Mercifully, Friday night marks the final game in the month of August for the Tribe as the Texas Rangers come to town. It's easily been one of the worst months in franchise history, as it started in the midst of a 11-game, featured a nine-game losing streak of its own, and put the Indians 21 games under .500. Here's a tale of the tape about how bad August has been for the Indians:

Record: 5-23 (one game pending)

Entered month seven games out of first; now 17.5 back

Runs scored: 93; 3.32 per game

Runs allowed: 174; 6.21 per game

Team batting: .233/.291/.353/.644; 218 hits, 202 strikeouts

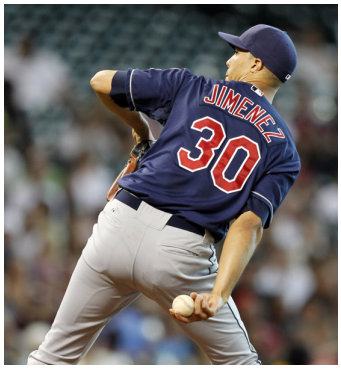
Team pitching: 5-23, 5.55 ERA, 1.525 WHIP, 37 HR allowed

Starting pitching: 5-16, 6.24 ERA, 1.62 WHIP, 28 HR allowed in 145.2 innings

Relief pitching: 0-7, 4.52 ERA, 1.38 WHIP, 9 HR allowed in 97.2 innings

That's not to say that September will be any better. It's certainly hard to believe that this series against the Texas Rangers will be any better. The Rangers are still in first place in the NL West and have won nine of 12. After a rough 9-14 July, they've bounced back in August to go 18-10 with just Friday's game left to go. The big difference has been their offense, which is batting .288 this month with an .810 OPS. That's just what Tribe pitchers needed to see.

Speaking of pitchers, here are the pitching matchups for this weekend set:



Friday August 31, 7:05 p.m. ET; Ryan Dempster (3-1, 5.46) v. Ubaldo Jimenez (9-13, 5.58)

Ryan Dempster hasn't fared overly well in his first five starts as an American Leaguer, giving up 22 runs in 31.1 innings of work. He was a trade deadline acquisition from the Cubs that was expected to be a major player in the Rangers rotation. Amazingly, Dempster's been worse in his two road starts than his three home starts. Dempster has held left handed batters to a .216 batting average and .629 OPS this season.

Ubaldo Jimenez. What more can be said about this guy. Since the All-Star break, Jimenez has bumped his ERA from 4.50 to 5.58 and has given up nine home runs in nine starts. In that span, he's 1-6 with a 7.93 ERA. On a team with little pitching talent at the Major League or high minor league levels, it has to be considered that Jimenez is pitching so badly that the Indians may not even pick up his 2013 option.

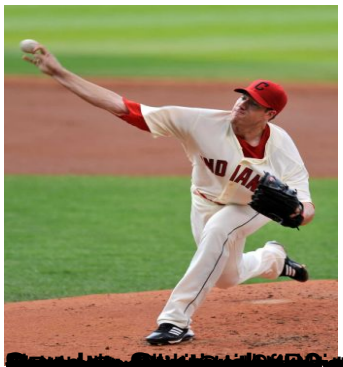
Dempster has faced the Indians three times in his career and is 1-0 with a 4.05 ERA. Of current Indians, however, Dempster has only faced Casey Kotchman and injured Travis Hafner. Jimenez is 1-0 in two starts with a 3.75 ERA against the Rangers. He's also been a much better pitcher at home, with a 3.54 ERA at Progressive Field compared to a 7.34 away from it.

Saturday September 1, 7:05 p.m. ET; Scott Feldman (6-10, 4.95) v. Roberto Hernandez (0-3, 7.53)

Scott Feldman has served as an innings eater for the Rangers this season. He's made 17 starts over 23 appearances and hasn't pitched all that well. He's given up 114 hits in 100 innings and 64 runs. The 6'7" righty had two promising starts to end the month of July holding the Red Sox and White Sox to just one run over 15 innings, but hasn't fared as well in August with a 5.40 ERA.

Roberto Hernandez left his last start with a mild right ankle sprain, so it remains to be seen if he will actually make this scheduled start. With rosters expanding, it's no guarantee that Chris Seddon would get a spot start if Hernandez cannot go. If Hernandez can go, he'll be looking for his first win with his real name. He gave up three runs in 2.1 innings in his last start before the ankle injury sidelined him. With that performance, he's now allowed 15 runs in 14.1 innings this season.

Feldman has faced the Indians 10 times in his career, but only three have been starts. He's pitched well against them in 31 innings with a 3.48 ERA. Lefties are batting 17 points lower than righties against Feldman in his career at .268. He's been brutal on the road with a 6.21 ERA in 42 innings this season. Hernandez will face Texas for the 13th time in his career and the numbers aren't good. In 67 innings, he's 2-8 with a 5.37 ERA.



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