

The Rundown: Vargas Leaves Indians Sleepless

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Wednesday, April 18 2012 10:00 AM - Last Updated Friday, April 20 2012 6:41 AM



When Run DMC came together with Aerosmith to help them out with "Walk This Way" they wanted it to be a big enough hit for the Seattle Mariners to use for this particular series against the Cleveland Indians. I can only hope the sound techs at Safeco are utilizing it justly.

April 18th, 2012

Cleveland Indians - **1**

Seattle Mariners - **4**

W: Jason Vargas (2-1) L: Derek Lowe (2-1) S: Brandon League (5)

[\[BOXSCORE\]](#)

Derek Lowe walked one single solitary hitter in his 14 innings this season. How in the wide world of Indians baseball did he manage to walk six Seattle Mariners?

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So what gives? Two pitchers that have walked a grand total of three hitters in 26 innings coming into this series have walked 10 hitters in eight innings. Even with the latest increase in walks, Seattle is still in the bottom six of the entire major leagues in walks. They're not the most disciplined team either was they've struck out 76 times. They're not the Cleveland team that the Indians have displayed to be these first few weeks in working the walk and not striking out.

I'm not sure as Lowe nor Masterson really answered that question.

All Lowe could muster was that it wasn't his night and I mean, that happens. But nothing frustrates this guy more than walks, especially from two pitchers who are not prone to giving them up. Especially a veteran in Lowe [who even admitted that he had a lot of](#) "non-competitive pitches" that he threw.

"To give up six hits on top of the two home runs," Lowe said, "and six walks, and they only scored two runs? Try that. That's not easy. But, yeah, it was just a lot of non-competitive pitches. I think I was on about Plan G by the time I got taken out of the game. I tried so many things.

"There were times where you could've easily made a pitch and got out of an inning, but it just wasn't going to happen."

I'm not even going to touch that last part of the quote. I've never pitched, so I'm not going to begin to try to understand, nor try to argue. He's a pitcher, who really knows.

It's maddening that he walked so many, because he also gave up so many hits, but still was only tagged for four runs (two off solo home runs in the first inning). As Lowe said himself. Try that. It's impressive, but also not effective because he A) Exited before the fifth inning was completed and B) Already put his team in a hole.

Not expecting perfection, but again, walks are frustrating. He could have went a little deeper into this game than he did. Granted the bullpen didn't get real taxed (2+ clean innings from Asencio/Wheeler? Score), but you just hate watching the same type of pitching performance

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two nights in a row.

It was the same type of stuff Masterson was dealing with. Going deep into the counts, laboring, just not being able to retire hitters. I'm not sure if it's the fact that it's the poor-hitting Mariners that makes it frustrating or not.

But really, none of it matters because there may have been no beating Jason Vargas on this night, even with a better outing by Lowe. The lone Indians run came off a sac-fly by Jason Kipnis, that was set up by an Aaron Cunningham leadoff double. Acta had to play small-ball just to get him around and the idea of playing for one run at the time was good because it looked as if Lowe could settle in and a 2-1 game would be manageable.

But Vargas shut it down from there. He walked three and gave up three other hits on the night. He just pitched well.

"He held us in check the whole night," Acta said. "He changed speeds to both sides of the plate. He just did a very good job."

And just like that, sometimes that's what a game comes down to. I can huff and puff about Derek Lowe and Masterson walking people they shouldn't, but Jason Vargas was too good to beat on this night.

Random Details...

Not only did the win-streak come to an end, so did the streak of scoring eight runs on the road (never have the Indians scored as many runs as they did to start the season on the road than they have this season and it set a record that was only bettered by one other team). They also lost their home run streak as they failed to hit a home run in a game for the first time this season. I mean, they ALMOST did it.

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Jason Donald was in the leadoff spot with Michael Brantley getting the day off. He was the one in the position to bunt Cunningham over for Kipnis to drive in. I'm wondering if Acta takes the same approach if Brantley and Cabrera are there.

The other hits other than Cunningham's double (which was oh-so-close to being a home run and extending that streak) came from Kipnis, Santana and former Mariner Jose Lopez. Pretty harmless.

Shin-Soo Choo had three of the four walks. Looks like Vargas wanted no part of that former Mariner.

Speaking of, this lineup contained three former Mariners in Lopez, Choo, Kotchman Just think if Jack Hannahan and Asdrubal Cabrera also started. The Mariners team only comprises of a former Indian coaching staff and Kevin Millwood.

Nick Hagadone with another opportunity to pitch in front of friends and family and he struck out a pair in an impressive inning of relief. Cunningham is also from the state of Washington, so he got an opportunity in front of his home. Hagadone said his [2012 debut was perfect](#). His second outing was just as good, if not better, but his first, really helped the Indians win that game.

Speaking of, how about him in his second start of the year? Throwing out Ackley at first, playing good defense, getting a hit. If Johnny Damon wasn't on the way in, he might have been a serviceable fourth outfielder. Just maybe.

[MLB SUSPENDS GOMEZ, FINES OTHERS]

Are you kidding me with this? The commissioner's office came down [with their punishment](#) stemming from the Royals/Indians incident last Saturday and not one single Kansas City Royal was disciplined, yet four Indians were.

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Granted, I can't think of any Royal that deserves disciplined for it, but it seems rather unfair. I guess it gives truth to the adage that he who retaliates is the one that gets caught.

The heftiest was given to **Jeanmar Gomez** who got five games for intentionally hitting Mike Moustakas with a pitch. Of course Gomez will continue to maintain that he wasn't trying to hit Moustakas, but just pitch inside. But I think everyone knows he was repaying the Royals the favor, even though it was not intentional that Jonathan Sanchez hit Shin-Soo Choo.

But in baseball, sometimes messages need to be sent and players need to be macho enough to enforce those messages by plunking people. So here we are. Gomez will appeal and it looks as if the Indians will handle it the same way they handled the Ublado Jimenez suspension, let Gomez pitch his upcoming start, [drop the appeal](#) , go forth with them basically re-aligning their rotation thanks to off days.

"We respect the league's decision," Indians manager Manny Acta said. "We're going to make the proper adjustments. Gomez is going to appeal, he's going to pitch on Saturday against Oakland, and then probably after that he'll drop it and pitch again."

Maybe the part that seems unfair in this is that Gomez is just a pawn in this whole game. He's not a central character to the story. Choo and Sanchez are. Jack Hannahan's craziness is more of a topic than Gomez hitting Moustakas is in my mind. The fact that he suffers the most from this just seems unfair when he was just sticking up for a teammate.

But again that's baseball.

Other fines were given to Hannahan and Manny Acta. It didn't seem right for Hannahan to get suspended because as he pointed out, he threw no punches. But perhaps another character that now has a prominent role in this story is **Chris Perez**.

Because he was fined too.

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What? Why?

Well, MLB is watching everything and they saw Chris Perez's tweet following the content in which he gave the Royals a little P.S. "You hit us, we hit you. Period."

Oooh. Chris is a fired up guy on the mound, he likes to say that doesn't follow him outside the chalk, but sometimes his fire is evident.

In return, MLB said that he crossed a line and fined him \$750. No that's not a typo, Seven-hundred and fifty dollars. It's actually \$250 more than Jack Hannahan and if they fined him that for one tweet, what do you think they'll say to [his response tweet?](#)

Not that it can be directly linked to the fine in anyway, but let's be real. Chris has a way of throwing those jabs in there.

Personally, I love it. It's harmless and it's fun. A millionaire was fined to what is the equivalent for someone like myself a few bucks. Perez will dish out the \$750, as he said, in straight cash, and continue to tweet as if there was no dent in his armor.

It's all good.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

The main guy who could be directly effected by the signing of Johnny Damon is **Shelley Duncan**, and he couldn't be happier.

"I couldn't be happier to have a guy like him as a teammate," said Duncan, who played with

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Damon on the Yankees from 2007-09. "It's premature and irresponsible for people to say certain things are going to happen [in regards to playing time]."

"I have all my trust, and everybody on this team has a trust, that [manager Manny Acta] puts the best nine on the field to win that ballgame each day. I want that. Every day I play with that attitude. If I'm not hitting good, I shouldn't be in the lineup, because other guys can help this team win."

It's an attitude like that will net him what he deserves. Duncan keeps playing the way he is playing, this will work itself out and he'll get everything he deserves. Simply as that. You can also see the genuine happiness as Damon talked of the same situation in regards to Duncan.

[Injury updates](#) to **Grady Sizemore** and **David Huff**... Sizemore is going to start baseball activities next week while David Huff will be starting for Akron on Friday.

[TIGER WATCH]

The Royals blew a 3-1 lead to the Tigers after Prince Fielder chipped away in the fifth and then Jose Mijares threw it away in the seventh, setting the stage for Fielder to then give the Tigers the lead once and for all. The Royals still winless at home have now lost again and the Tigers are beating the teams they need to beat.

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