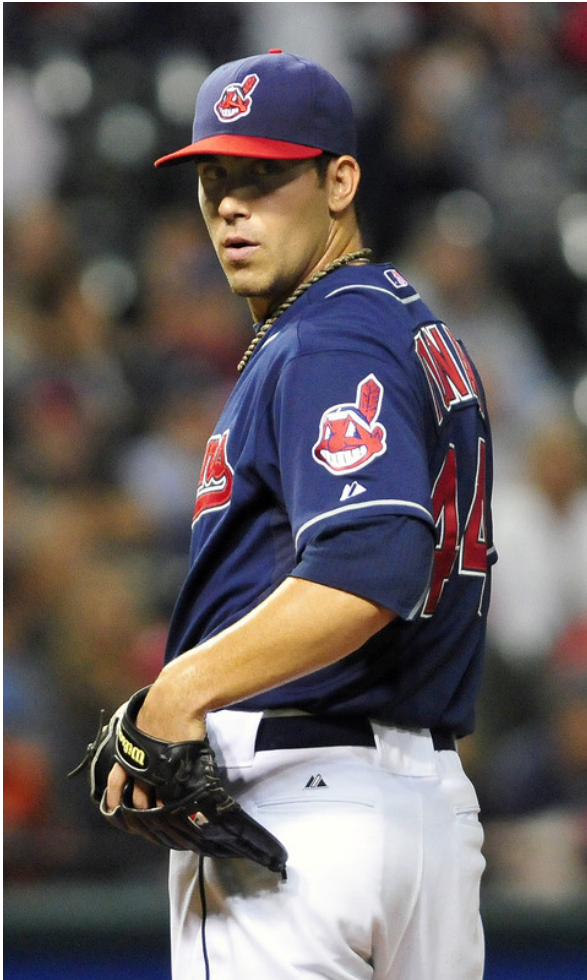


Morning Rundown: Tribe Split DH with Sox

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Wednesday, September 21 2011 6:48 AM - Last Updated Wednesday, September 21 2011 8:06 AM



Still with me? Season is almost over, you can make it!

September 20th, 2011 - Game One

Chicago White Sox - 3

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Cleveland Indians - **4**

W: Fausto Carmona (7-15) L: Gavin Floyd (12-12) S: Chris Perez (35)

[\[BOXSCORE\]](#)

September 20th, 2011 - Game Two

Chicago White Sox - **5**

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Cleveland Indians - **4**

W: Matt Thornton (2-5) L: Zach Putnam (0-1) S: Chris Sale (7)

[\[BOXSCORE\]](#)

I'll be honest. It's getting difficult. To come here every morning and get through this. It's getting hard with games like the night-cap. It's easy with games like the early one. But I didn't see the early one because I'm a human being that goes to class and has work.

So in my mind, the Indians lost yesterday more than they won, even though they did both.

Let's just start with the first game, because there is something I must address. The Indians [wo](#)

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[n the early game 4-3](#)

off the strength of three home runs from Asdrubal Cabrera, Kosuke Fukudome, and a two-run blast by

Travis Hafner

. That's all.

"They weren't terrible pitches," said Floyd, who has surrendered a team-high 22 home runs this season. "They just kind of got the right part of the bat on the ball. So you just take it for what it is. I'm sure it could easily be fly balls. Today it wasn't."

Nope, sorry Floyd. That really was the offense. Jason Kipnis had a pair of hits and scored on the Hafner home run and Trevor Crowe had a hit. But that really was it. Both Kipnis and Crowe stole some bases, but this was a game of the long ball, for the Tribe at least. They needed what they got because Floyd did not walk a hitter and struck out seven. It really did come down to three good swings.

"We just got some good pitches to hit," Hafner said. "We were able to put some good swings on and hit a few home runs. Other than that, we didn't get a whole lot. We were able to hit some balls out of the park."

Hafner reported no issues with his foot and says it feels really strong. So that is great news moving forward and obviously after the home run, there is evidence that he can not only play,

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but be productive. So when you talk about reassurance for next season, there is some in regards to him.

And speaking of reassurance. Did **Fausto Carmona** give us a little with his start?

"Fausto did a nice job of battling the whole time," Acta said. "He had some traffic on the bases and was helped a couple of times by double plays, but you've got to give him credit. He didn't crumble in any of those situations."

There was a debate on the radio and even on STO last night after the game during Chuck's Last Call about Fausto. I wanted to hold off on this until the offseason, because I hate making those snap judgments when the season is still going on and not completely over. But I'm thinking more and more that picking up Fausto's option is a no-brainer. When you look at it, the pitching depth is being tested, especially after the trade of White and Pomeranz and the injury to Carlos Carrasco. There's some uncertainty with Josh Tomlin to boot.

Could you find someone cheaper? Maybe, but can they be better? Maybe. That's a gamble. It's \$7 million and I say the risk is worth the reward. So that's kind of where I'm standing now, having flip-flopped my snap-judgment from last time out when Carmona sucked.

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And it kind of leads me into game number two, which was started by **Zach McAllister**. [The rook was making his third start](#)

and really, it was progress after what he did after the first two times out. McAllister in my opinion looked good. He looked more comfortable and I think he may be starting to figure it out in terms of the major leagues. That isn't to say he's ready, but I think he's over the fact that he's in Cleveland with the major league club and starting to settle into the idea of what he's doing.

He went into the sixth, threw 92 pitches and gave up a pair of runs. He only walked one, which is what I like to see and when he left, he was in line for the win.

"McAllister threw the ball very well," Indians manager Manny Acta said. "He was a different guy today. He was very aggressive. He got behind the ball and threw it with some conviction."

So McAllister, I think has put himself into an intriguing spot to contend for a rotation spot next season. Not just "Oh he's in the competition," but a more serious contender that will get several looks and be properly evaluated as someone who has just as much chance as anyone else.

His chance at a first major league win however was blown by another rookie. With the big three having already pitched in the early game, it was left up to Rafael Perez, Tony Sipp, and some rooks. The first rookie out of the box after Rafael Perez finished off the sixth (not cleanly by the

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by) was **Zach Putnam**. And again, Putnam struggled.

"When I needed to make a pitch down in the zone, I was just leaving things up," Putnam said. "Against that lineup, you just can't do that."

I really like Putnam, but as Manny said, it wasn't his day. Really impressed with the strides Judy and Hagadone are making though. Both came in and pitched well, Hagadone striking out a pair in 1.2 innings of scoreless ball. Those guys might be settling in and you have to think Putnam will get to that place too.

Random Details...

Vintage Bullpen Mafia in the first game. Joe Smith, Vinnie Pestano, Chris Perez, Boom, Boom, Boom. Clean and I mean clean three innings, no walks, no hits, Perez gets 35. Finish strong Mafia, finish strong.

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The offense in the second game was really good. They got to a young guy in Axelrod in the fourth inning by just pounding away. It wasn't the long-ball attack the unleashed earlier, but rather a one of hit after hit. Jim Thome led that charge (and was 1-for-2 with a pair of walks, by the by) even Matt LaPorta had a big hit.

I hate to keep making him a side not, but JASON DONALD! People, wake up! The guy is a hitting machine as of late. Four more hits last night and a run scored. Animal. ANIMAL! Is he on the radar? Isn't it going to be nice to not have to find out who your utility player is going to be next year?

[COLUMBUS DOES IT AGAIN]

I'm really going to just give **Mike Sarbaugh** the nickname right now. Mike "Magic" Sarbaugh, or "Magical" Mike Sarbaugh. Or just straight up Erving Johnson him, Magic Sarbaugh. Why the heck not?

Especially after Magic Mike [guided the Clippers to their second straight Overall Triple-A National Championship](#). That is now two years straight that Sarbaugh has taken his squad to the very top of the Triple-A level. The most impressive thing with it is the fact that he has been given these teams that are kind of oddly put together. They've had some talented guys like Chisenhall, Santana, Kipnis, McAllister, Gomez, go on and on. But they've lost a lot of the big talent like Chisenhall and Santana.

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More so than that, it's been a constant revolving door. I mean, how often were Travis Buck and Shelley Duncan filtered into and out of that team? It goes a little beyond talent at some point and it seems like regardless of who and what he is given, Mike Sarbaugh is able to make the best out of it. Triple-A and minor league baseball in general is different. However the fact that he can get this team and guide them two straight years with as much roster turnover the Clippers have had is downright remarkable.

Joe Martinez? Luke Carlin? I mean, love those guys, but how does he manage to get these results with this mix of guys?

The [Clippers won 8-3 over Omaha](#) in the game. It was in fact Joe Martinez who did it again, going seven innings and giving up three runs off six hits and three walks. CC Lee pitched two scoreless innings in relief. Luke Carlin hit a huge three-run homer to get things started and Beau Mills hit a solo shot and knocked in a pair.

Martinez took home the MVP award and after a rough start, credited Carlin with helping him make adjustments and turn the game around.

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"Whenever you go into a championship game, you want to win," Columbus manager Mike Sarbaugh said. "I think that's why we play the game. But in this type of game, it's different, it's one game and that's it. If you get timely hitting like we did tonight and good starting pitching, which we got, you win."

The Triple-A National Title isn't very old at all. It's something they started recently and it's the second time in the six-year history that a team has won the game consecutive years.

So Congrats to Columbus and everyone that took part in the win, especially Mike Sarbaugh. The guy is simply magic.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

We talked yesterday about the surge **Carlos Santana** has been on. MLB.com [has noted that the 26 jacks he's hit](#) is a career high at any level. Santana says he isn't trying to hit the home run and that he never thinks or tries to hit one.

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"I never think about trying to hit home runs," Santana said. "I try to make good contact with the ball and have a good swing and swing through the ball. I never think, 'OK, I need to get a home run' or 'Let's try to get a home run.'"

However Santana is also not surprised, saying he just tries to put a good swing on the ball. Between him and **Shelley Duncan**, they are just having [a September surge](#) that would have been nice a few weeks ago, but still welcomed none-the-less.

As hot as those two are, they haven't had the consistency that Asdrubal has had and he cherry topped his season. Yesterday, **Asdrubal Cabrera** [tied a record for home runs](#) by an Indians shortstop. He tied the record of Jhonny Peralta, who hit 24 home runs back in 2005. He now has a few weeks left to break that record.

Of course, in the process of that early game, Asdrubal also injured himself, putting a damper on his chances to do just that.

"I'm so happy that he was able to tie the record," manager Manny Acta said. "I hope he's OK and he can have one more week to take a whack at it, because I would love to have those records and power of the guys that are here and are going to be a part of our franchise for years to come."

Cabs said there was a cramp in his back, but that he is hoping to be ready for today's game. He was not scheduled to play in the second game of the double header yesterday.

Zach McAllister was called up for spot-starting duty on Tuesday and now Corey Kluber will re-join him in Cleveland with Columbus' season officially over. That should be about it in terms of call-ups at this point. He'll definitely be needed to be on call for Saturday with Tomlin scheduled to start one of the two games.

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So, there's a blog out there that is better than this one. We all know, if you've frequented this blog, that Cole Cook is funny as hell. But he's funny in 140 characters or less, in his short little quips. Can he be funny all the time? Uh, what the hell kind of question is that? Of course he can and now you can read it. [Cole has a blog that he's started](#) . It really isn't about anything special, just whatever is on his mind. From his battle at Coffee Bean to what he does in a day in Arizona to how he shaves, Cook really has no boundaries.

I read all of his entries last night in one sitting. Seriously, go give it a read.

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You can read more Morning Rundown and other features on Nino's blog, [The Tribe Daily](#) .

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