

Morning Rundown: Travis Hafner Does it Again

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Friday, July 08 2011 7:19 AM - Last Updated Friday, July 08 2011 8:48 AM



Power Coin! Power Coin! Power Coin! POWER COIN! That last power coin was shouted with incredible emphasis, if you couldn't tell. POWER COIN!

July 7th, 2011

Toronto Blue Jays - 4

Cleveland Indians - 5

W: Tony Sipp (4-1) L: Luis Perez (1-2)

[**BOXSCORE**](#)

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I mean.... I don't have words! I really don't have words as to what I saw. Do you? Chris Perez [s aid it best last night.](#)

If that stuff doesn't pump you up, you may not be alive.

I just want to run around my house doing whatever it was that Hafner did immediately after his bat connected with that ball.

Forget McAllister's short night, the missed opportunities earlier in the game, the errors, and everything else in between. Freaking **Travis Hafner** made it all a moot point with one swing. Games like those frustrate me to no end. Watching opportunity after opportunity squandered. Watching the bullpen keep this team in the game yet again with the starter going out early.

They suck and they are incredibly boring, so much so I fell asleep for a bit. Okay, perhaps the fact that I worked and was up at 5:30 had something to do with how tired I was. But the game didn't help. Horrible pitching last night in terms of aesthetics. Not fun to watch, point blank.

Someone throw some strikes!

Zach McAllister was not very impressive. He ended up walking three, which okay whatever, but in four innings. Of the 94 pitches he threw in just those four innings, 38 were for balls. Carlos Villanueva, the Blue Jays pitcher got seven strikeouts, but he also threw 40 balls. Watching him pitch last night was like watching someone rob a bank and get away with it.

"Throughout the game, we did struggle," Acta said. "We left a lot of guys on base, but we're still leading the league in batting average with runners in scoring position, so I'm not going to complain about it. We got the big one when it counted."

As Acta said. If he didn't get the big one, then he'd be cranky and yell at the offense. Which I'm about to do in a second. But McAllister [was not himself tonight in his debut](#) . This is someone who averaged just under a walk and a half per game and he had three in four innings in his

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major league debut.

"One of the things I'm most upset with today was not being able to execute with my command," McAllister said. "It's the one thing that I'm usually able to have, and I didn't have it today."

Uncharacteristic and I'm wondering if it had anything to do with first game jitters or just simply put, he didn't have it on this night. And it's a shame because now he probably goes to the back of the line in terms of who gets the next opportunity, because it looks like [his stay is going to be a short one](#).

"We'll probably make a move following [Thursday's game]," Acta said. "We're not going to stay with an extra pitcher here when it's not going to be useful."

Cord Phelps needs to play everyday, so it's good that he was sent down. Now [the Indians will recall](#)

Luis

Valbuena

to man the utility role. You now have an extra infielder for the next few games here and we get to see one of those guys that's tearing up Columbus to see if they can do the same up here. It's been awhile Baby Louie, but I'm willing to give the new you a chance.

So it's a short stay for McAllister, but it's good that he got his debut in. I certainly don't think we've seen his best effort and at some point he'll be back.

Yes the Indians always seem to have that never say die attitude and they never give up on a game. It was a horribly played game in terms of the offense executing and the defense and starting pitching didn't look good. But the game was close enough thatnks to the bullpen.

"We couldn't do anything right at the plate; we didn't play very good defense," Acta said. "It just seemed that it was going to be a waste of a night, but we came back alive."

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I wouldn't even say they came back alive. It was clear that there was no one dead, except for maybe **Orlando Cabrera**, who was a terror at the plate, and not in a good way. Seven, yes, SEVEN men left on base. Every time the guy stepped up to the plate, he had runners on. Why was it that he was the guy who came up in all the RBI situations and how is it that he couldn't come through at least once?

First inning: Bases loaded, 2 Out - Flied out to right.

Third Inning: Hafner on first, 2 Out - Grounds out to short.

Fifth Inning: Two on, 2 Out - Foul pop out to catcher. (Sizemore strikes out with 1 Out)

Eighth Inning: Sizemore at first, 1 Out - Double play to end the inning (Sizemore grounds into force out with nobody out).

All for his at-bats he had someone on base. Take it a step further, He had just as many opportunities pre-ninth inning as everyone else. Count in Sizemore's opportunity with one out in the fifth and you have four legit chances to score.

Second Inning: Two on, two out - Asdrubal Cabrera flies out to left.

Fourth Inning: Hannahan on third, two out - Michael Brantley lines out to center.

Sixth Inning - Side retired in order for first and only time of the night.

Seventh Inning - Travis Hafner hits into double play to end the inning.

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Orlando's actually looked more feasible. But really, look at all those chances missed. It took them until the ninth inning to actually get people to cross the plate. And surprise surprise, Orlando Cabrera was not at the plate.

I don't mean to pile on Uncle like this, but that was infuriating to watch last night. It was always Cabrera coming up with the scoring chances and the guy wasn't in it last night. So thankfully, the two guys you want finally came up when it counted and with such a good situation. One out and the bases loaded and your two biggest guns get the job done.

Asdrubal has a hit to move the train and set the stage for the big Pronk

"It's awesome. There's nothing like it," Hafner said of his walk-off slam. "It's the most fun you can have on the baseball field. It's great."

Damn right it's great. It's more than great. It's fantastic.

And just look at the man's grin in that photograph above. He's laughing, almost maniacally, that he just creamed that pitch and sent that Perez offering over the right field wall.

Random Details...

How ironic was it that last night's trivia question had to do with how many grand slams that Travis Hafner hit in that record breaking season of his? I mean, that is some chilling foreshadowing.

I could [watch this over and over again](#) . In fact, I am.

I could also [listen to it over and over again](#) . In fact, I am.

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Travis Hafner is now hitting .351 since his return from the disabled list with three home runs and 13 RBI. That's in just 37 at-bats because of Interleague, but wow. Hafner had two other hits last night. Some real sharp singles. He's swinging the bat with some absolute authority. You don't think this offense missed him not just when he was out but during Interleague play?

In fact look at that top of the lineup. Brantley, Cabrea, Hafner, and Santana were all on base at least twice. Sizemore and Orlando Cabrera were the biggest failures as discussed earlier. Combined 0-7 with a walk and 11 men left on base between the two. None of the bottom three (Hannahan/Chisenhall combined) got those opportunities. Rather they helped the top of the lineup set the table.

And they were the ones that set the table in the ninth inning.

Interesting role reversal by Rafael Perez and Frank Herrmann last night. Perez goes two scoreless innings in long relief and Frank Herrmann comes in later for a couple of outs. He did give up two hits and needed Joe Smith to get out of the inning. But interesting switch of roles.

What more can be said about the job Perez did though? He and Durbin largely responsible for the Indians sticking around in that one. Three solid shutout innings to keep it a 3-0 game.

If you left last night during the ninth inning, I should smack you. In fact, fess up, so I CAN smack you.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Ugly ugly ugly looking incident with **Lonnie Chisenhall** getting [smacked in the face](#) by that Villanueva pitch. Just a few weeks after the kid got a concussion that held him out for a week too. Thankfully, it hit him more in the face and resulted in a facial contusion, rather than any higher and a concussion.

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Manny Acta said that he has a swollen eye and he is going to be day-to-day. Hopefully it's a quick thing and he can be back in the lineup soon. More hopefully, this doesn't have a negative impact in terms of standing in that batters box. I'm sure he's been hit before, but who knows if he's been hit like that. It can really screw with a hitter's mind and thought process at the plate.

Villanueva said he felt really bad about hitting Chisenhall, saying he wasn't even trying to throw in. The ball simply got away from him and it struck Chisenhall where it did.

Acta believes that the break Orlando Cabrera received from Cord Phelps playing a little more than him for awhile [is the reason for this hot streak](#) . I might be able to buy that. Or he played against some good old National League pitching and has caught a little bit of fire. Hey whatever works, just avoid games like the one he had last night.

Interesting [note pointed out by Paulie C yesterday](#) about **Shin-Soo Choo's** recovery period. Paul Hoynes has Choo saying that he'll be back by the beginning of August, which is a month earlier than originally planned for a guy having surgery on a broken thumb.

That just adds to the convoluted discussion we've been having about making an addition to this team. There may be little point to do anything if Choo is coming back sooner than expected.

I'm personally not going to buy it until we hear it from the doctor's. Who does he think he is? Albert Pujols?



[STAT OF THE DAY]

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For your amusement the "Bullpen Mafia, Stat of the Day."

Everything isn't always peachy here in the Bullpen Mafia Stat of the Day. No, Tony Sipp is struggling as of late. He's given up a home run in three of his last four games. And the long ball has actually been Sipp's downfall this season. He's given up 11 total runs this year and seven home runs.

And to further that, of the remaining four runs that were not home runs, three of them scored on home runs given up by Sipp. If Tony can keep the ball in the park, he'd be golden.

[RAFAEL PEREZ TWEET WATCH]

Skipping the television reference today in honor of Rafael Perez's two solid innings. [Just watch this over and over again](#)

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Days Without a Tweet: 45

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You can follow Nino on Twitter @ [TheTribeDaily](#) where he tweets about running into Manny Acta on the streets of Cincinnati. You can also read more Morning Rundown and other features at his blog, [The Tribe Daily](#).