



After setting a franchise record by homering in their first nine games of the season, the Cleveland Indians have now gone 11 straight contests *without* clearing the fence once. "That's pretty pathetic," you say, not even glancing up from your iPhone, "but it doesn't explain why the Browns drafted Brandon Weeden in the first effing round."

Well, dearest reader, what if I told you it actually DOES explain it? That's right. Prepare to have your fragile, one-track minds blown, Ohio.

I'm Gonna Try to Make Indians Baseball Relevant to Browns Draft Junkies!

Exhibit A: A Draft Diss to a Can't Miss

To use a term a good ole Oklahoma boy would find fitting, this year's NFL Draft wasn't Brandon Weeden's first rodeo. Ten long years ago-- as an 18 year-old pitcher-- Weeden was selected by the New York Yankees as the final pick of the second round of the 2002 Major League Baseball Amateur Draft. Earlier in that same round, **the Indians-- focused strongly on pitching-- took a gander at Weeden**, but picked Villanova's Brian Slocum instead. This turned out to be quite a shitty selection, considering Brian McCann and Curtis Granderson went a few picks later. But all things considered, puff-puff-passing on Weeden was a good call for the Tribe. Because while Slocum at least got a brief sniff of the Big Leagues, Weeden had begun a journey toward an entirely different destination.

Exhibit B: The Power Outage

Flash forward a decade. It's April 17, 2012, and while the Cleveland sports universe is desperately transfixed on the blabberings of NFL Draft gurus debating **the merits of Brandon Weeden** as a football player, the Cleveland Indians are pulling out an impressive 9-8 win over the Mariners at Safeco Field. The highlight of the night is a three-run Carlos Santana home-run off Kevin Millwood. At the time, everything seems kosher for the Tribe. Santana rounds the bases without incident. Rick and Matt donate their five bucks to The Gathering Place. ...No one realizes they've heard the last crack of thunder on the eve of an eerie silence.

Almost two weeks later, the Cleveland boom-sticks have entirely lost their thump. The power hitters are swinging banjos, the banjo hitters have downgraded to ukuleles, and Shelley Duncan has adopted a "virtual bat" that's only visible when CGI-ed into his hands in post-production. The final result—the longest Tribe homer-less streak in nearly three decades.

You have to go all the way back to 1983-- **the year Brandon Weeden was born**-- to find the last time a Cleveland club went 10 or more games without a round tripper. From April 10 to April 27 of that season, the Mike Ferraro managed Indians (which included Rick Manning and Mike Hargrove in the starting lineup) put on a 14-game Punch & Judy revue, managing zero dingers in entire series against Texas, Baltimore, Toronto, Chicago, and Minnesota before finally breaking the string on a Friday night in Kansas City. Andre Thornton was the savior, hitting a game-tying homer off Dan Quisenberry in the ninth inning. But Cleveland still lost the game 6-5 in extras, well on their way to another last place finish in the AL East.



