

Morning Rundown: Reds Are Hot, Indians Pitching Not in Sweep

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Thursday, June 14 2012 9:32 PM - Last Updated Friday, June 15 2012 7:41 AM



The Ohio Cup will not be going to the Indians outright. What happens if the Indians sweep the Reds next week? Do they cut the cup in half? Who gets the Oh? Of course with just one win the Reds claim the coveted piece of silver. It is silver isn't it? One thing is for sure, whether it's coveted, silver, or whatever. If it's cut in half, you definitely cannot drink from it.

June 14th, 2012

Cleveland Indians - **5**

Cincinnati Reds - **12**

W: Jose Arredondo (4-1) L: Josh Tomlin (3-4)

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[BOXSCORE](#)

Perhaps the Indians just ran into a red-hot Reds team at the wrong time. It could be a plausible explanation for the offensive barrage, especially in this third and final game. They're a first place team that hasn't been showing any sort of consistency in their offensive production, still kind of waiting for things to click.

And it looks like [it just all clicked at the wrong time](#) for the Indians, because they started this road trip out with two series wins against last year's AL Central winner and last year's World Series winner.

"That's not the way you wanted to finish a road trip," Indians manager Manny Acta said. "But, you've got to give them credit. They beat us on both sides of the ball. Their starters pretty much held our offense down and then they out-hit us, too."

You win some you lose some, that's the motto. You just don't want to lose all of them if you can help it. It would have been nice to take one, but I think ultimately you accept the fact that the Reds just found their groove and move on. You can't let the second place (say whaaaat) Pirates come into Cleveland now and do the same thing. Look no further in submitting to what the Reds did as finding their groove than what Josh Tomlin had to say about his outing.

"I felt like everything I was throwing up there, they were hitting," said Tomlin, who yielded six runs on 10 hits over four innings. "The pitches out of the zone that I was trying to get bad contact with, they were just letting them go. Other than that, everything I threw over the plate, they hit."

Exhibit A? The center field shot that Joey Votto hit for his home run in the first inning was a good pitch. Low and outside and he just clubbed it to dead center. There's nothing you can do about that, nothing at all other than throw him a ball and even then he still might have hit it. He's one of the best hitters in the game and when he's one, he's 10 times worse to face. It turned out to be a forgettable outing for Tomlin. He gave up six runs off 10 hits, which leads you to believe he got absolutely shelled seeing as they did it in four innings (three if you don't count the scoreless second). Hey, you know what. He did it and now his ERA is ballooning even higher. But I still have a lot of faith in Tomlin even though he's turned in two five or more run games this month after not having done that since the one ugly relief game against the Royals in April.

If anything, the ballpark he pitched in was not really one that suited his style either. He lets them get a ball up and he's pretty much done for. You throw in the fact that the entire lineup was completely locked in and you can forget it. Votto is hot, Phillips is always hot against the

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Indians, Ludwick and Frazier ended up swinging the bats. It just wasn't going to work for Tomlin on Thursday afternoon.

If you want a positive, it was great to see the return of **Shin-Soo Choo's** power stroke, leading off the game with a solo home run and added another one for good measure in the fifth inning off Mike Leake again. It was only the fourth and fifth homers of the year for Choo, so he's got some catching up to do to catch Kipnis, but I'd be a little cautious in my optimism.

Again, we're talking about a ballpark that is notorious for being a hitters park where home runs tend to fly out a little more often than anywhere else. Make no mistake about it all though, Choo could care less about the home runs unless it helped the team win the ballgame, which it could have, but it was simply not enough for what happened as the game progressed.

"You hit two homers. Good," Choo said. "But, for me and for everybody, when we lose, especially like in this situation, trying to catch first place, when you lose three games straight, that's not a good thing." Even if the power stroke is temporary, Choo is just doing his job regardless. He does not need to hit home runs, just continue to produce. If it wasn't for two games against St. Louis in which he was completely shutdown, your eyes would pop at his June numbers. Those two games were the only ones without a hit. It was only the second and third RBIs for him in June, but he's scored 13 runs off 17 hits. That's all in 12 games, so the production for him is way up. The home runs though? Those are nice little bonuses.

You can't be too disappointed how the road trip shook out overall given the circumstances of who you faced and when you faced them. You can only hope that when the lights are on at Progressive Field tonight for a showdown against state-neighbor Pittsburgh, the habits of this past series die hard and the team gets back on track.

One thing is for sure, the Pirates are dead last in runs scored, so the chances of them suddenly "getting into a groove" like the Reds seemed to do are few and far between. They'll probably crack the 200 run mark (last team to do so), probably, but if they crack 210, there's a problem.

Random Details...

'Dat Dude' was all over the place in this one, only improving his numbers against the only other professional team he's ever played for other than the Reds. In the three game set he went 8-for-13 with a pair of home runs and seven RBI and three runs scored. Brandon Phillips is now hitting .355 against the Indians in his career with nine home runs and 29 RBI. That's more RBI against any American League team and there's only six National League teams that he's knocked in more runs against. He loves facing the Indians.

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Michael Brantley continued his hitting streak, marking things up to 21, the most of any player in the majors this season. He just keeps marching on. He got the hit and with the game out of hand, Manny Acta took him out to get him a little bit of a break. Can't sit the guy on the streak. He's now six more hits away from erasing Casey Blake from our most recent memory banks as that is the net longest streak in recent Indians history.

Good to see Carlos Santana have a 'Santana-like' game with a hit and two walks, even knocking in a run. Getting him to be the Carlos-like presence we know he can be will do wonders for this lineup.

Start against the right-hander for Marson but he comes through with three hits, two off Leake and reliever Alfredo Simon gave up the other. He had five hits against right-handers coming into the game and six against left-handers.

Speaking of Marson, how about the bunk play that he got charged with an error on? I'm not saying Reds catcher Devin Mesoraco is cheap or was wrong, but what he did was cheap. I mean, heady and smart on his part, I'll give him that. But man that's a play that absolutely honks you off. The guy is caught, runs towards home and Marson chases him with the ball. He looks back and Marson tosses to third. As Mesoraco is re-routing to go back home, he pulls a cheap falling trick right into Marson and gets the call, awarded home.

In the end, it mattered none toward the final score or anything else, but don't even begin to tell me the umpires believed Lou Marson was deterring him from anything. He fell into Marson, there's no way he should be awarded home. Maybe the umpires have to call it, maybe they don't. If anything it's unfair that Marson gets charged with an error.

Not sure what to make of Scott Barnes' outing. We'll get to it in a second but just one out and giving up five runs? That's getting shelled.

[DUSTY VS DEREK]

I really am not sure what I can say about this Dusty Baker versus Derek Lowe feud. Quite

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frankly, I'm not sure **Derek Lowe** even knows what it's about. [Every time you ask him](#), he tells you to ask Dusty about it. All of what he had to say, in one big block of quoted text box for you to read.

"Dusty will deny it," Lowe said. "I have zero respect for the guy -- not that it matters. I imagine he'd say the same about me. You can go ask him. He'll deny it like he has no idea," Lowe said of Baker. "To say it didn't come from Dusty ... Mat Latos was with the San Diego Padres the last four years, he has no idea what's going on. Again, you can ask him and he'll say he doesn't know [anything] about it, like he always does. This goes back to my last year with the Dodgers. ... You can go ask [Baker] right now, and he'll say he has no idea what you're talking about. But just watch the game. Mat Latos has nothing to do with anything that has gone on. How would he know? Why in the [world] would you throw a 96 mph fastball, first pitch, inside to a pitcher? Ask him. They've been trying to do this for years," Lowe said of Baker, "but I always came up with men on base. It's the first time it came up with no one on base. That's why I was pointing at him, because I knew why it happened. He shook his finger like he had nothing to do with it. I guess Mat Latos just figured he'd hit me to lead off the fifth inning on his own." To speed you up if this is all crazy in your head like it is in mine, Lowe got pitched inside by Latos in an at-bat on Wednesday. Lowe immediately starts pointing to the dugout. Baker responds by giving him the Mutombo finger wag. What any of that means is still not known even after the explanation from Lowe. And

Dusty? Oh well, the reporters,

[as instructed asked Dusty about it](#)

and he didn't clarify anything much further, but didn't Lowe say that would happen?

"I'm not denying anything," Baker said. "I didn't order anybody to hit him, but I told [Latos] to buzz him and make him uncomfortable. That's what happened. You go ask him, since he made it public. Go ask him what he did," Baker said. "The word was that whatever he did and said, there was probably a good chance he was drinking at the ballpark at that time ... so he doesn't remember what he said or what he did, OK?" Baker went on to say that Mutombo didn't shake his finger don't mess with me. Latos got involved and said that Lowe is whining about it and if he wanted to hit him, he would have hit him.

So to summarize. Latos buzzes Lowe, Lowe points to Dusty, Dusty wags his finger, Reporters ask Lowe why, Lowe says to ask Dusty, Dusty says to ask Lowe, Lowe says he knows why and to ask Dusty why he ordered Latos to hit him, Dusty says he didn't order a hit but he ordered a buzz, Latos says he would have hit him if he wanted to, Lowe says something else, Manny Acta says he wants nothing to do with any of it.

And he's smart for it.

Lowe says, even though Dusty instructed the reporters to ask Lowe about it, he will not talk about it. Latos expands on the issue saying that Joey Votto was hit back in 2009.

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All I know is that Derek Lowe is pitching again next week when the two teams are back at it in Cleveland.

Quite frankly though... This is all childish. As you can see from the mockery I've made it out to be, its nothing but he did this, go ask him why. I know why, but I'm not going to tell you, he has to tell you. It's the equivalent of two brothers fighting over a fight.

And really, if this is over hitting Joey Votto, what's so secretive that you can't discuss it because, um, duh, you just did!? I'm beyond trying to figure this one out, just wake me when it's resolved or the Reds leave town. We're talking about two grown men (one way older than other too, which makes him look even more bad) having a a fight you usually see sixth graders have.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

How about Indians hitters hitting .333 (5-for-15) so far in interleague play? They'll have three more games in Houston so more pitchers hitting but I'd say that's pretty impressive for an AL squad. No CC Sabathia moon shots but Josh Tomlin hasn't missed a beat from his days at Texas Tech. he has two of the five hits.

You know who has one of those hits too? Reliever Esmil Rogers, who granted, has been playing National League ball for awhile just coming over from Colorado. Rogers however had two at-bats in 23 games with the Rockies and was 0-for-2 with a strikeout.

At this point, Rogers is pitching better than Tony Sipp and hitting better than Matt LaPorta, the man he ended up replacing on the active roster. I thought it would be Sipp, but the Indians must believe they must fix him in Cleveland and not Columbus. LaPorta [meanwhile gets the heave-ho](#) and it could be more permanent. The move to carry the extra arm in the bullpen is likely temporary though and it will probably be Scott Barnes that gets called back down to Triple-A at this point.

Rogers has already [gained some quick brownie points](#) with Acta and the staff.

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"That's a live arm," Indians manager Manny Acta said. "I've seen him in the past throw even harder than that before. The whole game knows he has a live arm. It's about him being consistent and taking advantage of opportunities and running away with it."

Rogers has been impressive in his two outings with the Tribe though, so that's encouraging to see him come right in and do well. He struck out four in the 2.2 innings he's pitched. Rogers says he is excited to be with the Indians and Ubaldo Jimenez even chimed in and said he's going to love getting out of Colorado. I'm not kidding.

I'm not kidding though, Josh Tomlin has just as many hits as Matt LaPorta. I wish I was making that up.

Jack Hannahan was 0-3 on Tuesday in his rehab start for the Captains and on Thursday he was 1-for-5 and played the entire nine innings at third base. He knocked in a run and struck out three times. If he can do it again tonight, play nine innings, the Indians will decide what to do next. Likely meaning they'll activate him.

Finally, congratulations to trainer Lonnie Soloff for being [named to the American League All-Star team](#). Hey, even trainers are All-Stars too. You know, even through Wedge and Shapiro's reign, and now Acta and Antonetti, Lonnie has been around. Nine years he's been in that dugout as the head trainer.

[TIGER WATCH]

Eh the Tigers won, Verlander pitched well, Spazverde probably danced, no one really cares about any of that. All I care about is seeing [Jeff Garlin tell the Tigers fans that they suck](#). That was pretty awesome.

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Nino has a blog that is protected by a statue of Luke Carlin. Give it a vist at [The Tribe Daily](#), or he might eat your face off.

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