

## Morning Rundown: Nastiest Masty of the Season Leads to Cincy Sweep

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Thursday, June 21 2012 8:03 AM - Last Updated Thursday, June 21 2012 8:09 AM

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Sweeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeep! Sweeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeep! That blasted Ohio Cup ain't going anywhere! If it even still exists!

**June 20th, 2012**

Cincinnati Reds - **1**

Cleveland Indians - **8**

W: Justin Masterson (4-6) L: Bronson Arroyo (3-5)

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

When you score eight runs and basically do so off three hits, you are doing something right.

After the first three innings, if I was **Justin Masterson**, I probably would have went off on my offense. One of the worst run support averages in all of baseball, that would be the main reason he was 4-5 going into last night's game.

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Perhaps he did just that because in the fourth, the offense finally got the picture.

In the first and third innings, Shin-Soo Choo lead both off with doubles. One hit accompanied him in both innings, but that rally was erased on a double play. In the second, with two outs, Johnny Damon and Lonnie Chisenhall singled before a Lou Marson strikeout.

And here...we...go...again...

Until Johnny Damon homered and the flood gates opened. Two walks would follow and Tuesday's hero Asdrubal Cabrera would do it again, a three run shot off Bronson Arroyo that just basically said "Here you go Justin."

Not that he needed it, because [Masterson was brilliant](#) . His most brilliant outing of the season and he is now in a groove. Watch out world.

*"When he's on, he's very tough," Reds manager Dusty Baker said. "He was on tonight. It was mostly fastballs and sinkers and some sliders and the occasional changeup. Mostly, it was his sinker. You could tell by the number of balls we hit into the ground."*

Manny Acta compared his sinker to a bowling ball.

And aside from an error and a groundout, the Reds could not touch Masterson. Giving up three hits, striking out nine, asserting his dominance all night. He even struck out the side in the ninth for an extra exclamation mark. He also had the groundball out working as Tomlin did, getting 13. And only three fly ball outs, he definitely was in control. Acta said that they feel as if he's back to the guy he was last year, which is great news for the Indians moving forward that they have their ace back on track.

Perhaps the biggest development is that the Indians FINALLY scored him some runs. As mentioned earlier they finally broke through in the fourth and honestly, it was long overdue.

*"We definitely want to score runs for everybody," Chisenhall said. "We want to play well, and we*

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*want them to pitch well. I don't know exactly how many runs he gets per game, but we can always do better.* ☐

Try 4.90 runs per game, which is AFTER last night's eight runs...

The final big hit came in the seventh off the bat of **Lonnie Chisenhall**, who produced a bases loaded double that cleared the bags. Three big hits, eight big runs. You can't get more precise than that. How about The Chiz Kid? With regular playing time, he's starting to produce. Since the Reds series in Cincy he's had a hit in all but two games he's played in and in this particular series he knocked in six runs.

Can't beat that last note.

### Random Details...

You have to mention that in addition to hitting the first home run that just broke the offense through their inability to knock in a run, Johnny Damon was on base four time. He scored two runs, had two hits, had two RBI and two walks. And two's the number as he is now over .200 on the season. Perhaps finally giving up on him was the key. He's hitting nearly .300 over the course of his past 16 games.

Credit where credit is due man. Manny Acta was asked about Damon in the post game presser and he named all the big hits he had over the past week or so. It's true, he has contributed lately with some big hits. You'd just like to see a little more consistency and he has a lot of the early time to make up for.

Not only due to the roll he is on, but his history against Arroyo in the past, no surprises seeing Choo start off strong with those two doubles. He hits over .500 against the slender right hander.

Everyone in the lineup though did have a hit, save for Lou Marson, but he did walk and call one

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splendid contest for Masterson on the mound. In addition to the runs they knocked in and hits they had, Choo, Damon, and Chisenhall were on base at least three times in the night.

And most importantly, the bullpen got a complete night off and they get another complete day off with today's off day. Nothing better than that.

### [RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Man do I feel like a dope. I went through and pointed out each specific awesome defensive play, linking to a video and using the word fantastic to describe just about each one.

And I forgot the best play of the entire night.

People are STILL talking about **Jack Hannahan's** stellar (and fantastic) play in which he fielded and threw a ball with a bat propelling towards him and eventually clipping him in the shin. Top play all around and now Jack is talking about it, describing it, solving the mysteries. Did he see the bat? Did it hurt? How come he didn't move like 99% of infielders would probably do?

*"Usually when there's a broken bat coming at you," Hannahan said, "one or the other will get there before, so you have time to get out of the way and get the ball, or get the ball and get out of the way. That was the first time I've really seen the bat and ball get to me at the same time. I saw them both coming, and I was just anchored in and really focused on the ball."*

I told Twitter that Hannahan would have likely let the bat hit him in the face as long as he was able to make the play. Usually a fielder would flinch, the guy didn't bat an eyelash, made the play, and even got hit.

That's why he's a Mannahan.

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Great news on the **Travis Hafner** recovery front. Right now, [he's ahead of schedule](#) , at least according to Manny Acta.

*"We're anticipating that he's probably going to be ahead of schedule," Acta said. "We don't have any timetable yet for any rehab or games."*

I find it odd that someone can be ahead of schedule, yet there is no timetable set for even a rehab process. I mean, technically since he's jogging, he's rehabbing, no? Ahhh I guess I'll just stop questioning and nod my head. That's super news, I hope he is ahead of schedule and is back before the All-Star break, instead of after it.

Finally a day off for **Jason Kipnis**, who hadn't really had one all year because the one start he didn't make, he ended up playing. Kipnis [deserved a day off](#) , and it was at a good time because he has been going through a rough patch in terms of hits. So a mental break is probably what this was more than anything.

*"It's nice to get a break," Kipnis said. "It'll be good to just clear the head and get away from the diamond for a little bit."*

And when the Indians give him the day off, they give him the day off, no working out, no batting practice, no nothing. Kip said that he didn't know what to do with himself. If you ask me, that's a baseball player and I love it.

Perhaps we should credit Michael Brantley for giving **Casey Kotchman** a lift. With him being on base as much as he is, the [guy hitting behind him](#) gets a lot of opportunities and he's making the most of them.

*"The RBIs end up being a by-product of the guys in front of you getting on base," Kotchman said. "Brantley's been on so much the last month. Fortunately, if you come up with guys on base, you want to make the most out of it."*

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He's had so many opportunities that if he wasn't hitting, we'd pretty much know he's been bad. But he hasn't, he's been coming up and getting some key hits that have produced. So, thanks Mikey.

Indians first round pick **Tyler Naquin** made his professional debut [for the Scrappers in their 2-1 victory](#) last night. The outfielder was 3-for-4 with a double in the second spot in the lineup.

### [TIGER WATCH]

Old buddy Jake Westbrook did us a favor, holding the Tigs to five hits in an complete game of his own in St. Louis' big 3-1 win. It stops them dead in their tracks and puts them three games out of first with the Royals hot on their trail. The White Sox blanked the Cubbies though, keeping them just a half game back. That will stay with both the Indians and Sox off today, but the Tigers can either pull within 2.5 games or fall back 3.5 depending on the outcome of their game with the Cardinals today.

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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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