

Morning Rundown: The Baseball Wound Continues to Fester

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Sunday, August 05 2012 11:00 PM - Last Updated Wednesday, August 08 2012 11:01 AM



No more.... Just no more please.

August 7th, 2012

Minnesota Twins - 7

Cleveland Indians - 5

W: Tyler Robertson (1-0) L: Chris Perez (0-4) S: Glen Perkins (7)

[\[BOXSCORE\]](#)

Well it's good to see that the Indians have added that third factor to the way they are losing games. It had been pitching and hitting, and now, [for good measure, defense](#) !

Jason Kipnis' error in the seventh is one thing, it happened and it was bad and it was all his

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fault.

"When things are going bad, that's what happens," Acta said. "Kipnis has been our best infielder the whole season."

But a play like what happened to **Casey Kotchman** in the ninth that allowed the Twins to tie the game. It wasn't so much a bad play by Kotchman, but a bad bounce that he simply couldn't handle.

It's an error and always should be an error, but it's an unfortunate one.

It's an error that happens to a team who has lost 10-straight games and finally got something positive out of their pitching staff.

It's an error that happens to a team who is trying to break out of whatever dumb funk they seem to be in.

"He won't make any excuses," Smith said. "I just saw a replay. I've never seen a play like that in my life. The ball was foul, he tried to backhand it and it shoots back fair."

Of course Kotchman won't make any excuses cause he's damn good with the glove and he believes he should make every play. But even he is not immune to the bad winds that are sweeping through this ball club right now.

And again, not to make any excuses, **Chris Perez** wasn't hearing any of it. He still gave up the winning run and that's what mattered to him.

"After that play, it's still a tie game," said the closer. "We still have a chance to win, if I make

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some pitches to get out of it. That's the bottom line. I'm not making pitches."

At the end of number 11, it was, as Manny Acta put it, the two things that the Indians did have going for them all season, their defense and their bullpen, that caused this loss. It's probably the first time in the streak that you can blame those two entities together, but the way things are going, it was only a matter of time before the disease spread to those parts of the body.

The other two components, the one's that have been failing. They did the job for the first time in 10 games. Corey Kluber came out and pitched so well. The offense came out and scored early and gave the Indians a healthy lead that was added on to late.

But then by a bloop here, a double there, a few errors mixed in, the score crept closer and eventually, 11 is in the books.

And now the Indians have hit rock-bottom. This streak now matches the one from 2009 and with one more game, will match an even longer one that is the most losses ever from...1931. Yikes. Can they really lose 12 straight? Probably.

Will they finally have enough of it? Hey, they did what they could in this one. As Acta said, they played their hearts out. They did everything they needed to do to win the game. It isn't for a lack of effort that they lost this one. But remember what we talked about the past few days?

I wasn't being silly when I compared it to a disease a few paragraphs ago. This type of play is infectious and even if you are Casey Kotchman and think you are immune to it, the game will find a way to humble you. If it's a bad hop that causes you to make an error, then it's a bad hop that causes you to make an error. He wasn't lazy, he didn't make a bad play on the ball, he wasn't out of position. He simply was humbled by the bad and infectious baseball that is being played right now.

Josh Tomlin said that it's either going to take a well-pitched quality start by a starter or 10-runs from the offense to get out of this.

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It may take both because the Indians just got the well-pitched start and that didn't work.

It also may take an act of God at this point. Maybe lightning striking down a game-winning home run ball into the glove of Brantley in center so the Indians could record the out.

I'm not sure at this point if there's any energy left in the fan base, so you may all just collectively ask to be struck by lightning yourselves.

At this point it isn't about the Dolans, or Antonetti, or Acta, or anyone being fired or selling the team. It isn't about Choo or Perez or Hafner or Sizemore, and who shouldn't be brought back or traded or released.

It isn't about any of that. you can blame someone for the season and the collection of talent. You can blame someone for the way that talent is managed. You can blame the talent for their play. However you want to justify what has happened for the entirety of the season is your opinion, your way of explaining it.

These past 11 games cannot be blamed on anyone. You cannot justly fire or trade someone or tell the owners to sell the team because of it (more on that in a second). What this 11 games is about is a team, a fan base, a management group, collectively watching something really bad fester into something worse.

It's part of the reason I tell you not to go out and be rude or sarcastic towards whats going on. It's a reason that, I personally will not boo or say anything disparaging to Chris Perez on Twitter (that and I respect other people). This attitude only adds to the continued growing wound of this 11-game losing streak. The more and more we continue to act like this is the end of the world, the more and more this will spiral out of control.

The more and more the players think about what is happening and put themselves in situations where they may not be losing, but have the opportunity to lose, they'll lose.

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Right now, I think everyone knows the Indians are playing horrific baseball. No one knows more than the players that are playing that horrific baseball. But this continued culture of suck isn't helping matter. Collectively as a Cleveland Indians organization (with us fans included) have managed to fester this baseball wound into an open gash that teams are just coming by and feasting on.

It's like they're predators sensing the opportunity for easy dinner. They're taking advantage.

I'm not sure what it's going to take to end this all. But I know for one, right now, I'm done bemoaning it all because it only adds on to the sense of failure and humiliation.

Waiting for Next Year's TD [had probably one of the most compelling posts](#) I've read in awhile concerning the Indians. I find myself siding with a lot of the same thoughts he has and the original views he takes about the Dolans and the market and all that jazz. I pretty much align rather evenly with what he thinks.

So to see him pretty much make the call for the Dolans to sell the franchise, it's a bit of a shock. Am I ready for a culture change? I've been ready for one, but there's no changing the fan base in that aspect. But I think what he's getting at is different. Do I think that this is the direction the organization needs to start thinking about moving towards (or away from rather)? I'm not sure, that's a stance I'll need to internally think about and call when the season is over.

But TD's piece is so well put and reasoned. It provides me with a huge basis to start thinking and I need to start thinking, we all need to start thinking. Because even if the most hardest of the die-hards who had been believing in what was happening are starting to waver, I probably must follow suit in at least contemplating.

Boy this is going to be an interesting two months.

Random Details...

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Corey Kluber pitched one hell of a game. He only had three strikeouts, but he had two wicked ones of Justin Morneau and Josh Willingham later in his outing that made me realize something. Uh, the guy once struck out a ton of hitters in AA ball. And say what you want, but that's not only a tough level, but you strike out a lot of people, you must have something. He's got stuff and he showed it last night. He has the ability to be productive. I hope the Indians stick with him the rest of the season as an audition because they certainly lack any sort of other options for their rotation next year.

It's a shame they couldn't convert on his first major league win.

I mean the bullpen, for the most part did their job. It really was defense that was the root of it all. Sipp came in and even though he gave up a run, it was unearned and the reason that seventh inning unfolded the way it did was because several misplays by Asdrubal Cabrera and Kipnis. I will say that Cabrera woke up and made one heck of a play to end the inning and save the game from getting out of control right then and there. Only he delayed the inevitable.

It took Manny Acta to bring in Joe Smith to try and get outs and then when that didn't happen, he brought in another lefty, Chris Seddon to try and play matchup for the final out in the seventh. Of course that's when Cabrera's play at short happened so he got out of it, but Seddon must not be starting later this week, or maybe he is. At this point, Acta is just doing everything he can, including throwing a bunch of magnets at the refrigerator and hoping a few stick.

Shelley Duncan, caw.

He was technically 0-for-1, but Jason Kipnis did get on base twice and score twice. I'll say that is some progress in getting him back on track. More so than a few hits are because you know he's now at least up there looking for strikes to hit and not getting them, so he's being patient.

Tsuyoshi Nishioka (spell it without looking) ended up having the go-ahead sac-fly against Perez in the ninth. Hey, he can't buy a hit after just getting called up, so he might as well beat the Indians too in his own special way.

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[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

It's no longer #LopeyTime anywhere near Cleveland. Look I'm not gonna make any bones about it, I didn't like **Jose Lopez**. But I was quite shocked at the timing of their decision to cut the veteran infielder. Still, it needed to be done at any juncture because it's time to move on and give more opportunities to other people.

And he should have never been hitting cleanup, but whatever.

Lopez [was jettisoned for extra relief help](#) in the form of **Frank Herrmann**, who has the ability to give you an inning or more, and after the past few games, the Indians really needed the relief help, especially with a day game today and not having had the luxury of Josh Tomlin OR Esmil Rogers available last night.

Given his choice though, it sounds like Acta wasn't quite ready to part with Lopez. But whatever, he had to, so neh.

"Tough call. He's been very serviceable," Indians manager Manny Acta said of Lopez. "He was a very good teammate, and he has filled a role for us, but we had no choice. We had to do it. Our bullpen is just not in very good shape right now."

"So neh" is the type of analysis I'm sure you come here for and you will most likely get a little more of it the way the season is wearing on. So neh.

I saw Frank the Tank a few weeks ago in person at the Clippers game I went to and he was consistently hitting 96 on the gun in the stadium. Who knows if it was really 96 but it seemed to be really effective that night and Acta says that he's been working on a "spiked curve" to throw against lefties. I like the Harvard Man, hope he can find some more success this time around.

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I called out **Zach McAllister** after last night's stellar performance and salty body language after he continued to get pounded following the error that shouldn't have been. Acta [says it could present a problem](#), McAllister, who has the most unearned runs given up in the game, says he's trying to focus.

"It could [be an issue]," said Indians manager Manny Acta. "People have to be able to turn the page, especially when they're here. A guy makes an error, you've got to pick him up. That's what happens with the fielders, too. When a guy walks a guy, they make a play for him. Hopefully, that's not the case. We've seen that a couple of times, but he just didn't make good pitches at all."

"It's definitely frustrating for me. I'm not happy with it, especially being a guy that wants to pick up his teammates and has that type of pride in himself to pick guys up."

See, you say you pride yourself in being that guy, but so far, you haven't been that guy, so I don't know how you can pride yourself in being something you are not. I mean, I know what he really means, but so far, I'm not seeing it. In just a short time he's already given up a bevy of unearned runs and while they're runs that shouldn't be given up because he's doing his job, they're runs that are scoring because he's losing his focus. If you want to be a good pitcher in this game, you need to focus. How are you going to react to a playoff situation sir?

So that's there. He's a good pitcher, he's got some tools and he has the potential to be an option for this club going forward. But there's clearly some flaws there that need adjusting.

The Indians held out **Travis Hafner** for the second straight game, [deciding not to go with the DH](#) with an ailing back. The hope is he is ready today, but if not, you could see some evaluation done to him and if that's done, who the hell knows what they'll find. It's like digging in between the couch cushions, who the hell knows what you're going to pull out this time.

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That was a real weird analogy, but just another reason you come here right? Neh?

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Nino has a blog! Give it a vist at [The Tribe Daily](#) , or else Will Smith will drop down and erase your alien face memory.

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