

Last week Jarad Regano chronicled the ten greatest moves made by Mark Shapiro during his reign as Indians General Manager. And luckily for Indians fans, Mark has hit more times than he's missed. This week ... Regano runs down Shappie's ten biggest gaffes as the Tribe's GM.



[Last week I touched on all of the positives](#) GM Mark Shapiro has been responsible for during his time here. To be fair, though, everything has not been all cotton candy and playoffs. Here are some of the stinkers thus far:

10. Signing Brady Anderson

Whether you are of the opinion that Brady Anderson “had help” during his monster fifty-homer season or not, he was a productive player for many years atop the Oriole lineup. He also was completely done when the Indians brought him on board. The signing was ridiculous enough, but the fact he stuck around so long and spent so much of the time near the top of the order was worse.

9. Signing Danny Graves

With the Indians coming off a very impressive campaign in 2005, the Danny Graves signing was really a slap in the face to Indian fans. Graves and Steve Karsay were brought in as reclamation projects for the Indians, with Danny winning a bullpen spot in the spring.

Through no fault of his own, he was completely done.

The rest of the league had already concluded this except for the Tribe.

Danny on the mound was ugly, outdated, and out of control.

And that was just his hair. When it is all said and done, he is just one piece to the worst off-season Mark Shapiro has had during his tenure in Cleveland .

8. The Milton Bradley Blue Light Special

Fed up with ongoing behavior issues and seemingly endless injuries, Shapiro had seen enough of Milton Bradley. And by "seen enough," I don't mean closed-door management meeting "seen enough." I mean public "this guy is a cancer, he ruins any hint of chemistry we are trying to build, we cannot have him here for another waking moment so what do you want to give us for him" seen enough. Shapiro announced to the world that Milton Bradley, come hell or high water, would not be an Indian at the end of the weekend. As much of a distraction as he was, Bradley had finally come into his own as a player. Many feel a different approach could have at least landed the Indians more in return than Franklin Gutierrez and Andrew Brown.

7. Luke Scott and Willy Taveras for Jeriome Robertson

On paper it sure made some sense. Grab a guy who won fifteen games in his first major league season as compensation for two minor leaguers who were picked up in the Rule 5 draft. After seeing an 84-mile an hour fastball from Robertson for a few months and two young careers start to blossom elsewhere, though, the move proved to be a bad one. Luke Scott is playing regularly in Houston, while Willy Taveras is leading off in Colorado after being traded there last off-season.

6. Signing Jose Jimenez

Facing a year with Bob Wickman on the shelf for its majority, the Indians went scavenging for a makeshift closer. It obviously would not have been financially prudent to the Indians blueprint to go out and pay a second closer a substantial amount of money with Wicky already on the books. Even Shapiro proclaimed Jimenez was signed because he was the right price for the club. Jose was one of many to get a shot at slamming the back door to many an Indian game in 2004. He was absolutely atrocious, posting an ERA of nearly 8.50.

5. Hall of Fame Garbage

The time the club started its rebuild proved to be the right time. The first piece to leave was Robbie Alomar, who was arguably the best second baseman in the American League at the time. Some argue that since Alomar's career derailed upon the trade, it is a wash that the Tribe netted absolutely nothing of value in return. Aside from Lawton, the Indians acquired Alex Escobar, Billy Traber, Jerrod Riggan, and Earl Snyder. None of the prospects even saw regular time at the big league level. Just think of where the Tribe would be had this even been an average trade.

4. Signing Jason Johnson

The timing of this deal is why it is fairly high on my list. Coming off a 93 win season with fans hungry to take the next step, Jason Johnson was brought in to...oh, I can't even say it... be an innings eater. The theory was that although J.J. was never a .500 pitcher, he also was never on winning teams. The combination of his durability and an improved team should reap rewards. Wrong. Johnson was absolutely horrific, and with the Tribe understandingly holding off on rushing Jeremy Sowers, we got to see quite a bit of him.

3. Aaron Boone/Omar Vizquel

One of Mark Shapiro's strengths may also be his greatest weakness. While he has had success finding value in certain players coming off poor seasons and the like, he also seems to be all too quick to rush to a hospital bed with pen and contract in hand. The Aaron Boone signing came at a really unusual time. He was inked during the summer of 2004, where he was paid to basically heal his surgically repaired knee. He returned the following year showing rust and diminished skills. Perhaps the biggest disappointment was his inability to drive the ball for power. He was then signed again for the following September, mostly due to the fact that he was close reaching an automatic option. What further hurt was the fact that the Aaron Boone contract pretty much came from the money that the Indians chose not to give Omar Vizquel. While Omar signed a three-year deal in San Francisco, many believe he would have taken two years here. Vizquel leaving Cleveland also alienated some fans holding on dearly to glory days gone past.

2. Matt Lawton/Ricky Gutierrez

One of the things most admirable about Shapiro was his honesty throughout the entire rebuild. As a matter of fact, his candor was so truthful he probably kept some fans from Jacobs Field during the lean years. Shapiro was sincere in trying to "rebuild on the fly" at the start of 2002. He wanted to show fans that he wanted to restock the farm system without giving up a chance to compete in the Central. Knowing the dismay of many fans after the Robbie Alomar trade, Shapiro almost immediately signed Ricky Gutierrez to a three-year contract, and extended newly acquired Matt Lawton for four years before playing a game in a Tribe uniform. As bad as the contracts were, I believe they have scared Shapiro off of going the extra year on several key free agents since. This may be the worst part of these deals.

1. The Brandon Phillips Debacle

Mark Shapiro and the rest of the front office have done so many things right during the rebuild with respect to the development of prospects, it is almost unfathomable how much they messed up on this one. The cardinal sin a small market team can make is giving up on a young player too early. Seeing as they don't make much, what is the harm in keeping them around? The Indians though, after rushing Phillips to the big leagues in 2003, became frustrated with the second baseman's attitude after being sent to AAA. Despite his dismay, Phillips performed for the next two years. Out of options, we were told Phillips would compete for the utility spot with Ramon Vasquez. This proved untrue, as Phillips outplayed Vasquez only to be given away to the Cincinnati Reds. While opinions differ as to whether Shapiro or Wedge had the bigger problem with Phillips, one fact rings loud and clear. Shapiro is the GM. The blame lies with him.