

## Morning Rundown: Two Games, Two Wins, Lots of Tribe Luck

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Tuesday, May 08 2012 7:09 AM - Last Updated Tuesday, May 08 2012 8:12 AM

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You have four-five arms available in your bullpen, none of which are your two best arms. You're starting someone for the first time this year in the majors as he's been in Columbus. There's rain coming, and ya, you'll definitely be playing many of your backups in the second game of this double header. Are two wins possible? Just ask Manny Acta...

### May 7th, 2012 - Game One

Chicago White Sox - 6

Cleveland Indians - 8

W: Zach McAllister (1-0) L: Phil Humber (1-2) S: Nick Hagadone (1)

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### [BOXSCORE](#)

Game one was one of offense as the Indians were able to get to Mr. Perfect Phil Humber. In fact, they got to him early and chased him off rather quickly. Humber couldn't get out of the third and if anything, in addition to the eight runs that would be enough to win, the Indians biggest accomplishment was diving into that White Sox bullpen early.

Lucky for them, they got Jose Quintana to give up just a hit throughout the rest of the game. Quintana was the White Sox 26th man, so if anything, they used the rule effectively as he held the Indians to just three baserunners after Humber's implosion.

The Indians used their 26th man effectively too as they got **Zach McAllister** to [give them six healthy innings of work](#), giving up two earned (four in total) off six hits and a walk. That's solid baseball because that's a quality start from someone you just called up to make a spot start for a double header. And it's Mac's first win of his major league career.

Throw in the fact that they used no one of mass importance in their bullpen to save for the night cap? This is especially important in considering there was no off day following that weekend series and the Indians are just now starting this long stretch of games without a day off.

Huge...

*"I was happy with it," said McAllister, who allowed four runs (two earned) with a career-high five strikeouts. "I thought I was able to make some good pitches when I needed to. I was definitely happy to give the team some innings. And I was definitely excited to get the win."*

As nice as McAllister's effort was, let's make no bones about it, this one was about the offense scoring big early. What I find hilarious is that Humber thinks there is a "theory" about the Indians wanting to stuff the lineup with lefties against him.

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*"Obviously they have a theory about putting a lot of lefties in the lineup against me," Humber said. "But we are prepared as far as knowing how to pitch them, and after that, it's a matter of executing your pitches, and obviously that didn't happen today."*

Uh, guy.. That's the Indians normal lineup. They're ALL left-handed hitters. So you can think it's a theory when really in reality it's just... the normal lineup. And if you got a right-handed stater on the mound, you can expect Acta to put them all out there.

*"He has thrown good against lefties, but that's what we'll do," Acta said. "We'll have those nine lefties, we'll throw them at them. We know they have five lefties in the bullpen, but our job is to make sure that we score enough off the starter that, when the bullpen comes in, it's our problem if we didn't score enough with our lineup out there."*

The offense was smooth swinging in the first two innings. Hafner started things out with a home run and that only started the rally. The Indians pulled off three straight hits after that and then a run-scoring ground out. And that was just the start of it. The next inning, Travis Hafner made two outs after homering in the previous inning. But key doubles by Kotchman and Brantley did most of the damage.

And it was those two, who carried the offense. Both with three RBI and it pretty much was a representation of what this first game was. A lot of the spare parts, the role players, the guys who are not counted on to regularly provide the Indians with wins, coming together and getting a big one. It's always nice to take the first game of a double header, especially one that is a make-up from when you were not playing so hot, and especially when the game following it would end up in a win.

### May 7th, 2012 - Game Two

Chicago White Sox - 2

Cleveland Indians - 3

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W: Joe Smith (2-1) L: Matt Thornton (1-2) S: Tony Sipp (1)

### [BOXSCORE](#)

Credit where credit is due department for the second day in a row... **Michael Brantely** had a big hit in this one too.

After Tomlin gave up a run in the fifth, the Indians showed [some sort of magic](#) by not only getting a few runs for Tomlin, but getting a few runs before the rain came. It really looked at the time that the rain would come and wash this one out, so two runs, the fifth ends, this game is official.

And Brantley came through with a single to score Lou Marson, Kipnis would follow with the go-ahead RBI scoring Brantley. All with two outs to make it even more remarkable.

And after that rain started coming down hard. But the game played through, for a few more innings in a constant downpour. With the rain in Akron not stopping, I surely thought they'd call it at some point and call it for good.

I guess things work differently in Cleveland though, as the game stopped at an awkward spot in the eighth inning with Tomlin on the mound and runners on base.

Not only was Tomlin on the end of his rope, such a break (nearly an hour and a half) meant he was done for the night and it would be up to the bullpen to get out of his jam and keep his lead. And here comes the dilemma of the day for Manny Acta.

He had just Tony Sipp, Jairo Asencio, Dan Wheeler, and Nick Hagadone available in his bullpen coming into the day. Two games, four relievers. Luckily for Acta his starters went deep in both

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games, or else this could have been a blood bath and we may have seen Andy Marte on the first plane to Cleveland to pitch.

Asencio and Hagadone were used earlier (in a close game no-less), so that left Acta with just Tony Sipp as someone who he's used in close games. Dan Wheeler was warming at one point, but with Joe Smith telling Acta he was available if needed before the second game, it gave Acta a little more flexibility, but not much.

When the game resumed, Joe Smith entered and gave up a run to tie it, but then managed to get a huge double play off the bat of Adam Dunn to end the inning. Now the Indians just needed a run before this got out of hand, because they only have ONE arm left in the pen. Wheeler officially entered the game for Tomlin before the rain delay, but when it returned, he was not there. Talk about a pickle.

Shelley Duncan answers... Of course after back-to-back leadoff singles by Asdrubal Cabrera and Carlos Santana, the stage was set for someone to come through. Matt Thornton was struggling, and the Tribe took advantage.

But the bigger problem here? Yeah who's going to close this one? Hagadone did some closing in the minors and has that type of stuff, so that wasn't a hard pick for the first game. Acta was probably hoping for enough runs for it to be an issue, but one run? Yeah that's a nice margin for error.

And after Tyler Flowers banged one off the Home Run Porch sign, I'm sure Acta let out a big sigh of relief when it was ruled a foul ball. Sipp on the other hand, was called upon to close for really the first time since his days at Clemson. He did have a save in 2010 against Tampa, but it was one that got called 3-1 in favor of the Indians after seven innings due to rain. This was a real save situation...

*"I looked around," Sipp said. "I was looking to see if anybody else was healthy. I didn't know if they wanted to use me."*

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Tony Sipp was the only one to use! There was no one left in that pen and if he had given up a single run, we might have seen a Darnell McDonald situation in the 10th inning.

And if Flowers hadn't gotten out in front, well, the game would have likely not been a win. But somehow, someway, two games, two wins and both Pestano and Perez got rest.

*"It was worth it," Acta said. "We made it through it without our bullpen and we got two wins."*

Acta really hopscotched his way through that one. It can't work out any better for a manager. He didn't want to use his two best pieces due to their use the previous weekend, Perez and Pestano both having pitched in four of the last five games. Probably a dumb thing to expect in a double header, but he got his wish. He got two great performances by his starters and he got his offense to have some timely hits and of course, a little bit of luck.

### Random Details...

Congratulations to Nick Hagadone on earning his first major league save in the first game. Some think it could be the first of many as Hagadone has stuff that screams closer. He definitely has the mettle after the little jam he was faced with, coming on with a runner on and nobody out in a two-run game. The tying run is already at the plate. First save for Hags, first win for Mac.

Yes, Travis Hafner tripled for the first time since May 25th, 2007 against Detroit. He did hit two that year, and it was just his fourth since 2004.

Lou Marson scoring in the fifth came after he walked with two outs and stole his first base of the season. Not bad at all for your backup catcher, playing a key part in your win.

Asdrubal Cabrera 4-6 with two runs, two walks, and a RBI in the double-header. Yes, he was on base six times yesterday.

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**Sinister Tomlin** strikes again! The Indians cowboy started his third seven-strikeout game of the season and this set a career-high with eight strikeouts, topping his previous high of seven against the White Sox earlier this year. Tomlin has only struck out seven hitters in a game one other time prior to this year and that was last year in 2011. He has barely even struck out six, having done it once in 2010 and twice in 2011 (seven and six strikeout games).

And now in just a short month-plus he's got three seven-struck out games. Sinister Tomlin! Who would have thought he'd be leading the team in strikeouts at any point in the season? Well he is and it will probably last just a day as Masterson is right behind him, but that's just really unusual.

### [RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Scott Radinsky's approach to taking mechanical adjustments to **Ubaldo Jimenez** is to [show him the footage](#)

. That's what he did and it seems to be working as Jimenez displayed on Sunday.

*"It takes them to see it instead of you just grabbing them and telling them," Acta said. "It was very significant and it got his attention right away and he went to work on it with Rad. It's going to take repetition. That's why Rad asked for a couple outings. It's been two and he's shown some improvement."*

It's working because he has shown improvement, but again, as we preached yesterday, it is still a work in progress. He is still the AL leader in walks, but he did show statistical evidence as to him turning around. For one, watching him and watching his curveball was good enough to suggest things are turning the corner.

But I really hope things continue and Radinsky's approach takes for the rest of the season.

Manny Acta said that Johnny Damon's presence [does not really impact](#) how they treat **Grady Sizemore**

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and his rehab appearance. Of course if the Indians are playing well, there will be no rush to get Sizemore back, but with someone like Grady who's always hurt, you have to believe the Indians will take every precaution necessary.

Sizemore is still progressing through his rehab process and in a few weeks is expected to start hitting by taking part in a soft-tossing session by mid-May.

We saw how poked Jason Kipnis was on Sunday when he was getting showered with questions about Yu Darvish. Looks like he wasn't the only one. Vinnie Pestano (who's locker is right next to Kip's) heard it and [he's just as ticked](#) . Ready?

*"They wanted to talk about how bad Yu Darvish was," Pestano said. "They didn't want to talk about how good our hitters' plans were against him. All they wanted to worry about was how bad the Rangers were -- not how good we were. That upset me. We expect to be able to beat good teams," Pestano said. "If we're going to go where this team wants to go, then we're going to have to beat those teams. We're going to have to go through those teams to get to the World Series. We're going to have to go through the Tigers, the Rangers, the Yankees, the Rays. The Orioles are playing really good baseball this year. You just never know where teams are going to come from and you can't take anybody for granted, but when a team goes to the World Series back-to-back years and they're one of the best teams in the AL, [that says something]."*

I can't really add anything that hasn't already been said by Vinnie, Kip, or myself yesterday.

I also went on an attendance rant yesterday and more opinions are flowing out. Anthony Castrovince threw his two cents in from the first game of the double header. Of course combined, the Indians didn't even bring in 20K for both games, but what did you expect? Castro [puts things into a bit of perspective](#) . Something that is true, but also very very sad.

*This is what's called a trend, and it's part of the package here in a town that's endured declining population and economic downturn and really doesn't have baseball on the brain. It should surprise absolutely nobody that the city that [ranked first nationally in TV ratings for the NFL Draft](#) is the same city that ranks 30 out of 30 in MLB attendance, because this is a Browns town, through and through, and the once-in-a-lifetime Indians sellout streak of the 1990s was the product of a combination of unique*

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*factors (no Browns, strong economy, new ballpark, great team, downtown renaissance, etc.) that will never combine again.*

*I hear from fans all the time who say they'll support the team when it spends more money. And Indians ownership has made it clear that it will spend in accordance with revenues. And so around and 'round we go.*

Around we go indeed... Castrovince's point is hard hitting and it is really the root of all this. This is a Browns town and that's a point that I think most bloggers have made more than once, I know I have. But it's annoying that even in that regard, the talk isn't about the Indians and their first place status, but the Browns draft.

That's probably a little more annoying than the attendance. This requires no gas to travel, no money to purchase a ticket or food, no what monetary support what so ever. Respect and just some interest? Even that? No... This town continues to care more about a team that is a perpetual rebuild. The Indians haven't been the best, but as Castrovince pointed out, they're the only ones that have come closest to offering the city any sort of winning team.

And right now, they're playing well that that football team is NOT EVEN PLAYING.

But no, that's cool. Go ahead and care more about some middle-aged quarterback who used to play for the Yankees before he even takes a snap. That's cool. But you better still be caring about him more when the Indians are still playing meaningful baseball when the Browns are.

**Travis Hafner** is closing in on a significant home run total in Indians history, especially after Monday's first game. He did however [tie an all-time Tribe mark](#) when he was hit by a pitch in the second game. That gave him 79, which taps Napoleon Lajoie for the Indians career lead and with one more, he'll have it all to himself.

**[TIGER WATCH]**

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The double header sweep gave the Indians a five game lead over the White Sox, but what would it do for their lead over the Tigers? Well it would depend on their outcome of a late game in Seattle. And the result of that? Well, let's just say the Indians now have a three game lead over the vaunted Tigs after they dropped that contest 3-2.

Doug Fister returned to the mound and went seven scoreless, which is definitely good news for them. But with no Jose Valverde available, Octavio Dotel was asked to close and a Mariners' ninth inning rally helped the Indians out big time. But uh, they're supposed to just club everyone to death, right?

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*Nino has a blog that he creates dumb nicknames, even for players not on the Indians. Give it a vist at [The Tribe Daily](#) .*

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