

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Saturday, October 20 2012 11:00 AM - Last Updated Monday, October 22 2012 5:58 AM



I'm not sure many people can believe it. I know if you would have told me back in July that the Detroit Tigers would be going to the World Series, I wouldn't have believed you.

But that is what makes baseball as a sport so great. I would have believed the Tigers would have made the playoffs, but for them to have reached the World Series the way they looked back earlier in the year?

The Detroit Tigers had one thing that got them to the postseason. They had talent. Regardless of what happened to them, the reason they even stayed in the race was talent. Sure they never got hot and ran away with things like everyone expected them to, but they did not need to. They didn't need to because the division helped them out. If Chicago had played better baseball from start to finish the Tigers do not reach the World Series.

Simply, the Tigers survived on talent and got into the postseason because of that talent. You can't get hot and play above water and get into the postseason. It just doesn't happen and we saw that with out Indians. They got hot, and played above water, but their lack of talent did them in.

Now, a team can get to the postseason on talent, but they can't win the postseason on talent alone. They need that other component, the one that you can't get to the postseason with but the one you can't win in the postseason with out. You need to get hot.

And that's exactly what the Tigers are right now. They're red hot. Mainly their pitching. Never did I think their rotation could hang with what the Athletics had, but all of those guys, from Fister, to

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Scherzer to Verlander have it locked in. Those are all talented guys and add into the fact that they're playing their best ball.

Mike Illitch may have just bought himself a tittle. Not outright, but certainly a part of the equation.

Does that mean the Indians need to do the same just to get to the postseason and have a chance to win it? No, we saw that you can put things together without buying every bit and piece. Make no mistake that 2007 was not a fluke. It was a product of good personnel moves that put the Indians in a position that they could say, "We have some talent here." They had some talent, some talent that came together and was able to make the postseason. For awhile, they were hot. They ran through the Yankees and went up 3-0 on the Red Sox on the backs of hot bats and good pitching.

I won't go any further, but a postseason team can be built without being bought. The Indians may have the "getting hot" position down, but as we've seen the past two years, it is not something that can get them what they need or get them where they need to go.

So congrats to the Detroit Tigers. I'd much rather see them in there than the New York Yanekees when it comes down to it. I would have really liked neither to have been there, but when it comes down to it, the Giants or the Cardinals is who I'm personally rooting for.

[SANDY STAYING?]

The intrigue with Sandy Alomar Jr.'s status as a Cleveland Indian gets more and more interesting by the... well by the week at this point, the rate at which this situation is moving seems to be going very slow. But that's the MLB's wish when things are in the postseason. Don't do anything that can detract from what is going down on the diamond.

The Red Sox are quietly going through their list of candidates, interviewing most of them this week. At this point, the Red Sox do not seem to be an option for Sandy Alomar Jr. to look at because, well, they aren't looking at him. They did last year, but he is nowhere near their list

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that includes the likes of Brad Ausmus (no managerial or coaching experience), DeMarlo Hale, and Tim Wallach.

The Rockies, the other team with a managerial vacancy, does not really have a list of candidates right now. They're simply getting ready to interview Jason Giambi. Yeah you read that right, Jason Giambi is their main interview candidate right now.

I'm as puzzled as you probably are. Giambi is the second candidate to receive an interview, and the second in-house candidate with Tom Runnells out in Colorado. The Rockies will look at both before [going outside their organization](#) but it doesn't appear that Sandy Alomar Jr. would be on their radar. If Giambi doesn't get the job, he'll probably go back to playing. Yeah look I'm not making decisions there and personally, if I'm Sandy, I avoid that job for all I can. I know there is only 30 jobs out there and if you can get one, [you take it, but if I'm him, I'm hoping they don't come calling](#). There's better situations he can get into.

Now, it wouldn't appear that Sandy Alomar Jr. is a candidate for either of those jobs and perhaps that was his line of thinking [when he told MLB.com that he'd be sticking around in Cleveland](#) to be on Terry Francona's staff. It's great news, but it doesn't mean it will come to fruition until every team has a manager and Sandy Alomar Jr. isn't one of them.

If no one hires him, it is good to know Sandy Alomar Jr. will be back. But here's something that has come up that could cause an issue.

While the Red Sox are interviewing candidates, it has been reported that they are discussing with the Toronto Blue Jays, a form of compensation for them to pluck John Farrell away. Of course if they could get him, I think that Farrell would be the Sox top candidate because he got his big time coaching start there and had a lot of success and is doing a great job in Toronto with what he has in a tough division.

But if this comes to fruition, the Indians dodge one bullet with retaining Sandy, but perhaps face an even more dangerous one. One of the other teams that interviewed Alomar Jr. in the past for their managerial opening. One can't blame the Red Sox for passing up Sandy twice, he might

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have not been what they were looking for, but the Blue Jays? They went with John Farrell and made a brilliant choice. They now have an unexpected opening and could very well go back to their old list of candidates and pluck Sandy away.

If I'm the Indians, I hope the Red Sox don't get John Farrell, because that could mean bad things for them in retaining Sandy after all.

[OTHER STAFF NEWS]

With the news that Sandy Alomar Jr. will be staying, if he doesn't get a manager's job somewhere else of course, the Indians can safely say that former Astros' skipper Brad Mills [will be joining their organization](#)

. In what capacity is still unknown because Sandy's status for sure is not known. But in some capacity, Mills says he is going to sign on with the club rather soon.

Once Alomar is official (when all the spots are filled) I'd assume the Indians make that signing official. Until then, we just assume that this staff is going to be made up of some real heavy hitters in Francona, Alomar, and Tito's right-hand man in Brad Mills.

What the Indians will not do is round out their staff. We can assume those three are givens but after that, until things are official, the rest will probably not be filled out. The two names that won't be back are Bruce Fields and Steve Smith. Neither have been fired or let-go, but it simply is a matter of Smith wanting to "retire" in a way and take a year off to watch his son play college ball and Fields getting another shot somewhere else.

Whether Tom Wiedenbauer, David Miller, and Ruben Niebla return is up in the air. I think you could see Niebla brought back if Francona doesn't have a preference, but if Sandy is the bench coach, Mills is probably out there at third base and then you also have to consider the Indians finally bringing up Mike Sarbaugh to the major league staff.

That is all speculation though of course.

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[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

[Through Hardball Talk](#), there is some speculation from the CBS Jon Heyman camp (arhghgahgh!) that the Indians could make a play for **Kevin Youkilis**, who is in a position to become a free agent when the White Sox do not pick up his \$13 million option.

Where do we start with this?

Sure, it would make sense with the Terry Francona connection, but there are millions of more reasons why it makes no sense.

It also makes sense because it is a right-handed bat and he could fit perfectly into that 1B/DH role that the Indians have open, splitting time with Carlos Santana and whatever.

But unless the Indians are really set on contending, why do you sign that guy this season? A shot in the arm? Yeah, sure. But not enough of a shot in the arm. If they add another pitcher or two, and another bat in addition to Youkilis, then yeah, that would be a great idea.

But based off the conversation we just had a few sections ago, do you really think that is a possibility?

I know Justin Masterson made a good point, in that there were some good stretches and that the bad stretches were so bad that it made the overall picture look really bad. But things were not good. And there are [some scary and incredibly mind-numbing statistics](#) regarding the pitching on this team in 2012.

Look no further than this one.

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The Indians' 5.25 ERA from its starters (10 pitchers made at least one start during the year) was the fourth-highest single-season rate in club history. The team's 1.51 WHIP was the 15th-highest average for a single campaign for the franchise.

If that doesn't scare the living daylights out of you... Well then you probably can sit through Paranormal Activity 1-through-4. I know I couldn't.

Damn, that would have been a good costume idea. The Indians Pitching Staff.

In lighter news regarding the pitching staff, I'm a huge fan of television, as most of you who read this space know. One of the shows I frequently watch and love is *How I Met Your Mother*. And in case you missed it, one of our own was actually mentioned.

And who would have expected it? I certainly didn't, yet there I sat on Monday and all of a sudden, [Ted Mosby utters the name "Vinnie Pestano"](#). The Ted character is from Ohio because the actor (Josh Radnor) is also from Ohio.

So that's the connection. But the fact that of all people, Vinnie Pestano could get a shoutout... You know you've made it when your name is uttered on primetime television, even if it is an obscure reference. But hey, a reference is a reference and for us Indians fans that are also *How I Met Your Mother* fans, it's rather exciting.

And from now on, we can say "beloved Indians middle reliever Vinnie Pestano" anytime we mention Vinnie. It's a long nickname, but it is a very cool one that got national endorsement.

If I didn't say it Monday, then I'll say it now... Welcome to the offseason, where little news, is big news and big news, is huge news.

Offseason Rundown: Tribe Coaching Staff News and Beloved Middle Reliever Vinnie Pestano

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Nino has a blog! Give it a visit at [The Tribe Daily](#) , because Shin-Soo Choo will certainly be dancing 'Gangnam Style' somewhere there.

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