So my life is significantly easier. If you know me, or if you remember some of the gibberish I was talking about last year when the season ended, you would know that I'm now pursuing my Masters Degree in Education. The last step towards getting into graduate school was taking the GRE and I did that on Saturday. This means I can now spend my evenings for what I really want to spend my evenings for. Going through every single nugget and note and boxscore of Cleveland Indians spring training. It's far less stressful than determining what is greater between Quantity A and Quantity B if $-2 < x < 2$.

[REDS 12 - INDIANS 7]

Recap

Holy moly was there some scoring in this one. The Reds jumped out to a 5-1 lead after two innings and continued to pile on. The Indians fought back with a three spot in the sixth, only to see the Reds come back and put four more up. It was a 0-2-1 start for the Indians in their first three games with the Reds.

Carlos Santana had the big hit with a three-run shot in the sixth inning.

Juan Diaz was 2-2 with a pair of RBI and a triple and Ryan Spilborghs scored a run and

knocked in a run as well.

Justin Masterson followed things up from Ubaldo's game with some roughness of his own. Masterson exited after recording an out in the second inning. Two runs of Masterson's scored after he exited, but he gave up six earned off five hits and three walks. Like Ubaldo, Masterson isn't worried, in fact he feels happy about it .

"Do you want a 1-10 scale? Zero to 100 percent?" Masterson said. "For the feel of it, we're about halfway there -- just nice and easy. It had some decent run today, and some didn't do what it was supposed to do. Overall, I'd say we're about halfway to having a good feel for it."

I honestly have no clue what the hell any of that means, but I'm assuming he knows what he's talking about. Masterson didn't throw anything other than a fastball. I didn't throw anything other than a forkball, but that's the usual stuff.

Zach McAllister quietly had himself two scoreless innings with three strikeouts, but he was facing many reserves, so... Dan Wheeler got crushed, giving up four earned in his inning and Tony Sipp walked three, which is kind of concerning more than anything. Getting hit okay, not having your control? Ehhh

Derek Lowe tossed two scoreless as well, and he really could care less about it and so could I.

"I love Spring Training, trying to evaluate two innings," Lowe joked while rolling his eyes. "Unbelievable. I felt there was a nice breeze -- a northeasternly breeze."

And we don't do this often, but Josh Judy pitched an inning for the Reds, giving up a pair of runs off a pair of hits. Judy is now with the Reds after being claimed off waivers in the offseason when the Indians tried to get him off the 40-man roster.

That morning there was also a 'B' Game played with the White Sox were Aaron Cunningham was 1-4 with an RBI and Matt LaPorta struck out twice. You know, ho-hum, you know.

[ROYALS 2 - INDIANS 3]

Recap

Shelley Duncan staked the Indians to a 3-0 lead in the third and that was really all they needed. The Royals came right back in the next half-inning with a two spot, but that was the final score. Duncan had two hits and walked.

Maybe he isn't that bench role player we thought he was. Maybe he's more? Maybe he was just coming out last season in the final month of the season and that he at least deserves another shot at a full-time opportunity.

"He's picking up right where he left off last year, so it was nice to see him again contribute," manager Manny Acta said. "We know that he's a bat that at any moment can pop one out. He's been valuable -- very valuable -- for us."

Or maybe he is just gotten hot and has had some good pitches to hit. We'll see as spring progresses because this battle is far from over. Duncan seems to be believing in himself though and that of course can carry someone far if they believe strong enough. You can't deny the great points Jordan Bastian made as well. Yeah he might hit .240, but if he can hit 25 home runs given regular playing time and do so from the lower half of the order? You take that, right? I certainly do.

Jason Donald played third, moved to short, then moved back to third and played the whole game in the leadoff spot. He and Aaron Cunningham both had hits while Zeke Carrera nabbed a hit and scored a run and a steal.

It was Kevin Slowey's turn today and he matched McAllister, Gomez, and Huff with two scoreless innings of his own. He did gave up four hits.

Vinnie Pestano walked two, but picked up a win with a scoreless inning. Guess the New Indian #2 Jeremy Accardo tossed a strikeout in his quest for a bullpen spot while Nick Hagadone did the same.

Chris Ray, not so much, two runs off two hits.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Such the smallest things are pinpointed on new-found success. Fausto Carmona moves over on the mound at the urging of Jose Lima, he does better. Asdrubal Cabrera starts swinging for the fences and he has a career year. Carlos Santana eliminates the toe-tap and he busts out of a hitting slump.

Jack Hannahan changes his bat size, for the bigger .

"It forced me to get my foot down earlier and get in a position to hit," Hannahan explained. "It just never really clicked before. I've always been told that, but it never really clicked until I got that heavy bat in my hands to really feel it. I knew what I had to do. I just wasn't doing it until I got that big bat in my hands."

Bigger bat led to a stronger finish, a stronger finish led to higher confidence for now. We talked about maybe Duncan being an option and maybe, just maybe Hannahan has upgraded his bat to him being a nice option at third. Yes he was just a one-tool player with the glove, but remember Casey Blake? The Indians got him at a point where he was regarded as fodder and he turned into a player.

Fausto Carmona has been keeping busy. The Indians have been keeping him busy

with a plan of attack and getting him some work in over at their academy in the Dominican. Acta says the Indians remain optimistic that he's going to come, but the question is when.

I honestly think it should be will he come. I think this is a lot more complex than him getting things resolved. If Leo Nunez is still stuck, why does anyone think Carmona will get his situation fixed anytime soon?

So we can keep talking about this, or we can keep talking about this. I'm cool either way.

I've not yet read "The Bullpen Gospels" by Dick Hayhurst, but I already downloaded it to my Kindle. Everyone says great things about it and Hayhurst and if I'm going to read his second book, "Out of My League" staring **Luke Carlin**, then, I have to read the first one.

Carlin is a big part of Out of My League because he was the roommate of Hayhurst in 2008 .

"He talked about some really cool things that fans might not see," Carlin said. "There's definitely the dynamics of the clubhouse, the travel, the thought process, the interaction with the coaches. He captured the things that you don't see as fans. Everybody thinks we've got it made here."

The bigger picture here is, aside from being very well versed (always posts a word of the day on Twitter) and a total badass (see this picture), Carlin does a lot of little things well for this team.

"I think that was one of the big reasons I signed back," Carlin said. "I knew that they wanted me. I have good relationships with the staff. It's nice to go somewhere that you know that you're wanted. I knew coming in that I'm not going to be an everyday guy in the big leagues. I was disappointed I didn't get an opportunity last year. That being said, I didn't have a great year last year, personally, on paper or whatever. But, last time I was in the big leagues, I performed and I produced. They've already seen me do it, and I'd expect that they think I can do it again."

I like Luke Carlin and he follows me on Twitter, so. Yeah, he's cool in my book and in Hayhurst's too.

A great story on Yahoo about what the Indians did for a young fan going through a very rare form of cancer. Kipnis, Pestano, Acta, and Antonetti met with 13-year-old Clayton Turner last week.

Injuries: Chris Perez threw from 60 feet, Rafael Perez 120 feet and throwing again soon. Grady Sizemore is back with the Indians in their complex.

Lou Marson is calling himself "The Second Catcher" instead of the backup catcher. Is that like Second Drink? You know when you are drinking something and the ice melts down and you now have a watered down version of your previous drink? Second Drink! Second Catcher!

In all seriousness. Lou isn't really a backup. He plays more than a standard backup.

"If you take a look at his numbers last year," said Indians manager Manny Acta, referring to Marson, "they don't go with the backup numbers games-wise or at-bats-wise. We feel fortunate to have a guy like Lou. That being said, he's still young and he still needs to continue to improve offensively."

And this season he may play even more if Santana plays more at first or at designated hitter. Marson can hit the lefties and really should continue to play the majority of his starts against them.

That now concludes the only time we'll ever talk about two backup catchers.

This picture is reportedly real . I know, right? I'm more shocked that he has a glove with his name on it.

[SHAMELESSNESS]

Friends of the blog Did the Tribe Win Last Night is nominated for Cleveland Magazine's most entertaining blog in Cleveland
. They're in a sports bracket with seven others and are the only Indians blog in there.

Whoa whoa whoa wait a second...

Most entertaining blog in Cleveland? From the site that brought you LOLTribe, and Guess the New Indian (last one? Jeremy Accardo, new one up now!), nicknames like Hawkman and Crusty Rusty... The place that started The Bullpen Mafia... If you are reading this on TCF and are unaware, I've been up to my anticts for quite some time on
this lovely blog right here
.

That blog wasn't nominated for this? What's a guy got to do to get some love?

I'll give my vote to Did the Tribe Win because A) They're the only Indians blog and B) Mike and his staff is actually good. But take notice Cleveland Magazine... This isn't over! I don't care if I have to unofficially label this place the Most Entertaining Blog in Cleveland Indians history, I'll do it. I'll do anything. If that requires five more Sal Fasano photoshopped Super Mario pictures or more Facebook reactions til you are sick of me, I'ma do it.

This isn't over Cleveland Magazine! I got my eye on you.

-

Nino has a blog and it's so entertaining it should be nominated for most entertaining blog

competitions. Give it a vist at The Tribe Daily .

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