

All That I'm Saying...Is Give the Tribe a Chance

Written by {ga=mikeperry}

Thursday, March 24 2011 11:57 PM - Last Updated Friday, March 25 2011 8:05 AM



My cousin, Jeff, and I recently had a conversation about the 2011 Cleveland Indians. Well, I guess it could be classified as a conversation even though it was pretty much just me talking about how every year is a new beginning and how the Indians, with a couple of breaks, could be an interesting baseball team this season and Jeff rebutting every positive comment with either "The Tribe stinks" or "Dolan is cheap."

If you can believe it, Spring Training is not even over and he has already thrown in the towel on this season. It must be a terrible thing to be such a raging pessimist.

He is an Indians fan, and has the ticket stubs and assorted Indians gear to prove it, but something happened to him over the last couple of years that put him in this state of perpetual negativity.

This is a problem that I have been noticing more and more...people have either no faith or no interest in the Indians. Thinking back to the mid-1990's, when the team was loaded and the stadium was electric, it was almost unimaginable that, one day, there would be nights when the entire upper deck was populated by nothing but birds and the occasional fans in the sections right behind the plate.

Here is my message (call me a company man all you want, but this is from the heart): Major League Baseball is a blessing for a city, not a right, and the Indians deserve much better than the fans have given them over the last few years. It was 2007 when the Indians were one game away from the World Series (thanks Joel Skinner for the Kenny Lofton stop sign, by the way). This is a franchise that is dealing with the economic realities of Major League Baseball, and

All That I'm Saying...Is Give the Tribe a Chance

Written by {ga=mikeperry}

Thursday, March 24 2011 11:57 PM - Last Updated Friday, March 25 2011 8:05 AM

looking to compete while, at the same time, not sending the owner to the poor house.

There is no one that would rather see the Indians win than Larry Dolan. It is his dime, and a winning baseball team would mean a healthy addition to his bottom line. If Dolan was as cheap as everyone seems to think the Indians would not have one of the stronger farm systems in baseball. Cheapskates don't pour money into something as important, yet overlooked, as a minor league system.

And, yes, it would be great to see C.C. Sabathia as the No. 1 starter and Cliff Lee as the No. 2. But if this pair was still in Cleveland the team could scarcely afford to fill out the roster.

Running a baseball team at a deficit is what an owner with unlimited resources could do, but there are few people like that in the world. And how many of these people would want to purchase the Cleveland Indians?

No, most baseball owners have to stick to a budget and do what they can with what they have. The Indians have X number of dollars to spend on payroll, and that's what they work with. Meanwhile, occasionally a team like the Tribe will catch lightning in a bottle and make a run at the whole thing. This, my friends, is what we have to hope for. If that's not your cup of tea, if this isn't acceptable to you, maybe you should join the rest of the bandwagon Yankees fans in the area and root for the Bronx Bombers. But the year the Indians do make this run I am talking about, make sure to stay away from Progressive Field.

The Indians haven't made the best trades recently when they have had to dump salary. The Cliff Lee deal with the Phillies wasn't very strong (Jason Donald has been the best player from that trade thus far) and moving Sabathia to the Brewers brought the team Matt LaPorta and Michael Brantley, two players that could start this season, although they aren't exactly stars at this point. Don't forget, however, the Casey Blake for Carlos Santana deal. These things seem to sort themselves out in the wash.

Opening Day will be here very soon and the season is a clean slate sitting right there in front of all of us. It is time to put some excitement back in Cleveland again, to give the Indians a real home field advantage by making Progressive Field an electric place again.

All That I'm Saying...Is Give the Tribe a Chance

Written by {ga=mikeperry}

Thursday, March 24 2011 11:57 PM - Last Updated Friday, March 25 2011 8:05 AM

Take all your recent complaints and criticisms and leave them at home. If you aren't a big Dolan fan, give him one more chance. Make the 2011 season your season to give the Indians a chance again, and see where it leads. I will tell you this; if it is late August and the Indians are in the hunt, Mr. Dolan might just surprise you. Put him into a position to where he has to put up or shut up, and let the chips fall where they may. There is some talent on this team, strong talent, and the AL Central is fairly competitive. Detroit and Minnesota have better teams, but the talent gap is not as significant as it has been in the past. There is no reason the Indians cannot earn a trip to the post season this year...all you have to do is believe.

After all, you could be a baseball fan living in Pittsburgh.