

The Goal for May: Stay the Course, Fix Ubaldo

Written by {ga=edtherevelator}

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It's May, and the Indians are keeping their heads afloat in a three-way battle for the AL Central.

It's May, and I don't think anyone is quite sure about the players the Tribe has on its roster.

It's May, and the team has already made a panic signing.

It's only May, and that's why, outside of the bullpen (which will have to drop a player when Raffy Perez returns from the DL) and barring an injury (and with one HUGE exception), the Indians should end May with exactly the same players who they started with this month.

That means, until June, Aaron Cunningham will still have a big-league job. No calls for Casey Kotchman's head as he struggles to get on base (.240 OBP). Michael Brantley will remain the center fielder. Jack Hannahan's starting role is secure. The position players are set, at least until J

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The same cannot be said of the starting rotation. After his last start, Ubaldo Jimenez must be placed on notice.

To his credit, Jimenez knows he's been bad (5.02 ERA, 1.74 WHIP, 28.2 IP), and says he is working to fix his mechanics. However the Indians don't have the luxury of letting him fix this on-the-go at the big league level. And while the Indians gave up two highly-regarded prospects in Alex White and Drew Pomeranz to get Jimenez, that doesn't mean the Indians shouldn't consider shelving Jimenez until he gets this figured out, either by placing him on the DL, or if he accepts an assignment to the minors.

There aren't any sure-fire fixes for Ubaldo. Nothing the Indians do is guaranteed to work, although the Indians have had some minor success in getting pitchers straightened out in recent years (the former Fausto Carmona, Roberto Hernandez, springs to mind). But in order for the Indians to continue to contend for the AL Central, the Tribe needs a solid #2 starter who can be slotted behind Justin Masterson. And seeing as the Indians already traded the f

arm for Jimenez, the candidates are all in-house usual suspects, and all rather uninspiring. Kevin Slowey, Zach McAllister and Corey Kluber are all in line for spot starts (as is David Huff whenever he's healthy), but none have the track record, or potential, Jimenez has.

For better or worse, Jimenez is the guy. And if the Indians want this season to be successful, they need to fix him. No other moves should be made until the Indians know what they can get out of Jimenez.

It's May, and the Tribe has less than five months to get Ubaldo Jimenez right.