It may be time to admit something... Something that I probably will regret doing.

July 3rd, 2012

Los Angeles Angels - 5

Cleveland Indians - 8

W: Zach McAllister (3-1) L: Dan Haren (6-8)

[BOXSCORE]

So I'm not going to admit it. Basically I do it with good intentions because if I admit it, I may jinx him.

So I'll proceed as if I normally would.

That damn Jose Lopez. He's no good. He's a botch artist, he's stealing at-bats, he's horrible to

watch, I hate him in the fourth spot, get rid of him. No more #LopeyTime, it's just #DopeyTime!

Mr. DH and Clean Up Hitter had three hits last night. This is a few days after his five hit performance.

I guess I just can't bash him anymore. I'm not going to moan and complain like I do, but in order to stay free and clear of a jinx, I'll simply not talk about Lopez from now on.

You can bet all the pennies in the bottom of your coin jar though that I will be the first to ride his train out of town if things turn for the worse though.

This is **Zach McAllister**'s line had **Jack Hannahan** manage to start that double play. Heck get one out and the home run isn't even that bad. But that was a double play ball and I will treat it as such.

6 IP, 5 H, 0 R, 0 BB

Even the runs that he got charged with shouldn't count against him. I know I know, he has to pick up his defense. I agree with all that. But I think the guy deserves the benefit of the doubt. He's facing Dan Haren. Said Angels pitcher is getting beat up pretty bad. He's doing his part. I think we can say that McAllister shouldn't have had to pick up his defense in this one. He should have cruised through seven innings easy in this one as he wasn't even at 100 when he exited after six.

I'm taking McAllister's line every night. Even with the unearned runs in there, he gave up three earned through six. That's a quality start in the books. He didn't walk anyone, he did everything he needed to do.

He came out in the first inning and just mowed through the first three hitters. Came out in the second and looked just as good. He got into some traffic in the fifth, but got the ground ball he

needed not just for one out, but two. I'm giving McAllister that start .

"He was very aggressive with his fastball, never got scared out of the strike zone," Acta said. "He handled [the fifth] very well. He could have just crumbled there and not even be able to go back out for another inning, and he did."

My office has a softball team. We won our first game last Monday, got beat up pretty bad this past Monday. Nothing was working. But not even we made as bad of an error as Jack Hannahan made in the fifth inning with one out and runners on first and second. Hannahan got a perfect ground ball double player starter right to him and delivered a throw that couldn't have been any more imperfect.

I'm not saying our softball team could have made that throw, but even the professionals make some head scratching errors. Even as someone as pro as Hannahan.

Jack only gets so much of a reprieve for the error. He essentially let five runs happen. He only knocked in one so his run differential is not positive. But let's not crush him please...

"It's always nice to be able to pick up your teammates," said Indians manager Manny Acta. "Jack has saved us so many runs over the last couple of years. For his teammates to pick him up so he doesn't have to have that hanging over his head, it was good, because he has picked up a lot of people here defensively."

Here will save more runs in the long run than he lets score. So while that was bad, he's someone defensively that will make up for it throughout the course of the season. There's no reason to bash him. Of course the win makes it easier.

You want to talk about McAllister picking up his defense, but really, that is not necessary when the offense picked up Hannahan. To come right back and score three runs in the next half inning says a lot.

"That's the sign of a great team," Hannahan said. "When you make an error and it leads to five runs in the fifth, it's huge as a team to come back in and throw up a three-spot in the next inning after getting the wind taken out of you like that. We've been having good quality at-bats, and that's what we did there in the fifth."

That was key. Dan Haren is someone that it could be difficult to score twice off of, so to come back against him in that fifth and ultimately chase him away and put up the runs you need to win the game. That's huge. That was really the biggest key to actually winning the game.

Random Details...

The offense can't be contributed to one person though. There was equal parts everywhere and a lot of the runs the Indians scored was thanks to aggressiveness on the base paths. The Angels made a few flubs of their own and even got a hard slide from Lopez to knock free a ball a the plate. It was a lot of close plays, hard running and key hits. Brantley and Duncan can get a lot of credit for knocking in two each, but Kipnis, Lopez, and Hannahan all had key RBI as well.

Kotchman, Jipnis, and Choo all had two hits an two runs scored, making up for 2/3rds of the runs scored.

Kendrys Morales trying to bunt is hysterical. I know there was a shift, but really? Early in the game, leading off the inning, get out of here with that.

The first rain delay was excruciating. It fell at the time when I was planning on finishing most of the run down and teetered into the time zone of contemplating going to bed. I don't enjoy bed time delays. Unless of course the Indians make up for it by pouring more runs on. Then all is forgotten. In this case it isn't forgotten, but the pouting is gone. Until of course there's another one with one out in the ninth. Then you are just asking to piss me off.

The additional runs meant that Chris Perez didn't have to enter the ninth for a save situation. Instead we were treated to Esmil Rogers, who has pleasantly been more than solid since coming over. I'm not going to argue with a 97 mph fastball, he's getting the job done. He's a little

wild though, so you can see how he could go south at any point and has struggled in the past.

A good harnessing of that though and Rogers will be a welcomed sight in this pen.

Aaron Cunningham had an RBI-single in the eighth to make it that non-save situation. Could that have been his final contribution before his exit from the team? We'll see.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

It looks like **Travis Hafner** will be returning today for the series finale against the Angels. Which could man the end for Cunningham. Hafner did not rehab last night, getting a day off after playing Monday for the Clippers, he is expected to be activated for the game, which means he should be starting at DH. Acta stated that Tuesday was a recovery day for him.

"It's just a matter of trying to get your timing," he said. "[The knee] is doing good. Overall, it's good. There's a little bit of soreness off and on maybe running, but that's pretty normal. Overall it's doing really well."

Hafner's presence is so important, especially in the midst of Carlos Santana's struggles. You hope Santana won't need Hafner around to be productive, because he can't spend his entire career hitting ahead of him, but for this season if that's what is needed to get Santana turned around, get him back as soon as possible. Hafner alone though can do so much for a lineup because he is moving other hitters down and just easing the rest of the lineup.

You would think a productive **Ubaldo Jimenez** would ease the rest of the rotation into shape, but of course 3-through-5 are not exactly cooperating as well as 1 and 2 are. Of course it was Lowe and Gomez early on carrying the team and we all salivated over the prospect of Masterson and Jimenez coming together.

Well those have come together, and aside from some promising starts from McAllister, the wheels have fallen off elsewhere. Yet it is certainly a blessing that Jimenez has found his form . Acta says he's pitching

like a 2 or even a 1 right now and credits Scott Radinsky for some of the work he's done as well as Ubaldo.

"Radinsky deserves a lot of credit for working with him," Acta said. "And Ubaldo deserves the credit for doing it. It has worked the way that they had planned it. It was going to take a few starts for the repetition to sink in, and it has happened. He has been consistent in the zone. He has kept up his velocity and he has pitched well ever since." Ubaldo says all he's doing now is focusing on getting hitters out and to me, those comments seem like that his mechanics are just second nature to him. They're not on his mind because they are working. As long as that continues, Ubaldo will continue to be reliable. He might have his issues, everything won't be smooth sailing, but if this keeps up, they certainly won't be what it was early in the season.

And that's much easier to watch, is it not?

I'm a big proponent of nicknames. I mean, I created a
nickname database
and try to update it when I remember. This will probably force me to update it. Sometimes I'd just give players the first nickname that would pop into my head, even if it didn't make too much sense just to give them a nickname.

I mean, I don't want to brag, but I've come up with some brilliant things. Baby Louie is kind of fun, Marte Buffet makes sense, heck, when he was tolerable, I enjoyed saying Salute the Kearnal. And perhaps my biggest achievement in life will forever be the fact that I came up with Bullpen Mafia and that it stuck. I'm not bragging, just stating facts.

I'm honestly not sure I can get on the "Dr. Smooth" bandwagon for
Michael Brantley
though. I respect nicknames though and the creativity one has to have to make one up. I'm not really creative, maybe I think I am sometimes, but in reality, I'm not all that good. Dennis Manoloff certainly gets props from me for having something that has not only stuck though, but
embraced by Michael Brantley
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Let's just put it this way though... If I had Manoloff's job (and I don't want it, I used to), the Indians would all be saddled with some ridiculous sounding nicknames because they'd no doubt have a greater chance of catching on than Bullpen Mafia. Who wouldn't want to go around calling Shelley Duncan, "Hawkman"?

Just as a subtle reminder, you can vote for this past months' Manny Acta Golden Fedora of Greatness award on
both Facebook
and

the blog
. Basically the winner gets nothing, but the fact that they can say they won an award named after their manager's hat is pretty cool. And there aren't many votes right now, so change that. You can even vote on both places! That's pretty cool too.

[TIGER SOX WATCH] There's no need to care what the Tigers did because Chicago pulled the ultimate "look at me" move. The White Sox killed Roy Oswalt. They saw him in the middle of the street, sped up to 100 mph and ran him down. Then stopped, backed up and ran him over again. Then for good measure, ran over him forward once more time.

That sounds gruesome because what the White Sox actually did to him on the diamond is pretty gruesome. He gave up 11 runs, but thankfully for his ERA only nine of them were earned. On the bright side he almost got through five innings? Yeah there's no bright side to getting shelled like that.

Oh and the Twins beat the Tigers.

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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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