



Everybody is in agreement that the ball carries extremely well at Camden Yards when it's warm outside. They were all proven correct on Thursday night. The Orioles and Indians combined for four home runs and all nine runs in the game came via the long ball. The Indians exploded for seven runs, after scoring just 11 during their five-game losing streak. The recap is actually full of happy thoughts tonight as the Indians snapped the skid on the strength of a 7-2 win.

After both Zach McAllister and Wei-Yin Chen traded zeroes in the first inning, the Indians got some offense from an unexpected source. Jose Lopez singled to lead off the inning and Michael Brantley followed with a walk. After Shelley Duncan popped up, Johnny Damon got a pitch to his liking, got it up into the humid air and drove it out to right center for a three-run homer. Since looking atrocious in May, when he was rushed to Cleveland and not really ready to play, Damon has hit .271 in June with three home runs.

Unlike those who have pitched before him for about the last month, McAllister kept the Orioles at bay until the fifth. McAllister had good, late life on his pitches, though he got away with some mistakes and scattered a few two-out hits over the first four innings. He ran into a little bit of trouble in the fourth. With two outs, Matt Wieters singled and stole second. He moved to third on an infield single by Wilson Betemit. But, McAllister, to his credit, buckled down and struck out Mark Reynolds to end the threat.

The Indians responded to that shot in the arm in the fifth. With two outs, Shin-Soo Choo hit just his third HR in the last three seasons off a left handed pitcher, that's a span of 388 at bats. Choo went with a high fastball and drove it to straightaway left field for a solo shot to extend the lead to 4-0.

Unfortunately, McAllister gave two back in the bottom half. Ryan Flaherty singled to lead off the inning, but was still stuck there with two outs. McAllister, as was his MO all day, had trouble finishing off the inning. He hung a 1-1 slider to J.J. Hardy who deposited it deep into the left field seats to cut the Indians lead in half at 4-2.

The Indians tried for some two-out magic of their own in the sixth. After Jason Kipnis and Lopez flew out, Brantley singled and Duncan walked, but Johnny Damon could not replicate his second inning success and popped out to end the threat. Manny Acta, with McAllister at 98 pitches, opted to keep him in the ballgame to try and push him through the sixth. McAllister gave it a valiant effort, getting the first two men out, but again couldn't finish off the inning, allowing a double to Wilson Betemit. Acta went to Joe Smith to face Mark Reynolds. Reynolds had a significantly better at bat than his first two, hitting the ball about 48 feet farther than he had in his two previous at bats. Smith came in a couple steps, fielded the ball, and lobbed it to first to end the inning.

McAllister's final line for the night was 5.2 innings pitched, allowing two runs on seven hits with six strikeouts and just one walk. He definitely served as an upgrade over what Jeanmar Gomez had done in his last few starts. For McAllister, the movement was good, the stuff was good, but the command in the strike zone was a little spotty. It'll be interesting to see what adjustments he makes before his next start against Tampa.

The Indians rode the momentum of Smitty getting out of the sixth inning jam and put the game away. Jack Hannahan flew out to the warning track in center to open the inning. Lou Marson took a perfect inside-out swing and doubled to right center. Choo, in the at bat following his home run, walked and Orioles manager Buck Showalter went to the bullpen. He took out the lefty Chen and brought in right hander Luis Ayala. He may be second-guessing that decision as Asdrubal Cabrera teed off on a majestic home run down the right field line for the Indians second three-run jack of the night. It pushed the lead to 7-2 and the Indians finally had some reasons to smile.

Smith worked a clean seventh and the Indians left the bases loaded in the eighth. Esmil Rogers came in and worked two perfect innings in the eighth and ninth, including a strikeout of Mark Reynolds to end the ballgame and stop the Indians five-game losing streak.

Zach McAllister moves to 2-1 with the victory and the Indians BEAT A LEFT HANDED PITCHER!! WOOOO!! sending Wei-Yin Chen to his fourth defeat of the season. The Indians also inched back above .500 at 38-37. Unfortunately, the White Sox picked up a come-from-behind 4-3 win over the Yankees, so the Indians didn't gain any ground.

Stat of the Night: Mentioned above, but Choo's HR off Chen was just his third home run against left handed pitching over the last three seasons. In his defense, he spent a bit of time hurt, but still.

Player of the Game: Let's go with Zach McAllister. The Indians needed a strong start and, though they scored seven runs, McAllister threw the ball well and pitched in a close ballgame the entire time he was in there.

Tomorrow's Game: The Indians will try their hand at this winning thing again, because it's a lot more fun than losing. Derek Lowe will take on Jake Arrieta at 7:05 p.m. in Baltimore.

It's a great note for me to go out on as I'll be out of town for the next week. Thomas Moore will recap the day games for you, but you'll have to wait for Nino Colla's Morning Rundown for the night games.