

## **Bauer fans 11, but mistakes prove costly**

By Jordan Bastian MLB.com @MLBastian

MINNEAPOLIS -- A routine throw back to the mound. A tailor-made double-play grounder. Those were the types of things that played a role in sending the Indians to an ugly loss to the Twins on Saturday afternoon at Target Field.

During manager Terry Francona's tenure in Cleveland, playing clean baseball has been a signature attribute for his clubs. That was far from the case in this 7-1 defeat at the hands of the Twins, who made the most of the extra outs provided by the Tribe defense on a day Trevor Bauer was piling up strikeouts.

"We did that a couple times," Francona said of making defensive mistakes. "It doesn't mean you can't win, but it makes it a lot harder."

When it was all said and done, Bauer exited with seven runs charged to his line, though four were unearned due to the miscues around him. That tied the most unearned runs for a pitcher in a game this season in the Majors. The right-hander struck out 11 -- marking his fourth double-digit showing this season -- and took the loss after 5 2/3 turbulent innings.

"Bauer had really good stuff tonight," Twins second baseman Brian Dozier said. "He struck out his fair share of stuff, but we were able to capitalize, especially getting runners on base and scoring position to get those runs."

The first sign that it was going to be one of those days for the Indians arrived in the third, when Bauer fired a pick-off throw to first to keep Ehire Adrianza close to the bag. First baseman Yonder Alonso received the throw and then tossed it back to the mound, where the ball dropped below Bauer's glove and skipped wildly to the third-base line.

Third baseman Jose Ramirez hustled to retrieve the ball and threw quickly to shortstop Francisco Lindor at second, but Adrianza's 90-foot sprint was successful. Later in the inning, Bauer surrendered three runs on back-to-back pitches. First, Dozier sent an outside cutter off the right-field wall for an RBI triple. Then, Eddie Rosario yanked a first-pitch cutter in on his hands out to right for a two-run homer.

"It was in his own batter's box," Bauer said of the pitch Rosario hit.

Things eventually unraveled on the Indians in a four-run sixth inning.

With no outs and a runner on first, Bauer induced a grounder off the bat of Robbie Grossman for what looked like a twin-killing in the making. Second baseman Jason Kipnis bobbled the roller and was unable to record an out on the play, putting two on for Max Kepler. The Twins outfielder made the Tribe pay with an RBI single up the middle.

"We got into that sixth and instead of being one out and a runner on first," Francona said, "now all of a sudden it's no outs and first and second. It just snowballed from there. I don't know [if Kipnis could have started a double play], but I mean, you certainly think you're going to get one. It might not have been hit hard enough for two."

Asked about the botched ground ball, Bauer bit his tongue.

"I was just out there trying to do everything I could to help my team win," replied the pitcher.

Following a run-scoring single with two outs from Ryan LaMarre, Bauer was pulled at 104 pitches in favor of Dan Otero, who promptly allowed an RBI double to Dozier. One batter later, Oliver Perez's first pitch in an Indians uniform resulted in a passed ball by catcher Roberto Perez, allowing LaMarre to score from third to put Cleveland behind, 7-1.

"It's good to get a win against a division rival," Twins manager Paul Molitor said, "somebody who is ahead of us in the standings. Hopefully, we can win the series tomorrow."

### **MOMENT THAT MATTERED**

Stealing a run: The Indians had trouble breaking through against Twins starter Lance Lynn, who walked five and hit a better in his six innings. Cleveland went 1-for-8 with runners on base against the right-hander. The Tribe's only run off Lynn came with one out and runners on the corners in the second.

On a strikeout pitch to Perez, Kipnis stole second, drawing a throw from catcher Mitch Garver. Once the ball left Garver's fingertips, Greg Allen sprinted from third, beating a throw to the plate for a steal of home. It marked the first time an Indians player stole home since June 28, 2016, when Lindor achieved the feat as part of a double steal against the Braves.

"They did a good job," Francona said of the double steal against Lynn. "Kip, heads-up and that's kind of [how that play is designed]. He might have been a hair slow on his reaction, but [Allen] is quick enough where it still works."

### **HE SAID IT**

"There's a lot to like. We've seen him, because he's been pitching for a long time. But his stuff is still there. As a matter of fact, it might be a tick or two above what it had been. There's a ton of deception, but it's nice when you're not just relying on deception. It's nice when there's deception with stuff." --Francona, on Perez striking out three in 1 1/3 innings in his Indians debut

## UP NEXT

Right-hander Mike Clevinger (4-2, 3.14 ERA) is scheduled to take the mound on Sunday, when the Twins host the Tribe at 2:10 p.m. ET at Target Field for the finale of a four-game set. Clevinger has posted a 1.61 ERA in four road starts this season. Kyle Gibson (1-3, 3.57 ERA) starts for the Twins.

## Plutko fires Clippers' second no-hitter

By Mike Rosenbaum MLB.com @GoldenSombbrero

Making his first start since returning from the Major Leagues, Adam Plutko was untouchable. The Indians right-hander fired Triple-A Columbus' second no-hitter of the season while striking out eight on Saturday in a 6-0 win against Syracuse.

Plutko carried a perfect-game bid into the ninth inning before issuing a one-out walk. He rebounded to get the next batter to fly out, and then put a bow on his stellar outing by inducing a swinging strikeout, sealing his no-hitter. Plutko threw a season-high 112 pitches, 80 for strikes.

Plutko made a pair of starts for the Indians in his most recent trip to the big leagues, the first of which saw the 26-year-old right-hander take a no-hitter into the seventh inning. He's won all three of his big-league outings this year, pitching to a 3.93 ERA with a 1.04 WHIP in 18 1/3 innings.

He's been even more successful this season in Triple-A, where, after Saturday's performance, Plutko owns a 0.70 WHIP and a 1.87 ERA, the first- and second-best marks in the International League, respectively. He's compiled 43 strikeouts against 10 walks in 53 innings, during which he's held hitters to a paltry .146 average.

Plutko's no-hitter was the second in the last nine days after righty Shane Bieber (Indians' No. 3, No. 99 overall) accomplished the feat on May 25 in a rain-shortened, seven-inning game. Overall, it was the ninth no-hitter in franchise history.

Several prospects backed Plutko's effort on the mound with strong offensive showings. Indians top prospect Francisco Mejia (No. 12 overall) and Eric Haase (Indians No. 20) both collected two hits including a double, with Haase also scoring a pair of runs in the contest. Yu-Cheng Chang (Indians No. 7) plated a run with a single, giving him 17 hits and 14 RBIs in his last 12 games.

## Lindor powers way to top May AL honors

By Matt Kelly MLB.com @mattkellyMLB

A pair of middle infielders turned conventional wisdom on its head with eye-popping power in recent weeks, and they were justly rewarded Saturday. Major League Baseball announced Indians shortstop Francisco Lindor as the American League Player of the Month for May, while Reds second baseman Scooter Gennett took home NL honors.

Lindor, one of baseball's brightest young stars, exploded last month as he helped shake the Indians out of an early-season malaise. Lindor led all players with 44 hits and 27 runs scored in May, while his .373 average ranked third and his 1.169 OPS placed fourth among all players with at least 100 plate appearances. This marks Lindor's first Player of the Month award, after he previously captured AL Rookie of the Month honors in September 2015. Lindor incredibly posted two separate games with a pair of homers and a pair of doubles last month, first on May 12 against the Royals and then again on May 31 against the Twins.

Meanwhile, Gennett's stunning transformation into a consistent slugger continued in full last month. The second baseman entered Saturday pacing the Senior Circuit with a .341 average, thanks in large part to his .398 mark in May -- second only to Brandon Crawford among all players who stepped up to the plate at least 75 times.

Gennett also crushed eight homers, drove in 24 and paced the NL with a .720 slugging percentage and 1.139 OPS en route to his first Player of the Month award. He homered in four straight games from May 7-11 while helping the Reds to a weekend sweep of the Dodgers in Los Angeles.

## Tribe adds Oliver Perez to bullpen mix

By Jordan Bastian MLB.com @MLBastian

MINNEAPOLIS -- The Indians' search for stability in their bullpen continued on Saturday, when the team signed veteran lefty Oliver Perez to a Major League contract.

In order to add Perez to the active and 40-man roster, Cleveland designated lefty Jeff Beliveau for assignment. Perez became the 15th reliever used this season by the Indians, who headed into Saturday with an MLB-high 6.01 bullpen ERA. The Tribe relief corps posted an 8.01 ERA in May, marking the highest bullpen ERA in any month in franchise history (min. 40 innings).

"Hopefully this is a guy who can help us out with the lefties," Indians manager Terry Francona said. "He's been there and done it. And, by all accounts, he's actually been throwing the ball pretty well and he's healthy. So, we'll add him to the mix and see if he can help us."

Francona wasted no time in using the new acquisition in the 7-1 loss to the Twins. Perez entered in the sixth with runners on second and third. His first pitch eluded catcher Roberto Perez, who was charged with a passed ball that allowed a run to score. Perez returned for the seventh and struck out the side.

After being released by the Reds near the end of Spring Training, the 36-year-old Perez signed a Minor League contract with the Yankees on March 30. The lefty opted out of that deal and was granted his release on Friday. In 15 appearances for Triple-A Scranton/Wilkes-Barre this year, the left-hander has a 2.92 ERA with 13 strikeouts and three walks in 12 1/3 innings.

For his career, which includes stints with seven Major League teams across parts of 15 seasons, Perez has turned in a 4.46 ERA in 552 games with 9.5 strikeouts per nine innings. The reliever has limited lefty batters to a .231 average (.683 OPS) in his career, and held them to a .227 average (.665 OPS) last season with the Nationals.

Overall in the 2017 campaign, Perez appeared in 50 games for Washington, finishing with a 4.64 ERA, 39 strikeouts and 12 walks in 33 innings.

"He's got a lot of deception -- quirky in his delivery," Francona said. "[Pitching coach Carl Willis] was with him in Seattle, so he knows him, said he's a good kid. When [president of baseball operations Chris Antonetti] told me it was a possibility, I got excited, because I think he can help us."

Worth noting

- With the addition of Perez, Francona is hoping to ease the work load of left-hander Tyler Olson, who entered Saturday tied for the team lead in appearances (24). Olson has held lefty batters to a .129 average (.350 OPS) through 32 plate appearances, but righties have hit .355 (1.106 OPS) in 35 plate appearances against the reliever.

"We've gotten into games where you can't just match up where you want," Francona said. "Olson doesn't have the biggest frame. We don't want him to wear down. He's also a kid that will pitch every day. As much as we appreciate it, man, that's not healthy. He's a different pitcher when he's nice and crisp, as opposed to wearing down a bit."

- Andrew Miller (10-day disabled list, right knee) has been playing catch regularly and is planning on throwing off the mound in a bullpen session on Sunday at Target Field. There is still no date for a Minor League rehab assignment or an announced timetable for the left-hander's return to the Tribe 'pen.

- Outfielder Brandon Guyer (10-day DL, neck strain) went 0-for-3 in his latest Minor League rehab game for Triple-A Columbus on Friday. Lonnie Chisenhall (10-day DL, right calf) received the day off. Outfielder Tyler Naquin (10-day DL, left hamstring) will serve as the designated hitter in a Minor League rehab game with Double-A Akron on Sunday.

### **Rosario's homer helps Lynn, Twins beat Indians 7-1**

The Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) -- Lance Lynn made this start harder on himself with five walks and one hit Cleveland batter.

The recently revived Minnesota lineup made it a lot easier.

Eddie Rosario hit a two-run homer and Brian Dozier drove in two runs to support Lynn's third straight victory, leading the Twins past the Indians 7-1 on Saturday.

"They're scoring runs and playing defense," Lynn said. "It's a lot of fun to play the game."

In his first season with the Twins after waiting a month into spring training to sign a one-year \$12 million contract, Lynn has looked miserable on the mound in much of his time with the new team. Part of that is his ultra-competitive nature, but he had an awful April and a couple of rough appearances in May, too. Over his last three starts, Lynn (4-4) has allowed only three runs over 18 2/3 innings to lower his ERA from 7.47 to 5.46.

"He gets pretty flustered out there at times whether it's a play or a pitch or a non-call. He made some close pitches that didn't go his way, but he just kept finding his way to grind through it," manager Paul Molitor said, adding: "I just think he's been trying to earn his weight around here as of late."

The same goes for the Twins offense, with 30 runs over the last four games. Rosario has been the steadiest of all, with a team-leading 36 RBIs headlining a strong case to become a first-time All-Star. Dozier, who hit an RBI triple in the third inning right before Rosario's 10th homer of the season and added an RBI double during a four-run sixth, has heated up this weekend, too.

"We we can do a lot of different things with our legs and power when everyone is kind of going at least OK," Dozier said. "I think we're starting to see that."

Indians starter Trevor Bauer (4-4) struck out 11 batters, but he gave up six hits and three walks and didn't finish the sixth inning. Four of the seven runs charged to him were unearned, because of an error on second baseman Jason Kipnis and a passed ball by catcher Roberto Perez. Max Kepler and Ryan LaMarre had RBI singles during the Twins rally after the fielding flub by Kipnis.

"I was just out there trying to do everything I could to help my team win," Bauer said.

The Indians went 0 for 9 with runners in scoring position and 2 for 16 with runners on base. Lynn struck out five and allowed only two hits while throwing a season-high 113 pitches.

## PEREZ PITCHES

Oliver Perez, who was signed to the roster before the game, was the second pitcher summoned from the MLB-worst bullpen by manager Terry Francona in the sixth, becoming the 15th reliever used by the Indians already this season. They used 17 different relief pitchers last year, including a one-inning mop-up appearance by position player Michael Martinez and a one-off relief outing by Bauer.

The 36-year-old Perez, who joined his eighth major league team, was pitching in Triple-A earlier this season for the New York Yankees affiliate. He struck out three and gave up one hit in 1 1/3 innings.

"There's a lot to like," Francona said. "We've seen him so much just because he's been pitching for a long time, but his stuff is still there. As a matter of fact, it might be a tick or two above what it's been."

## ALLEN'S HUSTLE

Greg Allen, who could be bound for Triple-A next week with the expected return of injured outfielders Lonnie Chisenhall and Brandon Guyer, gave the Indians the lead in the second inning with a delayed steal of home after Kipnis took off for second during a strikeout by Perez. That was the first time the Indians stole home since Francisco Lindor did so on June 28, 2016.

Allen played right field, while Bradley Zimmer was back in center field for the first time in 21 games after being out with a bruised left rib.

## TRAINER'S ROOM

Indians: LHP Andrew Miller has been scheduled to throw a bullpen session on Sunday, Francona said before the game. He's been out for the last eight games because of nagging right knee inflammation.

Twins: Catcher Mitch Garver painfully took a foul ball off the top of his knee in the ninth inning but stayed in the game. "He just said that it takes a while for the feeling to return in the leg," Molitor said.

## UP NEXT

Indians: RHP Mike Clevinger (4-2, 3.14 ERA) will start on Sunday afternoon. He was second in the American League, entering the game on Saturday, with a 1.61 ERA on the road among pitchers with more than one start.

Twins: RHP Kyle Gibson (1-3, 3.57 ERA) will take the mound for the series finale. Gibson, who has a 5.82 ERA in 13 career starts against the Indians, has taken three losses and seven no-decisions since winning his first turn of the season.

## **Tito's pregame minutiae: June 2**

### **by Jordan Bastian**

Q: Will Oliver Perez be here in time for the game?

TF: "Yeah. I think he landed an hour ago. We don't have a visual yet, but I think we will soon. We talked to [Jeff] Beliveau last night. Usually you wait, but he had pitched four days in a row. We weren't going to pitch him anyway. We designated him. Perez was in Scranton. June 1, you see typically is a day a lot of guys have outs. Looking at transactions, it's kind of all over the map.

"Hopefully, this is a guy who can help us out with the lefties. We're trying not to overuse [Tyler] Olson, especially while Andrew [Miller] is out. He's been there and done it. And, by all accounts, he's actually been throwing the ball pretty well and he's healthy. So, we'll add him to the mix and see if he can help us."

Q: Did you see Perez in the spring when he was with the Reds?

TF: "Yeah. I think we saw him a couple of times. He's got a lot of deception. Quirky in his delivery. [Pitching coach Carl Willis] was with him in Seattle, so he knows him, said he's a good kid. When Chris [Antonetti] told me it was a possibility, I got excited, because I think he can help us."

Q: Are you hoping to use Olson less against righties?

TF: "We've gotten into games where you can't just match up where you want. Olson doesn't have the biggest frame. We don't want him to wear down. He's also a kid that will pitch every day. As much as we appreciate it, man, that's not healthy. He's a different pitcher when he's nice and crisp, as opposed to wearing down a bit."

Q: What's the latest with Miller?

TF: "He's set to throw a bullpen [on Sunday]. The good thing about that is he's kind of champing at the bit, which is good. When guys start getting like that, you know they're starting to feel better. He seems to be excited about how he's feeling, so that's good."

Q: What have you thought about Josh Tomlin out of the bullpen so far? He's been able to focus on his cutter and curve more, but he's still been prone to giving up home runs.

TF: “Last night, he threw the ball really well. He made one pitch and he paid for it. The last couple times out, though, I think he’s been pretty good. He’s so professional and he throws strikes and he also protects us in case something happens where we have length. That’s been one reason we haven’t used him in games, because having him sit there, we know if we have extra innings, he covers us, which really helps. If you get where we use three or four pitchers, you can go to Cody [Allen], because we have a guy sitting back there that’s stretched out.”

Q: With Melky Cabrera out of the lineup, did you put Greg Allen in the six-hole just to keep the lineup in order?

TF: “Yeah, me and Millsie [bench coach Brad Mills] went through it before. I don’t think you’ll see it very often, but he has been swinging the bat good and I’d like to keep those left-handers [split up], make them at least think about it when they bring in [Zach] Duke or Taylor Rogers.”

Q: Do you think Allen’s strong play of late is a combination of experience and regulat at-bats?

TF: “I think it’s just confidence. He’s laying off pitches way better than he was earlier. He’s hit some balls to left field on a line, as opposed to just a little fly ball to left. He’s always been quick in. He’s getting some playing time that’s consistent and he’s starting to feel a little better about himself. It’s fun to watch young guys get better.”

Q: Francisco Lindor took home the American League Player of the Month Award for May. We’ve talked about him and Jose Ramirez a lot lately, but how fun has it been to watch them kind of put the lineup on their shoulders?

TF: “It’s been so fun to watch them. You guys ask me all the time, when guys come up, ‘What do you see?’ Or, ‘What do you think?’ It’s fun to see what they’re turning into. Nobody really knows. Is a guy going to hit for average? Can he hit for power? Can he do both? Both of them are doing both and they’re good defenders. We’re pretty fortunate that two of our best players—put Brant in that—they play every day, they love to play, they’re great guys and we’re pretty fortunate.”

Q: How much have you liked the combination of Lindor, Brantley and Ramirez in the top three spots, given their different skill-sets?

TF: “I do. I really like Brantley hitting second. The game doesn’t speed up on him. I’ve told him, when guys are running, I don’t want him to take. If it costs us a stolen base, in the long run we’re going to make out way better. He hit a line drive double play [a couple games ago], but I love it. I had to remind him of that. Shoot, more often than not, we’re going to be in good shape.”

### **Clippers 6, Chiefs 0 | Adam Plutko fires no-hitter**

Adam Plutko delivered the Clippers their second no-hitter of the season on Saturday night, striking out eight and walking just one in a 6-0 win over the host Syracuse Chiefs before 9,296 at NBT Bank Stadium.

Plutko, 26, is continuing a comeback from offseason surgery to repair a torn labrum and impingement. He improved to 5-3 for the season with a 1.87 ERA. He also has appeared in three games for the parent Cleveland Indians.

The Clippers had an earlier no-hitter on May 25 at the Gwinnett Stripers, from Shane Bieber.

At the plate, Brandon Barnes went 3 for 5 with two RBI. Francisco Mejia, Eric Haase and Nellie Rodriguez had two hits apiece. Eric Stamets had a single in a three-run third inning to drive home the winning run. The Clippers totaled of 14 hits.

Erick Fedde (2-2) allowed 10 hits and five runs in five innings. He struck out nine and walked none for the Chiefs.

The Clippers conclude their trip to Syracuse on Sunday. They return to Huntington Park on Tuesday against the Norfolk Tides to begin a six-game homestand.

### **RubberDucks’ Kieran Lovegrove emerges from mental ringer with newfound love of baseball by Beacon Journal/Ohio.com**

There have been times in Kieran Lovegrove’s career that he didn’t think he deserved to be on a baseball field.

He wasn’t enjoying himself or performing well. He says he wasn’t being a good teammate.

Lovegrove, a reliever who was selected in the third round of the 2012 draft by the Indians, struggled for years while battling his habit of trying to be perfect. It bogged him down. He developed tunnel vision and lost sight of the bigger picture, which just led to more issues on the mound. He had chained himself within his own mind in the drive for perfection.

“It was undue pressure I was putting on myself,” said Lovegrove, now 23 and a key member of the RubberDucks bullpen. “I have ridiculous standards for what I have to do, and I wasn’t trusting the work I was putting in. It was the issue of overthinking. I think a lot of pitchers run into it.”

It took a long time for Lovegrove to gain the needed perspective, but he had a breakthrough near the end of last season and has revived his career. Every now and then, he takes a deep breath. He lets everything slow down. He remembers he just needs to relax and let it rip. He stops overanalyzing every little thing he has to do perfectly. Don’t think, just compete.

And, just like that, the love of the game comes rushing back with a smile and great weight lifted off his chest. He is again free of his own standards and the immense pressures of the job.

All of that happened on the mound at Canal Park a few weeks ago. Lovegrove had just walked his second batter of the inning and could feel himself regressing to his old, negative habits of trying to overthink every little mechanical issue. He had just been promoted to Double-A and was facing better hitters. He could feel it creeping back in, beginning to grip his mind.

"I had just walked another guy and kind of took a moment and smiled and said, 'You know what? You're still playing baseball,'" Lovegrove said. "'Just throw the ball like you're supposed to, you're not doing well babying it and throwing babied strikes, let it eat and it's either going to work or it's not but do it the right way.' And I've felt great since then."

This personal journey down the path to mental freedom has come in stages and started in 2016 with an intervention-like talk with Tony Mansolino, now the RubberDucks manager, when the two were in Lake County. Lovegrove was still struggling to free himself and had blocked everything else out of his mind, including his teammates.

"I was putting myself over other people as opposed to doing things the right way, which is looking out for your teammates and then they'll look out for you," Lovegrove said. "I just maybe didn't understand how to do things the right way. It was all brought to light by a conversation I had with [Mansolino] about it. After that, I was able to consciously make the effort to change. I never intended to be a bad teammate, but looking back, I definitely was."

The next milestone in his development came this past offseason. The Indians' performance coaches, led by Ceci Clark, put together a camp led by Army Special Forces and Army Ranger personnel. Lovegrove was one of six participants and in the process has become one of the biggest benefactors of the Indians' initiative to build the mental side of the game as well as the physical.

Clark, who previously worked for the U.S. Army for six years before joining the Indians, and the club have taught breathing and mental techniques, among other things, to help players on a day-to-day basis.

Lovegrove emerged from that camp with the second piece of perspective he needed to break free.

"Although it didn't necessarily relate to baseball, there were a lot of things we learned about ourselves during that time that I've taken to the mound that have 100 percent made an impact," Lovegrove said. "One main thing being that you're not a china doll. Things can go really bad and you're still fine.

"The other thing is that if you're lost — which inevitably at some point in a season you're going to feel completely lost out there — instead of just continuing to push forward not knowing where you need to go, take a moment, breathe, see where you need to be and once you find your reading, then you can push forward with everything you have."

The results have followed this season. After struggling to move up the organizational ladder — he didn't reach High-A until last year and posted a 5.01 ERA — Lovegrove posted a 1.56 ERA in 17⅓ innings and was then promoted to Double-A, where he has a 1.04 ERA in 8⅔ innings.

It just took time for Lovegrove to find his way.

"He's grown a ton and he's matured a ton," Mansolino said. "I think when guys go through failure in their career, they start to gain some perspective, just like any other person in any other walk of life. With the experience of failure comes perspective and with perspective comes the best version of yourself."

### **Indians notebook: Left-hander Oliver Perez brought in to bolster struggling bullpen; Francisco Lindor named AL Player of the Month by Beacon Journal/Ohio.com**

The turnover in the Indians bullpen hasn't yet slowed down.

The Indians on Saturday signed left-handed reliever Oliver Perez to a major-league deal and designated Jeff Beliveau for assignment.

Perez, 36, had been pitching at Triple-A in the New York Yankees system. There, he posted a 2.57 ERA and struck out 15 hitters in 14 innings. Perez had a 4.64 ERA and 10.6 K/9 rate in 33 innings last season with the Washington Nationals. He has a career 4.46 ERA in 15 big-league seasons.

Beliveau had allowed six runs on seven hits in 4⅓ innings in nine appearances as the Indians have struggled mightily to find consistency in the later innings.

Perez will be the second left-hander in the Indians bullpen, along with Tyler Olson, with Andrew Miller still on the 10-day disabled list. Once he enters a game, Perez will be the 15th reliever, including erstwhile starter Josh Tomlin, to make an appearance this season.

Player of the Month

Shortstop Francisco Lindor was named the American League Player of the Month for May.

Lindor tore through opposing pitching, hitting .373 with a .432 on-base percentage, 10 home runs, 13 doubles, 23 RBI and 27 runs scored in 27 games. He compiled 2.6 fWAR during May and entered Saturday fourth in baseball among qualified position players with 3.4 fWAR. That trails only Los Angeles Angels outfielder Mike Trout (4.6), Boston Red Sox outfielder Mookie Betts (4.1) and Jose Ramirez (4.0), his partner on the left side of the Indians infield.

Ramirez and Lindor each had 2.6 fWAR in May to pace the majors. Although the two were both among baseball's best in May, Lindor ended the month on a high note with a two-home-run, two-double, four-RBI performance in Friday's 9-8 win over the Minnesota Twins.

Lindor is the first Indians player to win the award since Jason Kipnis won it in May of his All-Star 2015 season.

### **Ryan Lewis: Danny Salazar remains in Arizona as progress remains slow by Ryan Lewis**

CLEVELAND: Perhaps the most logical — and simplest — answer for the fifth spot in the Indians rotation remains trapped in Arizona, sometimes singing Karaoke tunes to try to make the time pass when he's not on a mound in the sweltering heat.

Danny Salazar has primarily remained at the club's facility in Goodyear, Ariz. since spring training, throwing on back fields in 100-degree temperatures day after day, hoping the pain in his shoulder will subside. He was diagnosed with right shoulder impingement tendonitis, and the progress has been slow. And, there isn't much to do out there when the vast majority of your teammates are all in Cleveland, and the impingement in your shoulder will only allow you to do so much.

Salazar also received a platelet-rich plasma (PRP) injection earlier this month. The hope was that it would alleviate the condition enough to allow Salazar to begin letting it go again. There was hope, but it didn't last.

"I was feeling better for the first few days after," Salazar this week while in Cleveland. "I got 10 days of rest, not throwing, just icing and stretching. After that for the first few days, I was playing catch and I was feeling good. Then when I went to throw from 120 feet, it started bothering me."

Salazar received a cortisone injection this week after meeting with Cleveland Clinic's Dr. Mark Schickendantz, Indians manager Terry Francona told reporters in Minneapolis. Salazar will be shut down for 5-to-7 days, according to MLB.com.

That's been the brutal part of this process for Salazar — he can only ramp up to a certain point before the shoulder begins acting up again. There have been stretches during which he has felt good, but then it pops up again.

"It's frustrating," Salazar said. "I've been playing catch, feeling good one week. Then this week, it's like the same thing [comes] back. It's just been like that all the time. So I came here for like a week or so, see the doctor and see what the next step is."

Thus far, it has been a fight, but there isn't yet an end in sight. The team never really put a timetable on Salazar's return, and the situation hasn't gotten any clearer.

"That's been more frustrating for me, because I haven't been able to do what I want to do, which is throw the way I want to throw," he said. "There's no need for surgery or something like that. It's just something that is there that has to go away."

It has been a mental grind as much as a physical one. For several months, Salazar has had to go into each day only being able to hope it'll be better than the last, waiting for the time he can rejoin the major-league club. He's endured an extended search for answers, as well as the ups and downs of one positive day followed by pain the next.

In search of some form of normalcy, or least a bit of enjoyment through a long process, karaoke has been Salazar's answer. He has a karaoke machine, and he and Michael Martinez — who ruptured his Achilles tendon before the season — have broken up the monotony of their rehab by singing into the night. Sometimes, the results of these nights have made their way onto Instagram.

"It's actually pretty good, singing salsa," Salazar said of Martinez's abilities. "... I have the karaoke thing in my house, so he comes there and I think he feels the same thing. He's like, 'Damn, I want to one day wake up and just walk like normal and I can't.' That's something we've been doing, and I think he keeps my mind away from what's happening, even though after that, we come back to rehab."

The Indians have been searching for an answer for the No. 5 spot in their rotation since Josh Tomlin struggled mightily to start the season and was sent to the bullpen. Adam Plutko is an option but hasn't yet established himself.

Salazar, a former All-Star, has the better track record and an electric arm, with a career 3.82 ERA and a 10.5 K/9 rate. On paper, he has the highest ceiling. He just hasn't been able to stay healthy and was virtually a non-factor during the Indians' postseason runs the last two years.

The team is still trying to wait, because it has seen what Salazar can do when he's at his best.

"I think everybody would like it to happen more quick, for him to get back healthy and pitching the way he's capable of," president of baseball operations Chris Antonetti said earlier in May. "It just hasn't happened yet. But he could be a big part of our team in the second half."

### **A game of musical chairs is approaching for the Indians' outfield**

By Zack Meisel Jun 2, 2018 8

MINNEAPOLIS — The Indians' outfield is a forest full of question mark-shaped trees. Some of those trees will fall early next week, and they will make a sound.

Lonnie Chisenhall and Brandon Guyer are expected to return from the disabled list Tuesday, and Tyler Naquin isn't too far behind. That gives the Indians eight outfielders for likely five spots. If a Terry Francona-managed roster is going to overflow with something, it's relievers, not outfielders.

There's some irony involved in the fact that outfielders keep suffering injuries, yet Michael Brantley has stood tall in left field. (Really, that Brantley is standing at all is encouraging, given his frequent visits to the operating table.) Brantley earned an All-Star nod last season for his strong first half, and he's been leaps and bounds better this year, with a .332/.376/.551 slash line and a 149 wRC+.

Francona recently noted that he can pencil in Brantley in left field each game and leave him alone.

As for the rest of the outfield, well, the Indians have been searching for the proper (and healthy) combinations.

So, what will go into the team's decision-making process when narrowing the field next week? That's precisely the question The Athletic posed to Francona on Friday afternoon. He listed a few factors.

"One, and I think it's fair, contractually, what guys — I think that's part of it. Guys that have options. I think that's important, because you can try to have the perfect team, say, on Tuesday, but as we've seen, all kinds of stuff happens. So, if you try to get the perfect team and you let this guy go, you designate this guy, you do this, and then you look up a week from now and you go, 'Where are our outfielders?' So, you have to keep that in mind. Certainly, the goal is to win every game here, but I think you have to be mindful of the organization, the health of the organization.

"We know we have some decisions coming. We talk about it daily."

Francona and members of the coaching staff and front office will sort it all out Monday, in between draft prep meetings.

But why wait until then? Grab your detective kit and let's solve this puzzle.

Yeah, he's not going anywhere: Michael Brantley

The Indians' lineup is humming lately, especially the quartet at the top in Francisco Lindor, Brantley, José Ramírez and Edwin Encarnacion. Even though he missed the final two months of last season, Brantley, sporting a career-best .927 OPS, has played more games than any other Tribe outfielder since the start of the 2016 season. He hasn't missed a game in a month, either.

They already seemed to make up their minds on this one: Bradley Zimmer

The Indians could have activated Zimmer from the disabled list Friday and promptly optioned him to Class AAA Columbus. Instead, he took the roster spot that Shane Bieber occupied for the previous 24 hours. Still, Greg Allen started in center field Friday night, not Zimmer, and Allen notched a double and a triple. It's possible that the Indians could option Zimmer to Columbus, but, again, they also could have just done that Friday.

He's a safe bet to stick: Lonnie Chisenhall

This isn't much of a question. Chisenhall, out since the first week of April, is a lock to return to the big-league roster. How often he'll play is another question, especially if Melky Cabrera remains in the mix.

Switch-hitting helps his case: Melky Cabrera

Francona referred to him as "a nice connector between Yonder (Alonso) and (Jason) Kipnis because he's a switch-hitter and he can hit. He knows how to hit." Ah, but the Indians should not be abiding by the old "Do as I say, not as I do" mantra. Cabrera actually needs to, you know, hit. As his .186/.213/.279 clip in 47 plate appearances illustrates, he has not yet accomplished that aim.

But the Indians could point to that small sample size and request a longer evaluation period.

"Hopefully as he gets through this first period," Francona said, "I'm sure his body is kind of sore and everything, (so) hopefully we'll see even more."



He's going to need more time: Tyler Naquin

Naquin isn't really part of the current conversation, since he hasn't started a rehab assignment yet. He worked out with Class AA Akron on Friday, and he could see some game action this weekend. But since he's behind the other recovering outfielders, the team's decision on him will be a separate one.

Still, when that time comes, it's tough to see how he fits into the picture. If Chisenhall and Brantley are healthy, the Indians don't really need another left-handed-hitting corner outfielder, though Naquin performed well at the plate earlier this season.

The teacher and the pupil: Rajai Davis and Greg Allen

Allen has started nine consecutive games, and he has 12 hits in 33 at-bats in that stretch (.364 average). He knows a decision is looming, too.

"You're aware of these things," he said Friday night, "but you're really just trying to take it one day at a time. Control what you can control. Be where your feet are."

Does Davis offer anything that Allen can't at this point? Davis remains one of the game's speediest players, but Allen is no slouch on the basepaths or in the field. If the Indians choose to keep Davis, it's only because Allen has minor-league options and they want to preserve some depth. But, really, Allen deserves a big-league spot.

"It's nice to see a kid, he started out slow, but now he's starting to make adjustments," Francona said. "He's swinging at more strikes. He's keeping the ball out of the air, especially to left field. And his at-bats have been a lot better. He's swinging at more strikes. He's a good defender in center. You can put him in right and he's good there, too. If it makes for a hard decision, I think we're all happy about that."

The guy who better hit lefties: Brandon Guyer

In a perfect world, Guyer would serve as the lefty-mashing platoon partner to Chisenhall or whoever mans right field. But this is a world in which Marlins Man is popular and "The Office" continued after Michael Scott departed. Oh, and Guyer owns a .208/.300/.327 slash line since the start of the 2017 season. He's out of minor-league options and the Indians hold a \$3 million option on him for next year.

Prediction: Brantley, Chisenhall, Zimmer, Cabrera, Davis (Allen optioned, Naquin eventually optioned, Guyer designated for assignment)

What I'd do: Brantley, Chisenhall, Zimmer, Allen, Guyer (Naquin eventually optioned, Davis and Cabrera designated for assignment)

### **Cleveland Indians sign LHP Oliver Perez, designate LHP Jeff Beliveau for assignment**

By Joe Noga, [cleveland.com](http://cleveland.com) [jnoga@cleveland.com](mailto:jnoga@cleveland.com)

MINNEAPOLIS -- Veteran left-handed reliever Oliver Perez has signed a major league contract with the Cleveland Indians, the team announced Saturday. In a corresponding move, the club designated lefty Jeff Beliveau for assignment.

Perez opted out of a minor-league deal with the New York Yankees on Friday. He made 16 relief appearances for Class AAA Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, going 1-0 with a 2.57 earned run average. Perez allowed 17 hits and walked four, striking out 15 batters in 14 innings for the RailRiders, but allowing a .327 batting average by opponents.

If he appears in a game, Perez will become the 15th reliever used by the Indians in 2018. The team used 13 relief pitchers in 2017, excluding starters and position players.

Perez appeared in spring training games with Cincinnati after signing Feb. 25, and was signed by the Yankees March 30 after his release by the Reds.

Perez, 36, a native of Cullican, Mexico, is a 15-year veteran with stops in Pittsburgh, New York (NL), Seattle, Arizona, Houston and Washington. He owns a 69-86 career record and a 4.46 ERA in 552 appearances.

As a reliever, his ERA is 3.98 and he averages 10.8 strikeouts per nine innings.

Beliveau, was designated for assignment by the Indians for the second time this season. He appeared in nine games, logging 4 2/3 innings and allowing six earned runs. The 31 year old walked five and struck out two.

Cleveland Plain Dealer LOADED: 06.03.2018

### **Cleveland Indians can't break through against Lance Lynn, Minnesota Twins in 7-1 loss**

By Joe Noga, [cleveland.com](http://cleveland.com) [jnoga@cleveland.com](mailto:jnoga@cleveland.com)

MINNEAPOLIS -- Rain threatened throughout parts of Saturday in Minnesota but never broke through. Likewise, the Cleveland Indians' offense threatened the host Twins on several occasions, but was never really able to mount an offensive storm against starter Lance Lynn.

Lynn (4-4, 5.46 ERA) pitched his way out of trouble early and the Twins bullpen held Cleveland in check, winning for the second straight day, 7-1 at Target field.

Lynn struggled with his command from the outset, walking five batters in five innings, but he got big outs when it counted, retiring Greg Allen on a bases-loaded fly ball to left in the third and getting Edwin Encarnacion to bounce into a double-play with two aboard in the fifth.

Encarnacion singled to left field in the eighth inning, extending his season-high hitting streak to nine games. Since May 1, he is batting .323 with eight homers, six doubles, 18 runs and 26 RBI.

Cleveland was 2-for-16 at the plate with runners on base and 0-for-9 with runners in scoring position.

Trevor Bauer (4-4, 2.77), starting for the first time since his career-high 127-pitch outing against Houston May 27, suffered his third road loss of the season, allowing seven runs (three earned) on six hits with three walks, but striking out 11.

It was Bauer's 13th career double-digit strikeout game and fourth this season. Bauer has 24 strikeouts in his last two starts without a win to show for it.

"He wanted to get some guys out with his breaking ball, but he threw a lot," manager Terry Francona said. "Sometimes when you want to get a guy out with a breaking ball, you've got to show him another pitch, too, so you can get him out with that."

Brian Dozier roped an RBI triple off the wall in right field in the third and Eddie Rosario followed with his first home run since May 11 to put the Twins in front, 3-1.

Cleveland's defense made two errors behind Bauer, including a Jason Kipnis gaffe on a potential double-play grounder in the sixth that led to four unearned runs.

"Instead of being one out and a runner on first, now all of a sudden it's no outs and first and second," Francona said. "It just snowballed from there."

The Indians got on the scoreboard in the second inning when Allen drew a one-out walk and advanced to third on a base hit by Kipnis. The duo then executed a double steal as Kipnis took second and Allen crossed home plate for a 1-0 Tribe lead.

"They did a good job," Francona said. "Kip was heads-up and (Allen) might have been a hair slow on his reaction. But he's quick enough where it still works."

#### Inauspicious start

Left-handed reliever Oliver Perez made his Indians debut in the sixth inning facing Eddie Rosario with runners at second and third and two out. Perez's first pitch skipped past catcher Roberto Perez to the backstop allowing Ryan LaMarre to score. Perez, however, bounced back to strike out the side in the seventh.

#### Wall-banger

Allen's bid for an extra-base hit in the sixth inning was denied on a fine running catch by Twins right fielder Max Kepler. Allen drove a two-strike fastball from Lynn to right that Kepler sprinted back and grabbed just before slamming into the wall for the second out of the inning. Allen went 0-for-3 at the plate, snapping a seven-game hitting streak.

#### Home free

Allen became the first Indians player to steal home since Francisco Lindor did so June 28, 2016, also on the back end of a double steal at Atlanta.

The last Indians straight steal of home was Grady Sizemore on Aug. 27, 2005 against Toronto.

#### Return of the Machine

Bradley Zimmer returned to the Indians lineup for the first time since May 12. Zimmer went 2-for-4 with a pair of singles in his final two at-bats. The hits raised Zimmer's batting average to .234.

#### What it means

After winning six straight, the Indians have dropped two consecutive games and lead Detroit by 2.5 games in the American League Central Division. Bauer's record dropped to 1-3 in day game starts this season.

#### The pitches

Bauer threw 104 pitches, 65 (62 percent) for strikes. Lynn threw 113 pitches, 65 (57 percent) for strikes.

#### Rain or shine

The Twins and Indians drew 23,476 fans to Target Field on Saturday. First pitch was at 4:11 p.m. with a temperature of 62 degrees.

Cleveland Plain Dealer LOADED: 06.03.2018

### **Cleveland Indians SS Francisco Lindor named American League Player of the Month for May**

By Joe Noga, cleveland.com jnoga@cleveland.com

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- Indians shortstop Francisco Lindor was named American League Player of the Month for May, Major League Baseball announced Saturday.

Lindor hit .373 and slugged .737 with an OPS of 1.310 in May. He scored 27 runs and collected 44 hits, including 13 doubles and 10 home runs while driving in 23.

It is his first career Player of the Month Award, and the first time an Indians player has claimed the honor since Jason Kipnis in May 2015. Earlier, Lindor won AL Player of the Week honors for the week ending May 6.

Lindor led the AL in runs, hits, doubles and batting average in May. He was third in slugging percentage, tied for third in home runs and on-base percentage and tied for sixth in RBI.

In May, Lindor twice recorded games with two doubles and two home runs. He also became the first Indians leadoff hitter to total four extra-base hits in a game since Tribe manager Terry Francona's father, Tito, did so in 1954.

Francona said he's enjoyed watching Lindor and teammate Jose Ramirez grow into stars.

"It's fun to see what they're turning into," Francona said. "Is a guy going to hit for average? Can he hit for power? Can he do both? Both of them are doing both and they're good defenders. We're pretty fortunate that two of our best players -- put (Michael Brantley) in that -- they play every day, they love to play, they're great guys and we're pretty fortunate."

Lindor's Cleveland teammates Ramirez and Brantley also received player of the month award votes, as did Boston teammates Mookie Betts and J.D. Martinez and Los Angeles Angels outfielder Mike Trout.

Cincinnati infielder Scooter Gennett won the award in the National League.

### **Cleveland Plain Dealer LOADED: 06.03.2018**

#### **Rosario continues hot hitting into June**

Chris Hine

A few thoughts after the Twins' 7-1 victory over the Indians.

Steady Eddie: Eddie Rosario has carried over his strong start to the season in June. Rosario homered and drew a pair of walks Sunday. In May, Rosario had an OPS (on-base plus slugging percentage) of 1.003, which ranked 12th in MLB among players who played in at least 20 games.

On Saturday, Rosario took a cutter from Trevor Bauer that was way off the plate and sent it into the first row over the right field wall to give the Twins a 3-1 lead in the third inning. It was the perfect example of Rosario aggressiveness to chase – and hit – pitches that are out of the zone.

"I remember the first couple of weeks of the season, he was hitting and he came up to me and he said he felt something that he felt in the second half last year, which is a really good sign," second baseman Brian Dozier said. "He goes off feel a lot. He's a guy that is very aggressive at the plate. I think on the basepaths or whatever, what's impressed me the most is him taking that next step as far as drawing walks and getting on base and that kind of thing which is huge."

Rosario finished fourth in batting average in May among all AL players (.368). Entering Friday, he was hitting .432 (19-for-44) when leading off an inning. That was the best mark in baseball.

Garver gets a stinger: During the last at bat of the game, Jose Ramirez fouled a pitch right off the knee of Twins catcher Mitch Garver. Garver writhed on the ground in pain for a moment before getting up and finishing the game.

"He's had them and he just said that it takes a while for the feeling to return in the leg," manager Paul Molitor said. "It kind of catches it in between the pad there. It got him good, there's a question about that."

The fact that Garver finished the game should bode well for his availability Sunday. It wasn't the only injury adventure in the ninth innings. Max Kepler fell awkwardly trying to catch a double off the wall in right centerfield off the bat of Francisco Lindor.

Then Ryan LaMarre got injured slipping as he threw the ball back to the infield. Molitor said LaMarre "rolled his ankle" a little bit but LaMarre looked fine sprinting to catch the final out from Ramirez.

Star Tribune LOADED: 06.03.2018

#### **Lance Lynn brushes off wildness, allows just one run in Twins victory over Cleveland**

##### **Starter continued his steady improvement this season.**

The Lance Lynn experience has rarely been a smooth one, and his start Saturday against the Indians was Lynn on full display, warts and all.

He allowed only two hits but walked five hitters and plunked another. He threw 113 pitches, the most he has thrown all season, but only 65 for strikes.

"Pitch counts are pointless," a taciturn Lynn said after the game. "It's about how you're doing."

He did well enough. His customary wildness did not prevent him from defeating the Indians, as he pitched himself in and out of trouble while the Twins offense continued its resurrection in a 7-1 victory at Target Field.

Suddenly Lynn's numbers are coming back to Earth after a rough April and early May. In his past three starts, Lynn (4-4) has allowed just three earned runs and his earned-run average is down to 5.46 while picking up three wins.

He just hasn't made it look easy. Saturday was no exception.

"I thought it was pretty gritty," manager Paul Molitor said. "You look at the traffic he created for himself ... he gets pretty flustered out there at times.

"He made some close pitches that didn't go his way, but he just kept finding his way to grind through it."

The third inning required a lot of that grinding. Lynn walked two hitters and hit Yonder Alonso to load the bases. He then went to 3-2 on right fielder Greg Allen, who fouled off a few pitches before flying out to Eddie Rosario to end the inning and allowing Target Field to exhale.

"What you saw earlier in the season versus now is him getting out of those and making big pitches," second baseman Brian Dozier said.

It kept the Twins within a run and allowed them to get the lead in the bottom of the third. Dozier tripled on a high fly ball that scraped the wall in right field, and a similar towering shot from Rosario barely made it into the first row of seats over the wall.

The triple and home run had a hit probability of 11 and 16 percent, respectively, according to Statcast, but the Twins won't complain about something like that going their way.

Lynn continued his escape act in the fifth inning. With two on, he induced the dangerous Edwin Encarnacion to hit into a 5-4-3 double play. Lynn pounded his glove and gave a roar after the outs went into the books.

Soon after the fifth the overcast sky that rained on Target Field earlier in the day gave way to afternoon sunshine.

It might have been stormy at times again for Lynn, but of late he has gotten through to the other side.

He was at 99 pitches after five innings, but Molitor sent him back out for the sixth. It turned out to be one of his easiest innings, one of two in which he retired the side in order.

The Twins capitalized on another bit of good fortune, scoring four unearned runs off Trevor Bauer (4-4) in the sixth after second baseman Jason Kipnis booted a potential double-play ball.

That came after Lynn stretched out his arm for his longest outing of the season.

"He's never been what you would say a total command guy," Molitor said. "He's always had that issue to some degree. I think it's been a little bit exaggerated here, at least early. But the last three starts have been trending in a good way."

Star Tribune LOADED: 06.03.2018

## **1129672 Minnesota Twins Lance Lynn, Eddie Rosario help Twins to 7-1 win over Cleveland Indians**

MIKE BERARDINO

Maybe Lance Lynn should be saved for division games only.

The veteran right-hander reeled off his third straight quality start, all against American League Central competition, as the Twins rolled to a 7-1 win over the Cleveland Indians on Saturday afternoon at Target Field.

Including a May 5 win in Chicago, Lynn is now 4-0 with a 1.82 earned run average in four starts against the AL Central. In his other seven starts for the Twins, he is 0-4 with an 8.33 ERA.

For his career, including interleague play with the St. Louis Cardinals, Lynn is 7-2 with a 3.01 ERA in 15 tries against his current division. Not that he'd ever acknowledge his apparent mastery of AL Central foes.

"I don't pay any attention to that," Lynn said in his typically curt postgame monotone. "Every game is the same. I've pitched every game the same with the intent to get everybody out that's in the box."

Since falling behind 8-0 through four innings in the series opener on Thursday, the Twins have outscored the Indians 22-6. Improving to 3-2 in the season series, the Twins also pulled within 4 1/2 games of the first-place Indians after falling a season-high 6 1/2 back on Thursday.

At 113 pitches Lynn blew past the previous high for a Twins starter this season: Jake Odorizzi's 108 pitches on May 20 against the Milwaukee Brewers. Lynn walked five to retake the unwanted AL lead in that category from Chicago White Sox pitcher Lucas Giolito, but Lynn also limited the Indians to a pair of hits: Jason Kipnis' one-out single in the second and Francisco Lindor's leadoff single in the fifth.

Kipnis was part of a double steal in the second that saw speedy Greg Allen score from third when Mitch Garver threw down to second and Brian Dozier's return throw bounced wide of home, but Lynn left the bases loaded when Allen fled to left to end a nine-pitch duel.

The Indians left 11 on base and went hitless in nine at-bats with runners in scoring position.

Lynn, who threw 118 and 123 pitches last season for the St. Louis Cardinals in his first year back from Tommy John surgery, seemed to get stronger as the day went on. He entered 0-2 with a 10.29 earned run average in day games, but that figure improved considerably after he stuck around long enough to beat Trevor Bauer.

"Pitch counts are pointless," Lynn said. "It's about how you're doing."

Kipnis booted a routine double-play grounder in the sixth, opening the door for a four-run rally that chased Bauer despite 11 strikeouts. Max Kepler, Ryan LaMarre and Dozier had run-scoring hits in the sixth.

Dozier keyed a three-run third with an opposite-field triple off the right-field wall. Eddie Rosario followed with his 10th homer, a two-run shot on an inside cutter just over the flower pots in right.

Rosario, who also walked twice, is 12 for 30 with two homers off Bauer, who entered with a 2.61 ERA.

"Sometimes I feel I know what he's going to throw me," Rosario said. "He throws me a lot of curveballs, a lot of sinkers in. The last time I faced him, he got me for two outs with the cutter. I was thinking about that."

Lynn, meanwhile, needed 31 pitches to get through the third inning alone, which he finished at 69 pitches with four walks and six three-ball counts. Over his final three innings, Lynn threw just 44 pitches (32 strikes) while starting six of his final 10 batters with strikes.

Since his ERA climbed back up to 7.47 with a three-inning clunker against the Cardinals, Lynn has knocked more than two runs off his ERA (now 5.46).

A blister on his pitching hand had been a nagging issue for Lynn since his second start of the season. He was given 11 days between starts after facing the Houston Astros on April 9, but command has remained a problem.

"I think it's something that's somewhat chronic for him," Twins manager Paul Molitor said of the blister. "It's something that we monitor in between starts, when he starts, how it looks in the fifth inning compared to the start of the game."

Lynn, famous for his heavy fastball usage, had pushed that figure to 78.5 percent.

"He's just got that little spot where it gets irritated," Molitor said. "When it gets a little bit raw, it's going to affect how he's able to command and spin the ball. I don't think there's been a big correlation between his command, which he struggled with early, and the fact he's starting to get better and maybe that thing is healing a little bit."

## Nick Cafardo / SUNDAY BASEBALL NOTES / What will teams be looking for before baseball's trade deadline?

By Nick Cafardo

After this week's amateur draft concludes, teams will turn their full attention to filling needs up until the trading deadline. What's interesting is that there aren't that many true contenders in a sport that's been chopped into categories of haves, have-nots, and don't-cares.

Here's a look at what some teams may be looking to acquire or sell off:

**New York Yankees** — It's obvious that a team loaded with offense and with a good bullpen would need to bolster its starting pitching. The Yankees failed to secure Gerrit Cole in the offseason, and Cole has become one of this season's most dominant pitchers with the Astros. The Yankees have players to offer for front-line starters. Rangers lefthander Cole Hamels would seem the easiest to acquire, though there would likely have to be some financial relief from Texas, as Hamels's salary is \$23 million. That relief would likely need to be half, as the Yankees continue to strive to reset their luxury tax. Other targets for the Yankees could be Tampa Bay's Chris Archer, Toronto's J.A. Happ, Arizona's Patrick Corbin, and Detroit's Francisco Liriano. Doug Fister of the Rangers could also solidify the back end.

**Houston Astros** — The Astros have offense, and the best starting rotation in baseball. What they need is another solid bullpen piece, perhaps even two. The most oft-mentioned reliever linked to them is Baltimore's Zach Britton, who can become a free agent after this season but has not yet pitched this year after surgery to repair a ruptured Achilles' tendon. The Astros would have to see a healthy Britton over a few appearances before giving up prospects. There's also Kansas City's Kelvin Herrera, San Diego's Brad Hand, and Baltimore's Brad Brach.

**Boston Red Sox** — So much depends on whether Drew Pomeranz can straighten himself out, and if he can't, the Sox will likely give Steven Wright a shot. If that doesn't work, it's not out of the realm of possibility that they go after a starter. The elephant in the room is their MLB-high \$234 million payroll. But if that No. 5 spot isn't solidified, they may have to go this route. The other problem in making a deal is they have very few players in their farm system who are attractive to other teams, especially with Michael Chavis (PED suspension) and Jay Groome (Tommy John surgery) out of the mix.

Everything baseball every Monday-Friday during baseball season, and weekly in the offseason.

**Atlanta Braves** — Alex Anthopoulos has always been an aggressive GM. In his first full season with the Braves, he probably didn't expect them to be this good. They're at least a year ahead of schedule, maybe two. But the Braves don't appear to be fading, even with young superstar Ronald Acuna Jr. (knee) on the DL. The needs would include one more starting pitcher and a third base upgrade. Kansas City's Mike Moustakas is often linked to the Braves and would be an outstanding fit in that lineup. Oakland's Jed Lowrie, who can play all over the infield and offers leadership, also has been mentioned. The longer shot is Josh Donaldson, the player Anthopoulos stole from the A's for the Blue Jays in one of the more lopsided deals of the last decade. Donaldson is set to become a free agent, but he has had shoulder issues that could affect his appearances at third base.

**Philadelphia Phillies** — Another surprise team in the National League East, the Phillies could use some offense. This may be where we start the Manny Machado discussion. The Orioles' superstar shortstop/third baseman will likely go somewhere where Baltimore can get a good haul of prospects, and to a team that could conceivably re-sign him. The Phillies meet those criteria.

**St. Louis Cardinals** — The Cardinals keep things close to the vest, but it's clear they need third base help and an impact hitter. They have the pieces to get Machado, Donaldson or Moustakas, and if I had to venture a guess, they'll get one of them by the end of July.

**Seattle Mariners** — The Mariners keep excelling even without Robinson Cano. But Jerry Dipoto needs to have this group accomplish something — a playoff berth — which they have not done since they won 116 games in 2001. So, what do they go after? They could use another pitcher, so Archer, Happ, or Hamels fit the bill. But with Cano out, the Mariners could also go for offense (Hanley Ramirez?).

**Cleveland Indians** — Is this sleeping giant awakening? Their offense has been better of late, though players who make sense for them are Donaldson, Moustakas, and Adam Jones. Their bullpen isn't what it used to be, so help in that area is imperative. This is where they could be players for Britton, Herrera, and Brach in particular.

**Oakland Athletics** — We've written Lowrie's name a thousand times over the last two years, and he's not gone anywhere, but being in the final year of his contract, and making \$6 million, which would mean a \$3 million outlay by some team, we think this could finally be the year. In three seasons with Oakland, his OPS has risen from .637 in 2016, to .808 last season, to .855 this season. He also already has 14 doubles. Teams such as the Dodgers, Indians, and Braves could have interest in the switch-hitter, whose best position is second base, but he could easily play third.

**Milwaukee Brewers** — The Brewers know they have to address their starting pitching needs to remain in the race. They're likely to be players for most of the aforementioned guys, from Hamels to Archer to Happ to Fister, and possibly Liriano, who has been decent for the Tigers.

**Minnesota Twins** — I always thought they would be a landing spot for Ramirez, so we'll see where that takes us. The Twins also could use pitching help.

**Baltimore Orioles** — If the Orioles had their druthers Machado would go to the Cardinals for a couple of pitching prospects highlighting at least a three-prospect package. Dan Duquette will have other attractive pieces to deal — Jones, Britton, and Brach to name three. It's not expected that Kevin Gausman or Dylan Bundy are going anywhere, but Duquette may listen on Gausman.

**Chicago Cubs** — Theo Epstein spent a lot of money on pitching that hasn't worked out, but he may have to spend more. With Joe Maddon there, Archer's name always pops up. Epstein has pretty much called the acquisition of Machado a fantasy, so we'll cross that off for now. The focus will be a pitcher, and Epstein would likely prefer Archer over an older pitcher such as Hamels. They also need bullpen help.

**San Francisco Giants** — The Giants need a back-end starter, so they could go after Fister, Tyson Ross, or Liriano.

**Miami Marlins** — The first year of tanking isn't quite over. The Marlins got rid of their best players, but there are still others they'd like to find new homes for. Closer Brad Ziegler could be an interesting piece for a team looking for that different look. The Marlins would like to move infielder Martin Prado, first baseman Justin Bour might also have some value, and Dan Straily could fit the back end of a rotation. The prize would be catcher J.T. Realmuto, but the Marlins view him as someone to build around. Yet if they were offered the right package, they'd likely deal him, too.

Apropos of nothing

1. The Red Sox need to hit a home run in the draft because their farm system isn't good. Their first-round pick from last year, Tanner Houck (33 walks, 32 strikeouts for a 6.04 ERA in 44 $\frac{2}{3}$  innings), has been disappointing. Another former first-round pick — Trey Ball — is a release candidate (1-2, 9.00). Their two best prospects — lefthander Jay Groome (Tommy John surgery) and third baseman Michael Chavis (PED suspension) — will be gone for a while. The Sox couldn't make a substantial deal if they wanted to. "Let me put it this way," said one American League scout, "there isn't anyone in their farm system that a team would say, 'I have to have that guy.' Not saying they don't have anything to make a deal, but they don't have enough to make a major deal."
2. The Red Sox are one of the teams that have been watching Royals closer Kelvin Herrera in the event that Tyler Thornburg doesn't come back in the near future. Herrera obviously wouldn't be the closer in Boston, but rather a strong late-inning option. But as we mentioned, what do the Sox have to give?
3. Are the Red Sox trying to boost Blake Swihart's value by playing him more so they can use him as a chip in a deal? The prevailing opinion is that's exactly what they're doing. But while teams certainly know Swihart can hit, what they want to see him do is catch, and that's not happening.
4. Former Red Sox reliever Joe Sambito has filed a lawsuit against a former employer, Independent Sports & Entertainment (ISE), for whom he was a player agent, on the grounds of age discrimination and wrongful termination. The suit was filed in Superior Court in Orange County (Calif.) and Sambito is seeking \$2 million. Sambito, 65, has represented, among others, Diamondbacks first baseman Paul Goldschmidt. Among Sambito's other claims are fraud, unjust enrichment, breach of fiduciary duty, breach of contract, and unlawful business practices. The company fired back with a statement: "This lawsuit contains self-serving and meritless allegations, and Independent Sports & Entertainment will vigorously defend itself against this groundless suit."
5. The one surprise with the Dodgers is the performance of veteran outfielder Matt Kemp, who at times in recent years was considered washed up. Well, he's hitting .343 this season with a .920 OPS. One theory from a longtime scout who has been around Kemp: "He's taken things seriously again. He's motivated. He loves playing baseball again and he doesn't want it to end. He's a good hitter, always has been. I think he's learned a lot about hitting and what he can still do." Kemp, 32, was runner-up for NL MVP in 2011.
6. If you missed it, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts recognized the 75th anniversary of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League recently as a result of great work done by Kumu Gupta of Quincy. The league was featured in the 1992 movie "A League of Their Own." Quincy resident Mary Pratt, who is about to turn 100, was a player for the Rockford Peaches, the team the movie highlighted, and May 30 was declared "Women in Baseball Day" in the Commonwealth. Gupta is hoping to put together a Mary Pratt Day in Quincy and hopes to get the White House to do a National Women in Baseball Day proclamation.
7. The calls are getting louder in Toronto for the Blue Jays to call up third base prospect Vladimir Guerrero Jr. as injuries mount for Josh Donaldson, a free agent-to-be who is likely to be traded if he can stay healthy long enough. Donaldson recently had a calf injury after a shoulder injury. He didn't play Tuesday or Wednesday. He also has gone 22 straight games without hitting a home run. Guerrero is having a monster season at Double A New Hampshire, hitting .414 with 11 homers and 53 RBIs with an OPS of 1.166. Jays officials have tried to keep the Guerrero hysteria down to a realistic level, but it may not be contained much longer.
8. So, how are the Rays doing with relievers starting games? Heading into the weekend, they were 3-3 in games started by relievers. Sergio Romo and Ryne Stanek had combined for 6 $\frac{1}{3}$  innings and had allowed six runs. The long men who have followed have fared much better. Austin Pruitt, Ryan Yarbrough, and Anthony Banda had combined for a 2.04 ERA, a .197 batting average against, and a .615 OPS. So, that part is working.
9. Rays manager Kevin Cash says people who think all hitters have to do to beat the shift is bunt to the unoccupied side of the field don't get how hard it is to bunt against high-velocity pitchers. "There aren't many hitters who can do it," Cash said. "It's a lot harder than people think." Cash is right. If it was that easy, everybody would do it, and if you notice, very few hitters can pull it off. Cash believes one of his former players — Evan Longoria — could do it.
10. Everybody seems to forget about the Pirates in the NL Central. But for a team that got rid of Andrew McCutchen and Gerrit Cole in the offseason, they've managed to stay relevant. There's the possibility the Pirates could be seeking pitching help at the deadline. Chris Archer, perhaps?
11. The Royals are fortunate that the two teams who might have interest in third baseman Mike Moustakas are the Cardinals and Braves, teams with rich farm systems who could give Kansas City a decent prospect in return.
12. It's too early to rule out the Mets, but their injuries and a poor bullpen have made it tough to think about a revival. The Mets are likely to be sellers. Second baseman Asdrubal Cabrera (.303 average, .873 OPS) is having a really good season and could be a piece they trade.
13. Mets reliever Gerson Bautista, acquired from the Red Sox in the Addison Reed deal last season, has been throwing 97-100 miles per hour, but with the absence of off-speed stuff everyone's sitting on his fastball and he's getting hit hard. It's the reason that Herrera and the Red Sox' Joe Kelly have been so effective, they've used a three-pitch mix to get hitters out.
14. Jake Peavy is going to throw for teams in a private workout later this month.
15. Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson is heading a group that would like to bring baseball to Portland, Ore.

#### Extra innings

From the Bill Chuck files — "Last season, Craig Kimbrel averaged 98.3 m.p.h. on his fastball, topping out at 101.2. This season, he's averaging 96.6, topping out at 99.4." . . . Also, "With two outs, Atlanta leads the majors with 126 runs scored, second is the Braves' old home, Milwaukee, with 120 runs scored, and third, is the Braves' original home, Boston, with 111 runs scored." . . . Happy birthday, Carl Everett (47), Steve Lyons (58), Julio Valdez (62), and Jim Dwyer (68).

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### Kluber's Long Roll (Tyler Kepner)

In recent weeks in these pages, we have profiled two extraordinary pitchers at the top of their games: the Washington Nationals' Max Scherzer, who leads the majors in strikeouts with 120, and the Astros' Justin Verlander, who, heading into the weekend, had the majors' best E.R.A. at 1.11. But let's not ignore the sustained brilliance of Corey Kluber.

Kluber, the ace of the Cleveland Indians, fired six shutout innings with 10 strikeouts in a victory over the Chicago White Sox on Wednesday, capping a month in which he had 41 strikeouts and one walk. It also marked a full year of absurd regular-season dominance.

From June 1 of last season (when he returned from a back injury) through the end of this May, Kluber went 23-4 with a 1.76 E.R.A. in 35 starts. In 251 innings, he fanned 312 with 33 walks.

Those numbers closely align with one of the best seasons of the Hall of Famer Pedro Martinez. In 1999, when Martinez won his second Cy Young Award and nearly captured the Most Valuable Player Award, he went 23-4 with a 2.07 E.R.A. in 31 games (29 starts) for Boston. In 213½ innings, Martinez struck out 313 and allowed 37 walks.

Interestingly, both pitchers in this comparison allowed the same number of earned runs, 49. But for Martinez to match Kluber's E.R.A., he would have needed to add 37⅔ scoreless innings.

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