

The emotional letdown of swinging and missing at the trade deadline is a natural reaction. But according to Jarad Regano, given what the Indians would have had to give up to land an Octavio Dotel or a Jason Isringhausen ... fans should be happy the team passed on dealing a potential long term solution for a two month rental.



The major league trading deadline came and went, and just like many before under Mark Shapiro, it proved anticlimactic. Other than the addition of another bat atop the lineup a week earlier and sending Trot Nixon to the bench for good (wait, wasn't that what was supposed to happen?), the Indians passed on adding a late inning bullpen arm.

Of course the emotional letdown of not seeing your team improve is natural. The deadline is so over hyped these days that there is pretty much a large sigh league-wide when it actually arrives. But considering what the Indians would have probably had to give up to land an Octavio Dotel or Jason Isringhausen, the benefits probably would not have outweighed the ramifications.

Mark Shapiro often talks about his reluctance in trading possible everyday players for bullpen help after being in the organization for the infamous Brian Giles for Ricardo Rincon trade. Although not as much on the tip of his tongue, acquiring Scott Stewart and watching him throw meatballs for a few months probably reinforced this way of thinking.

Several sources have confirmed that the Royals were not interested in Ben Francisco for Dotel. They were more interested in Franklin Gutierrez. If true, the Indians made the right decision in standing pat. While Franky is still a ways away from a finished product, he possesses the much ballyhooed 5-tools. The Indians have already remarkably given away a low earning 5-tooler in Brandon Phillips, not to mention a cheap flamethrower in Jeremy Guthrie. With a small payroll, these mistakes cannot continue.

The Indians are not as good as the Detroit Tigers right now. No matter who the Indians would have acquired, he would not have made the impact that the return of Joel Zumaya and Fernando Rodney will for the Tigers. Despite this, the Indians still remain the team with the best chance at winning the AL wild card.

The mood around town, though, is downright pessimistic. The fact that the Tribe is playing its worst ball of the season has exacerbated the demands for an upgrade in the pen. Furthermore, had the Lofton deal been finalized at the 11th hour, reaction would be a bit less harsh.

For what appeared to be available, Indians' brass probably did the best thing. They will now turn to Jensen Lewis, a possibly revitalized Matt Miller and the waiver wire for help. As much as I agree with Shapiro's restraint at the deadline, though, he does not get completely off the hook.

What it takes to gain an adequate improvement at the trade deadline is often just too much. Small market clubs are often made to both absorb salary and give up players for the future. Knowing this is the case, Shapiro HAS to improve his track record of signing free agents. Putting your eggs in the baskets of several retreads is just not going to cut it. His resume in this department has been abysmal. It is much easier to spend a few extra bucks on better players without giving up

prospects by signing players in the off-season.

Furthermore, holding on to Franklin Gutierrez is only good if you play him. Are we really not going to find out if this guy can play everyday because of Trot Nixon? If he will be relegated to playing sporadically against left-handed pitching and replacing the near crippled Nixon late in games, we will go into 2008 still not knowing.

Rest assured, Tribe Nation, the trading deadline could have been much worse. How the current roster is utilized is probably much more important.