

Resident clinic Jarad Regano looks at this Indians team, and sees some problems. He says that this years team is not too far removed from the 2002 version that signaled the beginning of the rebuild. He also sees the contracts of CC and Pronk ending after 2008, and says to Larry Dolan: extend them or trade them before you lose them for nothing.



Indians Face Big-Time Crossroads

What a nightmare. I give my predictions on a lot of things. A lot of times, I am very wrong. So how come the one topic I want to be wrong about, I hit the nail on the head more times than not. That topic is my Cleveland Indians. So, after understanding that I am not just a whiny Tribe fan, grab an Alka-Seltzer and read on. The Cleveland Indians could be in trouble. And I do not mean in 2006.

The 2006 season is over. No miracle run passing not one, but two teams in the central. My concern is going forward. I am very cautiously suggesting we are not in that much better shape than we were in 2002 at the start of the rebuild. Before screaming at your computer, consider this:

The 2002 Indians, like the current Tribe, were done at the end of the June. The rebuild consisted of selling off player after player, with great return potential. Roberto Alomar (early 2002), Bartolo Colon, Chuck Finley, and Jim Thome to name a few, were all shopped for the brightest prospects. Despite the raves and awards given to Mark Shapiro for the fire sale, lets take a closer look at the net result. We have, count them, three people from the “waves and waves” of prospects that can be considered part of our core.

Grady Sizemore, Travis Hafner, and Cliff Lee are the only ones acquired via trade. All of the others are home grown.

When names like Ben Broussard, Aaron Boone, and Jason Michaels are offered as saleable assets, what makes you think Shapiro could net more for them than the aforementioned all-stars?

The good news is that we do have a nice core, albeit mostly from our own farm system. The solution is to get payroll up to the \$70 million range and fix the holes via trade and free agency. Since I have no confidence in Larry Dolan doing this (he did not after a 93 win season), I mutter the unthinkable. One of two things has to be done. The Indians either need to re-up on Travis Hafner and C.C. Sabathia and extend them to the terms of the rest of their core players (2010 through

2012), or they need to take them off of their untouchable list. In an organization that refuses to pay free agents, and refuses to trade prospects, it would be devastating to see one of these two leave without compensation. And by compensation, I do not mean a “sandwich pick.”

2006 has gone to the birds. Or at least the Tigers and White Sox. Without a significant pay hike in 2007, we will be filtering in the Andy Marte’s and Ryan Garko’s of the world. That leaves a one year window in 2008 with the big fella’ and Travis. With the “realities of our market,” can we really take a chance on a window that small?