So you know who is really good? Jered Weaver. Yeah he's pretty good. Like, probably one of the best.

July 2nd, 2012

Los Angeles Angels - **3**

Cleveland Indians - **0**

W: Jered Weaver (9-1) L: Ubaldo Jimenez (7-7) S: Scott Downs (7)

[BOXSCORE]

Regardless of how good he is though, the Indians had their opportunities. I ultimately can't blame them for losing a game like this though. It's Jered Weaver, hes lost once this year. He's never lost at Progressive Field. His ERA after that game at the park has to be well below 1.50 in eight starts. That's just ridiculous.

It pretty much comes down to this one being chalked up as facing a guy that simply is too good. Although I take away from it the chances that the Indians had, were a sign that despite

Weaver's toughness, this shutout was not because of total offensive ineptness. It wasn't one of those games that the offense just looked dead in the water. They had opportunities late, but Acta was disappointed overall with the approach .

"We didn't have a very good approach," Acta said. "Not to take anything away from Weaver, because he does this every five days against somebody in the big leagues, but I felt that we could've had a better approach early in the game. I just felt that we were swinging at his pitches, and too early in the count a lot of times. Too many quick outs. Yeah, he was throwing strikes, but still. We were rolling over a lot, and he just kept flipping offspeed stuff and we didn't make the adjustment."

They definitely didn't make Weaver work until late. He threw 107 pitches in seven innings. That was after a busy seventh and putting two runners on in the eighth. So of course he was efficient early. No one got past second base until the seventh. The only other inning before that that the Indians had two base runners was the sixth when Duncan walked but was erased on a double play and Choo singled before the inning was over.

At most the Indians had four at-bats in every inning until that seventh inning. So Weaver was very efficient in his work up until then.

Ultimately despite being down 2-0 and not having mustered much against a guy who's unbeatable in your own park, the Indians had a golden opportunity in the seventh that really makes this one sting worse.

He basically started to implode. The Indians started to go to the approach that makes them dangerous. They started laying back and spitting on whatever he was throwing. Two walks with Kipnis and Santana sandwiched the Brantley single and all of a sudden one swing could tie it up, give the Indians the lead, or even give them a two-run lead. All they needed was one hit from one of the next three individuals. Heck, even two sac-flies would have done the trick.

But you already know how the story goes. So why not hear the disappointment behind not coming through.

"He's a very good pitcher but, unfortunately, I let the team down," Damon said. "I was in a situation to -- worst case -- at least try to push across one right there. He gave me some pitches off the plate that I felt like I could drive to left, and I didn't."

All three of them, Damon, Kotchman, and Duncan let the team down. Duncan struck out on a pitch that was totally a ball. Three at-bats with a chance to score even just a single run and nothing. The trifecta of angst. Really three players that have caused the fan base a lot of grief this year. Damon is worthless, why did we add him. Kotchman can't hit a groundball out of the infield. Duncan is garbage, designate him.

And they all followed through on the angst they've received all year. It doesn't matter if they've all been hitting a lot better lately. They all failed in this situation against a good pitcher.

Some days you win, some days you don't. Let's not crucify those three. The Indians didn't do anything all game. So they get one shot to get things done at the end and if they don't get it done, we're going to kill them? Cant buy it.

The eighth was another story. Two singles to lead off the inning for Jack Hannahan and Shin-Soo Choo gave the Indians another golden opportunity. This time down 3-0 after the Angels pushed another run across, the game was still within reach though.

After that, Mike Scioscia knew his horse had run out of steam and brought in Scott Downs, who's been complete nails this season. And he's a left-hander to boot.

But just as Jered Weaver is good, if you want to kill Damon, Kotchman, and Duncan for their at-bats, please kill Asdrubal Cabrera as well. He takes an 88 mph two-steam for a ball then swings at the next one, something he isn't going to do anything with but beat into the dirt and does precisely that. What an awful at-bat for the All-Star. Completely unacceptable.

And from there, there's nothing else you can say. The game was over. Those were the two best opportunities the Indians had all game. Never mind how **Ubaldo Jimenez** pitched, because he pitched well. It doesn't matter. He isn't to blame for this. He did his part, the offense didn't. So

that's just what they'll have to live with, they ruined a good Ubaldo start.

"Ubaldo pitched well again," Acta said. "I like the way he's throwing. He's establishing his fastball and he's in the strike zone, and he doesn't have a lot of traffic out there like he did early in the year. I think he's [headed] in the right direction."

You'll see the four walks by Jimenez, eight hits, three runs and think it's so-so. But you know he pitched into that eighth and almost got out of it with three walks and two runs. He just reached the end of his line, but Acta left him out there to see if he could get out of it. Jimenez only walked one hitter until that eighth. He then intentionally gave Trumbo and Pujols passes before throwing four unintentional balls to Alberto Callaspo. Again, he just reached the end of his line. If anything he walked two hitters in the game. His other walk to Pujols came after he got two called strikes but simply couldn't put one of the best hitters in the game away. It will happen, but it led off the inning, so it really is a walk you can give.

It isn't a silly walk that gets you into hot water. It was against a good hitter after a tough at-bat.

He's a lot better. A lot lot better that he was earlier in the year. The control is clearly there. The fastballs are hitting 96 mph. He'll beat himself up for not getting Callaspo, but even I won't worry about that. He did his job as far as I'm concerned.

Random Details...

You know it, but with the dust settled, the Indians ended up 0-5 with runners in scoring position. Of course those five at bats all came in the seventh and eighth innings. So I guess it's better than being 0-for-0? The Angels were also 1-for-6, so again, Ubaldo came up big when he needed it.

Carlos Santana was back in the lineup and catching, going 1-for-3 with a walk. I honestly would have had him DH and put Marson behind the plate. Again, I'd be playing Marson at catcher with Hafner out at DH and giving Santana his at-bats elsewhere. And even when Hafner returns, more on that in a second, he's not playing every single day.

Cause I know you are concerned after I mentioned it earlier, Jered Weaver's updated stats at Progressive Field: 8 Starts, 5-0, 53.1 IP, 1.52 ERA (9 ER), 42/16 K/BB.

There's only four other parks he's started more games in. You guessed it, his home stadium and the three AL West parks. And of all the parks he has five starts in, there's no ERA lower than the one he has at Progressive Field. In fact the only park he has a lower ERA in is Wrigley Field, but that's just one start.

Brilliant move by Mike Scioscia with using Scott Downs for two innings. He pretty much got that double play and was unstoppable. With the Indians troubles against lefties, it was a strategically brilliant move to keep Downs in for the ninth, save his 'closer' for another day and watch Downs mow them down in the ninth for a two-inning save. He played the matchups and his hot hand in that one. This has been a strategy that some have been championing for in regards to handling a bullpen.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

Rain pushed Travis Hafner's rehab start back, as on Monday the Indians announced he'd play for the Clippers that night. Pronk was 0-for-4 in the contest, reaching base in a fifth at-bat after getting hit by a pitch. It is unclear what the Indians plan is right now.

"The rainout last night slowed down his rehab a little bit," Acta said Monday. "We're anticipating we're going to activate him on this homestand. I just can't sit here and tell you [it'll be] tomorrow, or the day after. He's got to go through today's game."

Well today's game was yesterday and Acta says that it is all about how Hafner feels. Well I'm sure he's going to tell you he's fine and ready to go. And Manny does note that there are a bunch of righties this homestand, so it's probably best the Indians get him up here real soon.

Justin Albers mentions that Shelley Duncan's wife is expecting twins (two baby hawks!) and that

the Indians could simply put Duncan on the paternity list for a few days as a corresponding move for Hafner's return.

Honestly, I'd imagine that Hafner returns tonight. Does he start? I think they'll start him the day the activate him, so yeah I think he starts tonight. But we'll see, they could hold it off til tomorrow.

Jason Kipnis is not talking about the All-Star game . Here's to hoping he's taking the road of "proving them wrong" in his few words. Maybe he's also a little hopeful that something will occur and he'll end up getting the call, because it very well could happen. Either way he is short with the media on the subject, saying he's simply going to "leave that one alone" and even on Twitter, saying there is a lot he wants to say but opting to just congratulate his teammates.

He's stung, disappointed. You can't blame him. I think he's doing the right thing by just keeping quiet for now. Again, he could make the team if something happens. You have that idiot Johnny Cueto in Cincinnati going off the rails and whining about not making the team because he thinks the manager is holding a grudge. Why be like that?

It's silly. Kipnis is doing the right thing by not talking about it.

Vinnie Pestano got a little excited, saying that we all had to vote him in through final vote. That was until it was pointed out to him that Kipnis was not on the final vote ballot. That is of course because he is not a pitcher.

But how about this. Why not **Vinnie Pestano** on that final vote ballot? Manny Acta says he's pitched like an All-Star and if the team took set-up men, he'd be the first to go. The only one that's really bucked that trend of setup guys not getting on was Tyler Clippard last year. Chris Perez knows that's a once-in-while type of a thing.

"All the stars have to align for the setup guys to make it," said Perez, who entered Monday tied for the AL lead with 23 saves. "Whereas closers, we make it because we get saves or whatever. At the same time, I worked to get to this spot, to be the closer. It wasn't just given to

me. I was a setup guy for a couple years. I think he knows how much I appreciate him being in front of me. I think we're a really good one-two combo."

"Saves or whatever." I like that.

The set-up guy is always overlooked. It isn't flashy. He could be one of the best relievers in the game but not go because that isn't what gets the attention. It's the closer. Vinnie is plenty good and I think there is no doubt he's a future closer. So he'll be there one day.

Intentional Signing Day was on Monday and the Indians inked a 16-year-old Venezuelan by the name of Yoiber Marquina and a Dominican by the name of Francisco Mejiaon. Both are catchers. They also got a Japanese player by the name of Naoki Hashimoto. Yoiber? That's a cool name. I hope it's really his.

[TIGER WATCH]

A tip of the cap to the Twins for beating around Doug Fister for four innings, putting the Tigers in a big enough hole to not come back. Minnesota beat the Tigs 6-4 and kept them a full game a half behind the Tribe for second. Miguel Cabrera was 3-for-3 though. So they got that going for them.

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Nino has a blog! Give it a vist at The Tribe Daily , because he's more Italian than Vinny Rottino. Pizza Pie!

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