I'm glad the White Sox only hit three solo home runs and not four. Just saying...

September 25th, 2012

Cleveland Indians - **4**

Chicago White Sox - **3**

W: Corey Kluber (2-4) L: Francisco Liriano (6-12) S: Chris Perez (37)

[BOXSCORE]

That is why walks will kill you in this game, especially against a team like Chicago who is not only built off the home run, but play in a park that caters to that.

They have seven players with 15 or more homers, five with 20 or more. If Jason Kipnis can hit another homer, the Indians will have four players with 15 and no one with 20, unless Santana hits two.

So when you hit the long ball, if you get those guys on base, you can dominate.

That's why five walks among the White Sox lineup is a good thing. Thankfully two of those came from Chris Perez in the ninth AFTER he already surrendered a home run to Paul Konerko.

You walk just one or two of those guys before those home runs and you are staring at a few more runs that you wouldn't have scored in this game.

If Adam Dunn didn't have two guys on base (one via the walk) on Monday, the Indians tie the game up in the ninth instead of only come within one. Walks will kill you against a team like Chicago. And thankfully the Indians were able to avoid that on Tuesday , or else they wouldn't have won.

Another impressive outing for **Corey Kluber** if I can say that. I know it doesn't look overly dominating, but again, he spread out those walks, he didn't let them hurt him with the two long-balls he gave up, both in the fifth. He went into the seventh and gave his team the opportunity to win and was rewarded with his second win.

"I think he grew a little as a pitcher today," Indians manager Manny Acta said. "That's what you're looking for right there."

I'm really impressed with how well he's pitched and adapted as of late. If you take away that fifth inning, he pitched a shutout, and six shutout innings is a job well done. Not to mention he did all of that on 86 pitches, which means if he can build off of that, he can be regularly counted on to be someone who will give you that depth, which is all you need out of a 4-5 pitcher in your rotation.

"I've seen him pitch like that a bunch of time this year in Columbus," Canzler said, "where he just kind of shuts teams down and uses all his pitches for strikes. It seemed like that's what he was doing today."

Go out, give me a chance to win and take me as deep into the ballgame as possible. Acta credited him for settling down after giving up the two home runs. He did a good job of putting the two mistakes he made out of his mind and settling that he made them, and that he didn't have to make anymore.

"He gave up those two homers and then just settled down," Acta said. "He showed some moxie."

He led perfectly into the back-end contention of Perez and Pestano, who were able to nail things down, not without drama of course. **Chris Perez** made an adventure of his first closing opportunity in what seems forever (even though it really isn't). His solo home run that he gave up to Konerko is frightening enough on the first pitch and then to walk two more people in the inning?

Talk about a Bob Wickman-like save. Perez did note that it was nice for Pestano to come in and get a chance to quickly redeem himself or Monday.

"As a reliever, that's what you want," Indians closer Chris Perez said. "I know he had a really bad taste in his mouth last night. As a reliever, the good ones, that's what you want, to come back the next day and get the same guys out. He did that."

And really the offense did all their damage in one inning, a three-run fourth that gave them a 4-0 lead. Coincidentally enough in talking about walks, they did it with two walks, one to start the frame and one to load the bases. From there, with one out, you can make a lot happen and a pair of two-out hits got the job done, which hasn't been the case as of late.

Then of course you add on the earlier homer by our little Crusticle Russ Canzler, and you have the difference. Not to mention Canzler had an excellent day overall with three hits and another

additional run scored in the bigger fourth inning.

Take your three solo home runs, as long as I have four total runs, all is good. And I don't care how you do it, as long as you do it.

Random Details...

Slowly but surely Carlos Santana's average is going up, another hit and a walk yesterday. Again better late that never, but that on-base percentage is really robust. I'll take him hitting .260 as long as he gets on base .100 percentage points more than he gets a hit and knocks in a lot of runs. That's what he's SUPPOSED to do as a middle of the order guy.

In opposition of Monday night with no hits with runners in scoring position, the Indians managed to get two. Where as the game on Monday they didn't necessarily need a few of those hits (although one or two would have won the game), they had no chance if someone didn't come through in those situations.

Brian Omogrosso and Nate Jones both struck out three hitters each in their 2.1 innings of work apiece. That's a little scary not just in your team striking out 10 times (with what Liriano did) but if those are the guys the White Sox are starting to infuse into their bullpen.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

If it were all about pitching, **Roberto Hernandez** would be pitching in the rotation. The problem with his bothersome ankle is that he needs to field his position, which he can't effectively right now.

He'll go through a simulated game today to figure if he has the ability to do so.

"If we don't feel that it's good enough for us to let him pitch," Acta said, "he'll just have another simulated game or something and call it a season."

Really, we're talking about one contest. So if he pitches the simulated game, it basically means he gets one more start. It isn't much in the grand scheme of things, but the Indians really want it and are committed to playing the string out to see if it is possible.

He will throw three innings and go through some agility drills. If it will be enough for him to make a start, provided Fausto does pass those tests, will it be a useful start? Or will he go out there and get bombed in four innings and put the bullpen in a bad bind?

Not that it matters, because that isn't an issue, but my point is, what is the point?

He notched another home run yesterday, but **Russ Canzler** is still very much a work in progress at the Major League level. Not a bad thing in the least bit, better than Matt LaPorta of course.

"He's done a decent job for us," Indians manager Manny Acta said on Tuesday. "He's quiet at the plate. Yesterday, he used the whole field better -- obviously, hitting that ball out to the opposite field. You have to understand that some of these guys are trying to impress everybody here and prove that they belong here. He's done OK."

I'd agree with that assessment, but I think based off what he's done and the potential he may have in being that right-handed corner bat the Indians could really use, you have to give him more of an opportunity next year. He didn't win anything this September, in terms of a roster spot, but damn, he made a lot of valid points in his favor with his play. And... he doesn't look like crap. So there's that.

Canzler though, went opposite field with his homer on Monday, which is something that tells you he isn't pulling pitches. He isn't a LaPorta in that he just has some massive hole in his swing where he can't take a pitch the other way. So I like him and would like to see him get some sort of opportunity next year. He's earned that much. Not a guaranteed roster spot, but an

honest-to-God's chance at something.

I'm not worried about **Vinnie Pestano**. Mainly because Vinnie Pestano is worried about Vinnie Pestano and that's all the reassurance that one needs. He isn't someone who goes out there and throws his mitt on the field. He is someone who cares very deeply about the position he is in. That's why he seems absolutely crushed and frustrated at his numbers over the past few outings.

"For the past several weeks, I've been brutal by my standards," Pestano said. "I'm a perfectionist. If I can give up zero runs in a season, I'm going to try. To give up three-quarters of my runs in the last six weeks of the season, I don't know what I can attribute it to besides execution."

I'm pretty sure whatever he needs to get fixed, he'll get fixed. I'm not sure if this shows badly for him in some people's eyes as the closer next year if the Indians are to deal Chris Perez. But it doesn't in mine. He's built up a reputation around the league and Indians fans know what he's capable of. I think if anything this struggle is a good test for him. He now gets to find out what he's made of and if he can handle one of the biggest things a closer has to deal with.

Failing and coming back the next day.

He did it yesterday afternoon with his clean eighth inning and I'm sure he could do it as a closer in the ninth as well.

Michael Brantley missed another game on Tuesday and he'll probably miss today's contest as well. There will be a re-evaluation done on him prior to the game. I think you just see the Indians hold him out until they start the homestand.

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Nino has a blog! Give it a visit at The Tribe Daily , because Shin-Soo Choo will certainly be dancing 'Gangnam Style' somewhere there.

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