I don't want to scare you, but the Cleveland Indians are 63-63 and six games back of first place. They are also a half of game ahead of Chicago. But you probably already knew that. Yesterday we had a little bit of doom, but thankfully, not quite disaster.

August 23rd, 2011

Seattle Mariners - **5**

Cleveland Indians - **7**

W: Chris Perez (3-6) L: Brandon League (1-5)

[BOXSCORE]

Seattle Mariners - **12**

Cleveland Indians - **7**

W: Anthony Vazquez (1-0) L: Zach McAllister (0-1) S: Jeff Grady (1)

[BOXSCORE]

You kind of needed that sweep. The Tigers have picked up the first two against Tampa Bay as the Indians have gone 1-2 since the sweep of Cleveland this weekend.

This is most definitely not good and things would be way worse if not for the heroic actions of **Shin-Soo Choo** in the first game. Special thanks to Mrs. Choo for letting him leave just a day after the birth of his third child, daughter Abigail. Just to give you an idea of how important that first win was, even Manny Acta, who has been preaching the "unless we are three games out with two games to play, we are not worried" mantra harder than anyone, said the game was needed.

"Really bad," Acta replied. "How bad can you put 'really bad' on camera. Really bad."

But now the Indians are six games out and it would have been worse if Choo didn't come up big and save the day, and Chris Perez's sanity. Perez said Choo bailed him out.

"I've faced him before," Choo said of League. "He throws a good hard sinker. So, with nobody on and runners on first and third, I tried to hit the ball hard somewhere. I tried quick swings, to start early and let good things happen."

Choo went on to say it was like a movie, having his daughter born and then hitting his first walk-off homer ever the next day. If Choo does what we and Manny Acta all know he can do, and that is carry this team offensively for the next month and a half, then it will be even more like a movie.

"We've got still over a month of baseball to play," Acta said. "He's a guy that can carry this ballclub for weeks. Right now with Travis out, and not having Brantley and Sizemore, it's a perfect time for him to pick us up a little bit."

It certainly is, especially if they are going to continue to get performances like the one from **Just in Masterson**
. What it is with this guy not getting wins? He could go nine innings of shutout baseball and probably still not get the win.

Masterson pitches into the ninth, something Acta had no problem with, even after he had thrown 117 pitches when all said and done and he gave up 10 hits. But he limited the walks, got seven punchouts, did his job. Unfortunately, after getting the first out, he let up two singles that prompted Acta to get Chris Perez to close it out.

Two on and one out isn't the most difficult situation to enter a ballgame in, but isn't the easiest by any means. Coming in knowing you have to pretty much not give up a hit or else the game is tied. A double would possibly allow them to take the lead.

And that is exactly what happened.

But again, thankfully, you had Choo. And Choo certainly gave his best effort in game number two of this double header. Unfortunately, **Zach McAllister**. Well. Yeah. This was set up real nice for the Indians. Their entire bullpen hadn't been used in the day game, where as the Mariners had used their closer and was throwing out Anthony Vazquez, someone who was making his major league debut.

Not saying someone throwing their major league debut is a disadvantage to McAllister, who was making only his second start, because well, they won the game, but it was set up for the Indians to do what they needed to do.

It came down to this for Acta in regards to McAllister's start. He didn't get ahead and the Mariners made him pay. He let a team that is weak offensively beat him up pretty bad. If anything, that is an embarrassing line for a rookie making his second start. This isn't Boston or even the Toronto team he faced in his debut. This was Seattle! And even against Toronto he just had control issues, throwing way too many pitches and his start wasn't so bad. It just wasn't long enough.

Against the Mariners, he got obliterated . He put the bullpen and the offense into a big hole, even though the Indians tried keeping up as best as they could.

"We got exactly what we didn't need -- another non-quality, short outing," Indians manager Manny Acta said.

But Acta, after winning and saying how badly the win was needed, switched back to the "I'm not worried" and "They are fighting," type quotes after the loss.

That isn't to say it isn't true, this team fought back and made this more of a game than it could have been by scoring seven runs.

But the second one hurts. It was a spot-start for both teams, so it makes it all the more important to win. You have to win those games. If you want to be a playoff team, these are the types of games that you don't need to win, but you SHOULD win. When you aren't winning the games you should win, then there is obviously not going to even be a need for winning the games you need to win.

And that's that.

Random Details...

Career day for Jack Hannahan in the night-cap. He had a career-high four hits.

It was a big day for Choo all around who is now back in the three hole where he really belongs. He belongs there if he's hitting like we know he can hit and he is certainly doing that lately. Choo had two home runs, a triple, a double, and five RBI between the two games. Talk about carrying.

Unfortunately, they walked him with the bases loaded in the sixth, that scored the seventh and final run for the Indians on the night. With a chance to hit, who knows, he could have done more damage than that.

Also a big day for Kosuke Fukudome, who not only hit his first home run as a member of the Tribe, he had five hits, three in the first and two in the second game. In case you were wondering, the home run celebration is "Take me down to FUKI Town." I know, I try.

And don't forget Zeke Carrera, who was also a two-three on the day. He had three hits in the first game as well, scoring a pair of runs, including starting that ninth inning off with a big double. Then he followed tha tup with two hits.

Bullpen combined in game two: 5.2 innings, two runs. That isn't bad if the other team isn't spotted ten runs to begin with.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Just because you assume that the Indians should be winning these games against Seattle, you shouldn't assume the win. Thankfully, the Indians don't take that attitude, as they have been in the shoes of the teams on the other side, not so long ago. That's a great mentality to have , but of course, none of it matters unless it's actually producing wins.

"We've been on the other side, where we were supposed to get beat later in the year and didn't," closer Chris Perez said. "Teams like this have got guys playing for next year, young guys getting called up and showing what they've got for the first time. I guarantee they don't care what their record is."

I didn't feel the earthquake. I know people who did. I know people in the same area as I was at that time that felt it. I did not. I did notice it knocked out the internet on Akron's campus for a little time though. That or the ensuing surging use of the internet because of the earthquake. Whatever the case, they felt it at Progressive Field and the press box certainly felt it as it shook.

Not aware of the earthquake either , the Indians dugout thought it was just fans jumping up and down.

And now your injury news... It looks like the Indians are looking at possible surgery options for **Travis Hafner**
and his sore right foot tendon. Lonnie Soloff indicated that surgery would sideline him for the rest of the season. The question is now, would rest/rehab get him back in time as well? This is actually an injury that occured way back in April, but just one thing Hafner has played through. Now it's not even playable.

"He was feeling good and then it just began to linger," Soloff said. "He was adamant about his desire to continue to play and support the team, and then he injured it again on Sunday in Detroit."

Soloff went on to say surgery would be an unknown at this point in terms of what would actually be done, just that it would take the rest of his season away. Soloff also seemed to indicate that regardless, he'd probably be headed for surgery after the season, where as before he would have just rehabbed the foot and given it the good old, rest and stay off of it.

Meanwhile, **Grady Sizemore** is staying optimistic about a return, but Soloff and the Indians aren't quite ready to commit to the timetable that Sizemore has in mind. Grady says he is ready to possibly go out on a rehab assignment this weekend. Soloff says that is simply a

self-evaluation and that there are still a lot of hurdles to clear before any of that is considered.

"We're going to re-evaluate him each day," Soloff said. "If all goes well and all checks out fine, we'll increase the intensity of his running activities as well as his baseball activities."

The injuries may be frustrating, but you have to appreciate the heart this guy has. It is admirable to see him continue to get beat down and beat down, yet still try and come back every time as quickly as possible. He knows what is at stake and he knows that a lot of people are frustrated. So you can only imagine how frustrated he is that he can't contribute like we all know he can.

Congratulations go out to the Columbus Clippers for clinching the West Division crown of the International League. They now can set their sights on defending both the International League Title, the Governor's cup, and the Overall Triple-A National Championship.

WFNY with the audio from Tom Hamilton's walk-off call. Love that Lazarus line. Love it!

[RAFAEL PEREZ TWEET WATCH]

Thank you Johnny Drennen for providing this picture of Akron Aeros catcher Chun Chen planking on a Home Depot shopping cart.

@Wegz33 @bmills504 @fedheems Chun Chen #planking in Bowie yfrog.com/khw1ftj

Days Without a Tweet: 92

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