

Kluber allows pair of HRs as Tribe falls

By Andrew Wagner Special to MLB.com

MILWAUKEE -- For a moment, it looked like the Indians might be on the verge of a breakout performance.

Cleveland had two on with one out in the first inning Tuesday night at Milwaukee and watched as Brewers starter Wade Miley left the game with an oblique injury, with Corey Kluber waiting to throw his first pitch.

So much for that plan.

Instead, Kluber gave up two home runs -- including one to Miley's replacement, left-hander Brent Suter -- and lasted a season-low six innings as the Indians fell to the Brewers, 3-2, extending their losing streak to a season-high four games.

Kluber had earned a victory in each of his last five starts, posting a 2.41 ERA in those outings.

"I thought he was getting under a few pitches, but he made some adjustments along the way and I thought the last couple innings were really good," Indians manager Terry Francona said. "Saying that, he gave up three, but we had a hard time putting runs up on the board."

After Suter stranded both runners in the top of the first, Kluber had two outs in the bottom of the frame when he hung a 2-2 curveball over the plate to Travis Shaw, who got all of it for his seventh home run of the season, giving Milwaukee a 2-0 lead.

Jose Ramirez got Cleveland on the board with a solo homer off Suter in the third, but the Milwaukee left-hander smashed Kluber's first offering in the Brewers' half of the inning to center field for the first home run of his career, restoring a two-run cushion.

"I don't know anything about him as far as a scouting report and stuff, so I tried going with a fastball away," Kluber said. "You just have to tip your hat. He went out there and got it, put a good swing on it and hit a home run."

The Indians got within a run again when Francisco Lindor led off the fifth with his ninth home run of the season, but Suter retired the next three in order and Milwaukee's bullpen took over and notched four perfect innings from right-handers Jeremy Jeffress and Dan Jennings and left-hander Josh Hader, who worked the final two innings and picked up his fifth save.

"It's frustrating. I'm not going to lie, but it's part of the game," said Lindor. "We understand there will be stretches when we don't score as many runs. I feel like we had good at-bats. We just left seven or eight people on base. It's tough luck."

MOMENT THAT MATTERED

Clutch relief: Milwaukee threatened to break the game open in the eighth, loading the bases with two out against Indians reliever Tyler Olson. Francona summoned Zach McAllister from the bullpen to face Manny Pina, and after a 14-pitch battle, McAllister got the Brewers catcher looking at a curveball for strike three to end the threat.

"They gave us a chance," Francona said. "After Evan [Marshall] had a good inning, Tyler got the ground balls he needed after letting some guys on base, and Zach ... that was a great at-bat against Pina, and he ended up getting him out on a breaking ball. They gave us a chance."

The Indians' bullpen entered Tuesday's game with a 10.06 ERA over its 12 previous games.

SOUND SMART

Tuesday marked the first time Kluber allowed multiple home runs in consecutive starts. He gave up three his last time out against Texas and followed that up with two more Tuesday in Milwaukee, giving him eight in his last four starts. Coming into tonight, he'd allowed three home runs combined in 19 career Interleague starts over 135 2/3 innings.

HE SAID IT

"That's what hitters try to do now. They try to hit home runs. If you make mistakes and they're trying to hit a home run, that's bound to happen. It basically comes down to the pitches I'm giving up home runs on. There's been a couple of good pitches, but for the most part, they were mistakes. Guys are doing what they're supposed to do with them." -- Kluber, on allowing 10 home runs through eight starts this season, including five in his last two starts

UP NEXT

Carlos Carrasco (4-1, 3.95 ERA) looks to snap out of a funk Wednesday afternoon when the Indians wrap up their two-game series at Miller Park at 1:10 p.m. ET. Carrasco is 0-1 with a 10.90 ERA over his past two starts and allowed six runs over 5 1/3 innings against the Blue Jays his last time out. He has never faced the Brewers, who'll be looking for a bounce-back start of their own out of right-hander Junior Guerra (2-2, 2.33).

Miller nears return on next Tribe homestand

By Andrew Wagner Special to MLB.com

MILWAUKEE -- Left-hander Andrew Miller threw off the mound Tuesday afternoon at Miller Park and all went well. But he's going to need a few more days before he can return to Cleveland's bullpen.

"He looked really good," Indians manager Terry Francona said. "When we get back home on Thursday, he'll get his strength measured, and as long as there's not much of a deficit, we'll get him going."

Cleveland's bullpen has struggled since losing Miller to the disabled list. The Tribe's relievers have posted a 10.06 ERA through the last 12 games entering Tuesday night's game against the Brewers, and not coincidentally, the Indians have gone 4-8 in those contests, with a number of late-inning losses.

"You go through ups and downs. That's part of the game," Francona said. "You just have to be patient when you don't want to be patient. The hard thing for me right now is figuring out how much rope to give guys, because when they're having a tough time, you don't want to just have a line moving out there, but we've been inconsistent this last week.

"We've got guys who have done it. They'll do it again."

To help out the relief corps, the team acquired right-hander Oliver Drake from the Brewers after he was designated for assignment by Milwaukee on May 2.

Drake, who was added to the Indians' active roster Tuesday, posted a 6.39 ERA in 11 appearances for Milwaukee this season, but six of the nine earned runs he allowed this season came in a single outing on April 16 against the Reds. He followed that with three scoreless outings -- spanning 2 2/3 innings -- and gave up two runs on three hits in a 3-0 loss at Wrigley Field on April 28.

Francona said the team was encouraged by Drake's stuff. He's a fastball-splitter pitcher with a curveball in his arsenal, as well. He has held lefties to a .237 average over his career, while right-handers have hit him at a .288 clip.

"A lot of times, when you see good stuff and an inflated ERA, a new start [can help]," Francona said. "We'll get to know him as quick as we can."

The 31-year-old had been in Milwaukee since he was removed from the Brewers' roster and worked out Monday afternoon at Miller Park with Indians pitching coach Carl Willis.

"It was weird sitting in limbo the first couple days," Drake said. "But it's unbelievably exciting to be joining a team like the Indians. The group they have in the 'pen is an impressive group. I'm looking forward to it."

Zimmer improving

Outfielder Bradley Zimmer remained sidelined Tuesday, still sore after crashing into the wall chasing down Austin Romine's double Saturday at Yankee Stadium.

"He's doing good," Francona said. "He'll be back in the lineup tomorrow."

Zimmer is batting .234 with two homers and nine RBIs in 31 games this season.

Michael Brantley's batting average went up 10 points on Tuesday before he even took the field.

Major League Baseball reviewed Brantley's eighth-inning at-bat in Game 1 of a May 3 doubleheader against Toronto and credited him with an RBI double, reversing the original ruling of an error. Brantley's line for that game now includes four hits -- including three doubles -- both of which mark club highs in 2018.

The change also moves Brantley into eighth in the American League batting race.

Roster moves

- To make room for Drake on the roster, right-hander Alexi Ogando was optioned to Triple-A Columbus. Ogando made just one appearance for Cleveland, allowing two runs on two hits and three walks in a 7-6 loss to the Yankees on May 4.
- Matt Belisle elected to become a free agent on Tuesday. The 15-season veteran was designated for assignment on May 2 after posting a 5.06 ERA over eight appearances for Cleveland this season, striking out four with a walk over 10 2/3 innings.
- Left-hander Jeff Beliveau accepted an outright assignment and will report to Triple-A Columbus this week. Beliveau appeared in five games for Cleveland this season, posting a 10.80 ERA over 3 1/3 innings. He was designated for assignment on May 4.

Salazar shut down after injection in shoulder

By Andrew Wagner Special to MLB.com

MILWAUKEE -- Danny Salazar has been shut down for at least a week after receiving a PRP injection in his right shoulder, the Indians announced Tuesday.

Salazar was evaluated on May 4 by Dr. Keith Meister to get an additional opinion after he was diagnosed with impingement tendinitis in his right shoulder. Meister performed an MRI and confirmed the original diagnosis.

The right-hander has not pitched for the Indians in 2018. Salazar began the year on the 60-day disabled list and had been throwing bullpen sessions during extended spring training in Arizona.

Salazar is coming off his highest career ERA in 2017 (4.28) while making 23 appearances (19 starts).

Morgan spins gem for Lake County

- Indians No. 28 prospect Elijah Morgan trimmed his ERA to 1.64, the fifth-best mark in the Midwest League, behind five scoreless innings for Class A Lake County in its win over Kane County. Morgan, an eighth-round Draft pick last June, gave up three hits, issued one walk and struck out eight, throwing 61 of his 85 pitches for strikes in the outing. In seven full-season starts, the 21-year-old right-hander has completed five innings with at least eight strikeouts on four occasions.

Five observations: On a shrinking Indians lead, a better night for relievers and a curious Corey Kluber trend

By T.J. Zuppe 2h ago 3

The Indians probably felt a degree of empathy for the Brewers on Tuesday night.

Well, maybe up to the point where the blueprint they've used to sink opponents over the past few years was turned against them. And given the Tribe's own recent struggles with their bullpen over the past two weeks, the unexpected but effective game plan had to sting a little bit more.

You see, it wasn't the Indians' relievers springing into action following the early exit of a starter, employing an often-used script to perfection. Instead, it was the Brewers' talented bullpen that saved the day in 8 2/3 heroic innings, leaping into the fray after an injury sent Wade Miley to the trainer's room.

Thus began a shocking tale, one which featured Brent Suter, the 6-foot-5, 28-year-old lefty, outdueling — and quite literally outpitching — the two-time Cy Young Award winner, Corey Kluber. The result? A 3-2 loss that probably had more than a few back in Cleveland scratching their heads and wondering who will empathize with them.

- The competition level of the AL Central will let the Indians stub their toe a few times before a bad stretch significantly hurts them. But that doesn't mean repeatedly banging your foot on the underside of the bed isn't extremely painful, nor is it an activity that any sane person should ever continuously entertain. (And at some point, you'll run out of toes.)

Their fourth consecutive loss, which matches last season's longest drought, has dropped them below .500 (17-18) for the first time since April 8, sitting one game behind their record from 2017 after 35 games (18-17). And while they still find themselves in first place, a five-game winning streak by the Twins has closed the division gap to a 1/2 game.

It's way too early to be seriously studying the standings (unless you have a deep desire to drive yourself nuts), but given the Twins' eight-game tumble and recent course correction, to see the Indians' advantage shrink to its current state is hardly comforting or excusable. And while last year's Tribe had similar concerns — heck, they were 31-31 through 62 games and 48-45 through 93 — the worries recently raised about the bullpen are fair (if not warranted), even if they're probably still fixable.

So, while winning a watered-down division doesn't give you any less of a shot in baseball's postseason sea of variance — really, securing that ticket is all that truly matters — it's pretty fortunate that they're nowhere near ready to discuss the randomness of October.

And in the meantime, the Twins appear to have no plans of simply bowing down to the defending Central champs.

- Speaking of the bullpen, the off day Monday probably felt like a chance to remove the Nintendo cartridge and blow within it, providing a needed system reset after rapidly falling 21 slots in relief ERA since Andrew Miller's disabled list stint began April 26.

(I later read that blowing in the game didn't accomplish anything, but explain that to my copy of "Duck Hunt," which never worked correctly.)

If you're looking for any silver linings, two scoreless innings by Evan Marshall, Tyler Olson and Zach McAllister is the closest you'll get, even if the trio had to pitch through some traffic to maintain the one-run deficit.

McAllister was forced to dig the deepest, striking out Manny Piña on the 15th pitch of their battle, finally dropping a curve after eight consecutive fastballs. Finding McAllister's out-pitch in the bases-loaded sequence feels a little like finally spotting Waldo.

Unfortunately, the Brewers' bullpen has sprung far fewer leaks to open the year, using a group that has built baseball's second-highest relief fWAR to toss 8 1/3 innings, giving up two runs on five hits.

Brewers lefty Josh Hader, in an outing that resembled some of Andrew Miller's finest work, looked extremely worthy of his MLB-leading 1.1 wins above replacement among relievers (according to FanGraphs), tossing two scoreless innings, punching out three.

As for Miller, his impending return this weekend should help remedy some of the Indians' relief woes by shifting arms like Olson's back to their original, comfortable roles. One of the first things Miller's arrival in 2016 seemed to do was make everyone else around him function better. They desperately need his presence to create a similar trickle-down effect in the months ahead, lessening the burden on the starters' pitch counts and keeping Cody Allen from burning out.

Theoretically, that should calm things down enough to get a more accurate read on the existing group before potentially shopping for a needed reliever later this summer.

- Kluber has been exceptional in almost every way this year, but if there's one small blemish on his sparkling numbers, it's the curious rate of homers he's allowed. After two bombs surrendered Tuesday — Suter's stunning solo shot later serving as the separator — Kluber's home run per fly-ball rate climbed to almost 21 percent, fourth-highest in baseball among qualified hurlers.

Concerning? Ehh, even if it was, his ERA still sits at an impressive 2.62. And while his strikeouts are down from last year, they're still in line with his career norms and his walk rate is still on par with last year.

"Whatever he's doing, I'll take," Terry Francona told reporters.

That's more than fair.

Kluber has relied on his breaking ball a little less than last year, which in theory, could be a purposeful play to work for more early contact and fewer stressful deep counts (even though he recently indicated that early contact isn't something he's necessarily seeking). Perhaps as his season continues, we'll see him shift more toward his devastating curve-slider mix, leading to an increase on whiffs and a decrease on homers.

That said, it's tough to argue with the current results — even if the six-inning, three-run effort Tuesday wasn't supported beyond the solo homers by José Ramírez and Francisco Lindor.

- Jason Kipnis' season slash line now sits at .180/.258/.266 through 35 games.

After showing signs of emerging from his season-long funk during their most recent home stand (.789 OPS in 11 games), he's gone hitless in the past four games (0 for 15), dropping his season run-creation rate to 57 percent below the league average.

He's been struck with a decent amount of bad luck, but he's also striking out at a career-high clip. As Zack Meisel also recently wrote, the Indians have to consider dropping him out of the two-hole. If Francona prefers to keep Lindor in the leadoff spot and maintain some balance, Michael Brantley's left-handed swing would fit nicely between two switch-hitters in Lindor and Ramírez.

Francona often walks the thin line between patience and being stubborn — something he's frequently acknowledged — and has been rewarded for his faith on multiple occasions. But with Kipnis still scuffling, the thought of pairing his two hottest bats with Brantley's 126 wRC+ warrants some consideration, letting Kipnis work out his swing a bit lower in the order.

- Just a few short weeks ago, the organization felt as if Danny Salazar had turned a corner in his rehab progression and were acknowledging a lingering sense of excitement. Unfortunately — and given how health has escaped the hard-thrower over recent years, predictably — a brick wall was lurking.

Salazar was evaluated over the weekend by Dr. Keith Meister, who confirmed the righty is battling shoulder impingement tendinitis. Salazar received a PRP injection, leading to a shutdown for 7-10 days before he'll be able to resume his throwing program in Arizona.

Given we're already into May and Salazar hasn't made it to the minor-league rehab portion of his progression, it's tough to factor him into any sort of expectations. Add in a setback — you can label it whatever you want, but a shutdown period for any length of time certainly isn't a step forward — and we've essentially reached the point where anything Salazar contributes this year is going to feel like a bonus.

Cleveland Indians' hitters make adjustments, can the relievers do the same? Hey, Hoysie

By Paul Hoynes, cleveland.com.phoynes@cleveland.com

MILWAUKEE - Do you have a question that you'd like to have answered in Hey, Hoysie? Submit it here or contact him on Twitter at @hoysie.

Hey, Hoysie: Can't say I love the fact baseball is turning to launch angles instead of moving runners and grinding out at-bats. This approach has really hurt the Indians in 2018. For this team to accomplish their goal of winning a championship, their hitters have to make adjustments. They can't be boom or bust every night - Jeff Heath.

Hey, Jeff: I think they have made some adjustments. In April, the Indians ranked last in the AL in batting average at .231 and 11th in runs with 95. In May, they rank first in the AL with 54 runs and second in batting average at .290.

A baseball season rarely travels in a straight line. In March and April, the Tribe's bullpen went 3-5 with seven saves and a 4.30 ERA. In May, it's 0-4 with a 10.24 ERA and no saves. Adjustments are always being made.

Hey, Hoysie: With all the bullpen woes the Indians are going through, would they consider reaching out to Huston Street? He has a great pedigree and is a proven performer who is only 34. I know he's struggled in recent years, but I hear he's in shape and ready to go. - Roger Luca, Tallahassee, Fla.

Hey, Roger: Street saved 40 games in 2015, but had a hard time staying healthy in 2016 and 2017, making just 30 combined appearances.

If the Indians were really interested, it seems like they would have brought him to camp this spring on a minor-league deal.

Hey, Hoynsie: I guess pitchers can clap and tip their caps when a teammate makes a great play behind them, but when Francisco Lindor can't handle the New York limelight and makes a double error, the pitcher can't show any emotion? - Earl Molnar.

Hey, Earl: A pitcher can show whatever emotion he wants on the field, but what Trevor Bauer did following Lindor's misplay on Saturday at Yankee Stadium was not a good look if you think baseball is a team game.

The late Phil Seghi, former general manager of the Indians, told me this story. He was an infielder in the minors. I believe he was playing in Green Bay, Wis. He made a costly error in a game. The next day he came to the park and found his glove nailed to the bench in the dugout.

He said he never found out who did it, but somebody got their point across and only two people knew about it.

Hey, Hoynsie: Why do I feel a level of acceptance after a loss where Lindor makes a few errors or Jason Kipnis goes 0-5, but I'm devastated after a loss that the bullpen coughs up? - Herm, Columbus.

Hey, Herm: There's nothing worse in baseball than when a bullpen/closer goes bad. If Lindor makes an error, he can always make up for at the plate. Ditto for Kipnis if he goes 0-for-5, he can still help on defense.

But when relievers, especially closers, pitch in tight games, they don't get a second chance. It's win and go home. Or lose and go home.

A team can play hard for eight innings, hand the pen a one or two-run lead and it can be gone in one pitch.

Hey, Hoynsie: The Tribe will likely win the AL Central, but so what? It's the worst division in baseball by far. Even with a division championship likely, would management consider starting to break this group up around the trade deadline because it clearly is not a championship contender? - Bobby, Albuquerque, N.M.

Hey, Bobby: Pump the brakes, roll down the window and let the cool breeze hit you in the face. If the Indians win the AL Central, and their rotation stays healthy, they have a chance to do some good things in October.

If they're out of it in July, you can bet Chris Antonetti will start trading players. One way or the other a big part of this team will be gone by the start of next season. Andrew Miller, Cody Allen, Zach McAllister, Josh Tomlin, Michael Brantley and Lonnie Chisenhall will be free agents.

But an organization never passes on a chance to win a division and reach the postseason. Why would they?

Hey, Hoynsie: Do you think Tomlin should be put in the bullpen and Ryan Merritt, or anyone else, be promoted to start? How long is manager Terry Francona going to wait on Tomlin? -- Brian Walsh.

Hey, Brian: Right now Tomlin is in the bullpen. He's not scheduled to start until May 15 in Detroit. Merritt just started his rehab assignment with Class AAA Columbus and was hammered in his first start.

I would think if the Indians did make a change, Adam Plutko would get the first opportunity after he pitched so well against Toronto on Thursday in the second game of a doubleheader.

Hey, Hoynsie: I think the solution to developing a seventh-inning replacement for Bryan Shaw is Tomlin. He is a nice contrast in speeds to our starters and bullpen arms and has been effective out of the pen in the postseason. - Jesse, Appleton, Wis.

Hey, Jesse: Not a bad thought. Tomlin will throw strikes and control the running game. I wonder if his velocity would work against him in that role? Shaw threw a lot harder.

One of the benefits of having Tomlin in the bullpen is that he can throw more than one or two innings. If he did that once or twice a week, it would be hard for Francona to go to him consistently in the set-up role.

Hey, Hoynsie: I am surprised all of you baseball minds have not mentioned that not signing Bryan Shaw, the workhorse reliever of the American League, spelled doom for the Indians capping late-inning scoring. - Greg Massi.

Hey, Greg: I'm not sure where you've been, or what you've been reading, but the fact that the Indians did not re-sign and/or replace Shaw has been written and talked about since December.

Cleveland Indians add RHP Oliver Drake; option Alexi Ogando to Triple-A

By Paul Hoynes, cleveland.com phoynes@cleveland.com

MILWAUKEE -- The Indians have added right-hander Oliver Drake to the 25-man roster and optioned right-hander Alexi Ogando to Class AAA Columbus.

The Tribe acquired Drake over the weekend after he was designated for assignment by the Brewers to add left-hander Wade Miley to the roster. On Sunday, manager Terry Francona said that they'd add Drake by optioning outfielder Greg Allen to Columbus.

Allen was recalled Sunday after center fielder Bradley Zimmer injured his left shoulder and left hip in a collision with the center field fence Saturday at Yankee Stadium. Apparently, Zimmer needs some more time to heal.

Drake will pitch out of the bullpen for the Tribe.

Cleveland Plain Dealer LOADED: 05.09.2018

Swing it: Cleveland Indians, Milwaukee Brewers starting lineups for Tuesday, Game No. 35

MILWAUKEE -- For the next two games the Indians will have to deal with the silliest rule in professional sports. Where else is one spot governed by two sets of rules?

So Corey Kluber will have to swing the bat Tuesday night and Carlos Carrasco will do the same on Wednesday afternoon. In the National League pitchers hit all the time. In the American League pitchers let the designated hitter swing the bat for them.

Everything changes when an AL team plays an interleague game in an NL park.

"I've seen Kluber help himself (with the bat) a few times," said manager Terry Francona. "Carrasco. . .we're just hoping he doesn't get hurt.

"We're at a definite disadvantage. We know that. We're built for the DH. We're just trying to make due."

Kluber is a .158 (3-for-19) career hitter with one double, one walk and nine strikeouts. He went 1-for-2 last year in interleague games.

Carrasco is a .083 (1-for-12) career hitter. His lone hit came in 2015.

Last year he went 0-for-4, but walked and scored against the Giants on July 19 at AT&T Park. Carrasco, who scored on a Michael Brantley's single, amazed his teammates with a nice slide at the plate.

All of which means that while having two sets of rule for one sport makes no sense, there's still a little bit of an everyday ballplayer in every pitcher.

Cleveland Plain Dealer LOADED: 05.09.2018

Cleveland Indians' Danny Salazar shut down; receives PRP injection for shoulder impingement

By Paul Hoynes, cleveland.com phoynes@cleveland.com

MILWAUKEE -- Indians right-hander Danny Salazar has been shut down for a week to 10 days after being examined by Dr. Keith Meister on Friday.

Meister, team physician for the Texas Rangers, confirmed that Salazar is dealing with right shoulder impingement tendinitis. He received a PRP injection in the shoulder. The PRP injection contains platelet rich plasma to help the healing process.

Salazar reported to spring training in February with a sore right shoulder. Meister's examination confirmed the Indians' findings on Salazar's injury.

He opened the season on the disabled list and last week was moved to the 60-day disabled list. Salazar has been in extended spring training in Goodyear, Ariz. throwing bullpen sessions.

But he has been unable to turn the ball loose for fear of reinjuring his shoulder.

Cleveland Plain Dealer LOADED: 05.09.2018

Corey Kluber can't keep ball in the park as Brewers hand Cleveland Indians 4th straight loss, 3-2

By Paul Hoynes, cleveland.com phoynes@cleveland.com

MILWAUKEE -- This time it wasn't the bullpen that cost the Indians. It was ace Corey Kluber.

Kluber didn't pitch poorly, but he couldn't keep the ball in the confines of Miller Park as the Brewers beat the Indians, 3-2, to extend their season-long losing streak to four games.

Things seemed to be going the Indians' way when Francisco Lindor doubled and Jason Kipnis walked to start the game. But nothing came of that potential rally except that Milwaukee starter Wade Miley was forced out of the game with a right oblique injury and replaced by lefty Brent Suter.

Losing a starting pitcher so early in the game usually puts a team in a jam, but Suter seized the opportunity not only on the mound, but at the plate. Suter had made six starts for Milwaukee, but lost his rotation spot when Miley was added to the 25-man roster.

He relieved Miley with a 1-0 count on Michael Brantley and retired him on a grounder to first. Suter ended the first-inning threat by striking out Edwin Encarnacion.

That's when Kluber's home-run problems surfaced. Travis Shaw gave the Brewers a 2-0 lead with two-out homer in the first. Shaw came into the game hitting .364 (4-for-11) against Kluber and looked like he was sitting on the 2-2 pitch he sent over the right-field wall.

"I thought early on he was getting under some pitches," said manager Terry Francona. "But he made some adjustments along the way. I thought his last couple innings were really good.

"Saying that, he (only) gave up three. We had a hard time putting runs on the board."

Jose Ramirez made it a 2-1 game with a homer off Suter in the third. Ramirez homered with two out for his team-high 10th of the season.

But once again the long ball hurt Kluber. And this one really hurt. Suter, leading off the third, hit Kluber's first pitch over the wall in center for his first career homer. Suter, who went to Moeller High School in Cincinnati and then moved on to Harvard, was seen leaping in the dugout in celebration.

It's one thing to give up a homer. It's another thing to give up a homer to a pitcher who came into the game hitting .125 (1-for-8).

To rub it in a little more, the Indians were rallying against Suter in the second on consecutive one-out singles by Brandon Guyer and Rajai Davis. Kluber tried to advance the runners with a sacrifice bunt, but sent a liner back to the mound. Suter made a diving catch and from his rear end threw to second to complete the double play.

Lindor kept the Indians close with a leadoff homer in the fifth to make it 3-2. It was Lindor's ninth of the season, but the Indians could get no closer. Suter (2-2, 4.86) allowed two runs on five hits in 4 2/3 innings. He struck out five and walked one.

"Suter was a guy who had been starting for them, so it was almost like he was starting the game," said Francona. "He worked quick and kept us off the barrel of the bat for the most part."

Kluber (5-2, 2.62) allowed three runs in six innings. He struck out four, walked one and was removed for a pinch hitter in the seventh.

This season Kluber has made eight straight quality starts -- six or more innings, three or fewer runs. He's also allowed 10 homers, second on the team to Josh Tomlin's 13.

"Whatever he's doing I'll take," said Francona, when asked about the home runs Kluber has allowed. "Sometimes it's first pitch-swinging like tonight with the pitcher. He was trying to get ahead. I'll take whatever he's doing."

Milwaukee loaded the bases in the eighth, but Zach McAllister relieved and struck out catcher Manny Pina to end the inning in a 15-pitch at-bat. The Indians committed three errors, one each by Guyer, Kipnis and Encarnacion, who played first base. Guyer was charged with an error when he nearly collided with Kipnis chasing a fly ball in shallow right field off Pina's bat in the fourth, knocking the ball out of Kipnis' glove. Kipnis failed to glove a slow roller by Suter in the fifth.

"He (Guyer) never said anything so I've got to keep going," said Kipnis. "He said he didn't want to call it until he was sure he was going to catch it. We talked about it, but that's how people get hurt."

Josh Hader retired the Indians in order in the ninth for his fifth save.

What it means

The Indians are 1-2 in interleague games this year.

The pitches

Miley threw 19 pitches, 11 (58 percent) for strikes. Kluber threw 95 pitches, 59 (62 percent) for strikes.

Indians right-hander Carlos Carrasco (4-1, 3.95) will face the Brewers and right-hander Junior Guerra (2-1, 0.82) on Wednesday at 1:10 p.m. SportsTime Ohio, WTAM and WMMS will carry the game.

This will be Carrasco's first appearance against the Brewers. He's 5-4 with a 3.21 ERA in 16 career interleague games, including 12 starts.

Guerra will be making his sixth start of the season. The opposition is hitting just .204 against him. Guerra has never faced the Indians.

Cleveland Plain Dealer LOADED: 05.09.2018

Oliver Drake trades places and 4 other things we learned about the Cleveland Indians

By Paul Hoynes, cleveland.com phoynes@cleveland.com

MILWAUKEE - Last year Baltimore traded Oliver Drake to Milwaukee. Three months later, he faced the Orioles and his old teammates.

So he's been through this before, but not exactly.

Drake officially joined the Indians on Tuesday at Miller Park. He did so by cleaning out his locker in the Brewers' locker room and moving over to the visitor's side.

"Weird," is how he described it.

The Indians acquired Drake on Saturday after the Brewers designated him for assignment. The Indians were in New York at the time. Their next stop was Milwaukee so they told him to sit tight and wait until they got into town.

On Monday he worked out for pitching coach Carl Willis. Manager Terry Francona said Drake threw a "touch and feel" bullpen session for Willis.

"We want to get to know him as fast as we can," said Francona.

On Tuesday, they officially added Drake to the 25-man roster by optioning Alexi Ogando to Class AAA Columbus.

"Swapping dugouts, swapping sides, going to the other bullpen, all of that will be a little different," said Drake. "But when you come down to it, it's baseball."

In the first inning Tuesday night something else was added to the unusual flavor of this trade. Milwaukee starter Wade Miley left the game in the first inning with a right oblique injury. When the Brewers activated Miley for this start, they designated Drake for assignment.

"This is an exciting team to join," said Drake. "I'm excited to be a part of this bullpen and help out anyway I can."

Drake relies on two pitches, a fastball and split finger fastball. The right-hander has reverse splits, meaning he pitches better against lefties than righties. Lefties are hitting .237 (52-for-219) and righties .288 (51-for-177) against him.

"That's the way it's been in the past, but I feel confident facing hitters on both sides of the plate," he said. "I think the split finger fares well against lefties."

Drake was attending the Naval Academy when the Orioles drafted him in 2008. He said the decision to stay in school or turn pro was the toughest he's ever made.

"It was an extremely difficult decision. The Naval Academy is such a special place," said Drake. "The friendships you make there are lifetime ones. Not many people get to attend and I was blessed and very fortunate that I was able to spend two years there."

No. 1: Bullpen session goes well

Andrew Miller, after the Indians finished taking early batting practice on Tuesday, threw an extended bullpen session. He had a couple of batters stand in the box to give him a feel for the strike zone.

"It went well," said Francona. "He looked really good so that's good news."

Miller, who has been on the disabled list since April 25 with a strained left hamstring, will have the strength in his hamstring tested on Thursday in Cleveland. If he passes that test, look for him to be activated on Friday.

No. 2: Permission granted

Ogando has six years in the big leagues with two minor league options. When the Indians optioned him Columbus on Monday, he had to agree to the move because of his service time. He could have refused and become a free agent.

"I like him," said Francona. "We told him that. His stuff is good. He's a veteran guy who knows how to pitch. My guess is he'll be back here. He can help a major league team. He can help us."

No.3: Another day of rest

When outfielder Greg Allen was recalled Sunday in New York, it sounded like he'd be optioned to Columbus on Tuesday when the Indians activated Drake. Instead they optioned Ogando and kept the switch-hitting Allen.

A couple of things factored into that move. Center fielder Bradley Zimmer is still sore from his collision with the center field wall on Saturday. Francona said Zimmer is scheduled to start Wednesday.

Francona added that because these games are being played under NL rules, Allen's speed and defense could help. As for being caught short in the bullpen, starter Josh Tomlin moved into the pen to take Ogando's spot.

No. 4: In closing

The Tribe's pen is headed in the wrong direction. Francona was asked how a bullpen reverses that course. "You need to get outs. That's the easy (answer). You go through ups and downs. That's part of the game. Sometimes some of it makes sense. We've asked a lot of Cody (Allen) and we know that. The hard thing for me is to try not to, maybe, overreach. You have to be patient when you don't want to be patient. The hard thing for me right now is trying to figure out how much rope to give guys. When guys are having a tough time, you just don't want to get a line moving out there. But we've been inconsistent the last week to 10 days. We've got guys who have done it and they'll do it again."

Real or not? No-hitter the latest feat in James Paxton's rise

David Schoenfield

In his previous start, Seattle Mariners lefty James Paxton had a chance at history. He struck out 16 batters through seven innings, giving him a chance to tie or even break the single-game record of 20. Instead, with his pitch count at 105, he was finished for the night and then watched his bullpen blow a 2-0 lead.

On Tuesday in Toronto, he made history, with a little help from his friends behind him, especially third baseman Kyle Seager. Paxton tossed the sixth no-hitter in Mariners franchise history, blanking the Blue Jays on 99 pitches and striking out seven in a 5-0 victory.

The final batter of the game was Josh Donaldson. Paxton threw a 98 mph fastball up and away that Donaldson swung at and missed. The next pitch was 100 mph on the inside corner -- the fastest pitch Paxton has thrown all season -- for a called strike two. After shaking off catcher Mike Zunino, Paxton delivered his final pitch at 99 mph -- the second-fastest pitch he has thrown all season -- and Donaldson hit a hard grounder to Seager, who made a nice snag for the final out:

That wasn't even the best play Seager made on the night. To end the seventh, he made a spectacular diving stop to rob Kevin Pillar of a double down the line, then made a rapid-fire no-look throw to get Pillar, with Ryon Healy making a nice scoop. The play had a hit probability of 41 percent, according to Statcast, but that doesn't factor in Pillar's above-average speed, which added much more difficulty to the play: Paxton became just the second Canadian to throw a no-hitter, joining Dick Fowler, who threw one for the Philadelphia Athletics way back in 1945. While the British Columbia native grew up much closer to Seattle than Toronto, it was special for Paxton to do it in his home country.

"Of all places, here in Toronto, it's pretty amazing," he said as teammates drenched him with blue Gatorade in his postgame interview. "The fans were giving me some trouble in the seventh inning, but once I got past that, they started kind of cheering me on. It was cool. I mean, what a defense tonight. Those guys were making every play. I made a few pitches, got lucky a bunch of times -- it was just our night."

Indeed, after Seager's great play to end the seventh, Ben Gamel ran down Russell Martin's drive deep into left-center, making a leaping grab against the scoreboard. Kendrys Morales then lined the next pitch hard to center field but right at Dee Gordon. Paxton fanned Lourdes Gurriel Jr. on 98 mph heat to end the eighth, got Anthony Alford to foul out to right field on the first pitch to start the ninth and blew a 97 mph four-seamer down the middle past Teoscar Hernandez for the second out.

Paxton's velocity is his calling card, especially for a lefty. His average fastball velocity in 2018 is 95.4 mph, eighth-best among qualified starters and tops among lefties. He was the hardest-throwing lefty starter in 2017. His ability to ramp up the fastball as the game progressed is a reminder of how Justin Verlander did that back in his MVP season in 2011. Courtesy of Kenneth Woolums of ESPN Stats & Info, check how Paxton worked the Blue Jays with his fastball velocity:

Innings 1-3: 94.4 mph

Innings 4-6: 95.1 mph

Innings 7-9: 96.8 mph

Coming off an excellent 2017 season in which he went 12-5 with a 2.98 ERA and 156 strikeouts in 136 innings, Paxton had a disappointing April, with a 5.12 ERA. With Felix Hernandez no longer an ace, Paxton is clearly the team's best starter, even if Felix still drew the Opening Day assignment. Now it looks like Paxton is getting on a roll. He struck out 10 in six innings two starts ago, then struck out 16, then pitched a no-hitter. "Just trying to challenge guys with my stuff instead of trying to be so perfect picking at the corners," he said.

No-Hitters By Decade	1930	8	1980	13	
DECADE#	1940	13	1990	31	
1900	20	1950	18	2000	15
1910	29	1960	34	2010	36
1920	9	1970	31		

When he gets going like this, Paxton can be as good as any pitcher in the game. He started 2017 with scoreless outings in four of his five starts. He had a 1.37 ERA in six starts in July. He also had two DL stints, however, and made 24 starts, though that was a career high. The Mariners are off to a 20-14 start, hanging in the tough American League West race with the Astros and Angels, but they need Big Maple to make 30 starts.

The best part of this no-hitter for Mariners manager Scott Servais was that he never had to sweat Paxton's pitch count. In fact, with 99 pitches, it was just the 12th no-hitter since 1988 -- when we first have pitch data -- with fewer than 100 pitches, out of the 75 individual no-hitters thrown. Five times this season, a starter has been pulled after six innings of no-hit ball.

Paxton's was the third no-hitter of 2018. He joins Sean Manaea of the A's and the Dodgers' combined no-hitter in Mexico just a few days ago. If you can't keep track of all the no-hitters, that's understandable. There have been 35 this decade, the most in any decade.

We had just one no-hitter in 2016 and one in 2017 after seven in 2015, so it will be interesting to see if we're headed to another Year of the No-Hitter. For Paxton, it will be interesting to see if he can avoid those minor injuries and become one of the best lefties in the game.

Deal ends Matt Harvey's roller-coaster ride with M

Lefty Brent Suter assumed unlikely hero role for Brewers, on the mound and at the plate

Tom Haudricourt, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Published 10:58 p.m. CT May 8, 2018 | Updated 11:18 p.m. CT May 8, 2018

As baseball players go, Brent Suter is practically a mythical creature. Sort of like Sidd Finch.

At one moment, the Harvard graduate is flying off the mound to make a sprawling catch of a bunt, then throwing from the seat of his pants to double off a runner at second before sprinting to the dugout as if racing Usain Bolt.

The next moment, Suter is hitting a 433-foot home run off Corey Kluber. That's right. Suter, a 31st-round draft pick out of Harvard, with five career hits -- all singles -- crushed a no-doubter to center off one of the best pitchers in the game.

With Hollywood so enraptured with super heroes these days, Suter certainly has a future in the movies.

"Raptor strength," teammate Travis Wood said of Suter becoming the first pitcher ever to take Kluber out of the yard.

Dinosaurs once roamed the earth and Suter certainly is leaving his footprints in unusual ways. Merely to make it to the big leagues with an 85-mph fastball is a feat in itself but what Suter did Tuesday night in a 3-2 victory over Cleveland at Miller Park won't soon be forgotten.

For beginners, Suter had to come in cold turkey after starter Wade Miley exited in the first inning with an oblique strain. Having been shuffled off to bullpen duty when Miley joined the team the previous week, Suter gave the Brewers 4⅔ gritty innings, allowing five hits and two runs, both on home runs by Jose Ramirez and Francisco Lindor.

"For him to eat up that many innings against that lineup over there, that was probably the biggest key of the night," Shaw said. "Suter. He's something else."

These kinds of situations are made for Suter, who never flinches when given different assignments or disappointments. Lots of players say they'll do whatever it takes to help the team win but Suter actually means it, every time.

Of the first-pitch fastball that he hammered out to center field off Kluber in the third inning, which proved to be the winning run, Suter said, "I went up there, saw the ball up a little bit, put the bat on the ball and after that it was just Cloud 9, like 'Angels in the Outfield.' It was fun."

Suter ran around the bases at a pace that would have lapped David Ortiz three times, then ducked into the dugout for an appropriately raucous celebration. Times Square on New Year's Eve has nothing on the Brewers' bench when someone goes deep.

"It was a lot of fun," said Suter, who hadn't homered since high school. "There was confetti flying. Everybody was trying to take my helmet off. A lot of raptor noises. It was great. One of those things you'll never forget."

"It was a crazy night but at the same time that's what I'm there for," Suter added. "I'm there as a long guy in the bullpen to pick up the team when the starter goes down early. So, I was prepared and mentally locked in as soon as Wade showed signs of discomfort."

"But the home run and stuff, who knows? That's just one of those moments that's only baseball. Only baseball can produce those types of things. Like I said, I'll never forget it."

The season is not quite one-fourth complete but Suter was asked where his home run off Kluber will rank among unlikely events after all is said and done.

"I'm not sure exactly where but I'm going to guess Top 5," he said with a broad grin.

The only downer was the Brewers' casualty list growing by two more players. After the game, manager Craig Counsell said Miley was heading to the DL with his groin strain after a mere two starts. Nick Franklin, who strained a quad muscle running to first base in the fourth inning, likely will join him after being called up earlier in the day.

"We've lost a lot of guys," Shaw said. "We've dealt with a lot here in the first five weeks of the season. We're staying afloat. Guys are doing their job. We'll just keep doing it. Next man up."

Journal Sentinel LOADED: 05.09.2018

Brewers 3, Indians 2: More injuries, but Milwaukee survives against Corey Kluber

The Milwaukee Brewers' casualty list continued to grow Tuesday night.

Almost amazingly, so did their victory total.

The Brewers squeezed out a 3-2 victory Tuesday night at Miller Park over the Cleveland Indians and their ace, Corey Kluber. Two more players – starter Wade Miley and second baseman Nick Franklin – exited with injuries along the way but once again the bullpen came through in a tight game.

The victory boosted the Brewers to 21-15 and in a virtual tie for first with St. Louis in the National League Central.

The game got off to a terrible start for the Brewers when Miley suffered a right oblique strain in the first inning and had to exit. Making only his second start since recovering from a groin strain in spring training and his first at home, Miley had two on and one out when he grabbed his right side after throwing a pitch to Michael Brantley.

The injury almost certainly will put Miley back on the disabled list.

Lefty Brent Suter, who moved from the rotation to the bullpen when Miley joined the club, took over and got out of the two-on, one-out jam in the first. Travis Shaw quickly turned the momentum back to the home club in the bottom of the inning by lining a two-out, two-run homer to right, snapping out of a 4-for-42 skid.

José Ramirez cut the Brewers' lead in half in the third by blasting a home run to center, his 10th of the season. Then came the real shocker in the bottom of the inning.

Suter, who had five career hits – all singles – in 36 at-bats, jumped on a first-pitch fastball from Kluber and drove it out to center for a home run. Not only was it the first homer of Suter's career, but he also became the first pitcher to knock one out against Kluber, who doesn't face many opposite numbers pitching for an American League team.

After Suter exited, relievers Jeremy Jeffress, Dan Jennings and Josh Hader covered the last four innings to hold off the Indians. Hader converted his fifth save, all of which have covered at least two innings.

FIVE TAKEAWAYS

KNEBEL READY TO BE ACTIVATED: Closer Corey Knebel returned from his minor-league rehab stint with Class AA Biloxi ahead of schedule but was not activated for the first game against the Indians. Knebel, who suffered a left hamstring strain April 5 against the Chicago Cubs, pitched three times for the Shuckers, allowing one hit and one walk over 2 2/3 innings with four strikeouts. "Corey has done an outstanding job throughout his rehab and responded very well," general manager David Stearns said. "He has probably exceeded my expectations in terms of how fast he could get back here. We're on the doorstep here." Stearns said Knebel "potentially" could be activated Wednesday but otherwise would rejoin the bullpen Thursday in Colorado.

LOGAN SHOULD BE READY SOON: Lefty reliever Boone Logan probably won't be far behind Knebel in being activated. After making five appearances with Biloxi, Logan pitched Tuesday night for Class AAA Colorado Springs and struck out the side in a scoreless inning. If deemed ready for major-league action and fully recovered from the triceps strain suffered in spring camp, Logan will be activated in the next few days. "It is possible," Stearns said. "If all goes well tonight and he feels good, we'll determine that he's ready to go sometime on the next road trip." Manager Craig Counsell said Logan was asked to do a longer rehab stint because the triceps injury was close to the latissimus dorsi tear that ended his 2017 season with Cleveland.

VILLAR SITS AGAIN: For the fourth consecutive game, second baseman Jonathan Villar was out of the starting lineup. The excuse over the weekend was that the Brewers wanted to give Eric Sogard some at-bats to try to shake out of his slump, which didn't work. In a 0-for-27 skid that dropped his average to .100, Sogard was optioned to Colorado Springs. Franklin was called up from Class AA Biloxi to start in place of Villar, who also is a switch-hitter. The excuse this time was getting Franklin's lefty bat in the lineup, but Villar was batting .303 from the left side with a .346 on-base percentage. Stearns said there was nothing physically wrong with Villar, who took over when Franklin exited with a leg injury in the fourth inning after running to first base.

STILL WAITING ON THE BATS: Counsell was asked before the game if he felt fortunate that the Brewers were 20-15 despite ongoing offensive struggles. "It's a team, you know? There's ups and downs to the season for each group, for each player..." he said. "We'll score some runs and the guys on offense will contribute to it a bunch in a while here, and that will be the season. It's never going to be perfect, you know what I mean, because there's going to be losses involved. So it's not going to look perfect but I think at this point, 35 or whatever games we're in, we're doing all right."

THE BEAT GOES ON: Jeffress pitched 1 1/3 perfect innings, extending his string to 15 consecutive scoreless outings and 18 of 19 for the season. He lowered his ERA to 0.45.

Kluber, Indians suffer tough loss to Brewers, 3-2

By Genaro C. Armas, The Associated Press

POSTED: 05/08/18, 11:40 PM EDT | UPDATED: 2 HRS AGO 0

MILWAUKEE >> Pitcher Brent Suter hadn't hit a home run since high school.

Imagine his surprise and delight when he went deep on AL Cy Young Award winner Corey Kluber.

This wasn't just a shot that curled around the foul pole, but a no-doubter to center that went 433 feet.

Suter also threw 4 2/3 innings of two-run ball after coming in for injured starter Wade Miley to lead the Milwaukee Brewers to a 3-2 win on May 8 over the Indians.

"It's a crazy night, but at the same time that's what I'm there for. I'm there as that long guy in the bullpen to ... pick up the team when the starter goes down early," Suter said.

But homering off one of the best pitchers in the game is not part of his job description.

"I mean, Brent is a strong dude, man," manager Craig Counsell said.

Suter hit the first pitch thrown by Kluber in the third, a sinker, to center for the first homer of his professional career. It was the first home run given up by Kluber to a pitcher in his eight years with the Indians.

Teammates greeted Suter, who goes by the nickname "Raptor," with raptor noises when he got to the giddy dugout. They threw confetti.

"I just had one of those awesome baseball moments that you'll never forget I guess," Suter said.

Kluber (5-2) had his five-start winning streak snapped after allowing five hits and three runs over six innings. He has given up eight homers over his past four games.

"Hitters are usually swinging against me, and with that approach and guys trying to lift the ball and stuff, if I make a mistake, then they hit it out of the ballpark," Kluber said. "It's not really much of an adjustment to make other than just trying not to make those mistakes."

Suter (2-2) had an eventful night on the mound too. The left-hander entered with one out in the first for Miley, who left following 19 pitches with a strained right oblique.

Suter allowed five hits, including solo homers to Jose Ramirez and Francisco Lindor, and struck out five in handing Cleveland its fourth straight loss.

He made a diving catch of a bunt attempt in front of the plate by Kluber in the second inning with two men on and one out, then threw out Brandon Guyer at second for an inning-ending double play.

Three more relievers combined to hold the Indians scoreless for the final four innings, with Josh Hader fanning three over the last two innings for his fifth save.

Travis Shaw had a two-run homer in the first inning for Milwaukee.

"Sometimes it's first-pitch swinging like tonight, the other pitcher swung at a first-pitch fastball. He's trying to get ahead. I'll take whatever he's doing." Indians manager Terry Francona when asked about the home runs given up by Kluber of late.

Indians >> OF Bradley Zimmer, who hurt his left shoulder when he crashed into the outfield wall Saturday at Yankee Stadium, is expected to play Wednesday in Milwaukee. ... LHP Andrew Miller, on the DL since April 26 (left hamstring strain) threw a mound session Tuesday. "When we get back home on Thursday, he'll get his strength measured. As long as there's not much of a deficit, we'll get him going," Francona said. ... RHP Danny Salazar, sidelined all season (right shoulder impingement tendinitis) and moved from the 10-day to 60-day DL on May 3, will be shut down from 7 to 10 days after receiving an injection in the shoulder. Salazar has been on extended spring training in Arizona.

Brewers >> All-Star closer Corey Knebel, sidelined since early April by a left hamstring injury, will be activated from the disabled list on Wednesday, Counsell said after the game.

"He passed everything at a pretty good rate and did everything in a timely manner, and really probably a little ahead of schedule," Counsell said. ... Infielder Nick Franklin left the game in the fourth after hurting his right quad while running out a fielder's choice. He had just joined the club earlier in the day after his contract was selected from Double-A Biloxi.

Counsell said that both Franklin and Miley are likely headed to the disabled list.

Mud Hens 2, Clippers 0 | Ronny Rodriguez home run sinks Clippers

Former Clippers infielder Ronny Rodriguez hit a two-run home run and the Toledo Mud Hens defeated the Clippers 2-0 on Tuesday afternoon before a crowd of 9,084 at Fifth Third Field.

Four pitchers combined on a six-hit shutout, with reliever A.J. Ladwig (4-0) pitching three innings to get the victory. Louis Coleman pitched the ninth for his seventh save of the season.

The Clippers' weak offensive showing wasted a solid outing by starting pitcher Shane Bieber (0-1), who allowed two earned runs on seven hits in 6 2/3 innings. He did not walk a batter and struck out four.

Dawel Lugo drove in the first run when he singled in Mikie Mahtook in the third inning.

Rodriguez, who played the 2016 and 2017 seasons with the Clippers, hit his third homer of the season with one out in the seventh.

It was the fourth shutout of the season for the International League West-leading Mud Hens, who have won three straight. The Clippers' second straight loss dropped them four games behind the Mud Hens.