What happened to the Orioles that we beat two days in a row and had lost nine-straight?

July 17th, 2011

Cleveland Indians - **3**

Baltimore Orioles - **8**

W: Mark Hendrickson (1-0) L: Jeanmar Gomez (0-2)

[BOXSCORE]

What a disappointment to leave Baltimore with a 2-2 split, especially after starting out the series with two wins. This last loss here yesterday afternoon was just a battering one. It was just a punch in the mouth really. You go up three-nothing before it even starts. A quick spot in the first inning. A situation the Indians have thrived in, scoring first and coming out on top because they can get enough from the starter and then turn it over to the bullpen.

But that wasn't what happened. It was a punch in the mouth. The game ended up not going the Tribe's way, giving up eight unanswered runs, losing another outfielder, and seeing their injury replacement starter give it away towards the end of his start .

And here comes the "fight through this" type comments from Manny Acta. It's cliche, but it's true. The Indians just need to power through it, especially with a double-header tomorrow, which will continue their week of eight games in seven days.

"These guys have done a very good job of staying afloat, fighting and holding their ground," Indians manager Manny Acta said. "Hey, nobody said it was going to be easy, and everybody has issues with their players. We're just going to have to fight through it."

It's incredible that the Indians essentially got beat by the other team's bullpen. Atkins went out after three. It's the way you draw it up if you are the Indians. You get five out of **Jeanmar Gomez** and possible go to the bullpen afterwards. But Gomez couldn't get through five without giving up a three-run home run to...Robert Andino?

Are...you...serious?

Gomez gives up the home run and then comes back out for the sixth, gets one more out and then gives up another bomb to Markakis. Gomez was close, but second time through the Orioles had him.

When all was said and done though, Gomez would only get one more out and give up three more runs. Robert Andino? Really? Two home runs all year now for the guy who's more of a defensive player than an offensive one. Not the guy you want to beat you really.

But back to the Orioles bullpen. Mitch Atkins goes out and is more like Mitch Talbot. Three innings and the bullpen is tasked to go the rest of the way and not give up any room and hope for the offense to get it going. The offense got it going, see Andino, and they really did what you wouldn't think they would be possible of. Hendrickson goes three, having probably the biggest effort in that bullpen performance.

It wasn't like they shut things down completely though. The Indians had just as many hits as Baltimore. They had more walks. They had more opportunities. Kind of a reversal of Saturday night. Only this time the Orioles got more clutch hits and actually got the win.

"We started very good offensively," Acta said. "But at the end of the day we left way too many guys on base. We got their starter by the third inning and only scored three runs off of him. We didn't do a very good job. We left an army of guys on the bases."

That's what did the Indians in. The formula was set up for them to do get the job done, regardless of what Gomez would do, as long as he didn't implode. And he didn't implode. He just let it get away. But the offense didn't come through. You could blame it on both parties, the job just didn't get done.

Random Details...

Carlos Santana is on absolute fire ladies and gentleman, doing what we've been waiting for him to do all season long. Since the beginning of July, he's hit four home runs, hit a pair of doubles and walked 11 times to the tune of a .404 on-base percentage. We knew what he was doing when he hit .212, but now he's hitting and walking and you see what he's really capable of. The power is nice too.

Speaking of hot, Nick Markakis? Is he available? No, but is he a human wrecking ball or what?

He was a terror to the Indians this weekend. He was 6-for-14 with a pair of home runs.

Carlos Carrasco turned in a win-worthy effort on Saturday if you ask me. He gave up three runs in seven innings and really that is a quality start plus an inning. He only walked a pair, struck out six. That's the solid Carrasco we've come to see. Hopefully that old Carrasco can stay pressed down.

The Indians almost got Carrasco off the hook with a comeback. It was a rather weird game offensively. They scored five runs, which was pretty good in the end, but not enough. They only had four hits though. It was a case of getting two of those hits when it counted the most, a double by Brantley in the sixth and a bases-clearing double in the ninth by Orlando Cabrera. Unfortunately they didn't have a third clutch hit in them.

Continuing to go back a little further, Friday was a win and it was probably a win that Josh Tomlin didn't earn, but certainly was in position to win with another five innings. Hey, that's baseball. Carrasco loses a game he probably shouldn't have, Tomlin wins one he probably shouldn't have. I'm sure he's glad to be out of Baltimore though. They just seem to be one of those parks that the ball flies out of.

And that's a bad mix for Tomlin, because he's prone to give up the long ball. But because he doesn't walk anyone, yet again he gets to minimize that damage. I'll take a pitcher like that on my staff every day and any day of the week. Even if he goes out there and wins a game he probably shouldn't. He's probably lost a few he shouldn't this year anyway.

The Joe Smith streaks came to an end at 19 straight scoreless innings and 27 appearances without an earned run. It was the third-most games in a single season since 1919 for an Indians pitcher and matched Jose Mesa's 1995 mark. Smitty is still having one fantastic year all-around. It's good to see him having success, because he's got the stuff. Like Acta said, not many submarine guys throw low to mid 90's. Usually submarine guys throw that way because they don't have the stuff or the fastball so they go for deception. Smith has the stuff and the added deception.

Another streak that came to an end on Thursday has to be pointed out in case you missed it. Justin Masterson had not surrendered a hit to 32 straight left-handed hitters until Nick Markakis

happened. And as we mentioned, Markakis is hotter than the weather outside in Northeast Ohio right now, so. Impressive, especially for someone who's biggest bugaboo was the left-handed hitter last season.

[RE-SIZED AGAIN]

How many times is **Grady Sizemore** going to hurt his knees? The answer for now is at least, three times in the matter of a year and a few months. Yesterday he exited in the first inning after he suffered yet another "knee contusion" to his right knee. Not the same knee that underwent microfracture surgery, but the same injury to the same knee that sidelined him for a few weeks.

"It's not the surgically-repaired knee," Acta said. "He had a quick turn around first base and it hurt him a little bit, so we took him out of the game. He's going to be examined [Monday] and we'll know more about it."

He was running around after to test himself, so who knows what the extent of this injury is, but could the knee be a little fragile because of the earlier injury? Should he take time off until it is 100% healed? It probably won't be this season. You can't really argue his productivity is worth sitting down, what are you going to do? Place Austin Kearns in there instead? No. So I think the Indians should probably just continue to do what they're doing with him. Let it heal to the point he can go at it again full bore and when the offseason comes, he'll just have to rest it again.

It's a shame that such a talented superstar is having his career augmented by knee injuries. But it's the way it goes when you have a player like Grady Sizemore who goes all-out, all-the-time. He's bound to get these bumps and bruises. Granted, it seems like these always happen on the base-paths and not in the outfield, but he takes the same mentality running around the bases. He goes full-on and all-in when he runs, so when he makes an awkward turn, or he goes sliding into a base, the impact is a little harsher.

Hopefully it isn't as bad as the knee contusion he had earlier this season and he can be right back in the lineup soon enough. But if not, Brantley of course will shift back over to center and we will be seeing even more of Austin Kearns and Travis Buck.

The Indians can't survive missing Hafner. Can survive somewhat missing Choo and can probably make due missing Choo and Sizemore as long as they have Hafner, Cabrera, and Santana. But can they survive the replacements for Choo and Sizemore? Not sure about that.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Ezequiel Carrera was called up with Mitch Talbot going on the disabled list, but it could be brief. Even though it was Shelley Duncan sent out to make room for Jeanmar Gomez on Sunday, a r oster spot is needed for
David Huff
to make a start tomorrow, and eventually Fausto Carmona in the second game.

Got all that?

Zeke Up, Talbot DL, Duncan Down, Gomez Up, Zeke or Valbuena back Down, Huff Up, Carmona Off DL, Huff back Down.

Good?

The Indians have selected Huff to make the start on Monday, which will be just a spot-start. Still, it is a chance for David to prove he's come a long way from last season.

"He's been pitching very well," Acta said. "He deserves to come up. He's made some adjustments down there and they're happy with the progress that he has made. We still believe in this guy."

Zach McAllister was lined up to start Monday as well, but I think after his opportunity went a little rough a few weeks ago, it makes sense to give David his chance. He too has had a good

season for Columbus. And who knows, the taste of the big leagues might re-ignite a fire in him.

Huff will start the first game and then probably get called back down so Carmona can get activated to start the second one. It could be Zeke getting sent back down, with Buck or Kearns as outfield backups. But with the injury to Grady Sizemore, it could keep him around and a corresponding move may not be needed (if Sizemore is DL-bound).

As Acta says with **Shelley Duncan** though, it's simply a numbers game . I'm sure Hawkman will be back.

Much was made over **Lonnie Chisenhall** in Friday's game not sliding. Not once, but twice, Chisenhall failed to slide into a base. First it was at second on what was a close play, and then going back to third base. I think in one instance, the one at second, he was scared of the tag coming in and hitting him in the face.

While I think the one at third he was simply lacking the fundamentals. It was a botch and more of a quick reaction/not knowing the situation type of a deal. Either way, it didn't really hurt anyone, he wasn't thrown out and the Indians won the game, so no big deal.

What's up with his helmet extension though? It was something he was supposed to wear for six weeks and he got rid of it after one game. He is one tough son of a gun, but I have to wonder if he simply wasn't comfortable with it. Have you seen his eye though? It's completely red. It looks like something out of a coloring book where the kid colored in the eye the wrong color.

Injured starting pitchers update: **Mitch Talbot** will resume throwing regularly in a few days according to Manny Acta. Seeming even more like a "let's just DL him situation" now more than anything. Pretty quick turnaround for him to be throwing.

Alex White tossed 30 pitches in a bullpen session on Saturday.

"It feels good," said White, who went 1-0 with a 3.60 ERA in three starts for the Tribe before the injury. "There's some expected discomfort every now and then, but not when I'm throwing. It feels great when I'm throwing."

He was also caught sleeping on the couch by Chris Perez. I'd say play a prank on him like they should for a rookie, but he's injured, so. Be nice.

Drew Pomeranz made his Double-A debut with the Akron Aeros on Friday. It was a win for Akron, but he exited with the lead before five innings completed and he did not factor into the decision. No use in pushing it, especially coming off a crazy week for Pomeranz, who participated in the Future's Game last Sunday.

"I felt a little rusty in the beginning, just not throwing all that much during those days when we had the Futures Game," he said. "I got into a few deep counts, they fouled off a lot of balls.

"I wish I could've gone deeper into the game, but overall I was pretty happy with my performance. I threw a lot of pitches but only had one walk. For the most part, I threw all three pitches for strikes. It felt good to go out there and get that first Double-A start under my belt."

Pomeranz went an out short of five innings, giving up a solo home run, two other hits, and a walk in his effort. He also struck out five, two of those of Washington Nationals super prospect Bryce Harper, his teammate in the Future's Game.

Hey, the entire Akron team seems to be on Twitter now. Give a follow to Johnny Drennen , Connor Graham , and Adam Miller . Also on Twitter, Kinston pitchers Clayton Cook and Toru Murata , who's tweets are pretty much all boxes because he is from Japan. Google Chrome users can get it translated though and reading his translated tweets are highly entertaining, just in my

opinion.

Murata has a blog . Again, it's in Japanese, but why should that prevent me from sharing this information with you?

I would also like to share this Twitter list, of all 40 players in the Indians organization that are on twitter. Give it a follow if you don't feel like adding all 40 Tribe players to your timeline.

Speaking of sharing information, there's a cool site out there called Stadium Journey. If you've never seen it before, it's a collection of reviews on just about any stadium going. They have reviews on venues from any sport imaginable. It's quite an effort and something pretty cool if you're looking to find out about a particular stadium or ballpark and all the little things there.

You can check out their review on Progressive Field , but one of their newest reviews is of Classic Park in Eastlake
, home of the Captains.

"Classic Park keeps this simple formula in mind, adding flourishes while keeping it affordable. Your standard concessions windows offer your basic hot dog, nachos, Bud and Bud Light on tap, Coca-Cola products, perfect if you just want a beer and something your child is going to eat half of while screaming at players for a ball between bites. The food and soft drinks here are $5 or less, going along with the MiLB-wide mantra of 'family affordable entertainment.'"

[STAT OF THE DAY]

For your amusement the "Bullpen Mafia, Stat of the Day."

Only one bullpen has blown fewer saves in the American League than the Bullpen Mafia. The Tigers pen has only blown five with two more opportunities than the Indians, have blown six in 29 chances.

[RAFAEL PEREZ TWEET WATCH]

Nino's TV Reference of the Day: " Dwight Does Hannibal Lector " - *The Office*

Days Without a Tweet: 55