



Tired of hearing about candidates for office in this election year? Well, here's the Cleveland Indians version. As much as this season is not Manny Acta's fault, he's likely the main casualty of the 2012 season. Such an epic collapse creates the need to do something and since the team cannot be fired, and the front office appears invincible, Acta is positioned under the guillotine.

The roster won't change a whole lot entering next season because the free agent market is very watered down and there aren't any top prospects beating the doors down to make the 25-man roster. Therefore, it's a debatable subject if Acta should be fired and if a new manager, regardless of who it is, can make chicken salad out of chicken...well, you get the idea. Acta is signed through next season.

Conventional wisdom seems to be expecting Acta to be fired. So, the new question becomes, who is out there to replace him? There are some intriguing names available and more will likely be available after the season as rumors are swirling that Jim Leyland, Clint Hurdle (who was interviewed in 2010 when the Indians hired Acta), and various other skippers will be getting pink slips following disappointing 2012 seasons. For now, and the purposes of this article, I will assume those guys to be unavailable, as we really have no idea who will get fired and who will keep their job.

The first few names will be ones that are undoubtedly on the Indians' radar. The others are pipe dreams of mine, though, it wouldn't be surprising if the Indians front office explored every avenue. Keep in mind that the Indians, their player evaluation systems, and their braintrust are very progressive with statistical analysis, something that likely drew them to Manny Acta. Acta has spoken on sabermetric topics with various websites and is against the sacrifice bunt – two

things that mesh well with the front office's ideology.

The most obvious candidate here is **Sandy Alomar Jr.** Alomar was almost instantly named the first base coach by Acta when he put together his coaching staff in 2009. Following the 2011 season, when Tim Tolman stepped aside to focus on his ongoing battle with a health issue, Alomar moved into the dugout to take over as Acta's bench coach. At the time, some speculated that this was a quasi-apprenticeship for Alomar, because the bench coach is essentially the manager's right hand man.

Alomar seems to be well-liked by the players and certainly has a tremendous rapport with the fans, as a throwback to the mid '90s glory days. He would be a good asset to the pitching staff, having been a very solid catcher for many years and would continue to help Carlos Santana and Lou Marson with game calling and defense.

One downfall to going with Alomar is that he has absolutely no managerial experience. He interviewed with the Toronto Blue Jays after the 2010 season and was on the shortlist of candidates last winter for managerial vacancies with the Chicago Cubs and Boston Red Sox.

Something that has to be considered by the Indians front office is that if Alomar is not named the manager, he may leave the organization. He has already been interviewed by other teams and must be thought of pretty highly in baseball front offices. That's not to say that the Indians should blindly hire Alomar, but, if he does in fact have a good relationship with the players and the front office, it adds another dimension to the search for a new skipper.

Another [name that popped up](#) this past week from CBS Sports's Jon Heyman was **Terry Francona**.

Reportedly, Francona, who has been an analyst for ESPN, would leave the broadcast booth if the "right" opening came about. Both Francona and his father played for the Cleveland Indians. The two-time World Series champion would definitely be an interesting name.

Of course, the issue here is what Francona would have to work with. In Boston, he had an owner with deep pockets willing to write a check for whatever was necessary. That won't be the case in Cleveland. It's hard to imagine that past ties to the organization would make Francona

jump at the chance to manage the Indians. If Acta is indeed fired, Francona will certainly interview for the job. Whether he'll want to accept it or not is another story altogether.

Almost by default, **Mike Sarbaugh** will get a look. Remember when the Indians snubbed Torey Lovullo during their search for a manager in 2009 and he immediately jumped ship and caught on with the Red Sox? Like Lovullo, Sarbaugh has risen through the Indians minor league coaching ranks, going from Mahoning Valley in 2004 to Triple-A Columbus in 2010.

Sarbaugh has had tremendous success at the minor league level, winning championships in Mahoning Valley, Kinston, and Columbus. The Indians won't want to ruffle Sarbaugh's feathers the way that they upset Lovullo. Even if it's just a token interview, he'll get a chance to impress the front office.

Other than those three names, who are some other possibilities? Well, one possibly might be **Charles Nagy**

. The Indians have seen Nagy in a coaching role, as he was the pitching coach of the Triple-A Columbus Clippers in 2009. It's pretty rare for a pitching coach to become a manager, as that's not usually the progression through the coaching ranks. This is a definite long shot.

My personal favorite is **Sal Fasano**. Fasano had a very brief stint with the Indians in 2008. After retiring, Fasano became a Single-A manager in the Toronto Blue Jays organization. He was the 2011 Eastern League Manager of the Year in the Double-A ranks with the New Hampshire Fisher Cats.

Fasano is widely regarded as one of the nicest people in baseball. At every stop in his career, he has been thrust into the role of mentor, always expected to help young players in the early stages of their career. That's the situation Fasano would enter here and it's a role that he would thrive in. Again, a long shot.

This is just a very short list and mostly my opinion, which, ironically the View from the Porch columns tend to be. There are tons of names that the Indians are likely interested in for a possible vacancy that I couldn't even begin to know anything about. To me, the best bet for the Indians would be to pick somebody with a clean slate. Retread candidates shouldn't be of interest. A fresh face would be a good move for the organization. Somebody who hasn't

managed in the big leagues yet. Get somebody who can grow with the team as it grows because this is not a contender in the near future.

It has to be an unselfish manager, willing to go through the growing pains of some really ugly seasons. It'll likely be at least three or four seasons before the Indians are ready to contend again. They need a manager who would be in for the long haul. All of the candidates I have proposed, outside of Francona, are younger guys who will be patient with the process.

That's what the Indians need. Patience. It's a virtue that will be a requirement for anybody ballsy enough to take on the job.