



It was the Zach McAllister show as he and supporting actor Brent Lillibridge put on a terrific performance to beat the Red Sox 5-2 on Saturday night at Progressive Field. McAllister pitched eight fantastic innings and Lillibridge, against his former team, was just a triple shy of the cycle with two runs batted in and two runs scored. With the exception of some shoddy defense in the fourth inning, it was one of the most complete games that the Indians have played in quite some time.

Right from the start, it looked like McAllister and Red Sox starter Franklin Morales would be locked into a pitcher's duel. The first 15 hitters were retired in order, six of them via strikeouts, through the first two-and-a-half innings. Lillibridge ended the pitching perfection with his first home run of the season, a rocket into the left field bleachers on a 3-1 fastball right down the middle. It was Lillibridge's first home run since August 31, 2011. Lillibridge would, however, help to give a couple runs back to the Red Sox in the fourth.

Jacoby Ellsbury ended McAllister's flawless line with a double to left center field to lead off the top half of the fourth. Carl Crawford put down what was intended to be a sacrifice bunt, but wound up reaching first anyway. The bunt wasn't very good and went almost right back to McAllister. He pounced on it and looked towards third, where he would have easily retired Ellsbury, but Lillibridge was in no man's land and unable to take the throw. McAllister's throw to first was late and Crawford reached safely. The next batter, Dustin Pedroia, chopped a ground

ball to Lillibridge who looked the runner back and then got caught in-between. Ellsbury bluffed a move toward the plate long enough for Lillibridge to have no time to get either Crawford at second or Pedroia at first. Adrian Gonzalez followed with a two-run double high off the left field wall. McAllister, who has really struggled when his defense has let him down this season and has given up 18 unearned runs, toughened up and got out of the inning without further damage.

The Indians got a run back in the fifth. Michael Brantley walked and went to second on a balk by Morales. After advancing to third on a Shelley Duncan ground out, Brantley scored when Lillibridge smoked a single to center field. The Red Sox infield charged in expecting a squeeze play to be on, but Lillibridge got a belt high pitch and cranked it for a RBI knock.

In the sixth, Ellsbury's aggression may have cost the Red Sox a run. Ellsbury smashed another would-be double to left center field, but was thrown out at third when he tried to stretch it into a triple. The Indians caught a break because Brantley's overthrew the cut-off man, but Lillibridge made a lunging effort to slap the tag on Ellsbury, who bounced his helmet in disgust. Crawford grounded out, which would have sent Ellsbury to third, and Pedroia grounded out, which may have scored Ellsbury. In any event, the Indians dodged a bullet and took the lead in the bottom of the inning. The Tribe loaded the bases on a walk, a hit by pitch, a double steal, and an intentional walk. Brantley came to the plate and had a very unselfish plate appearance, lofting a fly ball to left to break the tie and put the Indians on top 3-2.

The Indians added single insurance runs in the seventh and eighth. Lillibridge kick-started the seventh with a leadoff hustle double to left center, taking advantage of Crawford's pathetic arm. After Casey Kotchman grounded out, Lou Marson executed a perfect suicide squeeze to put the Tribe ahead 4-2. In the eighth, Carlos Santana doubled with one out, went to third on a groundout, and scored on Ezequiel Carrera's slap single to left.

Chris Perez nailed down save #31 with an impressive ninth, going through the top of the Red Sox order allowing just a ground ball single to Pedroia. The real story of the night was Zach McAllister, who really bounced back after a couple of rough outings. He went eight innings and allowed just two runs on three hits, one of which was pretty much unearned, and struck out four. It was a great sign for McAllister, who could have come back out for the ninth at only 100 pitches, but Acta elected to use his closer.

With the win, the Tribe improved to 53-61. Zach McAllister picked up win #5 and the Indians beat a lefty!

**Stat of the Night:** The seventh inning squeeze play was the sixth successful squeeze bunt in Manny Acta's tenure as manager.

**Player of the Game:** With honorable mention to Brent Lillibridge, this has to go to Zach McAllister. Eight phenomenal innings and I, personally, wanted him to come back out for the ninth, especially after the extra insurance run. He was outstanding.

**Tomorrow's Game:** The Indians have a shot at taking three out of four with Corey Kluber on the mound against Jon Lester. Sunday matinee as usual with first pitch at 1:05.