

Bauer K's 12, but Reds stun Tribe after mixup

By Jordan Bastian MLB.com @MLBastian

CLEVELAND -- When the bullpen door swung open in the ninth inning on Tuesday night, Indians manager Terry Francona was not expecting to see Dan Otero enter the field. With every step Otero took on his jog to the mound, Francona realized there had been a critical communication breakdown.

With the bases loaded, the game on the line and Reds star Joey Votto looming, Francona wanted lefty Oliver Perez for the two-out situation. This was a case of nicknames gone wrong, and the mixup did considerable damage in a 7-4 loss. All seven Cincinnati runs came in the ninth -- three on a three-run double by Votto -- to wash away a brilliant eight-inning performance by Trevor Bauer.

Francona has had a hard enough time working with Cleveland's beleaguered bullpen this season. The team's relief corps ranks last in baseball with a 5.37 ERA. The manager knew that he shared plenty of the blame for this collapse against Cincinnati.

"That one lands squarely on me," Francona said. "There's no getting around it. I've got to be responsible for that."

The game-changing mistake came while closer Cody Allen -- in the midst of a chaotic appearance -- issued an intentional walk to Scott Schebler. Francona turned to pitching coach Carl Willis in the home dugout and instructed him to call to the bullpen to have Perez warm up in case Votto came up.

The problem was that Francona used Perez's initials (O.P.) and Willis heard Otero's nickname (O.T.). So the pitching coach picked up the phone and called bullpen coach Scott Atchison, who followed orders and told Otero to start loosening up. After Allen's issues persisted in the form of a walk to Dilson Herrera to load the bases, Francona walked up the dugout steps and raised his left arm to signal for Perez.

"I should've asked him to repeat it," Willis said. "Quite frankly, heart of hearts, I felt like Cody was going to get out of the situation. But, you know, I made the mistake -- got the wrong guy up. It's not that [Otero] can't get the job done, but it probably wasn't the best matchup."

Willis noted that he checked his matchups sheet after calling the bullpen to get Otero -- a ground-ball specialist -- ready to enter. While the sample size is small, Votto had gone 0-for-4 with a strikeout in six career plate appearances against the righty. Even Votto admitted after the win that facing Otero is not a comfortable at-bat for him.

"He's tough, man. I've never liked facing him," Votto said. "Today was one of those occasions where I got a good pitch to hit, I put it in play and good things happen."

Otero, who did not think twice about being asked to face Votto, slipped into a full count against the Reds' first baseman, who then drilled a pitch deep into the right-center-field gap. All three runners scored, putting the Reds ahead for good, 6-4. Eugenio Suarez later added an RBI single to tack on an insurance run.

"I was ready. I'm always ready to pitch," Otero said. "I told [Francona] before the game I was ready to pitch. You've always got to be prepared down there for anything. I think I've told you guys that all the time, and I firmly believe that. I was fully ready. I made a mistake."

Votto's double was the decisive blow, but the Reds got things rolling against Allen.

Armed with a 4-0 lead, Allen's issues started when he hit Scooter Gennett with a pitch and then allowed an infield single to Suarez. The closer retired the next two batters in order, but Jose Peraza (bloop RBI single to right) and Adam Duvall (two-run double to left-center) delivered back-to-back pinch-hits to cut Cleveland's lead to one run.

Told of the mistake between Francona and Willis that led to Otero's entrance, Allen pointed to his own breakdown on the mound.

"We're confident in every guy that runs out of that gate," Allen said. "He shouldn't have been in that position in the first place. I take sole responsibility for everything that took place there."

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

Bauer's brilliance: Before the seven-run ninth, Bauer turned in arguably his best outing of the season. The pitcher piled up 12 strikeouts and scattered three singles in his eight scoreless innings. The Reds threatened in the seventh by loading the bases with two outs, but Bauer escaped that lone jam by inducing a flyout off the bat of Billy Hamilton. Bauer had 21 swinging strikes and 18 called strikes in the no-decision.

Bauer, who was named to his first All-Star team on Sunday, exited as the Major League leader in innings pitched (129 1/3), Fielding Independent Pitching (2.14), WAR (4.9, per Fangraphs) and homers per nine innings (0.35). He ranks fourth in baseball in strikeouts (168), fifth in strikeouts per nine innings (11.69) and sixth in ERA (2.30).

"[I used] breaking balls and some fastballs to offset their aggressiveness a little bit," Bauer said. "When teams are aggressive like that, there's ways to beat it. I have enough weapons in my arsenal that I can change things up and do that. It went well."

First-inning derby: It often seems like Francisco Lindor and Jose Ramirez are playing a game of, "Anything you can do, I can do better." In the first, Lindor led off with a home run against Reds starter Sal Romano, giving the shortstop 24 on the season. Two batters later, Ramirez launched a solo blast of his own. The third baseman now has 25 homers, which is tied for the second-most in MLB. That accounted for two of the four runs off Romano, who held the Tribe to a 1-for-16 showing from the third inning on.

SOUND SMART

Lindor is the first player in Indians history to have at least 50 extra-base hits and 80 runs scored before the All-Star break. Dating back to 1933, when MLB held the first Midsummer Classic, there have been seven players to achieve that feat. Lindor joins Ian Kinsler (2008), Todd Helton ('00-01, '03), Albert Pujols ('03), Frank Thomas ('94), Bobby Bonds ('73) and Reggie Jackson ('69) on that short list.

UP NEXT

Right-hander Carlos Carrasco (9-5, 4.28 ERA) is scheduled to take the mound for the Tribe on Wednesday, when the Indians host the Reds in a 7:10 p.m. ET Interleague clash at Progressive Field. Carrasco has gone 7-4 with a 2.97 ERA in 18 career appearances against National League foes. Cincinnati will counter with righty Tyler Mahle (7-6, 3.66 ERA).

All-Stars Lindor, Ramirez rake in first frame

By Jordan Bastian MLB.com @MLBastian

CLEVELAND -- After Francisco Lindor and Jose Ramirez were each named to the American League All-Star team, it was fair to wonder if the Indians' dynamic infield duo would want to square off in the T-Mobile Home Run Derby. Lindor expressed that he did not have interest in the event, adding that his teammate was the power hitter of the two.

The numbers say that they are both power hitters right now, and they held their own Derby in the first inning of Tuesday's 7-4 loss to the Reds. "They drive each other, which is cool," Indians starter Corey Kluber said on Sunday. "It's funny, I feel like if Frankie goes out there and hits a double, Jose is going to go out there and hit a homer and vice versa. I think they kind of feed off each other, which is good for us."

Lindor led off the bottom of the first inning with a shot deep into the right-field stands against Reds righty Sal Romano, pulling into a tie with Ramirez with 24 home runs on the season. They only shared the team lead for a few minutes, though. Two batters later, Ramirez crushed a pitch from Romano over the wall in center for his 25th blast of the year.

Ramirez, who will start for the AL in Tuesday's All-Star Game presented by Mastercard (7:30 p.m. ET on FOX), is currently tied with Mike Trout of the Angels and Aaron Judge of the Yankees for the second-highest homer total in MLB. Boston slugger J.D. Martinez leads baseball with 28 blasts. Lindor (named an AL All-Star reserve by his peers) is right behind the game's power pacesetters.

With five games remaining in the first half, Ramirez is two home runs shy of Albert Belle's 1996 club record of 27 homers before the All-Star break. Ramirez joins Belle ('94, '96), Jim Thome (2001-02), Travis Hafner ('06), Manny Ramirez ('99) and Al Rosen ('50) as the only players in Indians history with at least 25 homers before the break.

Lindor's home run was his fifth leadoff shot of the season, tying Kenny Lofton (1999) for the second-most homers of that kind in a season. Grady Sizemore holds that record, with eight game-opening shots in 2008. Lindor's eight career leadoff homers rank fourth in club history, trailing Sizemore (22), Lofton (18) and Al Smith (11).

Tuesday's blast also put Lindor in some exclusive company in terms of home runs by a shortstop. His 24 homers are tied for the fourth-highest total before the All-Star break by an MLB shortstop. Alex Rodriguez boasts the most with 27 before the break for the 2002 Rangers. Ernie Banks (26 for the 1960 Cubs) is next on the list, followed by Rodriguez (25 for the '01 Rangers) again and Rico Petrocelli (25 for the '69 Red Sox).

This marked the ninth time this season that Lindor and Ramirez went deep in the same game, marking the most by an MLB duo to this point this year. It's the most by a pair of Cleveland teammates before the break in the franchise's history, per STATS LLC.

Tribe places Tomlin on DL with hamstring woe

By Jordan Bastian MLB.com @MLBastian

CLEVELAND -- Josh Tomlin has been trying to get back on track on the mound all season for the Indians. Now, the pitcher will try to find the root of his issues while dealing with a stint on the disabled list.

Prior to Tuesday's game against the Reds, Cleveland placed Tomlin on the 10-day DL with a strained right hamstring and promoted righty Adam Plutko from Triple-A Columbus to take the veteran's spot in the bullpen. The move comes one day after Tomlin -- working in a third consecutive game for the first time in his career -- allowed a critical ninth-inning home run in the Tribe's 7-5 loss to the Reds.

"We finally corralled him and got him to kind of own up to [the fact that] his hammy was bothering him," Indians manager Terry Francona said. "Watching him, I'm kind of kicking myself a little bit, because I knew something wasn't right. On the one hand, you appreciate guys who'll go out there. But it just was getting in the way."

Tomlin, who spent time on the DL last season due to a left hamstring injury, has posted a 6.98 ERA in 23 appearances, including six starts early in the season for Cleveland. In 49 innings, the right-hander has surrendered 21 home runs (tied for the third-highest total in baseball this year). Tomlin's home run rate (3.86 per nine innings) is the highest in MLB history for a single season among pitchers with at least 40 innings.

Tomlin moved to the bullpen in late May and initially turned in a 1.98 ERA in his first 11 appearances in relief. Over his past five outings, though, the righty has given up eight runs on eight hits, including three home runs, in 4 1/3 innings. Tomlin -- the longest-tenured player in the Indians organization -- has allowed a .300/.338/.657 opponents' slash line overall this season.

"It's frustrating," Tomlin said after Monday's defeat. "I'll come back [Tuesday] and try to find a way to get better. That's the only thing I can do, just try to figure out what I'm doing -- either mentally, physically, whatever the case may be -- and try to get it figured out as quickly as I can."

Francona said the Indians will have Tomlin take a few days off from throwing before determining a course of action for the right-hander's return.

"He'll never stop working," Francona said. "I have no doubt he'll find a way to contribute to our team, even on the DL, because that's who he is."

Plutko, 26, returns for his fourth stint with the Tribe this season. In seven games (six starts) in the Majors this year, the righty has gone 4-2 with a 4.66 ERA. Plutko has a 1.94 ERA with 59 strikeouts against 13 walks in 65 innings for Columbus this season.

"We're trying to protect the bullpen," Francona said of adding Plutko. "We value enough what he's doing as a starter that this isn't long-term."

Doby honored with Congressional Gold Medal

The United States House of Representatives passed the Larry Doby Congressional Gold Medal Act, which was sponsored by U.S. representatives Bill Pascrell (New Jersey) and Jim Renacci (Ohio). The legislation awards the Congressional Gold Medal to the late Doby, who broke the color barrier in the American League with the Indians on July 5, 1947.

"The Cleveland Indians organization is extremely proud of Larry Doby's legacy," Bob DiBiasio, the Indians' senior vice president of public affairs, said in a statement. "Mr. Doby, a symbol of equality and freedom of opportunity stood with grace, dignity and a competitive spirit that resonated throughout Ohio and across America."

Worth noting

- Outfielder Lonnie Chisenhall (10-day DL) sought a second medical opinion from specialist Dr. Wiemi Douoguih, who confirmed a Grade 3 strain of the left soleus muscle (calf) on Monday in Washington, D.C. Chisenhall is expected to miss eight to 10 weeks.
- Left-hander Tyler Olson (10-day DL, left lat) threw a bullpen session on Monday, so the Indians opted against activating him on Tuesday. Francona said the club could activate Olson as early as Wednesday, but that they are still discussing the situation.
- Francona said the Indians would have news coming on lefty Ryan Merritt (60-day DL, left knee) within the next few days. Merritt has posted a 5.40 ERA with 18 strikeouts against one walk in 21 2/3 innings in five starts in his latest Minor League rehab assignment with Columbus.
- Reliever George Kontos cleared waivers and has accepted an outright assignment to Columbus. Kontos was designated for assignment on Friday in order to activate starter Carlos Carrasco from the 10-day DL and add him back to the roster.
- Right-hander Nick Goody (60-day DL, right elbow) resumed a throwing program on Tuesday. There remains no established timetable for his return.

Baseball | Indians starter Trevor Bauer takes in first call to All-Star Game

By Adam Jardy

CLEVELAND — In being selected to his first All-Star Game, Indians starter Trevor Bauer will be surrounded by the best talent the game has to offer. For Bauer, though, the honor means more than just a recognition that he's peers with the best pitchers in baseball.

It's a step toward validation that Bauer's willingness to challenge the baseball establishment's status quo is paying off in a big way.

"We'll see," Bauer said Monday inside the Indians clubhouse at Progressive Field. "I think that will be told in retrospect when my career is done and you look at the industry 30 years from now or 40 years from now. We'll see where it is. Who knows where it's going to go?"

Entering a start Tuesday night against the Cincinnati Reds, Bauer is third in the American League with 156 strikeouts and leads the league with the lowest home run rate per nine innings. He's 8-6 overall with a 2.45 ERA. Last season, he went a career-best 17-9 with 196 strikeouts and a 4.19 ERA.

Bauer's talent has seldom been in question, but his approach to the game has been. It led the Arizona Diamondbacks to ship him to the Indians roughly 18 months after taking him third overall in the 2011 draft. The Indians inherited a player who strongly believed in the necessity of long tosses and embraced alternative strength-training methods built upon extensive personal research.

Up next: seeing some of his personal beliefs start to be embraced by a wider audience.

"That's something that's important to me, though, is leading the industry forward and trying to promote positive change for player development and skill development and stuff like that," he said. "There's been a lot (of progress). Hopefully just getting going, though."

After pitching Tuesday, Bauer is in line to go Sunday against the New York Yankees in the final game before the break. Indians manager Terry Francona said they will not skip him in order to let him pitch in the All-Star Game.

When discussing his season, Bauer is quick to point out that he feels he has plenty of room for growth. He does this with a matter-of-fact manner, as if he had just been asked if the sky is blue or ice cream is enjoyable on a hot summer afternoon.

"I'm going to throw harder," he said. "I'm going to command the ball better. Pitch repertoire is where I want it to be now, but understanding hitters' swings and being able to command the ball better and physical stuff, recovery. I already recover better than almost anyone I know, but I can recover better. I've got a lot of plans."

Triple-A All-Star Game | Clippers' Brandon Barnes proud to be family man, All-Star

By Mark Znidar

Television viewers and maybe those sitting in the box seats on Wednesday night might notice the No. 14 hand painted on Brandon Barnes' spikes when he settles into the batter's box for the International League team during the Triple-A All-Star Game.

Clippers fans will wonder what is going on because Barnes, their hard-charging, team-first outfielder, wears No. 9 during the season.

The budding artist in Barnes is celebrating the fact that he finally has made an all-star team after 14 seasons of professional baseball that include 465 games in the major leagues and another 1,024 in the minors.

Barnes has done nothing but smile since being selected, and his expression will get only brighter when the first pitch is thrown at Huntington Park. Clippers teammates Francisco Mejia, Yu Chang, Adam Wilk and Mitch Talbot also will play. Wilk and Talbot, both pitchers, were late additions when several all-stars were promoted to the majors.

The 32-year-old Barnes, only two seasons removed from his last stint in the majors with the Colorado Rockies, might be bitter about not being in "The Show" or antsy about his baseball biological clock ticking. Barnes, though, is loyal to his family, team and organization to the max. In fact, one can read that loyalty to his immediate family on his torso.

Tattoos of children Kenadie and Tatum's hands are on his left side. His left ring finger has the initial "S" for wife, Shawn. His grandfather's signature and his mother, father and sister's names are on his back.

"I just wanted my kids to always be at my side," Barnes said. "My grandfather's signature was put on after he passed. Family means everything to me."

The Clippers have gotten Barnes' best through 87 games. He is batting .283 with 10 home runs and 56 RBI and has a combination on-base percentage and slugging percentage of .835.

"I spent all of last year in triple-A, and that was the first time in a while that I've done that," he said of a season-long stint in New Orleans. "It's part of the game and part of the struggle. Last year was tough. Coming into this year, I told myself that I was going to have fun and have good vibes. I was just going to go at it and play baseball. I want to play baseball the way it was meant to be played. I'm blessed to be able to play at 32 years of age. I have a jersey on my back."

Like most players, the younger version of Barnes thought developing into a major leaguer was a race against time. He approaches the game differently knowing that if he's good enough, the scouts will notice.

"You have to worry about today, the moment," he said. "You worry about that pitch coming up. You can't worry about going 0 for 4. I'm here for this moment."

It looked as if football would be Barnes' sport when UCLA and Colorado State recruited him in high school in Anaheim, California. He gave up baseball his senior year to concentrate on playing safety and receiver.

"I wanted to play both (sports), but I knew how much work it takes to be successful in one," he said. "Football came naturally. My aggression came out and I played so free. But baseball was my first love."

No football offers came and he walked on at Cypress College for baseball. The Houston Astros drafted him in the sixth round in 2005.

"I didn't know a whole lot about the draft, and all of a sudden my name got called," Barnes said. "I was slotted around the 10th or 12th round. They offered me some money — and I didn't have a lot of money growing up — and I said, 'Let's go.' It was awesome — a dream come true. I count my blessings. I still think I can help a major league team win games."

Reds 7, Indians 4 | Reds storm back in ninth inning

By Adam Jarley

CLEVELAND — Jim Riggleman's time in Major League Baseball stretches back more than 35 years as a player and manager. What he saw Tuesday night at Progressive Field almost defied explanation for the Cincinnati interim manager — and the 21,908 fans on hand.

Trailing 4-0 after Cleveland Indians starter Trevor Bauer pitched an eight-inning gem, the Reds sent 11 batters to the plate and scored seven runs to stun the first-place Indians 7-4. All of Cincinnati's runs came with two outs, punctuated by a bases-loaded, three-RBI double by Joey Votto.

"It's really a high-energy group and a fun-to-manage group," Riggleman said. "It was on its display at its best right there. That was probably the best inning that I've been involved in in a long time."

The Indians took a 4-0 lead through two innings powered by first-inning home runs by All-Stars Francisco Lindor and Jose Ramirez, and Bauer took a no-hitter into the fifth en route to his eighth double-digit strikeout game of the season.

When he departed after the eighth with 12 strikeouts and a four-run lead, it looked over for Cincinnati against a Cleveland team that entered the night 46-1 when leading after eight innings.

Cleveland closer Cody Allen immediately found trouble, though, hitting leadoff hitter Scooter Gennett on the hand with a 1-and-2 pitch. Eugenio Suarez followed with a single, but Allen got a strikeout and flyout and allowed an RBI single to Alex Blandino before facing pinch-hitter Adam Duvall.

Allen threw only off-speed pitches to Duvall, who hit the fifth one he saw to center field for a two-run double and a 4-3 deficit.

"I was kind of surprised he didn't show me at least something hard, but he stayed with it," Duvall said. "He's got a good curveball. He got me on a couple early, and I just got one I could handle."

The Indians put leadoff hitter Scott Schebler on with an intentional walk to bring Dilson Herrera to the plate. A journeyman who hadn't recorded a big-league hit since September 2015, Herrera worked Allen for a walk to load the bases and chased Allen for Dan Otero.

Then Votto did what Votto does: Despite an 0-for-4 start to the game, he blasted a 3-and-2 pitch to the wall in right-center to make it 6-4, before Suarez added the final RBI of the night.

"You know you're going to get a good at-bat (from Votto)," Riggles said.

It marked the biggest comeback by the Reds since they overcame an 8-4 deficit to Cleveland on June 30, 2006, to win 9-8. The Indians have now lost four straight.

After giving up four runs — three earned — in the first two innings, Reds starting pitcher Sal Romano settled in and matched Bauer's output if not his strikeout totals. The right-hander struck out only one batter in 7 1/3 innings, but he retired 15 Indians in a row until Jason Kipnis led off the seventh with a walk.

"Honestly, I probably only had my fastball today," Romano said. "To have a start like that, it was tough, but to be able to stay out there until the eighth inning and give this team a chance to win ... that was one of the most fun games I've ever had in baseball, watching those guys out there in the ninth inning do what they did to win. It was an unbelievable win for us."

Five RubberDucks eager to take part in Eastern League All-Star Game by ABJ/Ohio.com correspondent

Starting pitcher Jake Paulson, shortstop Willi Castro, third baseman Joe Sever and outfielders Andrew Calica and Connor Marabell are looking forward to having some fun Wednesday.

But don't think for a second the five RubberDucks won't attack the 2018 Eastern League All-Star Game at Arm & Hammer Stadium in Trenton, N.J., without the same tenacity that put the Ducks atop the Western Division at the break.

Aside from Castro, who has played in the last three midsummer classics in his respective leagues, it's been a while for the other four to play in an all-star game.

"It's always an honor to get selected to an All-Star Game, especially representing the Indians and the Akron RubberDucks and to play with the awesome players in the league and your teammates," Paulson said.

Paulson should know as his last all-star game came in 2010 as a senior at Walled Lake Central High School when he played in the Michigan East-West All-Star Game at Comerica Park.

Paulson (5-3) ranks seventh in the league in ERA (3.04). The right-hander has struck out 58 and is among the leaders in WHIP (1.22).

Sever hasn't played in a classic since 2012 when he was a member of the Mahoning Valley Scrappers in short-season A ball. He leads the EL in hits (93), is tied for second in doubles (23), is tied for sixth in runs (50) and is 10th in RBI (47) with a .293 batting average.

"I think after seeing so many good players come through this league and playing against a lot of them, it means more," Sever said. "It's a real testament to the Indians and how they draft and sign guys. It's cool to be a part of. I'm not surprised. I think we could have had even more guys with how we've been pitching and hitting this year."

"It's flattering to get that praise from other coaches. They know what we're doing over here is a good thing. I think we're a respected team, which is pretty cool. It's going to be fun. We're well represented."

The last time Marabell made an all-star team, he was a college freshman in 2013 at Seminole State.

With nine home runs, Marabell will take part in Tuesday evening's Home Run Derby. He is tied for seventh in RBI (51) and 10th in hits (82) and sports a .291 batting average.

"It's really special and a dream come true," Marabell said. "The competition is stiff up here. It's another opportunity for me to show that I can make it to the big leagues and show and can play with those guys as well."

Calica also knows what it means after a one-season hiatus as an all-star for the Scrappers. He's fifth in the league in runs (51) and has a .290 batting average with 33 RBI.

"I think it's a testament to the team we have right now," Calica said. "The game we've been playing the first half of this season has put us in a good position to be part of the playoffs. It's a testament to our team chemistry and what the guys have been doing. It's been cool to see what the guys have been doing on the field. Hopefully we can carry it on in the second half and win a championship."

Castro is tied for sixth in runs (50) and has a .251 batting average with 33 RBI.

Futures reward

For the third season in a row, the RubberDucks will be represented in the Futures Game as Kieran Lovegrove will play for the World Team. The right-hander is 1-0 with a 1.19 ERA, two holds and a save in 16 games for the Ducks. He follows former RubberDucks Francisco Mejia (2017) and Clint Frazier (2016). The Futures Game is Sunday at Nationals Park.

Big blowout

Arm & Hammer Stadium will try to break into the Guinness World Records on Wednesday for the most people blowing chewing gum simultaneously.

Five-time all-star and four-time World Series champion Bernie Williams will direct the challenge to raise awareness for the rare lung disease idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis. Williams' father, Bernabe, passed away from IPF in 2001.

The post Five RubberDucks eager to take part in Eastern League All-Star Game appeared first on Ohio.com.

Chisenhall to miss 8-10 weeks, Tomlin placed on DL

The Associated Press

CLEVELAND (AP) -- The Cleveland Indians will be without two of their most experienced playoff performers for an extended period.

Right fielder Lonnie Chisenhall will miss 8-10 weeks with a strained left calf muscle, and right-hander Josh Tomlin was placed on the disabled list with a strained right hamstring Tuesday.

Chisenhall suffered a grade 3 strain while warming up before a July 2 game in Kansas City. Manager Terry Francona said he expected the 29-year-old to miss "significant time," which was confirmed by a second medical opinion.

Both were members of Cleveland's last three postseason teams, including its 2016 squad that lost the World Series in seven games to the Chicago Cubs.

The Indians lead the AL Central by 8 1/2 games and appear headed to a third straight division title, but the injuries could change their approach with the July 31 trade deadline looming.

"We've been together six years now, most of this group, and there is a lot of trust that happens in that time," Francona said. "We'll sit down and figure out what's best for all of us."

Chisenhall is hitting .321 with one homer and nine RBIs in 28 games. He previously spent two months on the DL with a strained right calf before being activated June 5. He sat out seven weeks with the same injury last season.

Tomlin has allowed a team-high 21 homers in 49 innings, including three in his last five relief appearances. He gave up a two-run shot to Cincinnati's Scott Schebler in the ninth inning of a 7-5 loss Monday.

The 33-year-old is 0-5 with a 6.98 ERA over 23 games, six of them starts before being pulled from the rotation in late May. This is his seventh career trip to the DL.

"I'm kind of kicking myself a little bit because I knew something wasn't right with J.T.," Francona said. "When we finally corralled him, he kind of owned up that his hammy was bothering him."

Tomlin was chosen by the Indians in the 19th round of the 2006 draft and is the longest-tenured member of the organization. He has a 3-1 postseason record, posting wins in the 2016 ALDS and ALCS, and the 2017 ALDS against New York.

"Josh doesn't have to stop working, he'll never stop working," Francona said. "I have no doubt he'll find a way to contribute to our team, even on the DL, because that's who he is."

Indians allow 7 in 9th, lose to Reds 7-4 after Bauer's gem

The Associated Press

CLEVELAND (AP) -- Indians manager Terry Francona expected to see Oliver Perez run out of the bullpen. Pitching coach Carl Willis made the call for Dan Otero instead.

The mixup was a miserable one for the AL Central leaders.

Joey Votto hit a go-ahead, three-run double off Otero in the ninth inning as Cincinnati scored seven times with two outs, overcoming a gem by Trevor Bauer to beat Cleveland 7-4 on Tuesday night.

Francona instructed Willis to have "O-P" warm up, referring to Oliver Perez, with the bases loaded and a 4-3 lead with closer Cody Allen struggling. Willis misunderstood the message, believing he had used Otero's nickname of "O-T."

"When I saw O-T coming through the gate, it's not that I don't think he can pitch, but it just wasn't the guy I was expecting," Francona said. "We had a communication (error). That one lands squarely on me, no getting around it. I know Carl is beating himself up right now, but that one lands on me."

Willis, who rejoined the staff this season, accepted responsibility for the mistake. He noted that Votto was 0 of 4 in his career against Otero, but said he should have asked Francona for clarification.

Allen (2-4) initiated the sequence by loading the bases after recording two outs in relief of Bauer, who struck out 12 in eight shutout innings. Cleveland's bullpen entered the day with the third-highest ERA in baseball at 5.13.

"Quite frankly, heart of hearts, I felt like Cody was going to get out of the situation," Willis said. "But you know, I made the mistake, got the wrong guy up. It's not that O-T can't get the job done, but it probably wasn't the best matchup."

Adam Duvall also doubled in a pair in the ninth, while Jose Peraza and Eugenio Suarez had RBI singles off Allen. Cincinnati's final seven batters reached base before Scooter Gennett ran into the third out on Suarez's hit.

"I take sole responsibility for everything that took place there," said Allen, who was charged with a career-high six runs. "We're confident in every guy that runs out of that gate and we shouldn't have been in that position in the first place."

Making his first start since being named to his first All-Star Game, Bauer only allowed three singles and didn't surrender a hit until Jesse Winker's one-out liner up the middle in the fifth.

The right-hander became the second major leaguer to post seven consecutive quality starts with eight-or-more strikeouts and no homers allowed, according to the Indians. Pedro Martinez holds the record with eight in 2002.

"Bauer was a handful for us and we ended up scoring all of our runs when he exited the game," Votto said. "There is a reason why he's an All-Star and there is a reason why he is fastly becoming one of the better pitchers, if not one of the best pitchers in the game."

Former Cleveland reliever Kyle Crockett (1-0) netted the final two outs in the eighth after righty Sal Romano went the first 7 1/3 innings. Raisel Iglesias worked the ninth for his second save in two nights and his 19th of the season.

Francisco Lindor hit his fifth leadoff homer of the year and fellow All-Star Jose Ramirez had a solo shot for the Indians. Ramirez' home run was his 25th, marking the eighth time in franchise history the milestone has been reached in the first half of the season.

VERY MEMORABLE

Reds interim manager Jim Riggleman earned his 700th career win, but was unaware of it until after the game. Cincinnati is 38-36 since he took over for Bryan Price on April 19.

"This is really an energetic, high-energy group, a fun-to-manage group," he said. "It was on display at its best right there. That's probably the best inning I've been involved in for a long time."

The four-run comeback in the ninth was the Reds' first since June 30, 2006 against the Indians.

TRAINER'S ROOM

Reds: RHP Homer Bailey (right knee) reported no physical issues after throwing two innings out of the bullpen Sunday in a rehab assignment with Triple-A Louisville.

Indians: OF Lonnie Chisenhall (left calf) will miss 8-10 weeks after a second medical opinion confirmed a Grade 3 strain. He was placed on the disabled list on July 3.

UP NEXT

Reds RHP Tyler Mahle (7-6, 3.66 ERA) takes on Indians RHP Carlos Carrasco (9-5, 4.28 ERA) in the three-game series finale. Mahle hasn't lost since May 20, going 4-0 in eight starts, and has an NL-low 2.04 ERA since June 1.

Corey Kluber would prefer that you stop calling him 'Klubot'

Mike OzYahoo SportsJul 10, 2018, 4:57 PM

Corey Kluber, the Cleveland Indians ace and two-time Cy Young winner, isn't the most animated player on the field. You won't find him pumping his fist after a strikeout. Or shooting invisible arrows to the tops of stadiums. Heck, you've probably never even seen him smile on the field.

His demeanor is what birthed Kluber's nickname — Klubot.

But during his appearance on this week's Yahoo Sports MLB Podcast, Kluber proved that he is indeed not a robot by talking to our Jeff Passan about pulling pranks in the clubhouse, watching soccer and drinking wine. He also told us something about that Klubot nickname. He's not a huge fan.

In true Kluber fashion, he's not going to object too harshly, but he'd certainly prefer you not call him that.

"I won't be opposed to finding something different," Kluber said during our interview.

You can find our entire podcast and interview with Kluber by clicking over to Apple Podcasts, Stitcher or Acast. In the show, we also discuss the current MLB trade market for Manny Machado and others, how we'd reinvent the All-Star game and lots more.

Kluber is having another of the stellar seasons that's won him a Cy Young in the past — last year, in fact. This year, he's 12-4 with a 2.49 ERA and he's a big reason the Indians once again have one of the best starting staffs in MLB.

As for the Klubot nickname, Kluber further explains: "I wouldn't say it bothers me. When most people see me, that's when I'm pitching and I try to stay even keel when I'm pitching out there, not get too high or too low. If that projects as being robotic, then so be it. I wouldn't say it upsets me. What I'm doing when most people see me is probably what leads to that perception."

Once again, you can find the show on Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, Acast and where ever you find podcasts. If you dig what we're doing, we'd appreciate your ratings and reviews to help the show grow.

With plenty of blame to go around, Cody Allen points the finger at himself

By T.J. Zuppe 7h ago 11

Cody Allen stood at the space in front of his locker, dejected and disappointed. The clubhouse walls, once destined to echo the familiar jams of a victory playlist, now reflected the deafening silence of setback.

How did they get here?

How did a four-run advantage in the ninth turn sour so quickly?

How did Allen bring a potential quiet inning of work to the brink of disaster?

How did he depart with the bases loaded with two outs in a one-run game?

How was right-hander Dan Otero the one to emerge from the bullpen, the man deemed right to face the left-handed hitting terror, Joey Votto?

And how did a miscommunication between Terry Francona and Carl Willis lead to Otero's entrance, especially when left-hander Oliver Pérez's presence probably would have been far more advantageous?

With no shortage of perplexing questions and unavoidable blame to go around the Indians clubhouse Tuesday night, Allen pointed the proverbial finger at the guy he held most responsible for the unfathomable, seven-run meltdown — one that was punctuated by the bases-clearing, two-out double by Votto.

Cody. Edward. Allen.

"He challenged him and he just got beat," Allen said of Otero's matchup against the dangerous Votto. "But we shouldn't have been in that position in the first place. I take sole responsibility for everything that took place there."

That's true on a few levels.

The most obvious one, of course, will be centered on the misunderstanding between the Tribe's manager and pitching coach, a situation that resulted in Otero warming behind Allen, not Pérez. When it comes to oddities, it's tough to beat a club preparing the wrong reliever for a critical at-bat, a breakdown that Francona rightly put upon himself.

The second level is the one Allen chose to focus on — the fact the club's typically rock-solid closer, one who just recently became the franchise's all-time leader in saves, shouldn't be putting his team in a position to need that critical out, even when facing an offensively gifted opponent.

"Trevor (Bauer) pitched his tail off," said Allen, referencing the starter's eight shutout innings. "He deserved to win that game. I didn't do my job and took that away from him."

In fairness, that's not to say the Reds' hitters aren't owed their credit.

Adam Duvall's two-run double to left-center was a solid piece of hitting. The right-handed hitter reached low and away to yank an Allen curve ticketed for the bottom corner of the zone. Several others laid off some tough borderline pitches throughout the inning.

José Peraza also registered a 54.5 mph exit velocity on a perfectly placed bloop down the right-field line, a single that just evaded Yonder Alonso's glove and plated the first run, later setting up Duvall's pinch-hit heroics.

"Some of those were good quality pitches and they just got beat," Allen said. "Maybe some of the counts weren't necessarily bad, but they could have been better. Or the pitches before that could have been better to set those pitches up."

That said, hitting Scooter Gennett with an 0-2 knuckle-curve to lead off the inning was less than ideal. Losing Dilson Herrera with a 3-2 pitch to load the bases prior to his exit was even more egregious, particularly given Herrera's limited big-league resume and Votto's looming presence on deck.

A different execution in either of those situations might've led to a more pleasant, less head-scratching result. A better command of some important offerings could have left Tuesday's miscommunication as a comical side note. These are the things Allen considers when shifting the focus back on himself, understandable given the high level of expectations he's established throughout his career.

It's also something every pitcher, at one point or another, can relate to.

"It's tough as a pitcher when you're going through that because there's not really anything you can go to," Bauer said. "You try to get a better rhythm and that doesn't work. So, you try to take more time between pitches and that doesn't work. You try to reset yourself mentally and your head is spinning and there's nothing you can really go to. Whatever's happened, but I know if I can do this, then I'll get my stuff back. When it's going bad like that, it's just going bad. And you have to hope that it comes back before it costs you."

Unfortunately, that wasn't the case Tuesday, as Allen was lifted after three hits, two walks, a hit-by-pitch and 31 pitches. Otero entered. Votto doubled. Guts were punched.

"To kind of set the whole thing up, hitting Gennett there with two strikes on him put the whole thing in motion," Allen said. "I know that team's record isn't great, but offense has definitely not been their issue. They've beaten some really good arms. I just flat-out got beat tonight."

Even worse, the hiccups have been far too commonplace for the Tribe's beaten and bruised bullpen in 2018.

Despite a few better recent days, the relievers still own the majors' worst earned run average (5.37). They've posted baseball's second-highest FIP (4.75). These sorts of calamities have many anxious for the return of Andrew Miller and curious to see how the front office will fix a group desperately in need of an upgrade. And it doesn't help when one of the sturdiest arms in the bullpen contributes to the woes, currently owning the worst ERA (4.66) and FIP (3.91) of his career — both inflated by a particularly rough night.

Sure, the Otero-Pérez mix-up played a key role in Tuesday's collapse. But to Allen's point, it never should have factored into the equation.

For that, he blames himself.

O.P.? O.T.? The Indians and their bullpen are not O.K.

By Zack Meisel Jul 11, 2018 17

Dan Otero stood on the dugout steps at Wrigley Field as he pondered the origin of his nickname with the Indians.

Since he joined the club nearly three years ago, his teammates and coaches have referred to him as O.T. That afternoon on the North Side of Chicago, a teammate approached the dugout railing and joined the conversation, joking that Otero's actual nickname is "Douchebag."

Well, had that been the case, the Indians might have escaped Tuesday's meltdown against the Reds at Progressive Field. (Otero is actually a nice guy and a family man, so that moniker probably wouldn't apply.)

The Indians' bullpen has relinquished leads ad nauseam this season. The unit, with a hearty push from Terry Francona and Carl Willis, plummeted to new depths on Tuesday, though.

As Cody Allen floundered and the Reds turned over their lineup, Francona told his pitching coach to dial up the bullpen for "O.P." That's the nickname assigned to southpaw Oliver Pérez. (You see where this is going, don't you?)

Willis thought the skipper said "O.T." So, Otero started warming, preparing for his fourth appearance in five days.

"The phone rang," Otero said. "I was told to warm up, so I warmed up as fast as I could."

The Reds trimmed the Indians' advantage to 4-3 and loaded the bases with two outs. As Joey Votto strutted toward the plate, Francona exited the dugout to summon a new reliever.

Only, it wasn't the reliever he was anticipating. Francona appeared to motion with his left arm, but only a righty awaited. The bullpen door swung open, and out jogged Otero to the mound.

"Not the guy I was expecting," Francona said.

Once a pitcher enters, he's required to face at least one batter.

Votto vs. righties this season: .332/.454/.507 slash line

Votto vs. lefties this season: .216/.370/.324 slash line

"He's tough, man," Votto said. "I've never liked facing him. Today was one of those occasions where I got a good pitch to hit, I put it in play and good things happen."

Votto tagged Otero for a bases-clearing double. Otero intentionally walked Scooter Gennett, another lefty hitter. Eugenio Suárez then smacked an RBI single to hand Cincinnati a three-run lead.

"I thought I heard 'O.T.'" Willis said. "Frankly, I should've asked him to repeat it. But, I got Otero up. I actually sat down and looked at my matchup sheet. You know, Votto is 0-for-4 off of Otero. You know, it's a ground-ball guy that we trust. And, quite frankly, heart of hearts, I felt like Cody was going to get out of the situation. But, I made the mistake — got the wrong guy up. It's not that he can't get the job done, but it probably wasn't the best matchup."

That's quite an understatement.

Otero vs. righties this season: .189/.223/.389 slash line

Otero vs. lefties this season: .348/.362/.739 slash line

"That one lands squarely on me," Francona said. "There's no getting around it. I have to be responsible for that."

We can opt to debate nicknames. (D.O. seems more applicable than O.T., and Ollie would make more sense than O.P. if Tyler Olson weren't already Oly. And, yes, every player on every team has a nickname; that happens when you spend every waking second of eight months with the same group of people.) But this is yet another notch on the futility belt of a bumbling bullpen.

The Indians rank last in the majors with a bullpen ERA of 5.37. That's not a number that one healthy Andrew Miller can fully alleviate. The emergences of Pérez and Neil Ramírez have helped, but this puzzle is still missing some critical pieces. Allen can't always be perfect, and he's been a bit more imperfect than usual this season. Injuries have sidelined Miller for the majority of the season. Otero and Zach McAllister haven't found their footing. The team has cycled through minor-league call-ups, veteran castoffs, kids who fire the ball back onto the field from the outfield seats.

Last season, Indians relievers allowed 157 earned runs. This season — and we haven't even reached the All-Star break — Indians relievers have allowed 146 earned runs. They wasted eight brilliant innings from Trevor Bauer on Tuesday, and their losing streak mushroomed to four games as they tread water in the sorry AL Central.

"He deserved to win that game," Allen said. "I didn't do my job and took that away from him. This is a resilient group. It's a really talented group. We've been through trials and tribulations before. And we'll be all right. We're fortunate to have five really good starting pitchers and some really good bats in our lineup."

Every non-contending team should be plugging away at Chris Antonetti's cellphone with trade offers involving their relievers. Of course, they better enunciate when making one.

House of Representatives votes to give Larry Doby a Congressional Gold Medal

By Sabrina Eaton, cleveland.comseaton@cleveland.com

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The U.S. House of Representatives on Tuesday signed off on legislation that would award a posthumous Congressional Gold Medal to Cleveland Indians great Larry Doby, the second African American to join a Major League Baseball team.

The measure sponsored by Wadsworth GOP Rep. Jim Renacci and New Jersey Democrat Bill Pascrell passed on a non-controversial voice vote.

Over the last 2yrs, @BillPascrell & I have had the privilege of sharing the inspirational story of Larry Doby w/ our friends & colleagues. More than 290 members agreed that he deserves to be awarded the Congressional Gold Medal - the highest civilian award that Congress can award pic.twitter.com/yKU0X8uOQ2

-- Rep. Jim Renacci (@RepJimRenacci) July 10, 2018

"Larry Doby joined the Major Leagues shortly after the great Jackie Robinson and faced the same struggles and barriers without the same recognition," said a press statement from Renacci. "Every time I walk through Progressive Field, I am reminded of his contribution to Cleveland and America's favorite pastime."

The Senate counterpart of the bill to honor the Hall of Fame outfielder is sponsored by Ohio Democratic Sen. Sherrod Brown, whose seat Renacci is seeking in November. A spokeswoman for Brown said her boss is collecting cosponsors on the bill and hopes to get it passed this year. There are 38 cosponsors so far, including Ohio GOP Sen. Rob Portman.

Baseball pioneer Larry Doby of the Cleveland Indians, the first black player in the American League, would get a posthumous gold medal from Congress under legislation that Wadsworth Republican Rep. Jim Renacci is cosponsoring.

"Larry Doby is not just a sports hero, but an American hero who overcame discrimination and hostility as a young man to lead Cleveland to victory and lead our country in the right direction," said a statement from Brown, who displays in his Washington, D.C. front office a replica of the statue of Doby that stands at Progressive Field. "Doby and the 1947 Indians broke barriers, finally integrating all of professional baseball. Doby has seldom received the credit he deserves, and this recognition is just one small way we can honor all he did for civil rights and America's game."

At least Brown and Renacci can agree on baseball.

Larry Doby is not just a sports hero, but an American hero who overcame discrimination and hostility as a young man to lead Cleveland to victory and lead our country in the right direction. We keep this statue in our front office, as a reminder of his heroism and skill.

pic.twitter.com/dTl4bNGdV1

-- Sherrod Brown (@SenSherrodBrown) July 10, 2018

The House honored the legacy of @Indians legend Larry Doby by awarding him the Congressional Gold Medal. Doby was a WWII veteran, World Series Champ, a 7x All-Star, and the second player to break the color barrier. pic.twitter.com/L5OoZPU8HZ

- Congressman Tim Ryan (@RepTimRyan) July 10, 2018

Trevor Bauer gets the better of Joey Votto, but Cincinnati's star has last laugh against Cleveland Indians

By Joe Noga, cleveland.comjnoga@cleveland.com

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- Two of baseball's most enigmatic stars faced each other four times on Tuesday and it made for some pretty compelling at-bats.

But despite Cleveland's Trevor Bauer getting the better of Cincinnati's Joey Votto on each occasion, it was Votto and the Reds who had the last laugh at Progressive Field.

Bauer took a tough luck no-decision in a 7-4 loss to Cincinnati after holding the Reds to just three hits over eight shutout innings. He fanned 12 batters and walked four, marking his eighth start this season with double-digit strikeouts.

But closer Cody Allen could not hold a four-run lead, and Votto's three-run double against Dan Otero in the ninth inning gave the Reds their second straight win against the Tribe.

It's the seventh time in 2018 that Bauer (8-6, 2.30 ERA) has pitched at least six innings and allowed three earned runs or fewer but still taken a no-decision or a loss. In three of those outings he's struck out at least 11 batters.

Manager Terry Francona called Bauer's outing "terrific" and said it was obvious the All-Star right-hander had watched video of Reds hitters from the previous night's game, because he came out throwing more off-speed pitches and was getting a lot of swing-and-miss action. "He had a couple real quick innings when they actually made contact," Francona said. "I thought he was really good."

Bauer currently ranks third in the American League this season with his 168 strikeouts. He sits tied for third in franchise history with Sam McDowell (168 in 1968) for strikeouts in the first half, trailing Bob Feller (190 in 1946) and another season by McDowell (183 in 1970).

Bauer said he used his breaking ball and some inside fastballs to offset Cincinnati's aggressiveness at the plate.

"When teams are aggressive like that, there's ways to beat it," he said. "I have enough weapons in my arsenal that I can change things up and do that."

But it was Votto's four at-bats against Bauer that provided some of the more whimsical moments of the night. In the first inning, Bauer fanned Votto with a 3-2 pitch that the erstwhile National League MVP was not expecting.

"I didn't know he had one of those sideways sliders," Votto told the Associated Press. "I don't think I've seen that before and it shocked me."

In the fourth, Bauer retired Votto on a liner to second, and then in the sixth he ended the frame by getting Votto to bounce out to first base. In the eighth, Bauer shook off catcher Roberto Perez's signs eight times before Votto stepped out of the batter's box and the two grinned at each other.

"I went to throw something that I don't typically throw in those counts," Bauer said. "It's like a chess match, because he can hit everything. He studies the tape, sets pitchers up over the game. He's an intelligent guy."

The at-bat ended with Votto flying out to left field on Bauer's 111th and final pitch.

The two stars, known for being introverted and sometimes hard to read, met up in the offseason at a UFC event and struck up a friendly conversation. It made Bauer's mastery of Votto on Tuesday all the more satisfying.

"At the end of the day, it's a game," Bauer said. "Talented people on the other side and the best of the best matching up against each other. When you can keep it light like that, still competing, still trying to do your best and get the guy out. Kind of more of a one-on-one battle as opposed to a guy who maybe you don't joke around with, who you don't know very well or whatever. I enjoy that more."

Reds 7, Indians 4: 12 Walk-Off Thoughts on a miscommunication, a gut punch and a nightmare of a ninth

By Ryan Lewis

Here are 12 Walk-Off Thoughts after the Indians' 7-4 loss to the Cincinnati Reds on Tuesday night.

1. Of all the gut-punching ways to lose a game, or to at least open the door to blow a major lead, the Indians had one on Tuesday that likely felt like it was delivered by Mike Tyson. A four-run lead was erased. A terrific outing from Trevor Bauer was wasted. And the marquee, heavyweight matchup of the night had the incorrect fighter show up in the other corner.
2. As Cody Allen struggled through the top of the ninth, and as the Reds began chipping away, manager Terry Francona told pitching coach Carl Willis to get "O-P" up in the bullpen, meaning left-hander Oliver Perez, who would likely face star slugger Joey Votto if it got that far. Willis thought he heard "O-T," Dan Otero. So, Otero warmed up. Willis checked his matchup sheet and saw that Votto was 0-for-4 against Otero. But, the communication mishap wasn't discovered until it was too late.
3. Said Willis: "Listen, you know, we're all locked into the game, obviously. He came over and said, 'Get O.P. up,' which is what we call Oliver Perez. We also call Otero, 'O.T.' You know, I thought I heard, 'O.T.' Frankly, I should've asked him to repeat it. But, I got Otero up. I actually sat down and looked at my matchup sheet. You know, Votto's 0-for-4 off of Otero. You know, it's a groundball guy that we trust. And, quite frankly, heart of hearts, I felt like Cody was going to get out of the situation. But, you know, I made the mistake—got the wrong guy up. It's not that he can't get the job done, but it probably wasn't the best matchup."
4. Willis added that the call was made prior to Dilson Herrera's at bat. Allen went on to walk him to bring up Votto, one of the last hitters in baseball an opposing pitcher would like to see in that situation. As Francona walked out of the dugout to relieve Allen, he thought he'd be getting Oliver Perez—he can be seen motioning with his left hand to go get the lefty. The miscommunication wasn't revealed until Otero walked out of the gate. Francona took full responsibility for the gaffe.
5. Said Francona: "We had a communication [error]. I said OP and I think in the midst in all the [chaos], Carl thought I said OT. That one lands squarely on me. There's no getting around it. I got to be responsible for that. When I saw OT coming through the gate—and again, it's not that I don't think he can pitch—just not the guy I was expecting. I know Carl's beating himself up right now, but that one lands on me."
6. Otero fell behind Votto 3-1—again, one of the most dangerous positions to be put in, especially when you weren't meant to be in the game in the first place—and with a full count, Votto ripped a base-clearing double into right-center. The Indians had blown a four-run lead. They brought in the wrong reliever, and it cost them.

7. Said Allen: "We're confident in every guy that runs out of that gate. The guy's a really good player. Threw one, 3-2 count with the bases loaded and it's tough. He challenged him and he just got beat. But shouldn't have been in that position in the first place. I take sole responsibility for everything that took place there."

8. Added Otero, who noted that he was ready to pitch and felt good: "The phone rang, I was told to warm up, so I warmed up as fast as I could. Obviously came into a situation where I had to get Votto out. I've faced him a few times before, have had some success against him, so just trying to do the same thing I usually do to him, fell behind and made a mistake 3-2—trying to throw a strike obviously, bases loaded—and he put a good swing on it. He's a really good hitter. It was a tough one to lose because Trevor pitched his rear end off. It's a tough one to lose."

9. It was no secret that the Indians have been and will be in the market to bolster their bullpen. Tuesday night's disaster wasn't a tipping point or a new realization. But, it didn't help the current group's case that they can handle a postseason workload with the effectiveness needed. It's likely the Indians go out and acquire one of the top relievers available on the market. There are plenty of high-quality relief pitchers who are all controllable for multiple seasons—something president of operations Chris Antonetti said was a priority—on teams in a position to sell. They could even deal for two to join Andrew Miller, once healthy, and Allen in the back-end of the bullpen.

10. Tuesday's disaster, both the blown four-run lead and the communication issue, only stands as another notch in the bedpost for a bullpen that's been allowing opposing offenses to score just about on a nightly basis since March.

11. Said Otero, when asked about his reaction to those who say the Indians need to bolster their bullpen: "We're confident in who we have here. We've all done it. We're all fully capable relievers. It's tough to hear sometimes, but everybody's had success in the big leagues and we have a great team. We don't want to be the reason why we're not winning, obviously. The way we came out today, 4-0 and the way Trevor pitched, it should be a good win. Unfortunately, we didn't. We gotta come back tomorrow and got Carrasco on the mound and hopefully we win one."

12. Allen Added: "There's a lot of teams that hear that. It's part of the job. There's a lot of very good professionals down there. They understand it. It's part of it. You can't fault an organization for trying to go out and acquire guys to help make your team better. And we all understand that."

Akron Beacon Journal LOADED: 07.11.2018

Reds 7, Indians 4: Indians bullpen gives up seven runs in disastrous ninth inning

By Ryan Lewis

CLEVELAND: Everything went right for the Indians for nearly three hours Tuesday night at Progressive Field.

And then, in a flash, everything that could go wrong did go wrong and the result was a 7-4 loss to the Cincinnati Reds.

The Indians (49-41) entered the ninth inning leading 4-0 after Trevor Bauer pitched eight scoreless innings.

But then, disaster struck.

Cody Allen entered and quickly got himself into trouble. He hit Scooter Gennett to lead off the inning and then allowed a single to Eugenio Suarez.

After striking out Jesse Winker and inducing a long fly-ball out by Tucker Barnhart, Jose Peraza singled to make it 4-1. Adam Duvall then followed with a two-run double to left-center to cut the Indians' lead to 4-3.

Allen intentionally walked Scott Schebler and then unintentionally walked Dilson Herrera to set up a bases-loaded matchup with Reds slugger Joey Votto. The Indians turned to Dan Otero for the final out, but Votto won the battle, rifling a dagger of a bases-clearing double to right-center on a 3-2 pitch to give the Reds (41-51) a 6-4 lead.

Suarez then added an RBI single to extend the Reds' lead to 7-4, completing the nightmare of a ninth inning for the Indians.

Before that disastrous inning, the Indians led for nearly three hours.

Leading off the game against Reds starter Sal Romano, Francisco Lindor belted a solo home run, his 24th of the year, to right field to momentarily tie Jose Ramirez for the team lead. That deadlock was short lived.

Two batters later, Ramirez stepped to the plate and launched a solo shot of his own, his 25th, to put the Indians on top 2-0. It was the ninth time this season both players have homered in the same game, the most for any pair of teammates in baseball.

It was also Lindor's fifth leadoff home run this year, which puts him into a tie with Kenny Lofton (1999) for second most ever by an Indians hitter in a season. Grady Sizemore had a record seven leadoff homers in 2008.

The Indians doubled their lead in the second inning. Jason Kipnis walked and Tyler Naquin doubled to put two runners in scoring position. Kipnis scored on an error by Reds third baseman Eugenio Suarez and Naquin came around to make it 4-0 on a groundout by Lindor.

Bauer, meanwhile, was dominant, allowing only three hits and four walks in eight innings to go with 12 strikeouts. He lowered his ERA to 2.30 and expanded his lead as baseball's fWAR leader among pitchers (4.9). He also leads the majors with a 2.14 FIP.

Bauer has reached double-digit strikeouts eight times this season, including in seven of his last 11 outings. Only Washington Nationals ace Max Scherzer has more double-digit-strikeout games this year with 10.

Bauer also became just the third pitcher in franchise history to reach 160 strikeouts before the All-Star break, joining Bob Feller and Sam McDowell.

But much of the goodwill gained by Lindor, Ramirez and Bauer was extinguished by a deflating seven-run rally that denied the home crowd the kind of exit for which they were hoping.

Akron Beacon Journal LOADED: 07.11.2018

Indians notebook: Josh Tomlin placed on 10-day disabled list; Larry Doby honored with Congressional Gold Medal

By Ryan Lewis

CLEVELAND: The Indians on Tuesday placed pitcher Josh Tomlin on the 10-day disabled list with a strained right hamstring and recalled Adam Plutko from Triple-A Columbus.

Just about everything has gone wrong for Tomlin this season. Among pitchers who have thrown at least 40 innings, Tomlin's 3.86 HR/9 rate is the worst in the majors, and his 6.98 ERA is third worst.

Only three pitchers have given up more home runs than Tomlin's 21, though all three have also logged at least twice as many innings.

Indians manager Terry Francona said after Monday's game, in which Tomlin allowed a two-run home run that ended up being the difference in a 7-5 loss to the Cincinnati Reds, that he felt Tomlin was "fighting some stuff."

"When we finally corralled him and got him to kind of own up to his hammy was bothering him," Francona said Tuesday.

"You know, watching him, I'm kind of kicking myself a little bit because I knew something wasn't right. On the one hand, you appreciate guys who'll go out there. But it just was getting in the way."

The amount of respect Tomlin's peers have for him is well known. Francona has called him one of the best teammates he's ever been around during his time in baseball on multiple occasions and raves about his willingness to do whatever the team needs every chance he gets.

Tomlin is a valued member of the clubhouse and the longest-tenured Indians player, which does perhaps carry some value and warrant some lenience.

But on the mound, Tomlin can't find any answers, and the questions are mounting.

"Personally, it's very frustrating mentally, because you're not helping the team or doing anything to produce or help benefit this team going forward," Tomlin said Monday night. "When you're put in spots like that and you keep failing at them, it's frustrating as a whole, just for that reason."

"I've never put personal goals on anything. I never will, just for the simple fact of we're here to try to do one thing and that's win a World Series. If you're not doing your personal thing to try to help the team do that, it's frustrating, no matter who you are or where you're at in your career."

Doby honored

The U.S. House of Representatives on Tuesday passed legislation awarding Larry Doby with the Congressional Gold Medal.

Doby broke the American League's color barrier as a member of the Indians in 1947 only weeks after Jackie Robinson did so for the game of baseball. Robinson was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in 2003.

Titled the Larry Doby Congressional Gold Medal Act, the bill sought to posthumously award Doby the medal that represents Congress' highest expression of national appreciation and was co-sponsored by U.S. Representatives Jim Renacci (R-OH) and Bill Pascrell Jr. (D-NJ).

"Larry Doby joined the Major Leagues shortly after the great Jackie Robinson and faced the same struggles and barriers without the same recognition," Renacci said in a statement.

"Every time I walk through Progressive Field, I am reminded of his contribution to Cleveland and America's favorite pastime. I am pleased that my colleagues voted to award Larry Doby the Congressional Gold Medal and further recognizing his incredible life and career."

Ohio congressman Tim Ryan (D-13) also voted in favor of honoring Doby.

"He stood above the racism, segregation, and harassment on and off the field by carrying himself with dignity and grace," Ryan said in a statement. "Doby not only was an exceptional baseball player, but an extraordinary American by serving in the United States Navy during World War II. His legacy serves as an inspiration to baseball players and communities of colors all across the United States."

"This World Series Champion and seven-time All-Star was a great American ballplayer, breaking records and barriers one home run at a time that helped shaped the world of Major League Baseball and American Civil rights."

Long absence

The second opinion on Lonnie Chisenhall's strained left calf didn't offer any good news for the Indians.

It was confirmed he has a grade 3 strain and will be sidelined for 8-to-10 weeks, likely pushing back his return to September.

This season, Chisenhall has hit .321 with an .846 OPS but has only played in 95 games because of issues with both calves, which he's dealt with dating back to last season.

Akron Beacon Journal LOADED: 07.11.2018

Cleveland Indians' ninth-inning bullpen blowup due to faulty communication between Francona, Willis

By Paul Hoynes

CLEVELAND, Ohio - O.P.? O.T.? Oh, no!

The Indians' bullpen allowed seven runs in the ninth inning Tuesday night to ruin eight scoreless innings of work by Trevor Bauer in a 7-4 loss to the Reds at Progressive Field. But it wasn't just the Reds' hitters who beat the Tribe's bullpen. Part of this loss was due to a miscommunication between manager Terry Francona and pitching coach Carl Willis.

Yeah, you could call it an inside job.

The Indians started the ninth with a 4-0 lead and closer Cody Allen on the mound. But an RBI single by Jose Peraza and a two-run double by Adam Duvall made it a 4-3 game with two out. Allen intentionally walked Scott Schebler to face Dilson Herrera, who was appearing in just his second game since being promoted from Class AAA Louisville on Friday.

That's when Francona told Willis to call the bullpen and get "O.P." up. That's O.P. as in lefty Oliver Perez for a potential left-on-left matchup with dangerous Joey Votto.

Willis, however, thought Francona said to get "O.T." up. That would be right-hander Dan Otero.

When Allen walked Herrera to load the bases, Otero came through the bullpen gate to face Votto. In four previous at-bats against Otero, Votto was 0-for-4. But on Tuesday night, he hit a three-run double to put the Reds ahead to stay.

"I said O.P. (Oliver Perez) and Carl thought I said O.T. (Dan Otero)," said Francona. "That one lands squarely on me. There's no getting around it. I've got to be responsible for that.

"When I saw O. T. coming through the gate, it was not the guy I was expecting."

There was no way Otero could try to sneak back into the bullpen and send out Perez in his place. Once he'd been announced he had to face at least one batter.

Otero, pitching for the fourth time in five days, said he knew nothing about the miscommunication.

Ninth inning. Two outs. SEVEN RUNS.

Fight until the final pitch.#RedsCountry pic.twitter.com/dmzHjivgvP

-- Cincinnati Reds (@Reds) July 11, 2018

"No," said Otero. "The phone rang. I was told to warm up. I warmed up as fast as I could. Obviously, I came into a situation where I had to get Votto out. I faced him a few times before and had some success against him.

"I was just trying to do the same thing I normally do against him. I fell behind and made a mistake on 3-2 - I was trying to throw a strike with the bases loaded - and he put a good swing on it. . .he's a really good hitter. It's a tough one to lose because Trevor pitched his rear end off."

Said Willis, "We're all locked into the game, obviously. Tito came over and said, 'Get O.P. up,' which is what we call Oliver Perez. We also call Otero, 'O.T.' You know, I thought I heard 'O.T.' Frankly, I should have asked him to repeat it, but I got Otero up."

After telling bullpen coach Scott Atchison to have Otero start warming up, Willis sat down and checked his matchup sheet. It said Votto was 0-for-4 against Otero.

"Otero is a ground ball guy we trust," said Willis. "And quite frankly, heart of hearts, I felt like Cody was going to get out of the situation. But I made a mistake - got the wrong guy up. It's not that he can't get the job done, but it probably wasn't the best matchup."

Votto is 4-for-13 with one homer, six RBI and six strikeouts against Perez.

After eight sterling innings from Bauer - he struck out 12 and allowed three hits - Allen (2-4, 4.66) started the ninth and got knocked around. He hit Scooter Gennett to start the inning and allowed a single to Eugenio Suarez that Jose Ramirez knocked down at third.

Allen, who became the Indians franchise leader in saves July 4, struck out Jesse Winker and retired Tucker Barnard on a fly ball to the wall in left on a nice catch by Michael Brantley. But Peraza blooped a pinch-hit single into right field to score Gennett and Duvall doubled to center to bring home Suarez and Peraza and make it 4-3.

"Tonight I just flat-out got beat," said Allen. "Duvall hit a really good pitch - he's a big strong dude. Got the barrel to it. . .But to set the whole thing up, hitting Gennett there with two strikes on him set the whole thing in motion.

"I know that team's record isn't great, but offense has definitely not been their issues. They've beaten some really good arms. I just flat-out got beat tonight."

When told of the miscommunication between Francona and Willis, Allen said, "We're confident in every guy that runs out of that gate. Votto is a really good player. . .He challenged him and just got beat. But he shouldn't have been in that position in the first place. I take sole responsibility for everything that took place there."

There was a lot of that going around Tuesday night. But it didn't change the final score: Reds 7, Indians 4.

Cleveland Plain Dealer LOADED: 07.11.2018

Cincinnati rallies for seven runs in the ninth inning to beat Cleveland Indians, 7-4

By Paul Hoynes

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- The Indians hit the Reds hard early Tuesday night, but the Reds hit them harder in the ninth inning. Not to mention the Tribe getting rabbit punched by a costly communication breakdown between manager Terry Francona and pitching coach Carl Willis.

Joey Votto's three-run double highlighted a seven-run ninth as the Reds shocked the Indians, 7-4, at Progressive Field to ruin a strong start by Trevor Bauer.

Cody Allen entered the ninth inning and turned a 4-0 lead into a mess. Allen had two outs with two on when Jose Peraza singled home one run and Adam Duvall doubled home two more to make it 4-3.

Allen intentionally walked Scott Schebler and unintentionally walked Dilson Herrera to load the bases. Right-hander Dan Otero, pitching for the fourth time in the last five days, relieved to face Votto, who ripped a 3-2 pitch into the gap in right center to give the Reds a 6-4 lead.

Eugenio Suarez delivered Votto with an RBI single for the seventh run of the inning.

Why have Otero face the left-handed hitting Votto? Manager Francona said there was a miscommunication with Willis.

"I said OP (Oliver Perez) and Carl thought I said OT (Dan Otero)," said Francona. "That one lands squarely on me. There's no getting around it. I've got to be responsible for that.

"When I saw OT coming through the gate, it was not the guy I was expecting."

The Indians hit right-hander Sal Romano and the Reds hard and fast at the start of the game. The left-left combination was delivered by switch-hitters Francisco Lindor and Jose Ramirez. Lindor opened the first with his fifth leadoff homer of the season and one batter later Ramirez homered again for a rapid-fire 2-0 lead.

The Indians added two more runs in the second before turning the game over to Bauer. The game seemed in good hands as Bauer threw eight scoreless innings with 12 strikeouts in 111 pitches.

But then came the ninth inning.

When Lindor pulled Romano's 2-2 pitch into the right field seats for the eighth leadoff homer of his career, he tied Ramirez for the team lead with 24 homers. The tie lasted 2:42 before Ramirez sent a 2-2 pitch over the center field wall for his 25th homer.

It was ninth time Lindor and Ramirez have homered in the same game and the fourth time they've homered in the same inning this season. The nine games are the most homers by two teammates in the same game in the big leagues this season.

Lindor and Ramirez's teammates love to watch them compete against each other. They smile and say they're not trying to beat each other, they're just pushing and competing with each other. It's great entertainment and they get to watch for free.

It was a good night for the Tribe's All-Stars. Bauer struck out 12, giving him nine straight starts with eight or more punchouts. It was the eighth time this year he's struck out 10 or more batters in a game.

Lindor and Ramirez, meanwhile, set the tone early and it carried into the second inning.

Jason Kipnis started the inning with a walk. Tyler Naquin doubled him to third. Kipnis scored when Suarez dropped Roberto Perez's bouncer to third for an error.

Rookie Greg Allen, who had so much trouble bunting earlier in the season, moved Naquin to third and Perez to second with a perfect sacrifice bunt. Lindor's groundout to second made it 4-0 and gave him 59 RBI.

Romano got better in a hurry. He retired 15 straight after Suarez's error before Kipnis walked to start the seventh. It was his first career start against the Indians, but he came into the game with a 2-1 record against the AL Central this year with wins against Detroit and the White Sox.

Bauer didn't allow a hit until Jesse Winker singled with one out in the fifth. He didn't find real trouble until the seventh when he walked Alex Blaudino to load the bases with two out. He ended the inning without incident when Billy Hamilton hit a fly ball to center.

Bauer allowed three hits and four walks. The 12 strikeouts were one shy of his season high. It was the third time this season he's struck out 12.

What it means

The bullpen has helped waste the Indians' league-best 67 first-inning runs. They've outscored the opposition, 67-45, in the first inning this season.

The pitches

Romano threw 100 pitches, 60 (60 percent) for strikes. Bauer threw 111 pitches, 67 (60 percent) for strikes. Bauer has topped 100 pitches in each of his 19 starts this season.

Thanks for coming

The Reds and Indians drew 21,908 fans to Progressive Field on Tuesday night. First pitch was at 7:10 p.m. with a temperature of 80 degrees.

Next

Indians right-hander Carlos Carrasco (9-5, 4.28) will face the Reds and right-hander Tyler Mahle (7-6, 3.66) on Wednesday at 7:10 p.m. SportsTime Ohio, WTAM/1100 and WMMS/FM 100.7 will carry the game.

Carrasco will make his second start since coming off the disabled on July 6 to beat the A's. This will be Carrasco third interleague start of the season after beating the Brewers twice. He's 2-0 in five appearances against the Reds and 7-4 in interleague games.

Mahle, 23, is 4-0 with a 2.62 ERA in his last seven starts. This will be his fourth interleague start and he'll be trying to beat the Indians as he did the Twins, Royals and Detroit.

Cleveland Plain Dealer LOADED: 07.11.2018

Cleveland Indians place Josh Tomlin on 10-day DL, recall Adam Plutko

By Joe Noga

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- Pitcher Josh Tomlin is heading to the 10-day disabled list with a right hamstring strain, the Cleveland Indians announced Tuesday. Right-hander Adam Plutko has been recalled from Class-AAA Columbus to take his spot on the roster.

Tomlin has appeared in 23 games for the Indians, including six starts. He is 0-5 with a 6.98 earned run average and has given up 21 home runs in 49 innings.

Manager Terry Francona said he suspected something was amiss with Tomlin while watching him throw in his last few outings. The two spoke for about 45 minutes Tuesday prior to making the move.

"On the one hand, you appreciate guys who'll go out there, but it just was getting in the way," Francona said. "He can pitch with (the injury), he's just not pitching the way he needs to. So we'll get that straightened out."

Francona said he will work with pitching coach Carl Willis and Tomlin on a plan to try and get the 33-year-old righty back and contributing to the club.

"Maybe not throwing off the mound might be the best thing for him," Francona said. "But he'll never stop working. I have no doubt he'll find a way to contribute to our team, even on the DL, because that's who he is."

* Is time running out on Josh Tomlin? Hoynes

Tomlin worked two innings in Monday's loss to Cincinnati, allowing what proved to be the game-winning runs in the ninth on a two-run homer by Reds outfielder Scott Schebler. On Saturday, he took the loss against Oakland after allowing three runs in the 11th inning (including a two-run homer to the A's Stephen Piscotty).

Tomlin is the longest-tenured Indians player in the Indians, having joined the organization as a 19th-round draft pick in 2006. He reached the big-leagues in 2010. Cleveland picked up his one-year, \$3 million contract option for the 2018 season back in December. He will be a free agent in 2019.

Plutko is 4-2 in six starts with a 4.66 ERA and 28 strikeouts in 40 1/3 innings with the Indians this season. This will be his fourth stint with the big-league club. He has allowed nine home runs and nine walks.

Francona said Plutko can contribute a few innings from the bullpen this week if need be, and will provide added protection for an already taxed bullpen.

"It's not that we don't want him in our bullpen, that's not true," Francona said. "But we value enough what he's doing as a starter that this isn't long term."

Cleveland Plain Dealer LOADED: 07.11.2018

Is time running out on Josh Tomlin, last man on the Cleveland Indians' pitching staff?

By Paul Hoynes

CLEVELAND, Ohio - Josh Tomlin is the 12th man on the Indians' pitching staff and right now manager Terry Francona can't pitch him.

He keeps trying, but it's not working.

Tomlin made his third appearance in as many games on Monday night. He started the ninth against the Reds. The Tribe was trailing, 5-1, and the competitive part of the game appeared to be over. This was a chance for Tomlin to find something, anything that could help him be an effective pitcher again.

He threw a scoreless ninth inning in Sunday's 6-0 loss to the A's, retiring the side in order with two strikeouts. Could he build on that with another ninth inning in another lost game on Monday?

Francona was willing to give him that chance. Tomlin started the inning by giving up a single to Billy Hamilton, the No. 9 hitter. Then he allowed a two-run homer to Scott Schebler, who went 4-for-5 on the night, to give the Reds a 7-1 lead.

Tomlin faced four more batters before ending the inning. He is 0-5 with a 6.98 ERA in 23 games. He has allowed 63 hits, including 21 homers, in 49 innings.

But that's not the bad part. That came in the bottom of the ninth when the Indians, sleepwalking through the first eight innings, scored four runs before losing, 7-5. If Tomlin hadn't allowed the two-run homer, the four-run rally would have at least tied the score.

So if Tomlin, 33, can't pitch in a game that is all but lost, when can he pitch? That is the question manager Terry Francona and the front office have to be wrestling with as the All-Star break approaches and they make plans to improve the roster for the second half.

Tuesday afternoon, the Indians announced that Tomlin was going on the 10-day disabled list with a sore right hamstring.

The Indians are 0-3 in their last three games. On Saturday, the bullpen wasted a 3-0 lead and seven scoreless innings by Corey Kluber in a 6-3 loss to the A's in 11 innings. Tomlin started the 11th with the score tied, 3-3, and allowed a two-run homer Matt Chapman. A third run scored on an error by shortstop Francisco Lindor.

Tomlin, who pitched himself out of the rotation in May, has made three appearances in the last three days. In two of those games, he's allowed critical home runs that have led directly to losses.

"We're going to sit and talk to him," said Francona after Monday's game. "I think he's fighting some stuff. We'll visit with him."

If Josh Tomlin wasn't Josh Tomlin, the longest tenured player on the Indians, he probably would have already been designated for assignment. He has re-invented himself so many times in the past to win big games and pitch meaningful innings for the Indians that it makes sense that Francona and the front office would give him every chance get his game back together.

Francona is especially close to Tomlin. How could he not be after watching Tomlin and Kluber carry a wounded starting rotation through the postseason all the way to Game 7 of the World Series in 2016? On the last road trip, Francona told reporters that Tomlin really wanted another chance to start. But with him struggling so much in one-inning appearances what kind of problems would a start mean?

Tomlin's teammates feel the same way about him.

"The coolest part is he'll be right back here tomorrow, working his rear end off," said Mike Clevinger, Monday's losing pitcher, "and that's Josh Tomlin. He's the Little Cowboy, man. He's the reason we were where we were the last two years, and people seem to overlook that, even with his rough stretches.

"If you didn't see what he did in October, even down the stretch, you're missing a big, big piece. I mean, he works too hard not to get it back, so I think we all have faith in him."

So what can the Indians do with Tomlin?

* They could designate him for assignment, hope he clears waivers and see if he would accept an assignment to Class AAA Columbus.

* They could option him to Columbus, but they'd need his permission because he is in his eighth season in the big leagues. They did a similar thing with Fausto Carmona, aka Roberto Hernandez, several years ago.

* They could do what they did on Tuesday, put him on the disabled list.

Tomlin, meanwhile, keeps looking for answers. They have been hard to find.

"When you're going like this, it's tough to put a finger on one specific thing," said Tomlin. "You get behind a guy and you thought you made a pretty good pitch and they still put it in play. Or it still finds a hole or it's over the fence.

"That's just where I'm at right now. It's frustrating, but after tonight, I'll come back tomorrow and try to find a way to get better. That's the only thing I can do."

Cleveland Plain Dealer LOADED: 07.11.2018

Cincinnati Reds score 7 runs in the 9th inning, stun Cleveland Indians for comeback win

Bobby Nightengale, July 11, 2018

CLEVELAND – The Reds couldn't create much offense in eight innings against Cleveland Indians starter Trevor Bauer on Tuesday.

Against the Indians bullpen? Now that's a different story.

With the bases loaded and two outs in the top of the ninth inning, Joey Votto smacked a three-run double to the wall in right-center for the go-ahead runs in a 7-4 comeback win at Progressive Field in front of 21,908 fans.

Reds interim manager Jim Riggleman, who won his 700th career game, called it "the best inning that I've been involved in in a long time."

Starting pitcher Sal Romano said it was the most fun he's had while watching a game.

All seven runs in the top of the ninth inning scored with two outs. Seven straight Reds hitters reached base to waste Bauer's masterful performance.

"That's something special," said Adam Duvall, who hit a pinch-hit, two-run double in the ninth inning.

In the game's biggest moment, the Indians turned to right-handed reliever Dan Otero to face Votto. In a full count, Votto drilled the seventh pitch of the at-bat to the wall in right-center field. Votto clapped a few times when he stopped at second base.

"He's tough, man," Votto said of Otero, entering the at-bat hitless in four at-bats against the reliever. "I've never liked facing him. Today was one of those occasions where I got a good pitch to hit, I put it in play and good things happen."

Indians manager Terry Francona told reporters afterward he actually wanted left-handed reliever Oliver Perez to face Votto, but he had a miscommunication with pitching coach Carl Willis.

Before the go-ahead double, Votto took a 3-1 pitch down the heart of the plate. He fouled off the next pitch before crushing another fastball left over the middle.

"I was very, very apprehensive about swinging there just because we're one pitch away from tying it," Votto said. "In that situation, the same pitch that comes 3-1, you're supposed to expect the same one at 3-2. They are very, very similar situations.

"I trust my instincts enough in a 3-2 counts to foul balls off or hopefully put a ball in play with good direction."

It was the Reds' largest comeback in the ninth inning since June 2006 when they erased a four-run deficit to, coincidentally, beat Cleveland.

Two pinch-hitters, Duvall and Jose Peraza, delivered run-scoring hits and Dilson Herrera drew a key seven-pitch walk. The home crowd boomed when the inning ended.

"We've got a good offensive ballclub and it was on display there," Riggleman said.

The Reds couldn't do much against Bauer, who tossed eight scoreless innings. Bauer struck out 12, including five on called third strikes.

Things didn't start as well for Romano.

Before Tuesday's game, Riggleman raved about the power from Indians shortstop Francisco Lindor and third baseman Jose Ramirez against right-handed pitching – "off the charts," he said.

It didn't take long to understand his point.

Lindor and Ramirez, Cleveland's All-Star infielders, hit a pair of solo home runs in the first inning.

"(Romano) got knocked around in the first inning and kept working and battling," Riggleman said. "Tucker (Barnhart) helped him get through it."

The Indians, on a four-game losing streak, scored two more runs in the second inning through an error and groundout.

From there, Romano looked like a different pitcher. Following the second-inning error by Eugenio Suarez, Romano retired 15 consecutive batters.

Romano completed 7 1/3 innings, allowing four hits and three earned runs. It was his second-longest start of the season.

"I really learned a lot about myself today," Romano said. "I just didn't want to give up on the team and we came out on top."

As Reds pitchers will often say, keep the score close enough and the offense will find a way to score a few runs.

Seven runs later and the Reds won for the second straight night, improving their record to 10-2 during interleague play.

Cincinnati Enquirer LOADED: 07.11.2018

Real or not? The Indians need all the bullpen help in the world

David Schoenfield

Let the bidding war for Kyle Barraclough begin!

The Tuesday night escapades began in Cleveland, where Trevor Bauer crushed the Reds with 12 strikeouts over eight scoreless innings. The Indians led 4-0, and Cody Allen came in for the final three outs.

He didn't get them. The Reds scored seven runs -- all with two outs -- to pull off a shocking 7-4 comeback victory. Joey Votto's three-run double provided the go-ahead runs:

That double didn't come off Allen. It came off Dan Otero, who entered with the 4-3 lead and the bases juiced. At the time, it seemed like a weird decision to bring in Otero instead of lefty Oliver Perez, given that Votto entered the game with a .961 OPS versus righties and .694 versus lefties. It was not just a weird decision. It was a colossal miscommunication between Terry Francona and pitching coach Carl Willis: Indeed, Francona appeared to motion for a lefty when he went to take out Allen. Willis took the blame after the game. Francona took responsibility as well. Heck, Cody Allen blamed himself. And really, as big as the Otero-Perez gaffe was, the bigger problem is that anybody Francona summons from the bullpen these days isn't a good option.

Whether looking for that final piece or building for the future, every team has a reason to make a deal. Here's whom they should be shopping around.

The AL has more stars, but is the NL a better league?

From Trout and Betts to Lindor and Judge, it's clear where MLB's superstars are, but the National League is finally ruling interleague play.

The Indians have a 5.37 bullpen ERA, worst in the majors. Andrew Miller, when he returns from the DL for his knee problem sometime after the All-Star break, isn't going to fix this all by himself. That is why the Indians will be in on every significant reliever available at the trade deadline, whether it's Barraclough or Zach Britton or Joakim Soria or one of the Padres guys, or maybe they try to pry Raisel Iglesias from the Reds.

Look, the Indians will win the division no matter what they do with the bullpen, but theirs doesn't look like a bullpen that wins a World Series. The Cleveland bullpen won't have to carry the same load in the postseason as other teams, given that Francona can ride Bauer and Corey Kluber deeper into games, but the Indians are going to need more than a healthy Miller and Allen. They do have some flexibility in moving a starter such as Shane Bieber there in October, but it seems likely that they'll add a couple relievers at the deadline.

(Also, kudos here to the Reds, who continue to play well. They've won 33 of their past 57 games. As Buster Olney pointed out, that's a 93-win pace.)

The bullpen situation is a little more complicated for the Astros. They rank third in the majors with a 2.78 ERA, second in strikeout rate and first in lowest walk rate ... yet continue to blow leads. They led the A's 4-0 heading into the top of ninth. Ken Giles faced three batters, allowed three hits and was removed. Hector Rondon allowed two more hits, including a game-tying double. In the 11th, Collin McHugh -- who does have a 1.02 ERA -- gave up a go-ahead home run to Stephen Piscotty, only to be rescued when the Astros scored twice to win.

The walk-off play there provided one of the strangest endings we'll see all season:

Anyway, the bullpen ERA is great. McHugh has been excellent, Chris Devenski (1.73) has been excellent, Rondon (1.62) has generally been excellent. Still, there are concerns here. The Astros entered the game 14th in the majors in bullpen Win Probability Added, so the glossy ERA and strikeout totals hide that the pen hasn't been particularly clutch. As with Cleveland, the Astros will move a starter to the pen in October -- Lance McCullers would be a nice weapon there -- so maybe they just roll with what they have and fly by the seat of their pants like they did last October.

Strong debut for De Los Santos: In matchup of starters making their big league debuts, the Phillies' Enyel De Los Santos outpitched the Mets' Drew Gagnon in a 7-3 victory. De Los Santos, acquired from the Padres in the offseason for Freddy Galvis, allowed one run over his first six innings before tiring in the seventh and giving up two more. Still, he showed why he had a sub-2.00 ERA in Triple-A, attacking hitters with a 92-