

Morning Rundown: Clutch-Mannahan Puts Tribe in First

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Thursday, May 03 2012 6:21 AM - Last Updated Thursday, May 03 2012 9:41 AM



It's lonely at the top and that's the way we like it, right? A big win over Chicago (the first of the year) and a Detroit loss to Kansas City and this city should be riding high. Their Tribe is in first place and beyond all that (because first place in May is nothing, unless you are the Rangers with a mega-lead), they are competitive and show no signs of slowing down, even with a flimsy offense.

May 2nd, 2012

Cleveland Indians - **6**

Chicago White Sox - **3**

W: Joe Smith (1-0) L: Will Ohman (0-1) S: Chris Perez (8)

[\[BOXSCORE\]](#)

The situations keep finding him and [he keeps producing](#) .

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"I love coming up with guys in scoring position," Hannahan said.□

The fact that **Jack Hannahan** is the Indians most clutch hitter is certainly not a bad thing. Considering he's the guy that keeps coming up in the clutch situations and he produces more times than not. I mean, Hannahan is the guy I want in this situation all the time now.

In a 3-3 game, there was a few runners on in the eighth and Addison Reed just was brought in to reliever left-hander Will Ohman.

I'm half paying attention, also focused on whatever is happening on Twitter (might have been General Cramping, might have been Jeff Liefer, might have been Jody Gerut). And then I notice who it is at the plate.

Pay attention, front and center. When Hannahan comes up to the plate in these situations, I take notice. I get a little excited. And every time he is up there, I think "Oh, this is the time he'll surely not come through, because he's come through so many other times, he's going to run out of steam."

And every time, that slick-fielding Irish man who's slightly balding comes through with the improbable. And now, these situations for him, they've become pretty productive.

"It's all about staying with your approach and not trying to do too much," he said. "It's easy to get excited and pull off a ball you should be able to drive. You have to stay within yourself and just kind of do what the pitch allows you to do. Stay calm. If you've got to take a walk, you've got to take a walk and let the guy behind you do it. I think we've been doing good at it."□

Oh man.. Or should I say, Ohman... Remember when Travis Hafner was getting on-base at the flip of a coin about a week or so ago? (He's still pretty close). Well, Jack Hannahan is getting a hit with runners in scoring position at the flip of a coin. He's 9-for-18 with runners in scoring position and with two outs, he's hitting .400, 10-for-25.

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That's insanity. It surely will not continue and his numbers will even out. Just say that he has improved (and at this point, it becomes foolish to suggest that he hasn't in some way with the bat), the numbers are still a little too high and his numbers will even out, but it's nice having someone come through with the clutch hits, especially since he's always the one in the position to deliver.

I don't think it's fair to call Hannahan a fluke. Will he regress? He probably won't hit near .300 all season. But I think he's at least a changed hitter. He's no longer that guy that will hit his weight in average. He has at least a serviceable bat to go with an above average glove. In Cleveland he's found himself and that is nothing out of the ordinary. He isn't hitting the home runs he was last year that made us say, "Who the hell is this guy!" He's simply hitting well, producing quality at-bats and being smart when he swings the stick.

So don't get all "BUT IT'S JACK HANNAHAN!"

Yeah it is Jack Hannahan. I'm not saying he's the .300 hitter who is leading the team in RBIs that is now... But he's at least a little better now than we all thought. He's an improved hitter overall and he deserves that much credit.

Throw a little credit **Josh Tomlin's** way after his outing. He got through six innings on just 82 pitches, but that was probably the right time to make a move. He started out getting through the first three innings having only walked Adam Dunn, then he gave up the solo shot in the fourth to Dunn. Overall, it was just one of those Josh Tomlin outings. It's six innings, three or less runs, a quality start that Josh Tomlin has made us accustomed to from him.

He went toe-to-toe with his good buddy and perfect game-twirler Philip Humber. He really out-pitched him despite going the same amount of innings and giving the same amount of runs. Humber walked six and really tread the waters a few times. It wasn't until Carlos Santana's big blast in the fifth that things kind of loosened up and the Indians settled in. They wouldn't score more off of him, but if they couldn't get a single run off Humber and he got through six or even seven, there might have been a big demoralizing aspect to that.

But instead, Santana crushed one with a pair on and at least gave some relief to Tomlin. Who promptly surrendered the lead, but still pitched well enough to win and still out-pitched his

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teammate, even if the numbers don't totally dictate it.

Random Details...

On another night the following details would have been major storylines... And I feel with all the praise towards Hannahan for his clutch hitting, we need to heap a lot of blame on the rest of the Indians for their lack of clutch hitting.

Early in the game against Humber, the Indians struck out three times with the bases loaded, Choo being the culprit twice and also with runners on second and third and one out. That's four prime run scoring opportunities. Had Santana not redeemed himself (one of the strikeouts with bases loaded, with one out, no less), I would have figured this would be a bigger deal than it is.

"We put together a bunch of good at-bats," Indians manager Manny Acta said, "except in those situations where Humber made some good pitches."

But fear not. The Indians really started out striking out a lot, but still managed to work a good amount of walks, eight in total actually.

The problems with the bases loaded are a little concerning this year, [as Jordan Bastian notes](#) . Currently 0-for-12 with two outs and the bases juiced, that's a big fat goose egg... AND just three hits in total out of 26 opportunities. Um, gross.

Choo overall had a rough night (he left seven on base). Made his return to the lineup and had several opportunities to make some things happen and he came up dry. Another day, another chance big guy.

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