We saw old Carlos Carrasco make an appearance. A good four innings after the new Carlos Carrasco was cruising through a potent Texas lineup with a 3-0 lead.

June 2nd, 2011

Texas Rangers - **7**

Cleveland Indians - **4**

W: Michael Kirkman (1-0) L: Carlos Carrasco (4-3) S: Neftali Feliz (12)

[BOXSCORE]

This is a game you want to have. You return home, winning your last two on the road against Toronto. Just having flexed your offensive muscle. You have someone like **Carlos Carrasco** on the mound, who's pitched well in his last few starts. And you are facing Texas' spot starter, Dave Bush on short notice.

And for four innings, everything went according to plan. The offense put up a quick three-spot in the second inning. It was a thing of beauty, with station to station baseball and fundamental, get the runners over, get them in.

And Carrasco... Man Carrasco was cruising. He had thrown very few pitches and had looked to be taking this one deep the way he was dealing. Aside from a walk and a single in the third, there was nothing to hint disaster was on the fron t for Car².

"We had a three-run lead," Acta said. "I felt that probably could've gotten us to the bullpen territory and given us a chance to win the ballgame."

Perhaps that is why Acta looked dejected after the game. Because if you haven't figured it out by now, the Indians lost this one.

Disaster was on the front.. And in the fifth things started to fall a part. A ho-hum run scored on a ground out after a Nelson Cruz double, so Carrasco just needed to get one more out to get out of things. But then he gave up a single, a stolen base, a walk, then two more singles to let a pair of runs score. And it was a new ball game.

That isn't really a disaster, but what would follow in the sixth was. With Chavez's at-bat, it continued that inning. There was no one on base and all Carrasco had to do was get one more out, but the inning continued and perhaps created the opening for "Old" Carrasco to come back.

Old Carrasco is rattled easily and lets a little thing like an Endy Chavez single get to him for much more than it should. Things snowball and that is exactly what happened in this one. I had

thought "Old" Carrasco was gone, but apparently there are still traces of him floating around in the spirit world.

But back to the sixth inning, which wasn't all his fault. Acta said the Indians didn't play the game the right way in the two aspects they had been playing very well in. We talked about component one, the pitching, but the defense really had a head-shaking moment in the sixth as well.

After a groundout by Adrian Beltre, Nelson Cruz started off the Rangers' attack with yet another double. Mitch Moreland followed with a single and then... **Matt LaPorta** decided he forgot how to play defense after Moreland forgot how to run the bases. In the battle of forgetfulness, LaPorta would win, or would that be he lost? Either way, Moreland started running to second with Cruz on third. Moreland was dead to rights if LaPorta just tossed the ball to Orlando Cabrera at first. But as he was chasing Moreland, he thought he saw Nelson Cruz run.

He did see Nelson Cruz run, but Cruz stopped and went back. Perhaps decoying LaPorta to make him hesitate long enough for Moreland to get back. Or maybe he was thinking of running. Who knows, but it worked and LaPorta hesitated instead of throwing to first. Both runners were safe and it obviously led to more runs being scored. Sure, it wasn't really considered an error or a play that gave up outs, but it was a play that good teams need to make because it takes advantage of other team's mistakes.

Acta explains what LaPorta should have done.

"Get rid of the ball as quick as possible," Acta said. "If you get the guy hung up at third base, you should forget about the guy on first. Who cares about that guy? Just give up the ball and get [the guy at third]."

LaPorta didn't get rid of it quickly. He held onto the ball. That was his mistake. If Cabrera is at first, you throw to first immediately. Maybe Cruz does take off. That's great because then you have him pegged and end up with one runner at second, presumably.

Here's the whole thing. Matt is a decent first baseman in terms of the normal, run of the mill type

of plays. He is more than serviceable over there. The problem is when it gets into this tight situations where you need to be quick. He just hasn't learned all the situations and he doesn't have the instinct. Maybe that will come as he learns, but it's what separates average from above average. And in this one, it perhaps cost the Indians a little bit. Maybe not entirely, but it was definitely part of the problem.

Which continued to spiral out of control as another young defender made another mistake. It was 4-3 at this point and then the always crafty speedster Endy Chavez was involved again. Chavez triples and then ends up scoring when Santana, after retrieving a wild pitch, decided to fire over to third, completely disregarding the fact that Chavez retreated to third.

Of course Santana's throw went haywire and Chavez did go home, but he could have walked to home plate this time.

Just ugly. Acta went on to say that the defense didn't help, but the pitches weren't made. I personally would have probably gone to the bullpen after the fifth inning. Just based off the fact that Carrasco gave up two more runs with two outs and nobody on base in the fifth. That to me would have signaled that he was inching closer to disaster.

But of course... LaPorta's solo shot, which was nice to see.. Didn't matter much in the end. It brought the Tribe within two, but another unearned run in the ninth inning would make it a three run game, and despite a little hope with a Hannahan hit, the rally would fall incredibly short.

Random Details...

Really disappointed the Indians didn't take advantage of the fact there was a spot-starter on the mound, but you have to credit their bullpen. Michael Kirkman did give up that homer to LaPorta, but his previous two innings of scoreless baseball, and the two innings Bush threw after he gave up the three-spot were key in keeping an offense like Texas' in the game. They're never out if they are within even 7 or 8 runs. Certainly not out of something down three runs.

It makes it worse though when you give an offense like there's more of an opportunity that it

deserves.

A lot of hard-hit balls by the offense towards the end, especially in the ninth inning. It seemed like it just wasn't one of those nights after the fourth. Maybe the pitching set the tone, but I felt like a few of the balls the Indians hit towards the end were hit pretty hard, but they just found their way into gloves. I sort of fault the offense for not adding on, but I sort of don't because it isn't like they were awful.

That friggin Chavez... He singled on a bunt in the ninth inning to get that whole thing started. Then ended up scoring when Rafael Perez committed his second error in as many games. Things like that in those situations don't necessarily cost you anything in terms of the game, but just make it that more frustrating to watch.

Perhaps a reason for the lack of offense was the two guys at the top. Combined 0-10 with three strikeouts for Brantley and Cabrera. Can't have that and win many games.

Carlos Santana back in the cleanup spot was on base all four times. Two hits, two walks. Might it have something to do with the protection? Let's discuss...

[THAT'S AN ORDER]

What you witnessed last night was what you may be witnessing for some time in terms of a batting order. **Carlos Santana** was moved back to the cleanup spot after just a short week out of it. He was backed up by **Grady Sizemore**, who was once again at the DH spot to give his legs a break from playing all those games on turf.

Sizemore will likely be staying in the five hole for the time being, which is something that I called for when he first came back. Acta says with Hafner out, there needs to be a little bit of a thump and they can afford to move him from the leadoff spot like they did last year.

And the move for Santana works, because it isn't so much where he's hitting, but who's hitting around him. We've touched up on this, but by having Sizemore hit fifth, Santana gets some protection as the cleanup hitter. This is an alignment that points to the odds working out very well in the Indians favor in terms of production. I'm glad Acta decided to go in this direction.

And as Acta likes to say, outs are the most important and Santana does in fact give up very few outs.

"There's not such a big difference between fifth and fourth," Acta said. "What's the difference? That you can call the fourth cleanup and you can't call the fifth cleanup? It's no big deal."

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Travis Hafner will be resuming baseball activities today provided the workouts he went through yesterday went good. Acta had what was likely the quote of the month in regards to Hafner picking up a bat.

"He's going to be introduced to a bat tomorrow," Acta said on Thursday. "'Nice to meet you. My name is Travis Hafner.' Then he's going to start doing dry swings."

Still no timetable or guesstimate as to when Hafner will be back or what his plan is. Way too early in that process anyway.

The ninth inning in Kansas City we we're talking about yesterday from 2005 is visually available . Thanks to statmastasibs on Twitter for digging it up. It was Chip Ambres, not Emil Brown, who made the error. My mistake, all those fifth outfielders for KC run together.

It's also nice to hear John Saunders' voice, before he started sounding boring and old.

I was officially credited by Justin Germano on the creation of Bullpen Mafia. I'm not demanding any royalties.

Speaking of the Mafia, **Chris Perez** did a very funny interview that you can watch. It contains some curse words, so enter at your own discretion. But this is truly Pure Rage unplugged, so I feel as if you are seeing the most genuine version of Perez yet. It's also damn funny.

Shin-Soo Choo was ranked as the 50th best player in Major League Baseball by the SportingNews in their latest edition. Asdrubal Cabrera snagged a mention as one of the five "On the Horizon" players.

[RAFAEL PEREZ TWEET WATCH]

After committing two errors in a row, I think chances of Rafael Perez tweeting went from 1.5% to .001%.

Days Without a Tweet: 16

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