, and your other best hitter who seems to power the offense is not allowed to have more than one at-bat. Then, okay I can kind of see why things look as bad as they do.

But those are excuses. The lone run that scored in this game, in this entire series by the Indians was a weak ground-out that was set up by a double that probably shouldn't have even happened! This is downright sad.

And it was all capped off on Sunday, on national television no-less, by watching some kid named Bumgarner (Bumgarner? Really?) strike out 11 hitters and then some guy who used to pitch for the ROYALS, strike out five more.

Bum and Royals... The bums might actually be wearing the block C hats though. After that bum-tastic performance, I'm not sure what there is left to say.

What did the "[alteration of pregame strategy](#)" by new hitting coach Bruce Fields actually do? He's going to start holding meetings before each game? Hey, whatever you have to do... But this is all talk. It's time to stop talking and time to start doing. You can talk to the hitters and give them a plan. But they just have to eventually shutup and put their money where their mouth is.

The continued disappointment to the pitchers is getting frustrating. We're back to the point we were right after the winning started to subside. Which I guess is better than the horrible funk we were in a few weeks ago when we couldn't get anything. But this offense is wasting great pitching performances.

And when you waste a pitching performance by **Fausto Carmona** it's time for us to have a discussion. You going to peg the guy for this one? He didn't look good. He looked okay, but he gave up you a quality start, going six and giving up three. But he was shaky after the first inning,

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But he didn't need to go out and toss a shutout (actually he did because of the offense). Was he battling for his job? The ESPN guys made it seem like he was, but I don't think he was. They tend to blow that stuff out of proportion. What really changed between prior to the game and when Acta said Carmona was in the rotation and they had to stick through it.

And of course, Carmona [was a little more willing to talk](#) to the media after yesterday's start.

"I'm happy, because I pitched much better," Carmona said. "But I'm a little sad, because we're losing. I want my team winning. I kept the game close and you saw what happened. I can't control that. I can only control my pitches."

Give Carmona his due credit, because he did keep his team in the game, which is all you can ask of your starting pitcher. Acta said that in a way, it was encouraging to see Carmona and the rest of the pitchers throw well in this series. But let me remind you of one sticky detail in that.

And I'm not trying to be a buzzkill in regards to the one good thing that we can take away from this sweep. But the Giants offense is putrid. It is the worst run scoring offense in the game. But hey, at least the pitching didn't look awful against an awful offense. Take that away, but just remember the competition.

19 scoreless inning later though, we've still got issues. It should tell you how bad the offense was that they got outscored three times by an offense that averages just over three runs per game. Granted, it has nothing to do with the opposing offense because the offense is facing good pitching from the Giants, but to not scratch more than a run across in three games? Kind of pathetic.

"The way we are right now," Acta said, "we have to play just about perfect baseball. When we get those opportunities, we have to take advantage of it, and we didn't."

"Of course," Acta said. "I'm a positive guy. It is going to get better. It has to get better. The guys that are struggling right now are better hitters than that, so they are going to get better."

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But no excuses... Right? That's what Lou Marson said. I'm going to sit here and make the excuses, but it doesn't matter. These boys that we have right now, they have to make it work. They have to turn it around and they have to do it themselves. There isn't anyone in the minor leagues that will save this offense. Lonnie Chisenhall or Jason Kipnis, or even a Zeke Carrera or Nick Weglarz. They may help a little and provide a spark, but the only thing that will save this offense is if they take it upon themselves.

Travis Hafner can't even save it, he can only improve their chances.

And now with Choo out... Well... They were doing it without him anyway, so all it does is decrease your ability. It doesn't prevent anything though and it certainly isn't going to be a dramatic change as to how the offense operates, because he certainly wasn't impacting a whole heck of a lot up to this point.

Random Details...

Sizemore's caught stealing was just a play you had to go for. Yeah he got thrown out, but it was close and with the offense the way it is right now, you have to make something happen.

The reason that one run did score though was because of a double that probably shouldn't have been a double. The ball landed on the foul side, but because [there was only three umpires](#), it was up to the home plate umpire to make the call and he didn't have the greatest vantage point.

The Indians caught a break with the failed suicide squeeze by Bill Hall and Bumgarner. It just goes to show you how perfectly executed and how the timing was perfect in terms of when the Indians did them this year. One little misstep and it can take you out of a good position.

Grady Sizemore dropped an absolute can of corn in the outfield. It wasn't sun related, more so concentration related as he just didn't see the ball into his glove correctly. Thankfully Carmona didn't let that spiral out of control.

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Don't question Manny Acta for pinch-hitting Hafner in the seventh against Bumgarner instead of waiting until the ninth when he could do it with Duncan. You'd ideally would like to get Hafner in against a rightie, but with the pitcher's spot up, are you really going to use Austin Kearns in a 3-1 game? It may be your last spot to pinch hit for the pitcher (it was) anyway. And it ended up being Affeldt pitching, so you would have been waiting for a right-handed pitcher that never showed up.

It just is infuriating that the guy sees three pitches and his day is done. Again, it is an excuse, but it still doesn't make it fair.

[CHOO OUT 6 WEEKS?]

The poor-man's prognosis on **Shin-Soo Choo's** fractured thumb is that he'll be out six weeks. Either way, he's [headed for an examination](#) by Dr. Thomas Graham today and after that, he could be headed for surgery. And if that's the case, he'll probably do it tomorrow. His season isn't done, but this will take out a significant portion of it. Likely two months if you count in rehab. Maybe more...

There likely will be no miracle return like there was last year when he had a finger injury (not the same hand this time) and was supposed to be out an extended period of time, but ended up returning a lot sooner than expected.

This is much more severe. After getting hit, his batting glove had to be cut off and his hand was bleeding. X-rays at the local hospital confirmed a fracture of his thumb, actually called a displaced fracture, and Choo said he knew it was broke when it happened.

That's the worst feeling... But Choo has no bad feelings for Sanchez, saying it was his job to throw inside.

This hurts mostly because of the progress he seemed to be making at the plate. He says he's

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passed the distractions and the mental blocks he was suffering. And it started to show as he had a .370 average over his last eight games.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Manny Acta deserves more credit than I. If I was in his position, I'd be as equally angry as he likely is. I'd be screaming [like a raving lunatic](#) about the unfairness of having nine-straight road games during Interleague play. But he isn't, choosing to keep his comments to himself, because he knows his opinion won't change anything and will likely do more harm than any good.

"The DH, just in general, makes it a lot easier for the manager," Acta said. "I don't doubt that every single one of us in the American League can manager in the National League, but it's so much easier to manage [in the AL]. The National League game is a challenge to manage. There's a lot more strategies involved right after the fifth inning."

It isn't about any of that though. You know what's wrong, Acta knows what's wrong, and I'm sure Bud Selig knows what's wrong, but nothing will be done to fix any of it. There's nothing wrong with having a DH in one league but not the other (we've become so accustomed to it, that it's a nice quirk to baseball that actually makes me appreciate the game), but you have issues when those two leagues play each other. Either institute a DH-wide Interleague rule, or don't let your schedule-makers be boneheaded and schedule a pair of teams to play nine-straight road games.

I guess [it's good to know](#) that **Grady Sizemore** isn't hurt.

"Guys just go through some struggles," Acta said. "This question wasn't brought up when he was doing really good when he came off the DL [in April]. He's just going through some struggles right now and he's going to have to work through it. He's gone through it before."

Travis Buck can't stay away. I don't even think the ten days from when he got optioned out the first time has run out. But with two injuries, Buck became eligible both times to be recalled, despite not having spent more than 10 days in the minors, which is the rule when you get

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optioned down, unless someone goes on the disabled list.

Which was the case when Choo got hurt and Buck's [services were needed](#) . Unfortunately for his sanity, the Indians were in San Francisco. Buck arrived at the park on Saturday and almost immediately, Manny Acta called upon him to pinch hit. He got a few swings in the cage and put on his uniform, and pretty much when he got there, he was asked to hit.

Buck talked about his up and down season thus far from Columbus to Cleveland.

"I think it's definitely going to benefit me," Buck said. "This been a very good learning experience for me. I played every day basically my whole career, or for the majority of my career. I'm finding out how tough it is to be a bench player."

I'm willing to stick with Buck for a little while longer. Austin Kearns on the other hand... I'm completely done. [I'm ready to see Plan B, C, D, E, and F](#) .

[RAFAEL PEREZ TWEET WATCH]

Rafael Perez is running me dry on Archer quotes...

Days Without a Tweet: 39

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