

Morning Rundown: Bottom's Up In Rare Road Victory

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Sunday, August 12 2012 5:55 PM - Last Updated Tuesday, August 14 2012 9:18 AM



Ultimately what is funny about last night is that what I said yesterday morning actually played out. And it actually didn't even make me right, it also made me wrong.

August 13th, 2012

Cleveland Indians - **6**

Los Angeles Angels - **2**

W: Justin Masterson (9-10) L: C.J. Wilson (9-9) S: Chris Perez (32)

[\[BOXSCORE\]](#)

Full disclosure: I did not watch the game and will be unlikely to watch many of the upcoming ones as I currently do not own television service. So it's Hammy and highlights online for me.

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But I find it interesting that a day after I talked about the bottom of the lineup and how you won't win games unless you get good pitching, the Indians get good pitching and win the game.

The only thing is, the bottom of the lineup was directly responsible for the runs and how the Indians scored. Yeah Donald, Cabrera and a pinch-hit from Kipnis knocked in three, but Brent Lillibridge scored three runs on his own and knocked one in, Carrera scored one, Kotchman scored one and Marson scored one and knocked in one.

After Carrera replaced Duncan, the Indians bottom four of the lineup accounted for all the runs scored and two of them being knocked in. Marson was on base three times, add into the hits by the other three and that is eight times. Those four guys were on base eight times. They collectively went 6-for-11 with a pair of walks, two RBI and six runs scored. No strikeouts.

It's as if they were listening.

And let me tell you. If Brent Lillibridge really believes he's playing to prove something for next year, and if the Indians really hadn't thought about it, they will now.

The story is and should be **Justin Masterson**. But a day after I lambasted the fact that the lineup's bottom half would be responsible for very few runs, [they come out and account for all of them](#) and that's really nice.

Of course the other half of the equation is a good pitching performance and Justin Masterson delivered that when the Indians really needed it. He only went six, but he went six scoreless despite giving up six hits and three walks. He was never really in big trouble, but he walked the leadoff hitter in the first and third and except for the fourth, he had a runner on in every inning he pitched.

His biggest friends were the double play as he got a pair of them and Joe Smith in the seventh. As with nobody out and two on, Masterson gave way to Smitty and he retired the side without a run scoring.

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"I caught a couple breaks here and there," Masterson said. "It's always nice to get those double plays. A few were not the typical double plays -- a few line drives -- but I'm not going to complain about that."

"The key relief was Joe Smith," Acta said. "He did a fantastic job coming into that situation."

It's just one of those times where it looks like the starter has the opposing lineup's number, but that seems to always be the case for "Dustin" Masterson against the Angels. (As of this writing, MLB.com's Chelsea Janes, who wrote the game recap, called him Dustin.)

"Masterson matches up well against that lineup because they have a lot of right-handed hitters, and he's very effective against righties," Indians manager Manny Acta said. "His sinker coming into their hands, the slider going away from them ... he matches up well."

Masterson's ERA against the Angels is now 1.35 and that's in over 46 innings. Easily enough to say that he just feels good against the Angels. That's a great thing. won't complain. And if [he can use these last few starts](#) to build and build, that will be a great thing.

"In the last start I was able to get into a good spot and was able to carry it into this one," said Masterson, who struck out four, walked three and allowed six hits against the Angels. "The goal for me is to finish strong. If that happens, it will help the team to finish strong."

Again he doesn't seem consistent enough to be this team's ace. But he can be a really really good number two if this team can find someone to lead the rotation. Justin is a good pitcher when he's on and when he's on, he does things like what he did last night. The problem is he can have those games that even when he does not have his best stuff, he goes out and gets killed and doesn't even give the Indians a chance.

He not only gave the Indians a chance last night, he carried them.

Random Details...

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You may have forgot but that was a win on the road, which is the first win on the road since July 18th against the Tampa Bay Rays. It's been almost a month since the Indians won on the road.

Big opportunity for Esmil Rogers and he went ahead and put the Indians in a jam in the ninth inning. Luckily Chris Perez was on and he came right in and struck out the side. His 32nd save of the season marked his 100th career save.

Vinnie Pestano is [in front of friends and family](#) anytime he comes to the west coast and that was the case last night.

"It's always fun coming back home," Pestano said. "But it's always hectic with family and friends. ... Last year I had everybody here one game. But I've gotten a little smarter this year, I'm spreading them out over the course of the series this time."

So what you are saying is that we need to blame the relatives for him giving up a pair of runs and watching his 20 consecutive inning scoreless streak end.

He did get a hold though, his 32nd of the year to match Rage's save total. The number passes Rafael Betancourt's 31 holds, a team record for a single season. And hey, there's no shame in walking a good hitter like Mike Trout and giving up a home run to one of the best hitters in the game in Albert Pujols. I guess if it's going to end, it can end like that.

Jason Kipnis made his return to action, giving hope that he could be back starting later tonight. He of-course had the pinch hit sac-fly to knock in a run. His workout was enough for the Indians to make him available, but they chose not to start him yesterday.

Brent Lillibridge had his second career home run and all of a sudden that 110 pound twig has a power stroke and is hitting above .200. What are we going to do with this kid? Two home runs in three games, and another multi-hit game.

He plays all over the diamond and if he can hit consistently, not like 2-3 hits a game like he's done, but just a few hits here and there, he may actually prove to be useful going forward.

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Seriously without the bottom of the lineup, no win. Choo was a dismal 0-for-5 with three strikeouts and Santana had just a measly single. Brantley was also 0-for-4 on the evening.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

This will be the last of **Carlos Santana** in the outfield discussion, but the quote came up so I figured I'd use it. Santana [actually played outfield sooner back than you would have actually thought](#)

. Granted it was four years ago in 2008 with the Dodgers, but he did play three games in right field.

"Did you see him go after the first one? Backpedaling the whole way?" Acta said laughing. "It was interesting. ... Very athletic."

He made both his catches and did his job. He also used Ubaldo Jimenez's glove because he didn't really have one that would work in the outfield.

[The Indians made a trade on Monday](#) , getting rid of a minor league arm. They contributed to the interesting seasonal-path of left-handed reliever **J.C.**

Romero

. The former Cardinal (of this year) and Oriole (of this year) was sent back to Baltimore in exchange for minor leaguer

Carlos Rojas

.

Rojas is 28-years-old, and all the Indians traded was Romero, don't get excited. Romero was originally a member of the Cardinals this year before being cut. He was then signed by Baltimore, but never made it to the big leagues, so he split under the clause that lets him leave if he isn't on a major league roster. Well now the Orioles have a use for him as he is now a big leaguer again with the Indians traded him back to the Orioles.

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Romero had the ability to opt out on Wednesday and it wasn't looking like the Indians would be bringing him up to the major leagues any time soon, even if they needed it. It's time to get young guys in, not Romero. He'll help the Orioles in their pennant chase.

Rojas is barely mentionable. He's organizational filler, not really worth the time to look up to see if he's anything to get excited about. He'll go to one of the top affiliate and act as a backup.

Side note of the unmentionables: **Derek Lowe** pitched four scoreless innings for a save yesterday in the Yankees win. That son of a bahbaababaah.... Whatever dude.

The anticipation with **Roberto Hernandez's** start tomorrow is building. Bullpen catcher Francisco Morales says [that the mechanics look clean](#) and that the work he did some good work in the Dominican while he was held away.

"That's going to be uncharted waters for him, especially making his first start this late in the season," said new pitching coach Ruben Niebla, who saw Hernandez make one of his two starts at Class AAA Columbus. "But if he does what he's capable of doing -- throw strikes, sink the ball and throw sliders in the zone, he'll be fine."

Dave Miller, the bullpen catch says he is throwing strikes and that his sinker is still sinking. But he is also looking like someone who has a little bit more control. Now all of that is well and great and it sounds like Fausto may come back as a better pitcher, but it needs to translate into a game against big league hitting. If that doesn't take, then none of it matters.

Since he's had success and it isn't like it has been three years or anything since he's been around, the possibility of him going out there and finishing this year super strong and looking like a new guy is not out of the realm of possibilities.

And you have to think, Fausto is pitching for something. Not just the idea of getting another contract (or getting the Indians to pick up his option), but his pride. He is now pitching for himself. I still call him Fausto, and people in the media will still call him Fausto. But he is now

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pitching for Roberto Hernandez. He isn't pitching for Fausto Carmona, he's finally pitching for himself.

And with all that has went down. he may really want to prove that he is who he says he is.

If he can do that. Well that will be a big help to the Indians for one. But it will also be a great story for someone who really has had nothing but scrutiny since he's been a member of this organization.

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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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