

= Armando Galarraga 's near @-@ perfect game =

In a Major League Baseball game played on June 2 , 2010 , at Comerica Park in Detroit , Michigan , Detroit Tigers pitcher Armando Galarraga nearly became the 21st pitcher in Major League history to throw a perfect game . Facing the Cleveland Indians , Galarraga retired the first 26 batters he faced , but his bid for a perfect game was ended one out short when first base umpire Jim Joyce incorrectly ruled that Indians batter Jason Donald reached first base safely on a ground ball . Galarraga instead finished with a one @-@ hit shutout in a 3 ? 0 victory . He faced 28 batters and threw 88 pitches ( 67 strikes and 21 balls ) , striking out three . The game is sometimes referred to as the " 28 @-@ out perfect game " , the " Imperfect Game " , or simply the " Galarraga game " .

Joyce was tearful and apologetic to Galarraga after the game upon realizing he had made the incorrect call . Galarraga was forgiving and understanding of the mistake . Without irony , he told reporters after the game , " Nobody 's perfect . " Galarraga was the most prominent of the many people throughout Major League Baseball who subsequently voiced their support for Joyce . Unusually , the umpire met with both the pitcher and the media after the game to apologize for his error . The sportsmanship demonstrated by Galarraga and Joyce earned them both widespread praise for their handling of the incident .

= = Game summary = =

Detroit scored a run on a second @-@ inning solo home run by Miguel Cabrera . Two more runs scored in the eighth inning when Austin Jackson singled , then advanced on an infield hit by Johnny Damon . Jackson and Damon both then scored on a single by Magglio Ordóñez and a throwing error by Shin @-@ Soo Choo .

In the top of the ninth inning , Tigers ' center fielder Austin Jackson executed an over @-@ the @-@ shoulder catch on the run to retire Cleveland 's Mark Grudzielanek for the first out and preserve the perfect game , a play that has been compared to DeWayne Wise 's leaping catch at the wall in the ninth @-@ inning that preserved Mark Buehrle 's perfect game in 2009 . Mike Redmond grounded out to make the second out of the inning . Jason Donald then hit a soft ground ball that first baseman Miguel Cabrera had to range far to his right to retrieve . Donald was ruled safe , giving him an infield single , but video replay showed that Cabrera 's throw to Galarraga , who was covering first base , beat Donald to the bag . Donald advanced to second and third base on defensive indifference during Trevor Crowe 's at @-@ bat , until Crowe grounded out to Brandon Inge , ending the game in a 3 ? 0 victory for the Tigers .

= = Statistics = =

= = = Linescore = = =

= = = Boxscore = = =

Source : MLB.com

= = Historical context = =

Only four days before Galarraga 's near @-@ perfect outing , Roy Halladay pitched a perfect game for the Philadelphia Phillies , and just twenty days prior to that , Dallas Braden threw a perfect game for the Oakland Athletics . Halladay 's and Braden 's perfect games had been the first pair of such games to occur in the same season during the modern era , let alone the same month . Joyce served as the second base umpire for Braden 's perfect game .

The twenty days between Braden 's perfect game and Halladay 's was the shortest span between

two perfect games since 1880 and there was a chance that for the first time in MLB history there would be three perfect games in such short succession . Had Galarraga 's game been correctly called , the four @-@ day span since Halladay 's perfect game would have broken that 130 @-@ year @-@ old record , and marked the only time that three consecutive no @-@ hitters had been perfect games , the only time that three perfect games had occurred in one season ( since done in 2012 by Philip Humber , Matt Cain and Félix Hernández ) , the only time that three perfect games had occurred in a span shorter than a month , the only time four perfect games had occurred in a span shorter than a year ( as Mark Buehrle of the Chicago White Sox threw a perfect game in July 2009 ) , and the only time that four perfect games had occurred within a stretch of five no @-@ hitters .

This would have also marked the first perfect game in the Tigers ' 110 @-@ year history . The 83 pitches thrown before the blown call would have been the fewest pitches in a perfect game since 1908 . Galarraga 's near @-@ perfect game was the first such game since Mike Mussina 's bid for a perfect game on September 2 , 2001 , which was broken up by 27th batter Carl Everett . It was also the third time for a Tigers pitcher to come so close to a perfect game , as Milt Wilcox also missed getting the 27th straight batter out on April 15 , 1983 , and Tommy Bridges missed the 27th batter on August 5 , 1932 .

Galarraga 's near @-@ perfect game was the tenth time in major league history that the 27th batter in a game broke up what was ( to that point ) a perfect game . One other instance of this occurrence also involved a missed call by an umpire , who later admitted to his mistake . On July 4 , 1908 , Hooks Wiltse of the New York Giants , perfect through 26 batters , hit Philadelphia Phillies pitcher George McQuillan on a 2 ? 2 count in a scoreless game . Umpire Cy Rigler later admitted that he should have called the previous pitch strike three , which would have ended the inning . Wiltse pitched on , winning 1 ? 0 in ten innings , with the hit @-@ batsman the only lapse separating him from a perfect game .

= = Reactions = =

= = = Armando Galarraga and Jim Joyce = = =

On tagging first base after Cabrera 's relay , Galarraga began celebrating his accomplishment . His immediate reaction to Joyce 's on @-@ field ruling was a momentary pause followed by a wry smile at the umpire before returning to the mound . Galarraga told reporters after the game that the outing " was my best game , so far " , and said that Joyce " probably feels more bad than me . Nobody 's perfect . Everybody 's human . I understand . I give the guy a lot of credit for saying , ' I need to talk to you . ' You don 't see an umpire tell you that after a game . I gave him a hug . " He also told reporters , " I know that I pitched a perfect game , I believe I got it . I said before , I got a perfect game . I 'm going to show my son . Maybe it 's not in the book , but I 'm going to tell my son , ' One time I got a perfect game . ' I 'll show him the CD , " further calling his effort " the first 28 @-@ out perfect game " . Tigers ' manager Jim Leyland added , " It 's a crying shame . Jim [ Joyce ] is a class guy . This sounds crazy , but after looking at the play , nobody is going to feel worse than he does . I yelled a bit after the game because emotions are high . You just want it so bad for the kid . I don 't think you 're as mad at the umpire as mad the kid didn 't get it ? and he did deserve it . " Leyland also said that Joyce 's call was part of the " human element of the game " .

Joyce , a 22 @-@ year veteran , tearfully admitted after reviewing video of the play after the game that " I did not get the call correct " , insisting that he " took a perfect game away from that kid over there that worked his ass off all night " . Joyce called the Donald ruling " the biggest call of my career " , claiming that " I thought [ Donald ] beat the throw . I was convinced he beat the throw , until I saw the replay " . The umpire later said , " I didn 't want this to be my 15 minutes of fame . I would have liked my 15 minutes to be a great call in the World Series . Hopefully , my 15 minutes are over now " .

Just prior to the next day 's game , a tearful Joyce met Galarraga at home plate to receive the

Tigers ' lineup card . The two shook hands and Joyce gave the pitcher a pat on the shoulder , with a warm reception from the audience . Joyce 's accountability and regret , and Galarraga 's sportsmanship were widely praised for turning the unfortunate situation into a positive .

= = = The rest of MLB = = =

Many people within Major League Baseball spoke out in support of Joyce , offering their sympathies and noting his exceptional reputation . New York Yankees pitcher Mariano Rivera said , " It happened to the best umpire we have in our game . The best . And a perfect gentleman . ... It 's a shame for both of them , for the pitcher and for the umpire . But I 'm telling you he is the best baseball has , and a great guy . It 's just a shame . " Former Chicago Cubs pitcher Milt Pappas said , " I would tell [ Galarraga ] , ' I feel for you . There have been only 20 perfect games in the history of baseball . The umpire situation was the same one I had ? they blew it . At least I had the satisfaction of getting the no @-@ hitter . You don 't . I feel for you . You pitched a tremendous game . At least you have the satisfaction of the umpire saying he was sorry . But that doesn 't help your situation as far as a perfect game . " Pappas ' own bid for a perfect game on September 2 , 1972 , was spoiled when umpire Bruce Froemming called a borderline 3 @-@ and @-@ 2 pitch to 27th @-@ batter Larry Stahl a ball , issuing a walk to the pinch @-@ hitter . Former Yankees pitcher Don Larsen ? who threw the fourth perfect game of the modern era and the only one in World Series history on October 8 , 1956 ? said , " I feel sorry for the umpire , and I just feel real badly for the kid . He 's probably wondering right now whose side God is on . "

The incorrect call led many baseball writers to call for the increased use of instant replay in baseball , which was used only to review disputed boundaries on home runs during the 2010 season . Many journalists also advocated for MLB commissioner Bud Selig to overturn Joyce 's call and award a perfect game to Galarraga . On June 3 , Selig announced that Major League Baseball would look at expanded replay and umpiring , but he did not specifically address Joyce 's call . A baseball official familiar with the decision confirmed to The Associated Press that the call was not being reversed . For his efforts in this game , Galarraga was named the American League Player of the Week on June 7 . Also , first base , a ball used in the game , and Galarraga 's spikes were sent to the Baseball Hall of Fame .

Less than two weeks after the controversial game , ESPN The Magazine released an anonymous poll of 100 current MLB players that named Joyce as the best umpire in Major League Baseball . Joyce was named on 53 % of ballots , 19 ballots ahead of second @-@ place Tim McClelland . One player was quoted as saying , " The sad thing about the Galarraga game is , Jim Joyce is seriously one of the best umpires around ... He always calls it fair , so players love him . Everyone makes mistakes , and it 's terrible that this happened to him . " Furthermore , the players in this poll overwhelmingly endorsed ( 86 % ) Selig 's decision not to overturn the call , and were overwhelmingly against ( 77 % ) instituting replay for calls on the bases .

= = = Outside baseball = = =

On June 3 , White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs said during his morning press briefing , " I hope that baseball awards a perfect game to that pitcher " , joking that the White House was " going to work on an executive order " to that effect . He elaborated , " To watch an umpire take responsibility and to watch a pitcher do what he did , the type of sportsmanship that was exhibited there ? I think that gives a lot of heart ( ... ) I think it 's tremendously heartening to see somebody understand that they made a mistake and somebody accept the apology from somebody who made that mistake . I think that 's a good lesson in baseball . " Michigan state Governor Jennifer Granholm also issued a gubernatorial proclamation stating , in part , " I , Jennifer M. Granholm , governor of the state of Michigan , do hereby declare Armando Galarraga to have pitched a perfect game . "

Former SportsCenter co @-@ host Keith Olbermann dedicated a special edition of the " Worst Person in the World " segment of his political commentary show Countdown to lambasting Bud Selig 's refusal to reverse Joyce 's call . While Olbermann ordinarily lists three " Worst " , Selig alone was

awarded the title because " there can only be one Worst Person tonight " . Olbermann went on to cite Lee MacPhail 's handling of George Brett 's 1983 Pine Tar Incident as an example of a commissioner overruling an umpire 's call , and discussed the matter with both Governor Granholm and documentarian Ken Burns .

The day after the botched call , in a ceremony before the Tigers game , General Motors presented Galarraga with a red 2010 Chevy Corvette Grand @-@ Sport convertible , recognizing his outstanding performance on and off the field . GM North American President Mark Reuss said the way the pitcher had handled the situation deserved to be recognized . Galarraga was presented with a " Medal of Reasonableness " by Jon Stewart at the Rally to Restore Sanity and / or Fear for his measured response . On July 14 , 2010 , Joyce and Galarraga together presented the ESPY Award for Best Moment at the Nokia Theatre in Los Angeles . The winner was the stoppage @-@ time goal scored by Landon Donovan for the US National Team versus Algeria at the 2010 World Cup .

= = = Book release and resulting MLB rule = = =

Armando Galarraga and Jim Joyce , along with Daniel Paisner , released a book titled Nobody 's Perfect , chronicling their experiences during and after the game . In June 2011 , one year after the near @-@ perfect game , Major League Baseball put a rule into effect that Joyce cannot umpire any games in which Galarraga 's team plays . Due to the book release , the two are now business partners , and this relationship could affect Joyce 's impartiality while umpiring Galarraga 's team . It is similar to the policy that prevents umpire Jim Wolf from being the plate umpire in games that his younger brother Randy pitches in .

= = In popular culture = =

Singer @-@ songwriter Dan Bern composed and recorded a song , " Joyce and Galarraga " , about the game . It appears on his 2012 album of baseball @-@ themed songs , Doubleheader .