Boy, the way things are going, we may have to start worrying about finishing last and shy of 70 wins, because loss 70 is quickly approaching and if this slide continues, they'll be at it by the end of this road trip. I know, what's the big deal? Fifth is the same as third and fourth, it isn't in contention and it isn't anything close to where the Indians want to be.

August 20th, 2012

Cleveland Indians - **3**

Seattle Mariners - **5**

W: Charlie Furbush (5-2) L: Joe Smith (7-4) S: Tom Wilhelmsen (18)

[BOXSCORE]

It's still no fun to finish last or well below expectations. Or well below a line that I don't think anyone thought the Indians would be finishing at given how they started this season.

It just puts into perspective the dismal slide they've gone into and how quickly things have broken down into pieces. I know I have never seen anything like this and what is going on right now is comparable to the early 2000's when this team was trying to rebuild. It was helpless at times, knowing you were watching a team that was just floundering around.

But those teams were different. Those teams did not have much talent. Not saying this one is super talented, but it has enough for this to not be something that should happen. Say what you want about the pitching that has been horrible, but we at least know that the five people in the rotation are capable of going out and winning at least one game here or there on any given night.

The offense has four of five guys who are capable of producing at a high level.

The bullpen has some great arms that can get the job done.

Yet here we sit, a sixth straight loss and the Indians are halfway to a streak that would topple the one they just got done working on. If this isn't agony, I never want to experience it.

"We don't even want to think about that," Indians starter Ubaldo Jimenez said. "We have to go out there every day, trying to execute, trying to hopefully get a win. You definitely don't want to put that in your mind that, 'Here we go again.'"

Too late Ubaldo, here we go again.

Now this wasn't really one you can blame on the starting pitching. Of course, because in a losing streak, it may start with one thing, like the starting pitching, but once it snowballs, the rest of the team starts to catch on and even when you get something good from the initial reasoning for a losing streak, something else gives out on you.

Like... the bullpen.

"It's a team effort," Acta said. "The pitching as a whole, we're allowing over six runs per game [on the road trip]. It's really hard to expect our guys to score seven or eight every single night. It's a team. We win as a team and lose as a team."

Jimenez gave up three earned in just shy of six and while Jimenez gave up the solo shot to Eric Thames that tied the game before he exited, **Tony Sipp** frosted the cake by giving up a two-run shot to Michael Saunders in the very next inning. And don't hold
Joe Smith
, who took the loss, out of the blame game as he put that other runner on to start the inning, which probably forced Acta to have to turn to Sipp in the first place and even if it didn't, still made the game a two-run game instead of a one-run game.

It's just how things like to go in this situation, with the way this team is playing. Even an opportunity to tie things up in the ninth will inevitably go awry and add to the frustration. The Indians get a Zeke Carrera double that puts Kotchman at third with one out. A wild pitch thrown by closer Tom Wilhelmsen bounces right back to Miguel Olivo. Okay only one run would have scored, but now you can tie the game rather easily.

Jason Kipnis' ground ball is a double play ball, but you just wonder what might have been.

This is just a team that can't really do the thing they need to do to win correctly. Some nights they do one thing right, like get a good starting pitching performance, or score a good amount of runs, but something else inevitably fails them in some way. Most nights it has been the starting pitching, but that seems to be a rare occasion.

"Ubaldo did a very nice job for us," Acta said. "Unfortunately, he gave up that home run to Thames there to allow them to tie the ballgame. He was very aggressive early in the game with his fastball. He pitched well. He gave us an opportunity to win."

Ubaldo Jimenez showed more of the good stuff Monday night as he was striking hitters out at a fantastic pace. He tallied eight on the evening compared to just one walk, but it was the home run ball that ended up getting him as all three runs scored because of them.

It is more like what Masterson said the other day. He really did get beat by two pitches because those two pitches that were hit over the fence made the difference. I'll take a start like that, even though it was an out shy of six frames, he did his part, he pitched well.

He gave the team an opportunity and they were tied when he exited, leading for most of the time when he was in there.

If you can't even hand it over to your bullpen and expect them to go at least an inning before giving something up, you know you are just simply in a bad way. A bad way that doesn't look to be ended with King Felix waiting in the wings.

Random Details...

Jason Kipnis called his 2-hit, 2-RBI night useless because the Indians didn't win, but it was nice to see him start to get out of that funk he's been in. He clubbed his 12th homer of the season and homered for the first time in over two months. June 17th against the Pirates was the last time the Kipper went deep. He'd really been struggling. It also was an entire month since he knocked in two runs in one game.

Asdrubal Cabrera also had two hits and knocked in a run, but the rest of that top/middle of the order struggled to produce anything. Santana doubled and walked, Brantley walked, but that was it and that is why your team ends up scoring just three runs.

Zeke Carrera though continues to scorch the ball, in addition to that ninth inning double, he scored a run and had two hits on the night. Just worth mentioning. Casey Kotchman was also on base twice, scoring a run as he had a hit in the ninth and a walk. I'm surprised the Indians have not yet moved him to someone who could use some extra defense and a first base bat off the bench.

With two more outs, Cody Allen is up to 13.2 scoreless innings of work to start his major league career. He notched the only other strikeout not tallied up by Jimenez.

We could get one guy to do it all as Michael Saunders did. He hit both of the two-run shots (all of the Mariners runs came off the home run ball by the way) to total four RBI on the night. If not for him or Eric Thames, the M's had no offense last night. The Indians can't even get that right now.

[RAGE AGAINST THE FANS]

Here we are again.

But this time instead of calling out the Indians fans, **Chris Perez** took it to the fans of another team and in my opinion, it was well deserved.

If you haven't seen it yet, or have chosen not to because of the foul language used , (caution on that link, video and text contains questionable content) let's just put it this way... Perez was egged on, goaded into getting into it with this particular fan and he responded in only the way you would expect Chris Perez would attack when he's corned by some guy spewing nonsense and berating him.

He gave him a piece of his mind and he defended himself all while dressing the fan down and unleashing a barrage of expletives and insults. Do I agree with the language he used or what he chose to say? No, not really. That's not me in anyway. But I have no problem with Perez fighting back against someone who he says has been bugging him for four years .

"He's been wearing me out for four [seasons]," Perez said. "I had enough. I'm not even playing a game. I'm shagging [fly balls]. I can understand if it's during the game. That's part of the game and stuff, and it wasn't just a random guy that I pointed him out and went over. It was the same guy. Four [seasons], just on me, on me, about everything. I get that some of it's playful and everything, but some of the stuff is not playful."

Does Perez have to use better judgement? Of course he does. He's not one to make the best heat of the moment decisions and he's paid for it with how he's treated by some fans and media. That will continue to be the case as long as he does things like this.

And when there's a plant like there was in this one, he's going to pay dearly. Obviously he probably had no clue what the guy was going to try and do by getting him to do that and get it on tape.

I personally, again, love the fact that he put this idiot in his place because there's a guy like this in ever ballpark for every team and they need put in their place. I just wish it wasn't caught on tape. It's kind of like Perez said that he doesn't regret it and that he wouldn't have done it had he known it would be on tape.

It's like, it's not cheating if you don't get caught. In a sense, it's not bad if you don't get caught on tape.

But he did get caught on tape and now he's going to have to pay the price for it. One member of the Ohio media, former ABJ writer Pat McManamon is calling for Perez to get suspended , not by the MLB, but by the Cleveland Indians.

He earned it by representing the Indians — the team, the organization and its fans — in a classless, boorish way with that "discussion" with the fan in Oakland.

Perez needs to hear the team's message, loud and clear.

What he did was vile and crude.

The Indians should never want a player representing them on the field, in uniform, the way Perez did.

Suspend him

I can understand McManamon's point of view and if the Indians really do value what their outlook is and think Perez has tarnished that outlook and has disgraced the Cleveland Indians franchise, they should suspended him.

And McManamon is right, Perez should have walked away. But he didn't and he went on to give that fan a piece of his mind and put him in his place for being an idiot. Again, if it's not on tape, we don't know about it and justice is served. But it was on tape and now Perez looks like the bad guy.

Maybe he is the bad guy. I like Perez. I like his attitude, I like his demeanor. It's going to get him in trouble sometimes and if the Indians want to hold onto him in the future, that is the price they're going to have to pay in addition to the "salary" Perez was asking the fan about.

Could Perez have handled the situation better and swallowed his pride? Yup. But that destructive instinct is what also makes Perez so intense on the mound and fixated on getting the job done. So it's something you have to live with or live without. In fact that is the choice the Indians are going to be faced with this offseason. Perez's status will be a topic of discussion for this front office, it probably already is, it probably already has been. They know what they have in him, a guy who can net you a good amount of saves and stabilize the back end of the bullpen.

They know that they also have a trade chip and someone who they believe can take over that role without much of a drop off, if any, and a much cheaper one. So the discussion about money

is there, the discussion about all of it is there.

But ultimately this is what it will come down to this offseason. Can the Indians continue to live with Chris Perez? Can they put up with what he'll bring to the table, both good and bad? That will be the question that they have to answer. They've got a lot of things to help them make their decisions, a lot of incidents to evaluate and decipher. We'll see where they go with it.

For now... Some people will stand behind Perez and some won't. I will stand behind him for standing up to that idiot fan and all the idiot fans like him. I don't condone his language and really wish it wasn't caught on tape, but it doesn't change my opinion of him or anything like that. I also don't have a problem with people who want to down him and criticize him. That's their right and in this instance, it isn't one that I will argue against.

Either way, on a light-hearted note... He's definitely just had his Kenny Powers moment, straight out of East Bound & Down. You're FNing out!

[RANDOM RUNDOWN}

Everybody is just in a slump eh? **Jack Hannahan** is just one of those players that the Indians have not gotten much from and part of the reason that they've regressed into what you see now. Early in the season, much like last year, they were finding ways to score runs and Jack Hannahan was a part of that. Hannahan doesn't have one specific theory as to what has gone wrong since then.

"It's a good question," Hannahan said. "That's what I've been working on. I think I've always been a player that, when I play consistently, I produce. When I came back from the [back] injury [in mid-June], I was in kind of a platoon situation where I'd play a couple days and sit a couple days. And when an offense doesn't produce like it should, you tend to try too hard. You start pressing. When I came back from my injury, I was hitting the ball hard, I was having good at-bats, I just wasn't getting hits. Whenever you do that, you tend to try harder, which is probably the worst thing you can do."

Yeahhhhh... Look I love Jack Hannahan. He's been a nice little find and despite what people may say, he's grown into a player who can swing the stick a little better than his numbers showed before he got here. Credit him for that. He's also great defensively. If there's a space for him next year, it would be nice to have him, but the Indians need to focus on their future at the position. They can no longer go forward with someone like Hannahan as their starter getting a majority of the playing time. A nice player and a luxury if you can work it out because of his glove, and possibly a starter if the Indians could get the pitching and the offensive production from other spots.

But that all has passed. The chance for Hannahan to start on this Indians team and be successful has passed and they now have to reconfigure how they do things.

Manny Acta will continue to use his deep bullpen and will consider making a change when they get home.

"There's a chance that, once we go through this series, we make changes," Acta said on Monday. "It all depends on the day-to-day [results]. This series could change things up, depending on how our bullpen is used."

Certainly though with Jimenez pitching into the sixth last night, things should be okay and as long as no position player is unable to contribute the Indians should be fine, but you could probably see a change made soon.

It's still a game of catch-up though as a lot of these bullpen arms have been seeing a lot of action due to how deep the starters have't been able to go.

The Indians are still missing one of their lefties and don't intend to get him back soon. I wouldn't be shocked if we see do not see **Rafael Perez** the rest of the season. The left-handed reliever with the rubber arm suffered yet another set-back in his latest rehab attempt. This time he injured his ankle, completely unrelated to why he was rehabbing in the first place. It's the reason he's been inactive since August 11th and it looks like his stint on the disabled list will continue and his return is as up in the air as anything.

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Nino has a blog! Give it a vist at The Tribe Daily , because his caught stealing percentage is higher than 12 percent.

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