Pure...Anger... Pure...Rage! How could you not be angry?

July 19th, 2011

Cleveland Indians - **1**

Minnesota Twins - **2**

W: Glen Perkins (2-1) L: Chris Perez (2-5)

[BOXSCORE]

I'm trying to think of all the situations throughout the game that the Indians could have capitalized on to prevent what happened in the ninth inning of last night's game.

I mean, of course they could have had more hits and scored more runs. But namely the only real point in the game where the Indians were threatening was in the fifth when they scored their only run. Asdrubal Cabrera's sac-fly was the only run the Indians scored and this was after a long at-bat for Orlando Cabrera in which he ended up sending a weak fly to short. Santana would follow with a pop out to second. Opportunity to score more than just one run was wasted.

Other than the third inning when Marson was on third with two outs, there wasn't many legit run-scoring opportunities Some walks and singles here and there, but that was it.

Even the Twins had minimal opportunities and when they did, **Justin Masterson** was brilliant.

"The guys got a run up there," Masterson said. "I was just trying to get out there and limit anything that was taking place. Pound the heater, working in and out. I was able to be pretty successful with that."

Pretty successful? He wasn't just pretty successful, that was the only pitch he threw all night! It was like testing fate, although Masterson knew he had no chance of getting burned. Almost like a sick joke. Here's my fastball. It has movement and it's fast. Try and hit it!

They couldn't touch him all night with one pitch. Every pitch was getting pounded into the ground. He struck out six, didn't walk a hitter and barely got behind anyone. He had one single flyout the entire game. ONE! Everything else was groundball and strikeout. That's Masterson at his absolute best and he doesn't need any of his other pitches. Imagine if he can be on with all the other ones in one night?

According to Bastian, Masterson threw 54 fastballs and 44 two-seam fastballs (more of a sinker pitch, but still hitting the 90's). He threw one lone slider to Michael Cuddyer with a 1-0 count.

You have to feel good about when Manny Acta removed him. No use pushing the envelope in a one run game. Bring in your left-hander to do the job and get one more out so **Chris Perez** can come in.

Unfortunately, it wasn't Chris Perez's night. He got the first out and then that would be the only out.

And Perez, showed some of that Pure Rage we all know him for.

"I thought I made some good pitches to Mauer," Perez said. "One of the four that [the umpire] called balls is a strike to 95 percent of the league. But, that's baseball."

And in baseball you can also be into some really ironic situations. Including facing your former roommate and one of your best friends with the game on the line. If you follow Perez's exploits on Twitter, you know he has tons of Miami Hurricane pride and his roommate while at "The U" was Danny Valencia.

Of course. The two have talked in the past about facing each other, with Perez saying he has him all the time and Valencia can't touch his slider.

But whatever he touched last night, he touched for a win. Now let's back up for a second. He walks Mauer, gives up the hit to Cuddyer and then has to intentionally put on Jim Thome. Force at every base, don't let that guy beat you, perfectly fine.

But what cost the Indians may have been something, at the time, that didn't really look like it would ultimately impact the game. If you want to identify a moment in the game where the Indians might have been set up to lose, before the ninth inning even rolled around, it may not be a missed offensive opportunity.

It may have been something totally out of their control. It may have been Travis Buck being

plunked in the head with a pitch. As many outfielders as the Indians have had on their roster at one point this season, they actually ran out. Sizemore and Choo are down, and with Michael Brantley a late scratch due to a stomach ailment, the Indians had no backups for the outfield. The only one with additional experience was Matt LaPorta, in at DH for Travis Hafner, and Luis Valbuena, who has played a few games here and there in Columbus in the outfield.

Yikes.

So why is Luis Valbuena playing left field?

Probably because he's the only other one that can.

So is it really his fault that he got burned by Cuddyer on that double? Or that he let that blooping hit by Valencia fall in to win the game? Not entirely. It's frustrating, but you can't blame Acta for putting him in that situation, because he had no choice, and you certainly can't blame Valbuena for it, because he isn't accustomed to that spot.

I mean, if you want to blame someone, why not Francisco Liriano for plunking Buck square in the dome with a fastball? Well you can't really blame something like that on him, it wasn't intentional. But it's damn scary, especially after seeing Chisenhall get hit in that region just a few weeks ago.

So is that what cost the Indians? Did the fact that the Twins seemingly hit everything to left with a guy not used to the position out there get them a few extra bases here and there? Maybe. The point is though, Chris Perez lost it in the game and then after the game, throwing all sorts of stuff in the dugout.

More than anything, he was probably upset at the fact that he lost Masterson's fantastic effort.

"Obviously, I feel bad for Masterson," Perez said. "He pitched a heck of a game for us. He put

us in a position to stomp on their throats, and I gave it up."

I can only imagine Perez and Valencia's bed time discussion from last night. With Perez staying over his roommate's house last night, unless CFP pulled out last minute of the sleepover after the game-winning hit.

"You know Valbuena was in left field right? And that swing was totally weak? I still own you."

Or something, like that.

Random Details...

The Indians are down to few bodies right now in the outfield, which is so strange given the depth they've had at the position all season, at times having as many of six players capable of playing in the outfield. Now with the injuries to Choo and Grady, Buck being clonked on the head, and Brantley possible still unavailable due to his stomach issue, could the Indians turn to Matt LaPorta for today's afternoon tilt?

Or maybe come hell or high water, Michael Brantley is starting in the outfield, because we definitely cannot test Baby Louie in left for a whole nine innings.

The only extra-base hit of the night was by Michael Cuddyer in the ninth and even that was debatable in terms of it actually being extra-bases. Maybe the heat got to the hitters, because it certainly didn't bother the pitchers. In fact, it may have been a key to their success. Jake Westbrook used to thrive on the hot-muggy days because he says the conditions would give his ball some extra sink.

Perhaps that's why Fausto was successful too. For our rotation's sake, let's hope this weather continues, right? Right.

It's good to see them utilizing Ezeuqiel Carrera's speed. I like having someone in the lineup that is always a threat to steal and is always in motion. He got thrown out for the first time yesterday, but this is the type of game I was hoping Brantley would play. He can hit though, so it may be more needed for Zeke's style of play.

Travis Buck officially left the game with a head contusion. Appears to not be a concussion, which is good news, especially how dazed Buck looked after getting hit. You gotta feel for this guy. Career having been really impacted by injuries, gets injured in this way through no fault of his own.

[LET'S WAIT ON A DEAL]

Lot's of trade rumors are going to be swirling right now as the last few weeks of July run off the calender. Be cautious of what you read and hear. A lot of it is rumor mongering and "sources" tend to be just that, "sources."

It would appear though that two legit candidates that the Indians could really explore are Josh Willingham and Ryan Ludwick. We've discussed Ludwick in the past, but have not mentioned Oakland's Willingham up to this point.

Let me say this right now though. The Indians aren't going to acquire Matt Kemp, Hunter Pence, and I wouldn't count on Carlos Beltran either. Simply put, players like that are not only too rich for the Indians blood, it doesn't make fundamental sense to give up a prospect for a few years for those players. You really think the Indians are going to end up signing a Matt Kemp or a Hunter Pence to a long-term contract? They probably won't even sign Shin-Soo Choo to a long term deal, so why would they sign either of those guys?

Now that you've been prepared to not see a Pence or a Kemp come in via trade, still tread water with trade rumors very lightly
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"We're looking at all different opportunities to improve our team," Indians GM Chris Antonetti said. "We are not limiting ourselves."

And only like he can, perhaps Manny Acta says it the best.

"You can have all the Christmas lists and wishes and all that, but you need to have somebody that you can engage with."

The Indians won't trade their top prospects. That's Chisenhall, Pomeranz, White, and Kipnis. So that means they won't have a chance to land a Kemp or a Pence, because, even if those teams were looking to deal those players (Houston is not), it would take a king's ransom.

I even count out Beltran, because the Mets will likely want a top prospect, because they will prefer to pay Beltran's salary and get that better prospect in return. Something I don't think the Indians have an interest in doing.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

No news is potentially good news on **Grady Sizemore** and the MRI he underwent on Tuesday. That's because no damage was revealed and Manny Acta says that it may not be "anything as serious as we've might've feared." That is the good news. Of course, that's until bad news Lonnie Soloff gets in front of the media to tell us what's really going on.

Remember when the Indians wanted to speed **Fausto Carmona** up a few years ago? All part of rebuilding him. Well, he was going really slow on Monday and both Acta and Belcher, seeing that it was working, decided not to say anything .

I say, if he pitches well, he can take as long as Rafael Betancourt to deliver a pitch if he so

chooses. We aren't going anywhere!

"It does help him," Acta said. "What we want to make sure, is that he doesn't rush when he has the ball and is going to throw it. It's not so much in between pitches, but being able to hold the ball longer and just staying under control, instead of going forward too quick and flying open, and all that kind of stuff."

You know it's funny. The Indians do this all the time. They can say "We're not moving Talbot to the bullpen" until they are blue in the face. Then when the cavalry finally backs off, they end up doing what the masses want or at least clamor for. Now I'm not saying that there was a mass-movement to move Talbot to the bullpen recently. But the whole **Mitch Talbot** situation may work out without much notice.

Last night, Mitch tossed a scoreless sixth inning in the Clippers win . He struck out a pair and gave up a hit. But rather quietly, Manny Acta dropped the nugget that the Indians want to determine if Talbot is a realistic option in the bullpen.

In other words, Talbot, you've been demoted. In way, I think that's a stand-up thing for an organization to do. Instead of the embarrassment that comes with a public demotion or "We're removing Talbot from the rotation." The Indians just go about their business, say Talbot is injured (whether he was injured to the point of being placed on the disabled list is highly debatable, but he was injured), and a few days later, go through the motions of putting him on a rehab assignment. Only to say, yeah we're actually going to try him out in the bullpen.

We all knew this is what was happening. We've been talking about it for the past few days as every day, something new came about about Talbot. Yet, the Indians don't acknowledge it until it's so small and minute, it's a side note in one of Bastian's notebooks .

I can respect that. I really can. And who's it hurting? No one really. If anything, it's not making Talbot out to be some hack and they are treating him with respect and giving him an opportunity to redeem himself and remain on this team.

Just know this. Scott Barnes is hurt, David Huff is up with Cleveland. The Clippers have plenty of rotation spots with no one from Akron busting down the doors. They want Talbot in the bullpen.

[RAFAEL PEREZ TWEET WATCH]

Nino's TV Reference of the Day: " To Catch a Scalper " - *Sports Action Team*

There's a little-watched, little-known show what aired on late-night NBC a few years ago called Sports Action Team. It was like a television show about the anchors of a show sports highlight show. They had a lot of great athlete cameos.

This is their funniest bit. Watch their shows on Hulu, and thank me later.

Days Without a Tweet: 57

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You can follow Nino on Twitter @ TheTribeDaily where he tweets in defense of Chris Perez. You can also read more Morning Rundown and other features at his blog, The Tribe Daily
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