



The Indians have now lost five in a row thanks a 5-4 series-ending defeat at the hands of the New York Yankees. The Indians are going through a lot of adversity right now and some of the leaders need to step up. They had plenty of chances today, but couldn't get enough breaks, even after Andy Pettitte left the game with a fractured ankle. It's a series to forget for the Indians and they better forget it in a hurry.

The first inning of the game started out about how you would expect it to. Andy Pettitte struck out the side, as Michael Brantley, Asdrubal Cabrera, and Jason Kipnis all took the walk of shame back to the Indians third base dugout. Pettitte looked sharp and was locating everything where he wanted to, working both corners of the plate.

Ubaldo Jimenez, for his part, navigated through the first inning without allowing a run. He walked Curtis Granderson to leave off the game and Granderson immediately stole second. After striking Nick Swisher out swinging, Alex Rodriguez drew a walk. With two on, Jimenez buckled down and got Robinson Cano swinging and Mark Teixeira popped out to end the threat.

In the second, the Indians picked up their first lead in the series and first lead since the fourth inning on Sunday. Carlos Santana reached on a Rodriguez throwing error that pulled Eric Chavez off the bag. Shelley Duncan snapped an 11-game RBI-less streak with a great piece of hitting, doubling to right center field. Unfortunately, the Indians could not execute small ball to get Duncan over and get him in. Casey Kotchman struck out, Lou Marson grounded out, sending Duncan to third. After Aaron Cunningham walked, he was picked off by Pettitte to end the inning.

Jimenez did exactly what was required of him in the second. He retired the Yankees in order and got the Indians right back to the plate. Both teams went down in order during the third, and the Indians did so again in the fourth, before the Yankees took the lead in the fourth. Cano singled with one out and moved to second on a two-out walk by Raul Ibanez. Chavez stayed on a Jimenez pitch and hit it to left center for a two-run double and the Indians were, again, trailing in the middle innings.

To their credit, the Indians battled back in the top half of the fifth. In the first bit of good luck for the Indians in a while, Kotchman rifled a breaking ball back up the middle that appeared to hit Pettitte in the ankle. Pettitte crumpled to the ground after taking a step toward the ball and was tended to by trainers. He convinced them to let him stay in the game, but after coming up limping on the first pitch to Marson, Pettitte exited the ballgame. Marson singled off reliever Cory Eppley and Cunningham executed a sacrifice bunt to put runners on second and third with one out. The Indians had the contact play on with Kotchman at third and he took off for home on a sharp ground ball off the bat of Brantley against new pitcher, Clay Rapada. Chavez came up firing from first base and Kotchman, despite his best efforts to run over Russell Martin and knock the ball loose, was out easily at home. Cabrera picked up his teammate with a two-out RBI single and Kipnis followed with a RBI knock of his own to put the Tribe back on top, 3-2. The Yankees again went to the bullpen to bring out ageless Freddy Garcia who struck Jose Lopez out swinging to end the inning.

Again, Jimenez did what was required of him in the bottom of the fifth. The Indians went down in a hurry in the sixth and then Jimenez gave the lead back. A-Rod inside-outed a double down the right field line to start the inning. Jimenez got ahead of Cano 0-2 and then brushed him back with a fastball. Cano, guessing that Jimenez would go with a breaking ball away, stayed on a changeup off the outside corner and hit it out for an opposite field two-run homer. Jimenez finished the inning, but the damage was done. His final line for the game was six innings pitched, allowing four runs on just four hits, struck out seven, but walked four.

The Indians couldn't answer in the seventh and went to Joe Smith in relief for the bottom half. Smith recorded a couple of punchouts and got the Indians back to the plate for the eighth. David Robertson entered for the Yankees, one of the best setup men in baseball, and plowed right through the Indians 2-3-4 hitters.

Vinnie Pestano gave up a rare run in the eighth. It proved to be extremely costly. Nothing was hit overly hard in the inning, but three singles, one with one out and two with two outs plated a

run when Eric Chavez drove in Mark Teixeira. The Indians trailed 5-3 heading to the ninth.

The ninth inning used to be automatic at Yankee Stadium. Mariano Rivera, perhaps the best closer in the history of baseball, made a career out of throwing one pitch, breaking bats and breaking spirits in the ninth. Rafael Soriano has been pretty darn good himself, not allowing a home run to date and blowing only one save.

The Indians nearly made that two. Lonnie Chisenhall pinch hit for Carlos Santana to lead off the ninth and singled. Choo walked, batting in Duncan's spot when he replaced him for defense in the sixth. After Kotchman flew out to left, Marson singled to load the bases. Johnny Damon pinch hit for Cunningham and struck out swinging. Brantley drew a bases-loaded walk to bring the Indians within one, but Cabrera harmlessly flew out to left to end the ballgame.

With the sweep, the Indians drop to .500 on the season at 37-37. With the White Sox bombing the Twins, the Indians are now 2.5 games back in the Central Division. Ubaldo Jimenez pitched rather well, making just two mistakes, but was saddled with his sixth defeat of the season. Freddy Garcia was named the winning pitcher with 2.1 scoreless innings.

Stat of the Day: On this road trip, the Indians are 8-for-44 with runners in scoring position. That's a .182 average. If you're wondering why they can't score runs, that's why.

Player of the Game: I'll go with Ubaldo Jimenez here. He really made only one mistake, and it honestly wasn't that bad of a pitch. Cano's two-run homer was a big turning point in the game, but it's not like Jimenez threw a meatball.

Tomorrow's Game: The Indians travel to Baltimore to open a four-game set with the rejuvenated Orioles. Zach McAllister returns to the rotation and will take on Wei-Yin Chen, a lefty who is 7-3 on the season.