

## Offseason Rundown: Are You Not Excited Now?

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Sunday, January 06 2013 6:00 AM - Last Updated Saturday, January 05 2013 7:33 PM

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I was tempted to go through the entire **Nick Swisher** press conference and count the number of times that the man said the word "excited". It was like Tim Tebow sitting up there after being traded to the New York Jets. He's just so darn excited to be here!

No really, he's REALLY excited.

I think that is the word that athletes go towards when they're in a situation they probably didn't see themselves in. Tebow did not ask to be traded to New York. He wanted to be in Denver. He was all of a sudden thrown into a situation where he was going to be playing for a new team and they already had a quarterback, at least one that was starting.

So what else could he say? He was excited! (And [MLB.com's Zack Meisel did the legwork](#) , 16 times!)

Now please, do not think I'm going to start off by comparing Nick Swisher to Tim Tebow or say that Swisher is in a situation he doesn't want to be in.

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I'm simply saying that Swisher is in a situation he probably did not expect to be in a month ago. And his press conference was rather similar to the Tebow one with the Jets in that he said the word excited so many darn times.

It did not come off as fake. But to me, I kind of now see Nick Swisher in a unique light.

I see him as somewhat of a hired gun. [A hired gun with a big smile](#) .

*"It's going to be great, man. It's going to be super exciting," said Swisher, who erupted in a grin so wide that laughter filled the room. "I can't help it, man. I'm pumped. I'm excited. I feel like I'm smiling a lot."*

Just in that quote, he said the word excited a lot. Is he really THAT excited? Is he really that pumped and amped to be a Cleveland Indian? Or is he just excited to have a big fat contract, a team that really wanted him, and to be in a situation with a manager that is clearly a players manager?

Hey, those are great reasons to be excited. I'm glad he's excited, but please, I'm not ready to buy into Swisher really wanting to be a Cleveland Indian above any other team. Let's not fool ourselves. This is about money and recruitment. The Indians rolled out the red carpet for this guy. They knew his wife is expecting in May, so they had an baby Indians Jersey on hand for the couple. They knew Swisher is a big Buckeye, so why not bring in the Sweater-vest and the Urban Legend?

*"We were walking out of here like, 'Man, these guys did it right," Swisher said. "It was just an amazing situation to be in. They tugged on the right strings, man. ... All the places we visited, it was nothing compared to this."*

The Indians offered the best deal for him. Maybe it wasn't ALL money, but when you take money into account, the manager... Look, this is a great situation for Swisher. He should be excited to be here because this team has already made him the face of their franchise. They're going to plaster his mug all over the town. To them, he's an Ohio kid. Yeah he was born in Columbus, but he didn't grow up here. He did go to College at Ohio State, but again, that's Columbus. He is not a Cleveland-guy because as much as you can come to me and say "it's

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the same thing!", it's not. So stop it right now.

When you have a mess of fans who are Ohio State supporters and Pittsburgh Steelers fans, you can get out of here with that argument. I know, you have the die-hards that are All-Ohio, All-the-time. If that's you, and because of the venue I write to, I'm guessing that is the majority of you, that's great. Go for it, I'm happy for you.

But do not sit there and try and tell me that this is all the same. It's all the same! Cleveland is Ohio! Ohio is Cleveland! Columbus is Cleveland! So therefore, he's a hometown kid. He isn't. Jensen Lewis is a hometown kid.

Am I acting a little crabby when I should be as excited as Nick Swisher?

Maybe, but I'm just trying to temper things. I'm excited. This team was able to nab the perfect fit. He's excited to be here! What's to be down about?

I'm not down. I'm rather up, but I was struck with an odd chord after watching Swisher's introduction to Cleveland. It was refreshing, but peculiar.

Nick Swisher, with a smile as wide as wide can be said he was excited to be playing in Cleveland. He came to Cleveland. Yet, he did so in a rather "I'm just here for the food" type of way. I'm not saying he was genuine or anything, but to me, it came off as very hired-gunish. The Indians wanted Swisher more than Swisher wanted the Indians, it was clear when he said at some point, you just have to stop denying it.

Denying what? Cleveland is a place you can play?

Here's ultimately what it is.

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Nick Swisher is the perfect fit for the Cleveland Indians. Maybe the Cleveland Indians are not the perfect fit for Nick Swisher, but that isn't the priority here.

Because the Indians can give Swisher everything and anything he ever dreamed of, not that he wants much.

To me, Swisher [seems to be the type of guy that wants to play baseball](#) . He could care less where he does it, what uniform he's wearing, or who he's doing it with. He just wants to play and he wants to be himself. He can be that in Cleveland.

*"That's just Nick," said his father. "He loves the game. He knows he's blessed. He knows every day is not perfect day, but he knows that you must respect and love the game every day."*

The money is nice, the manager is cool, the team wants him. What's not to love? But let's not kid ourselves. Nick Swisher did not pick Cleveland. Cleveland picked Swisher and Swisher said, why not?

Why not with 56 million dollars. Why not with a manager that is going to hit him smack-dab in the middle of the lineup? Why not with a team that is rather close to his family with his first kid on the way? Why not with a team that clearly is set to make him their guy.

What did Nick say?

Front and center?

*"I never thought I'd be part of a press conference like that," Swisher said with a laugh. "I was front and center. Front and center."*

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Front and center...

Is this all bad?

No, it's not. Please do not think I'm dogging Swisher, the Indians, or anything. I'm stoked to have a guy that fits this team as well as Swisher does.

*"It's hard to envision a better fit for our team," Antonetti said. "For anyone who's watched Nick play, it's not only about his ability, but how he plays the game. His passion, his enthusiasm, his energy, you'll see it from the very first day."*

In the last Rundown I talked briefly about something Vinnie Pestano said, and I must bring it up one more time with a little bit more discussion.

Pestano said that the team did not have a clubhouse presence. There was no one to calm the storm that was the downfall in August. You think a guy like Nick Swisher will let that type of stuff happen? The man that flashed that \$56 million dollar smile all day on Thursday would let a losing streak like that fester and ball this team up in a pile of baseball garbage?

Absolutely not. This team didn't just need a switch hitter who could produce a boatload of runs. They needed someone like Swisher to basically be the guy that supported the message Terry Francona is trying to transmit. That is why Francona of all people should be [as thankful as he is to have Swisher on board](#)

*"The hard part for me was letting him go without getting him signed," said Francona. "It's a bad feeling because you know he's going somewhere else."*

