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Before getting into the players coming to Cleveland in exchange for Lee and Frisco, let's take a look at the rumor that dominated most of the Trading Deadline season as the Phillies courted Jays' RHP Roy Halladay, eventually backing away from the table when the Jays demanded a king's ransom of Kyle Drabek, JA Happ, and Dominic Brown and/or Michael Taylor for 1 ½ years of Doc Halladay fronting the Philadelphia rotation. The demands by the Jays did not seem out of line, given the analysis by Dave Cameron as to [the value that Halladay would provide](#).

After [extending that exercise to Lee](#), the thought was that while Halladay had a larger body of work in terms of performance, the lower amount of money owed to

Lee compared to Halladay made the value of the two pitchers relatively similar, if not identical. Now, news that none of the players that the Jays demanded for Halladay (and rightfully so) have been included in the Lee deal for the Phillies starts to throw up the red flags.

Instead of demanding Drabek (the top pitching prospect for the Phillies right now) or Happ (already thriving in MLB), the Indians seem to have centered their deal for Lee around one very high-ceiling young arm in Jason Knapp and a AAA perennial prospect in Carlos Carrasco with two upper-level position players in Lou Marson and Jason Donald coming as organizational filler that could see the Indians' roster as early as this year. While prior to the season [Kevin Goldstein of Baseball Prospectus had Carrasco \(#1\), Marson \(#5\), Donald \(#6\), Knapp \(#10\)](#), the return (when looked at as a whole) is not...um, not quite what we were expecting:

[Carlos Carrasco RHP - Age 22](#)

2009 (AAA) - 6-9, 5.18 ERA, 1.36 WHIP, 3.0 BB/9, 8.8 K/9, 2.95 BB/K in 114 2/3 IP

Carrasco's youth and power pitching arsenal portend good things for the young RHP, though those attributes have not yet translated to the AAA level this season. He throws a low-90's fastball, complementing it with a changeup and a curve, none of which has developed as a true strike-out pitch. Most scouts see his upside as that of a second or third starter, with only the most optimistic predicting front-line stuff from him, age considered. Just as likely though, is that he is a frustrating rotational filler who allows innings to get away from him as he matures as a pitcher. Carrasco is a possibility for the rotation in 2010, but to expect tremendous things out of him that early is foolhardy.

[Jason Knapp RHP - Age 18](#)

2009 (A) - 2-7, 4.01 ERA, 1.20 WHIP, 4.1 BB/9, 11.7 K/9, 2.85 K/BB in 85 1/3 IP

If Carrasco is the "finished product" in the deal, Knapp is the wild card as he has hit 97 MPH on the gun as an 18-year-old and is a big, strong power pitcher who works his secondary stuff off of his fastball. He could mature into a top-of-the-rotation starter (although not any time soon) or he could flame out through injury or ineffectiveness a long way from Cleveland with the possibility even existing that the bullpen is his eventual home. Certainly one red flag that

goes up is the fact that Knapp was shut down on July 11th with "shoulder fatigue" and has yet to pitch since...but that's the risk of a player like Knapp, who certainly represents the high risk/high reward portion of the deal.

[Jason Donald SS - Age 24](#)

2009 (AAA) - .236 BA / .297 OBP / .332 SLG / .629 OPS with 1 HR, 15 2B in 23 PA

A player that projects, initially at least, as a utility IF in the Majors, Donald does a number of things very well, but not one thing well enough to justify his consistent inclusion in an MLB lineup, at least not right now. There's a chance that he can develop into a moderately effective 2B, but it's much more likely that Donald projects to a utility IF who can play a number of positions effectively.

[Lou Marson C - Age 23](#)

2009 (AAA) - .294 BA / .382 OBP / .370 SLG / .751 OPS with 1 HR, 13 2B in 241 PA

Marson is a high-OBP, low-SLG catcher whose ball-to-bat ability is his greatest strength as well as providing solid, if unspectacular, defense. His lack of power is disconcerting and probably prevents him from every truly projecting as an everyday MLB catcher. If he did, he would fall into the Jason Kendall mode of a high-contact placeholder who probably fits better as a back-up catcher.

For a guttural response to this, this trade makes no sense for the Indians on any level. According to numerous reports, Carrasco was one of the players discussed in the CC deal last year in a deal that the Indians turned down. The difference, of course, being that CC was under contract for 1/2 of a season when he was dealt as Lee is still under contract for 1 1/2 seasons - meaning that a 1/2 of a year for CC is worth less than 1 1/2 years for Lee, particularly when you consider Carrasco's struggles this year. If Carrasco is the major chip (and I'm having a little trouble considering an 18-year-old in A-ball as the "major" piece), then he certainly doesn't fill the bill of an MLB-ready starter or even an exceptional prospect a little further away.

It's probably true that you can slot Carrasco into the rotation in 2010, but how much of a difference is putting him in there than putting a player like Hector

Rondon in the 2010 rotation?

And that, to me, is the disappointment of the whole trade at first glance - it unquestionably takes 2010 off the table for the Indians and gives them no real blue-chip prospect who can be relied on to contribute mightily in 2010 or even 2011. Sure, maybe Donald and Marson are close...but Donald looks like the replacement for Jamey Carroll more than anything else for next year and Marson is a AAA catcher in an organization now boasting Victor, Shoppach, Gimenez, Torregas, and Carlos Santana as 2010 options at catcher.

Certainly it looks like a sign that more moves are coming, as holding on to Victor (particularly looking at the 2010 rotation WITH Carrasco) makes less sense today and there's a likelihood that the move is strictly a salary dump of Lee's contract for 2010 (which is about the only level it makes sense at), with the edict coming to extract the most value for Lee in the next two days and the return being thus.

The return however, is underwhelming on many levels particularly for the Indians' most marketable player going for what looks to be a group of mid-level (if close to MLB-ready) prospects.

Much more to come on this sad day - but for now, we'll have to sit and wait to see if the other shoe drops with Victor as the head-scratching, the violent reactions, and the questions come faster than they can find an answer.