Byrd Feathered In 11-9 Loss

At least we don't have to worry about trying to win 161 in a row anymore.

The Cleveland Indians lost last night to the Seattle Mariners by a score of 11-9 in front of a sparse crowd at Jacobs Field. It was not a good night for GM Mark Shapiro's new additions as the trio of Paul Byrd, Jason Michaels, and Danny Graves all played a big part in the loss.

Paul Byrd (1-1) never looked comfortable against the Mariners, who he has dominated throughout his career, going 6-1 with a 1.46 ERA in 7 career starts. Byrd, a pitcher who lives on changing speeds and throwing strikes was unable to throw strikes and get ahead of hitters. Unable to make it out of the 4th inning, Byrd gave up 7 hits and 3 walks, leading to 6 runs for Seattle.

Mistakes on the basepaths didn't help either. With the chance to answer Seattle's first inning run, Jason Michaels coaxed a one out walk from Indian punching bag Gil Meche, and a single by Jhonny Peralta brought up the red hot Travis Hafner, who seemed certain to at least tie the game. That was until one of the strangest, most horrifying base running mistakes I have

ever seen. For some reason Manny, err Michaels, decided to take off a little early on a 3-2 pitch and got himself picked off. To make matters worse, Peralta decided to wander off first base far enough for the Mariners to throw back to first and double him up, completely taking the bat out of the one guys hands you do not want to ever take it out of. Later, in the fourth inning, another rally was killed when Casey Blake was picked off third base on a Grady Sizemore liner that bounced off the first base umpire. That was the type of night it was for the Indians.

After Byrd was sent to the showers, Manager Eric Wedge brought in Danny Graves, even though Jason Davis is here to be the long man in the bullpen. And it worked, for a few minutes. In the 6th inning, Graves allowed a solid single to a guy named Yuniesky Betancourt, surrendered a line drive single to Ichiro, and threw a wild pitch. Then he intentionally walks Raul Ibanez (good move), but is allowed to stay in the game to pitch to Richie Sexson (bad move). Sexson jumped on the first pitch from Graves for a grand slam, which extended the Seattle lead to 10-5.

The Tribe offense almost pulled off the comeback, thanks to another big day for Casey Blake. Blake went 3-4 to raise his average to .429 on the year. His 4 runs batted in, 2 of which came with 2 outs, kept the Indians alive. Travis Hafner hit his 6th home run of the year and went 2 for 4 with 2 runs and 2 RBI. Peralta, Brousard, and Belliard also chimed in with multiple hit games.

In the final game of the series tonight at the Jake, the Indians face Mariners phenom prospect Felix Hernandez. Jason Johnson takes the hill for the Tribe, as they try to start the season with three straight series wins.