



Lately, the only way to avoid hearing about the first place Indians' disturbingly low attendance numbers is to sequester yourself in a peaceful place far from the rest of humanity — like Progressive Field. *Zing!* In all seriousness, though-- for both the disillusioned fans and the die-hard devotees who berate them-- those swaths of empty seats are raising a lot of questions: Is it the ticket prices? The bad weather? The low payroll? The tumultuous five years since the Tribe's last playoff run? Basically, why aren't people getting their asses to the ballpark? Well... while others are content to ask, The Opposite Field seeks to answer. Presenting... the Unofficial Metric of Fairweather Fandom!

If yee be timid in the face of obsessively detailed statistical analyses, tread no further. For the Fairweather Fan Metric is—for lack of a better term— numerically psychotic. The goal was simple. By indexing some of the top excuses for low ballpark attendance, and how these factors affect all 30 Major League ball clubs, we can finally get a clearer sense of how unique the Indians' circumstances are—and by further extrapolation—how fickle Cleveland fans are compared to the rest of the league.

To come up with our final Fairweather Fandom Standings, a three-step process is required.

1. Tally Up How Each MLB Team Ranks in 7 “Fan Attendance Discouragement” Categories, aka FAD’s

2. Use the Team’s FAD Number to Establish Its’ “Forgivable Attendance Rate” (FAR)

3. Compare That FAR to Each Team's Actual 2012 Attendance Rate to Get their +/- Fairweather Fan Rating.

Simple, right? No, of course it isn't! And there's loads of shady math in there, too. But when we're done, we'll know which fans keep the faith in trying times, and whether the Tribe's fan shortage is understandable or unforgivable.

Introducing the Fan Attendance Discouragement (FAD) Categories

So, you want to calculate how much a team is crushing its fans' spirits before even taking the field? No problem. These are seven of the most often cited reasons that fans elect not to go see their team play in person.



1. Team Payroll (PAYRL): We hear this one routinely with the Indians. "Dolan is cheap," etc. When a team spends big dough on free agents, the fans tend to feel like a commitment to winning has been communicated. The 2012 team payrolls below were yonked from USA Today.

2. Ticket Prices / "Fan Cost Index" (\$FCI): The people over at fancostexperience.com came up with each MLB ballpark's average costs based on *the prices of four (4) adult average-price tickets, two (2) small draft beers, four (4) small soft drinks, four (4) regular-size hot dogs, parking for one (1) car, two (2) game programs and two (2) least expensive, adult-size adjustable caps.*

3. TV Market Size (TV): Teams in big cities ought to have an easier time filling a stadium, right? Here, our market sizes were determined by [Nate Silver at Baseball Prospectus](#), who helped split up market share for cities with two teams.

4. Postseason Drought (PSD): When your season always ends before the leaves change, your fans may become disenchanted.

5. Ballpark Age (PRK): Unless Babe Ruth played in your park, newer is always better.

6. Average Temperature (TEMP): Here we're just using average temperatures for April/early May in the MLB markets, with the understanding that dome/roof parks (R) are immune to such concerns.

7. 2012 Winning Percentage (2012): Obviously, a winning team is a more watchable team. These stats are through May 16, 2012.

Now, using these FAD categories, it's time to see how all the MLB teams stack up. Below, each team is ranked from 1-30 in all seven columns (with 1 being best, 30 worst). These rankings appear in parentheses next to the stats themselves. We then add those 7 separate rankings together for each team (Rotisserie League style) to figure out their Fan Attendance Discouragement (FAD) total. The higher your FAD number, the more excuses your fans have NOT to show up.

The Fan Attendance Discouragement Standings *(as of May 16, 2012)*

Team	PAYRL	\$FCI	TV	PSD	PRK	TEMP	2012
1. Royals	61M (27)	\$185 (13)	(28)	26 (29)	39 (25)	67 (13)	.429 (24)
2. Rockies	78M (22)	\$184 (12)	(27)	2 (13)	17 (18)	61 (22)	.400 (26)
3. A's	55M (29)	\$187 (14)	(18)	5 (20)	46 (26)	63 (19)	.500 (14)
4. Pirates	63M (26)	\$152 (3)	(30)	19 (28)	11 (10)	62 (21)	.459 (18)
5. Twins	94M (13)	\$225 (23)	(25)	1 (9)	2 (2)	58 (29)	.297 (30)
6. White Sox	97M (11)	\$223 (19)	(16)	3 (17)	21 (22)	59 (25)	.459 (18)
7. Cubs	88M (15)	\$300 (28)	(8)	3 (17)	98 (5)*	59 (25)	.417 (28)
8. Padres	55M (30)	\$151 (2)	(26)	5 (20)	8 (7)	68 (12)	.368 (29)
9. Indians	78M (21)	\$174 (9)	(22)	4 (19)	18 (19)	59 (25)	.568 (8)
10. Mariners	82M (18)	\$196 (15)	(17)	10 (25)	13 (15)	R (1)	.410 (27)
11. Orioles	81M (19)	\$176 (10)	(21)	14 (26)	20 (21)	65 (17)	.622 (4)
12. Blue Jays	75M (23)	\$217 (18)	(12)	18 (27)	23 (24)	R (1)	.526 (13)
13. <u>Astros</u>	61M (28)	\$224 (21)	(10)	6 (23)	12 (12)	R (1)	.432 (21)
14. Red Sox	173M (3)	\$337 (30)	(7)	2 (13)	100 (5)*	56 (30)	.459 (18)
15. Tigers	132M (5)	\$233 (25)	(15)	0 (1)	12 (12)	59 (25)	.486 (17)
16. Nationals	81M (20)	\$198 (16)	(7)	— (30)	4 (5)	67 (13)	.622 (4)
17. Mets	93M (14)	\$230 (24)	(3)	5 (20)	3 (3)	61 (22)	.541 (9)
18. Giants	118M (8)	\$224 (20)	(11)	1 (9)	12 (12)	63 (19)	.500 (14)
19. D-Backs	74M (24)	\$146 (1)	(24)	0 (1)	14 (16)	R (1)	.432 (25)
20. Marlins	118M (7)	\$242 (26)	(23)	8 (24)	0 (1)	R (1)	.541 (9)
21. Dodgers	95M (12)	\$213 (17)	(4)	2 (13)	50 (28)	73 (9)	.649 (1)
22. Angels	154M (4)	\$160 (5)	(5)	2 (13)	46 (26)	73 (9)	.432 (21)
23. Reds	82M (17)	\$166 (6)	(13)	1 (9)	9 (9)	66 (16)	.528 (12)
24. Brewers	98M (10)	\$172 (7)	(29)	0 (1)	11 (10)	R (1)	.432 (21)
25. Cardinals	110M (9)	\$225 (22)	(19)	0 (1)	6 (6)	67 (13)	.583 (7)
26. Rays	64M (25)	\$153 (4)	(20)	0 (1)	22 (23)	R (1)	.632 (2)
27. <u>Phillies</u>	175M (2)	\$257 (27)	(6)	0 (1)	8 (7)	64 (18)	.486 (14)
28. Braves	83M (16)	\$172 (8)	(2)	1 (9)	16 (17)	73 (9)	.605 (6)
29. Yankees	198M (1)	\$324 (29)	(1)	0 (1)	3 (3)	61 (22)	.541 (9)
30. Rangers	121M (6)	\$184 (11)	(14)	0 (1)	18 (19)	77 (8)	.632 (2)



