



“WTF was Cleveland thinking?!” This was the title of a thread introduced to the CigarFamily.com Online Forum on June 27, 2002—the day the Tribe sent Bartolo Colon to Montreal for a collection of minor leaguers. Now, almost ten years to the day, that long forgotten comment board serves as an educational fossil of truth-- buried deep beneath our own revisionist internet histories. We couldn’t foresee Cliff Lee and Grady Sizemore becoming all-stars; or Brandon Phillips as our grinning, vengeful nemesis; or Bart Colon as the rotund picture of longevity\*. All we knew for sure was. . . we were smarter than everybody else.

*\*In celebration of the 10th anniversary of his landmark trade, Colon just injured his oblique muscle while pitching for Oakland this week-- the same injury he was getting treatment for when the Tribe sent him to the Expos. That was also back when people still thought the White Stripes were siblings, but that's neither here nor there.*

Anyway, suffice it to say, Fan Forum Archeology is not for the faint of heart. Digging up old threads for the sake of comedic hindsight is often dangerous, painful work. And for those poor souls whose bloated, ignorant opinions remain frozen in time like the volcanic corpses of Pompeii—it can prove more than a little embarrassing, too. Still, there’s so much we can learn from re-examining our kneejerk reactions of the past. Like, why didn’t we thoroughly assess the situation before commenting on it? How come we shat all over players we hadn’t even heard of hours earlier? Is it possible that we’re still doing this kind of dumb stuff to this very day—shouting at talk radio personalities or Yahoo comment board readers about how certain members of the Cleveland sports community should be executed by firing squad for their offenses against humanity?

As my favorite cliché goes, those who don't know their history are doomed to keep saying the same stupid shit. So let us travel back in time to an internet before TheClevelandFan.com. Before Youtube. Before Facebook... all the way to a tiny corner of ancient cyberspace known as the CigarFamily.com Online Forum in the year 2002.



CigarFamily.com is/was the “official website of Arturo Fuente and J.C. Newman cigars.” Not being a cigar man, myself, this means next to nothing to me. And considering that the site is now basically defunct (save for the perfectly preserved forum), it may not mean a great deal to Arturo Fuente and J.C. Newman, either. But, like all smokeable things, cigars have their passionate devotees, and it's these gentlemen who have provided us with our Bartolo Colon time capsule.

It's probably worth noting that there were plenty of other more mainstream examples of Cleveland's borderline psychotic reaction to Bart's exodus a decade ago. The next day's *Akron Beacon Journal*, for example, went with the following, level-headed headline: “*Colon trade a slap in face to fans; Shapiro talks about rebuilding team, but wrecking ball whisks Tribe's top pitcher to Montreal.*”

Meanwhile, the *Plain Dealer* held a reader poll asking, “*When will the Indians be contenders again?*” And these were the results:

"2003": 6 percent.

"2004": 17 percent.

"2005": 14 percent.

"2006 or beyond": 9 percent.

"Who knows? I'll probably be dead by then": 54 percent

There were also countless chat rooms and message boards overflowing with the seething rage of scorned Tribe fans, still fat off the entitlement of the "Era of Champions." So why just focus on the fellas at CigarFamily? Three reasons:

1. The thread is 100% real and [still exists](#) .
2. It includes the much appreciated ignorance of some non-Clevelanders.
3. It reads just like every other thread on the subject at the time.

**Selections from "WTF was Cleveland Thinking?" - CigarFamily.Com Online Forum.**

June 27-28, 2002.

*With special DVD commentary from The Opposite Field*

**NYPete | June 27, 2002 10:48PM**



They trade one of the best young pitchers for a .190 hitter and 3 cups of coffee.

*The .190 hitter was Lee Stevens, a salary-balancing toss-in. The "3 cups of coffee" have since combined to make 8 all-star appearances and win 1 Cy Young award, 5 gold gloves, and 2 silver sluggers.*

**Egoist | June 28, 2002 7:26 AM**

Freaking hilarious. What an awful move. Guess they are giving up on this year already and looking for 3 years down the road. Colon has been their only consistent pitcher all year.

*We did still have a 21 year-old named Sabathia who was pretty solid.*

**bigdaddy | June 28, 2002 8:19 AM**

They have lost their minds. Be prepared for an all out fire sale.

If (when) they get rid of Omar, I'm through with them.

BTW, the Cleveland Plain Dealer is raking Dolan and Shapiro over the coals pretty well today. This reminds me of Marge Schott and the Reds all over again.

*The firesale did indeed continue, with Chuck Finley shipping out soon after. Omar, however, stayed in Cleveland two more years—to the ripe old age of 37. Eight years later, he is still playing. No word on whether bigdaddy switched allegiances. As of yet, Larry Dolan's respect for Hitler has gone unpublicized.*

**CPT/VSG | June 28, 2002 8:33 AM**

As one FORMER season ticket holder, I will not be happy until I see that IDIOT Larry Dolan in rotting in Hell along with the incompetent smirky punk GM, Mark Shapiro, who wouldn't know a baseball player if he saw one. What a sad, sad, sad destruction of a franchise almost overnight by absolute idiots who have no idea of what they are doing. After 8 years of holding season tickets, I will never set foot in Jacobs Field again until I have positive confirmation that Dolan and Shapiro are resident in Hell where they belong.

*Now there's a true Tribe fan for ya! How sad CPT would be to find out that Dolan and Shapiro have dodged the Lake of Fire, while Jacobs Field got a new name just to spite him.*

**bob | June 28, 2002 9:19 AM**



Very sad day. First they tell us they are going to load up pitching when they traded Alomar, now they fire sale the best young pitcher in the league, Omar & Thome will be next to go then next season when they only draw 10 or 15000 a game they will cry and raise the prices. Just 2 years ago they sold out every home game for 419 games in a row now we are back to the old days with an owner that has no money a GM that has no idea, guess I will go buy a boat as I sure won't be spending my \$6000.00 a year for tickets.

Oh and the rumor around here is that the player to be named later will be Tim Drew, a good PITCHING prospect in the minors now that has shown a lot of promise.

*Bob has since sailed the seven seas on his boat, missing out on the entire MLB career of Timmy Drew-- the black sheep of the Drew family-- who won a grand total of two games in five seasons. Meanwhile, Bob's words continue to inspire a new generation of punctuation-hating forum posters over at Cleveland.com.*

### **LuvDog | June 28, 2002 10:39 AM**

They'll pick up the new "prospects" and when they get good, they'll trade them away for either a bunch of "has beens" or more "prospects"... just like the Indians of old.

*Hmm, is it LuvDog, or Nostradamus? Although, to nitpick a bit, Brandon Phillips was actually traded away BEFORE he was good. And Grady Sizemore was never dealt at all (except for a bad break, that is). The narrative fits C.P. Lee pretty accurately, however.*

### **Bond | June 28, 2002 11:01 AM**

Dolan and Shapiro might as well be related to Modell for all intensive purposes. And I hope Selig decides to keep the Expo's and contract the Indians!!

*Bond shares CPT's well reasoned assertion that Larry Dolan and Mark Shapiro are evil men. But he goes a step further, suggesting that the only way to end their reign of terror is through the sacrifice of the entire Indians franchise. A noble and unique idea, but unfortunately for Mr. Bond, the Tribe lived on and got within a game of the World Series five years later, bla bla bla.*

### **mmeadows | June 28, 2002 8:23 PM**

Welcome to our baseball hell.

*Oh, mmeadows, you silly bastard. Jose Jimenez hasn't even arrived yet. You have so much to look forward to!*

**Brandon Phillips of the Past says... "Don't know what you got, till it's gone!"**

