

## Morning Rundown: The Big U Tops Yu; Where Are YOU Cleveland?

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Monday, May 07 2012 9:30 AM - Last Updated Monday, May 07 2012 8:21 AM

---



The Cleveland Indians may very well be the baseball equivalent of the "Call Me Maybe" song by Carly Rae Jepsen. You know you've heard it before even if you just said "What, Who?" in response to that sentence. Maybe once and awhile and you were like, "Jeeze... This song is annoying." But now it keeps getting more and more play and you're kinda like, "Okay this song is kind of catchy." You don't want to admit it, but maybe, just maybe....

Am I saying I like this song as I've heard it more and more on the radio? No, I'm trying to draw a very bad parallel here to an audience who based off my estimation realistically has never heard this damn song. But I'm thinking the way it's getting played, "Call Me Maybe" might be the song of the summer.

And I can only hope that the Indians are the team of the summer the way they are playing.

I've gone these entire two opening paragraphs and haven't even brought up the fact that they just took two out of three from the best team in the American League, the Texas Rangers. Where do we go from here? Three directions.

1) This team is playing well, but it's merely that, a streak.

2) This team is really very much like the 2011 version of the club, they'll fade and Detroit will show their staying power and pounce.

## Morning Rundown: The Big U Tops Yu; Where Are YOU Cleveland?

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Monday, May 07 2012 9:30 AM - Last Updated Monday, May 07 2012 8:21 AM

---

3) Take this team seriously, because they could be making some serious waves.

One thing is undoubtedly sure based off this series and the past month, regardless of if the Indians were playing well or not (because they weren't through their bad stretches too). You may have seen other writers proclaim it, but it's an undeniable fact.

This is going to be a fun summer. This team has some staying power, whether they are 2011 again or a version of that 2011 team that is going to take it a step further, they've played too well in this first month to be a flash in the pan. They've now gone up a pair of decent teams in Texas and Chicago and showed this isn't just a team that beat up on some bad clubs in April.

I'd even point to a Baltimore team that is playing way above expectations (in a tough AL East no-less) and say, a team playing that well is playing too well to be simply a flash in the pan. That isn't to say the Orioles are going to be winning any sort of division or wild card spot this year, but it is to say they'll likely have a fun summer.

They're going toe-to-toe with Toronto and New York and this weekend, they beat around Boston. They'll have their own test of a home stand consisting of Texas and Tampa Bay this week, but I wouldn't be looking at Baltimore as a complete fluke.

You look at some of the other teams atop their divisions and the Dodgers and Nationals in the NL are here to stay as well. It's clear Washington is for real with some of that talent they have and the only thing likely to derail them from contention is multiple injuries. We always knew the Dodgers had talent, but it seems the "ownership cloud" that hung over them last year was actually pretty real.

Maybe the Indians are just in a bad division. Maybe they have taken advantage of bottom feeders and a struggling Angels team. Whatever. Reasons to rebel be damned, this team could have very well swept Texas this weekend.

**May 6th, 2012**

## Morning Rundown: The Big U Tops Yu; Where Are YOU Cleveland?

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Monday, May 07 2012 9:30 AM - Last Updated Monday, May 07 2012 8:21 AM

---

Texas Rangers - **2**

Cleveland Indians - **4**

W: Ubaldo Jimenez (3-2) L: Yu Darvish (4-1) S: Chris Perez (11)

### [\[BOXSCORE\]](#)

From the credit where credit is due department. **Ubaldo Jimenez** pitched well. He pitched well enough to win and he did what he needs to do. I don't care how he does it, just that he buckles down and does it.

But you will not come here and see me say that Jimenez is fixed and that things are going to be different from now on. Jimenez still has work to do, by evidence of the struggles he had in the first three innings. Honestly it was hard to watch. The guy gets ahead of a hitter 0-2 and he ends up walking them or giving up a junk hit.

He gets behind the first batter of the game in Kinsler and he manages to get the out. Then in the third he walks the bases loaded after getting two outs. It's like he goes out of his way to make things more difficult when they are supposed to be easy. I know he doesn't do it on purpose, but it's like he can't close. Heck, he maybe Fausto Carmona. If we were to put him in the closer role, he might have a complete breakdown.

I guess in a nutshell he wasn't Ewwbaldo, which to me is good enough for right now after the way he was pitching. If he can keep Texas off the board for seven innings, good for him. If it helps him build confidence, all the better. But there better not be any sort of regression from this and Indians fans better not go around thinking that Jimenez is going to go out every time now and only get better. He has to prove whatever it is he and the coaching staff is working on is working.

## Morning Rundown: The Big U Tops Yu; Where Are YOU Cleveland?

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Monday, May 07 2012 9:30 AM - Last Updated Monday, May 07 2012 8:21 AM

---

He gave up two hits, which is great, but he still had traffic to deal with because he walked five hitters. But again, credit where credit is due, especially as the game went on. He walked Josh Hamilton to load the bases and then got out of that jam, much in part to the fact that there was two outs already and from there, he pretty much took control. He would set 10 Rangers down in a row at one point and that's nothing to sneeze at. But it's [far from "terrific" after the way](#) he started.

*"Ubaldo was terrific today," Acta said. "He proves that you don't have to throw 99 to get people out, but you do have to throw strikes. He threw strikes today. He had very good offspeed stuff. His curveball was the best I've seen so far."*

His curveball was pretty good. It really accounted for a lot of his swings and misses as he did strike a few hitters out on it. Maybe that's the pitch he needs working to close things out. But early on, it looked like we were going to get more of the same. Ron Washington said that if they could have put some runs up early (like in that third inning) it could have been a different story. In fact, it probably would have been a different story. Jimenez maybe used getting out of that jam to propel himself into the rest of the outing. Where as if he didn't, it could have sent him off a cliff as trouble usually seems to do to him.

And as I've flip-flopped from giving credit and taking it away, here's where I'll get Jimenez the ultimate point of credit, and it has nothing to do with his performance.

*"It's still a work in progress," Jimenez said. "It's really hard to make adjustments, but hopefully everything comes together. ... Commanding all of my pitches, that was the main thing today. I was able to throw my slider, curve, changeup, everything for a strike."*□

He more than anyone realizes things are not all better and he still has things to do. He knew he walked a good amount of hitters, but he was confident in that he was throwing strikes, because he was. He was really getting squeezed a lot, not often getting that outside part of the plate, especially early in the game.

**Random Details...**

## Morning Rundown: The Big U Tops Yu; Where Are YOU Cleveland?

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Monday, May 07 2012 9:30 AM - Last Updated Monday, May 07 2012 8:21 AM

---

The Indians benefited once again from the sun, as Johnny Damon was able to leadoff the third inning with a single that was popped straight up on the infield. Ian Kinsler wasn't wearing sunglasses and his team paid dearly as what was a routine out, turned into a rally starter. Kipnis followed, and Cabrera brought them both home with a huge double. The other defensive miscue from Elvis Andrus would lead to another run and you could argue that Darvish really was not given a just fate.

But guess what? The Indians got their hits when they needed them. Then they got an additional Kipnis bomb in the fifth to make it a four-run lead. Enough insurance for the bullpen (but not Tony Sipp) as a whole and for Chris Perez to notch the save.

That's ideally how you set it up, Jimenez seven, bullpen eighth and ninth. Winner.

I hope Johnny Damon and Michael Brantley's lack of arm strength is contagious [after watching this gem](#) from Shin-Soo Choo, followed up by...whatever it was that was.

### Series Notes...

Seriously though, that play to end the game on Friday, that play there... **Shin-Soo Choo** had more than a few big plays with the glove this series. Usually he's there for his arm, but he's been way better than he has in the past with the glove. He seems to be taking better routes to the ball than in the past. I've been impressed with that.

Johnny Damon did really hit the ball well in the series. He was 3-for-9 with a pair of RBI and a run scored. It's nice to see him putting in quality at-bats, coming up with big hits. He's very much stabilizing the top of that lineup, without actually being overly impactful with the bat.

With Ubaldo's quality start on Sunday, it marked the first time all year a team was able to have three quality starts against Texas in a series. That lineup is really dangerous, especially with a

## Morning Rundown: The Big U Tops Yu; Where Are YOU Cleveland?

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Monday, May 07 2012 9:30 AM - Last Updated Monday, May 07 2012 8:21 AM

---

guy like Napoli hitting towards the bottom. But you have to really credit the Indians pitchers. Gomez and Lowe both too. Gomez's outing will go overlooked due to what Jimenez did, but he, not Jimenez, faced the Rangers best pitcher in Colby Lewis. That's a tough task to match but he not only did that, he bested him.

Lowe on the other hand had some issues and not his best stuff, but he made up for it by giving his best effort. He was able to ride some solid defense and get through what could to give the Indians a chance to win the game.

So much for that home run drought huh? The Indians hit eight home runs in the six games against Texas and Chicago. Two have come from Jason Kipnis in the final games of both series, while the other seven came from seven different players.

### [RUNDOWN RANT: AN ANNUAL PLEA]

I'm not sure I did this last year, but if I did, I can't find it. But I'm sure I probably said something in passing. If anything, I probably went on a Twitter rant about it. Well now, here's a rundown rant...

Two of this club's major players thus far are two bouncy youngsters who are quickly endearing themselves to the fans of this city. **Vinnie Pestano** hasn't allowed an inherited runner to score this year and is practically striking out anyone that tries to get a hit off him in a big spot.

#### **Jason Kipnis**□

has come up with more than a few big hits and up to this point, has been the Indians best all-around player, hitting, running, fielding, just being an overall joy to watch.

# Morning Rundown: The Big U Tops Yu; Where Are YOU Cleveland?

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Monday, May 07 2012 9:30 AM - Last Updated Monday, May 07 2012 8:21 AM

---



[Pure Race Pooz](#)



[Follow @DnDnDaily](#)