

If left up to Jarad Regano, Trot Nixon would be following Oldberto Hernandez out the door ... and he uses his latest column to make that plea to the Indians brass. Nixon has nothing left argues Regano, and is also denying the Indians of seeing exactly what they have in Franklin Gutierrez and Ben Francisco before the trade deadline, which suddenly looms just six weeks away.



Trot Nixon Era Should End Soon

Well, I gave them credit at the time. After a second straight poor off-season in regards to free agency acquisitions, the Indians at least attempted to spend some of the left over money they said they had. Trot Nixon was inked to a one-year deal at \$3 million when it became apparent that Shin-Soo Choo had eaten himself back to Buffalo.

There was no time commitment, and the money was pocket change at the major league level. What I failed to take into account, though, is the slow “cut bait” trigger of the Indian organization. As was the case with Brady Anderson, and more recently and hurtfully, Jason Johnson, Tribe brass has seemingly held on to one-year rentals as long as possible as if to justify the money given. The latest

situation with Nixon resembles very closely the Anderson signing. Both were players that Shapiro liked for a long time. Both were at the end of the road when they were signed. Does anyone else remember the Shapiro comparison of newly acquired Grady Sizemore to Nixon? Thank God that was not accurate.

The release of Roberto Hernandez gave me a glimmer of hope. Would Trot follow him out the door or at least be reserved to late-inning pinch-hit duty? For two reasons this move has to come sooner rather than later.

The first, and probably most obvious, is that Nixon is currently a zero tool player. While it may sound harsh, it is unarguably true. There is no more pop in his bat, and his pull happy style leaves little hope of sustaining a respectable average. His bad back leaves him laboring down the line on weak grounders to second. And as far as a fly ball to the gap? As far as Nixon's go, my money would be on Richard tracking it down before Trot. And that is today's version of Richard.

Secondly, though, and maybe even more importantly, is that the Indians need to find out if either Ben Francisco or Franklin Gutierrez can play every day. With about six weeks between now and the trading deadline, it would be the perfect opportunity. While the core philosophy of developing youngsters into core players has been a key ingredient to the Indians plans, too often have journeyman blocked playing time from potential core players.

Brandon Phillips is the poster child of this argument. How about Jeremy Guthrie though? Now hindsight is obviously 20/20 and no one could have predicted his success in Baltimore. But when taking into account his signing bonus, the way he pitched in Buffalo last year, and the fact the season was over by Memorial Day, how did he not start the last three months of the season?

I must admit I have never been the biggest Franky G fan. I have taken notice though, as to how hard he has successfully worked at putting the ball in play this year at Buffalo (and here). And, he is still just 24. Francisco, while a bit older, possesses both speed and a little power that could fit as a corner outfielder.

I have no idea of either will ever be an everyday outfielder. But I am pretty confident that, at least here, this may be their best chance. Trot Nixon has to go. And for more reasons than one.