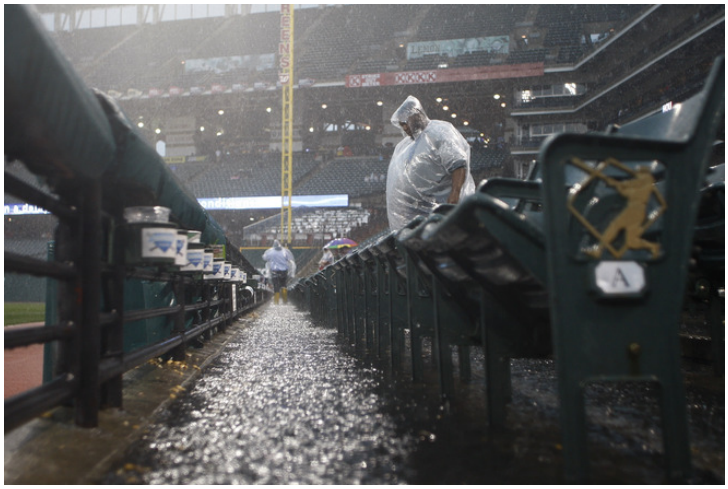

We found something to halt the Tribe and the roll they've been on other than Justin Verlander. Rain...

[RANDOM RAIN]

I'm sure the Indians and Twins didn't want yet another double header or another one of their off-days to be claimed by a make-up game (the two already made a game up as a part of a double-header once this season) but I'm sure the Indians would rather deal with that than having their second game in a week put up to their bullpen after two innings.

Granted, there is an off day today and September is coming up, but that's just that. So what if the Indians have to play 45 games in 44 days after today ? They'll have added help from their bullpen and bench players once rosters expand, making the team that much deeper. It's a lot easier to deal with than a second game being put up to the bullpen in just a matter of days.

The shame in all of it is the raw deal **David Huff** gets out of it all. He get's called down because of the Jimenez trade, which is understandable. But he was on a role in just a few starts. He deserved to be around. But as it goes, justice would prevail and Carlos Carrasco would hit the disabled list, opening up the opportunity for Huff to return.

But yet again, it seems as if there is a rain cloud following the man. He goes out, pitches two

very impressive innings, striking out four of six hitters, and the rain comes. You could see his frustration as the umpire waived the grounds crew on.

"I honestly felt like I had good stuff tonight," Huff said. "I felt good about tonight. To have the rain come in, it's just, I don't know. Oh, well."

It is just, I don't know. Oh, well. That's what it is. It's oh well. Huff won't be out there again until Saturday, but I'm sure if need be, since he didn't pitch all that much yesterday, he'll be available for an inning to get some side work in against Chicago.

What also sucks is that the Indians had a 1-0 lead and the offense had actually started out early. It was shaping up to be a sweep of a day and with Detroit losing, it could have cut the deficit to two games going into the day off.

Choo knocked in Zeke Carrera in the first inning, getting things off to a great start, and showing that the re-addition of Choo could potentially be a huge boost going forward. But of course, that won't count and neither will Huff's two innings of work.

To make room for Huff, the Indians already optioned **Shelley Duncan** out to Columbus. But with **Michael Brantley** out of the lineup once again, Duncan could be re-added here tomorrow if Brantley needs to hit the disabled list. If there is an injury, the club is allowed to re-call someone they just optioned out and by-pass the 10-day rule.

"If by then the medicine hasn't kicked in and he's not ready to play," Acta said, "then we're probably going to have to make a decision."

A plus, even though Brantley may be disabled list bound, is that **Jason Kipnis** has essentially had a nice mini-break by A) not missing Sunday's game officially, getting the day off on Saturday, and also getting his day off today on Monday. Kipnis has been dealing with right side soreness

. Acta is hopeful the rest for Kipnis works out, but he also is hoping it's enough for Brantley to be ready to go.

The rotation headed up for the Chicago series will look like this... Ubaldo and Floyd on Tuesday, Carmona, and Buerhle on Wednesday (uh oh Carmona against the Sox), and Masterson against Humber. So you got the Indians three big guns going in this series, lined up perfectly to get things done and perhaps dispatch the White Sox away from this Central race. Should be an interesting series. Let's hope the rain didn't cool the them off.

This is the stretch the Indians are facing from here on out in August. They've got just one off-day in September on the 12th, with a make-up game against Seattle on the 19th, a double-header against Chicago the day after on the 20th and likely now a double-header later that week against the Twins when they come in for the last time this season. The Twins and Indians share September 12th as a common off-day, but it could be a real pain for the Indians to have to travel from Chicago, to Cleveland for one day, to Texas, and to Minnesota all in the span of five days.

August

3 @ Chicago, 3 @ Detroit

4 Vs Seattle, Off Day, 3 Vs Royals, 4 Vs Athletics

A pretty cool link passed on by White Sox writer JJ Stankevitz. It has the probable starters and opponents winning percentage for all three AL Central teams in the fight for the division. I see Verlander's name a couple times on the Indians side, with one of those on the final day of the season. Eheeeee, hope that's not the case.

As the spreadsheet notes, the White Sox are utilizing a six man rotation and have the most days off. The Indians of course have a few double-headers scheduled. Detroit also has the lowest opponents winning percentage, but it's by mere percentage points.

The good news... Two series, two series wins this past week.

[INTRODUCING...]

Carrying on the theme of introducing some of the other lesser-known prospects since the Jimenez deal went down, every day we'll learn a little more about one of the prospects in the Indians system.

Nick Hagadone throws hard. He also has a really good slider. But that's the problem. Hagadone really only has two very good pitches. His fastball and his slider. That makes him an excellent reliever, but not really a starter, which is why the Indians have moved him to the bullpen this season. Hagadone is a recovering Tommy John victim and also a trade acquisition from the Victor Martinez deal a few season ago. He came over from Boston as the "crown jewel" of the trade, although Justin Masterson has turned out to be the main piece.

Hagadone still has a future possibility of moving back into the rotation, but until then he'ls doing well as a power arm in the Clippers bullpen. He dominated the Double-A level in 12 games earlier this season to the tune of a 1.59 ERA in 22 innings. He walked just seven and struck out 24. With Columbus he is 4-1 with a 3.15 ERA in 40 innings. He's struck out 43 with 12 walks.

He was a prime candidate to be traded from the Indians perspective because of the unknown involving his role. But the Indians have held on to him and decided to trade off their two top starters. Hagadone could eventually be a reason for parting with Pomeranz or White, but for now, he'll have to make his bones as a high-impact reliever at the back-end of bullpen and he could do it as soon as next month.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Mentioned that it was nice to see **Shin-Soo Choo** come through with that early RBI. I really think we might be seeing the 2010 Choo return i

n this return from the disabled list
, and that's a great things for the Indians.

I'm very intrigued to see how Acta is using Choo. He had him hitting lead-off in the return game and down in the two-hole on Satutday. I think it's a nice transition as Choo gets his timing back and they try to re-integrate him into the lineup. Thing is, the timing is already looking like it's back. Acta remarked after the game on Friday.

"I was pretty impressed the way he swung the bat last night," Indians manager Manny Acta said, "for a guy who only had six rehab at-bats."

Why wait longer? Glad Choo is back and next time he tells us he'll be back earlier than we all think, we should probably believe him. He is indeed a quick healer.

I'm not buying the knee rationale for **Carlos Santana**'s rough early start either, Manny.

If it had been Justin Masterson who lost his start again on Sunday, we might have seen some rotation shuffling. But no, it was David Huff and Acta says that he was okay with bringing Masterson back later in the week like he did.

Any closer is better when he's sharper. **Chris Perez** just needs to get repetition and consistent save opportunities and he'll be okay. That's not the easiest thing ever when save opportunities are dictated by the success of the team. As it was, he went a good month or so with just four save opportunities.

"Getting work, it just helps you with your location," he said. "Your slider is tighter, your fastball, your put-away pitches, what you need to do when guys are on base, they're there when you pitch two or three times in a row, or three or four times a week."

A lot more in the down stretch, right? Right.

After tomorrow, Drew Pomeranz will likely no longer be a member of the Cleveland Indians organization. After today, we also may have some more young Tribesman as the draft pick signing deadline is today. Over the weekend, the Indians inked infielder and 13th rounder **Zack MacPhee**
. After Kipnis and the long line of Arizona State players having success lately in the majors, MacPhee could be an intriguing sign.

Hey, Big Jimmy didn't get an opportunity to hit 200 in the park he's hit the most of his homers at. The Twins will be back later, but it's may be hard to believe that Jim Thome wont hit at least two more home runs by the time late September rolls around.

[RAFAEL PEREZ TWEET WATCH]

One of the things you'll get a lot of if you follow most of the minor leaguers on Twitter is the constant complaining they do about their bus trips.

And they have a right. Those bus trips are probably agonizing, especially since you do so many over the long course of a hot summer.

*10 minutes in I'm already bus sick, this is going to be a long night #nobueno - **Clayton Cook***

*12 hour bus ride back to A town... #lifeoftheminors - **Donnie Webb***

Then you find certain situations/players who find ways to make the bus rides worth it. I'm not really sure he'll be saying it at hour number five, but Adam Miller seemed pretty pumped about things.

*Street Fighter to start the 12 hr bus ride. Jean Claude Van Damme he's good!! - **Adam Miller***

Days Without a Tweet: 83

-

You can follow Nino on Twitter @ TheTribeDail y where he doesn't tweet about 12 hour bus rides! You can also read more Morning Rundown and other features at his blog, The Tribe Daily
.