You thought you got rid of me didn't you? You thought... Oh, the games are over, that Nino is going into hibernation isn't he?

Here's the fun part. I don't do what most expect me to do. I actually think there is a lot of business to attend to and a lot of what you read here you will need to pocket for later discussion.

Because here's the deal. The Indians have a lot of work to do this offseason and there is a lot to remember when these decisions need to not only be discussed, but worked out.

I've been saying there is a time and place to discuss some of the matters most want to discuss.

We've reached that time and place and as we start to dig into the nuts and bolts of this offseason, what the brass is now telling us becomes important.

So pocket some of these quotes, some of these things said and get ready to bring them out later, because there is most certainly some juicy material in this special Rundown edition.

[MANAGER SEARCH]

A good source to go for your manager search is this piece by Hoynes, as he pretty much compiles all the Antonetti notes on **Sandy Alomar Jr.** and **Terry Francona** as they square off to become the next manager of our Tribe. If you'd like the full story, not one better to go to than Bastian's version.

As we know by now, Sandy had his interview yesterday and Francona will go today. Antoneti said the decision will be made as quickly as possible, but that they still won't rush. Yet he seemed pretty set that they'd "emerge with a great leader" in one of the two.

In regards to Sandy, Antonetti was pleased with Alomar in the six games he had to audition, but we all know that means little. What will go further is the exit interviews he had with players and how he mentioned that Sandy is in high regard among the players, having had some of the push for him to get the job.

The hard line stance with Terry Francona's salary seems to be from the Indians saying all the right things, like, 'economics' will not be a factor in the decision they make.

The things to take into consideration there are A) What Francona was making before he got

canned in Boston (Just around $4 million-thank-you-very-much). B) What Francona is making right now at ESPN ($1.7 million). And of course C) What the Indians have to pay Manny Acta to hang out with his family in Florida for 2013, and perhaps be some sort of an analyst with ESPN Deportes (if that's still around?).

Oh, the price on that last one is about $1 million.

So while I don't perceive economics (who says it that way?) to be an issue in this, it certainly is cheaper to go with the guy who's never been a manager yet considering you are paying someone else already to not do the job you are hiring for.

But that's that and with contracts like Hafner and Sizemore coming off the books, the Indians don't really need to spend $60 million on player salary, so for now they can probably afford to pay a coach more.

Digging back into the way-back machine... because it is fun, the Indians picked up Manny Acta's option year   at the end of last season and of course it was because of that rather surprising 2011 second place finish.

In the midst of that, Antonetti, said the following.

"When we reflect on the successes we've had and the progress we've made, it began with Manny and his coaching staff and the tone they set in spring training," Antonetti said Thursday. "I feel much better about where we are today than where we were a year ago, and I think a lot of that has to do with Manny's leadership."

Just some fun food for thought. But what's a little more comical is that Acta went on to say that he's happy to know that he'll be in Cleveland for at least two years.

Well, he can remain in Cleveland if he wants, and he'll still get paid. But he actually isn't going to be around for that second year.

[PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE]

Little did anyone know that before Mitt Romney and Barack Obama debated (if you could call that a debate) later that night, there was another debate involving in a President.

A must-see video comes from STO's always loved mass of hot-air, Bruce Drennan, and his All Best Are Off program. Drennan had a host of guests on his show Wednesday, the final day of the season, all of them rather important in the Indians hierarchy. I stopped watching his program regularly a long time ago and if I do watch anything of the sorts on STO, it seems to be Chuck's Last Call due to the parade of nincompoops that call into the show at that juncture of the evening.

But I digress. This interview caught my eye at after I saw it linked on Twitter. Things get rather heated after team president **Mark Shapiro** takes a jab at the media who "say he made a bad deal" with the Cliff Lee trade. But he includes Drennan in the mix , only saying people LIKE him. Drennan, being the ultimate guardian against any and all 'erroneous' statement ever said jumps down Shapiro's throat. Unwarranted of course.

Watching those two starting around the 12 minute mark is hilarious. You can tell Shapiro thinks Drennan is a complete blowhard, because he probably is.

The interview as a whole is interesting and it gives us a look into a little more of this whole situation because, to his credit, Drennan if anything can pry until he gets something out of someone, even Shapiro, and he did get a few things out of him that are interesting, even before Shapio's ERRONEOUS ERRONEOUS ERRONNNNNEEEOUSSSS remark.

Drennan pressed Shapiro about the "strategy" or as we like to say around these parts, the process, and how it has not produced more than one playoff team in all these years. Shapiro

went on to say that they had a good team in 2005 and 2007, and .500 teams around it. Drennan responds in saying that the team didn't make it and Shapiro's response is that it didn't matter.

And Drennan's reaction was similar to mine.. It doesn't matter? I get Shapiro's point, you win 93 games, that's a good season. I agree, normally you are in the playoffs. Shoot, in 2012 that not only gets you an AL Wild Card, that gets you the AL Central handily.

But the overall point... It doesn't matter? Yes it does matter. As Shapiro said himself, those are the types of teams the Indians need to build. He mentioned that 'cycling' is inevitable and he is already skating into that territory of using that as an excuse.

But Drennan is right. One playoff team in 10 years and then we start again, or at least have to go through down years (after the years that were SUPPOSED to be good) to get back to a state of contention? That is not acceptable and if anyone stands for it with this administration, they need their head examined.

I support the plan, I've been on Shapiro's side for a long time because I thought the direction of this team was headed into the right direction and the changes Shapiro made (like with the draft) needed time to be made and needed time to take into effect. But if the attitude is "the process" is working because there were two "successful" seasons and we have the "potential" to add to make a run...well...I can't get on board with that.

So that's that. Shapiro also was asked about the potential of Francona being hired and Drennan, again to his credit, asked the question that was on most of our minds. If Francona gets the job, where does Sandy go?

Shapiro made it clear that Sandy needs to concentrate on being the manager and not anything else and the Indians need to look at him as a serious candidate, not the prospect of having both. But he did say that if Francona were to get the job, they'd like to keep Sandy around. He was also asked about Francona "demanding" certain staff members and made it clear they wouldn't be attempting to work with someone who "demanded" things. I'm on board with that.

He also addressed **Mike Sarbaugh** and made it seem like he was a candidate to be on the major league staff next season, which, if you ask me, really needs to happen. I think it makes all the sense in the world that if Sandy gets the job, or even if Francona does, Sarbaugh is with the team and coaching down the first or third base line.

All in all, it was one of the more informative pieces I saw as it did get us some intriguing and interesting answers from the horse's mouth, who right now, is a little bit more bearable to listen to as opposed to Antonetti, who just seems to be, in my opinion, a little less straight-forward and useless in trying to read what is what is up with this team. Shapio may throw his famous "Shapiroese" at you, but at least he's stern, straight-forward, and a little more articulate.

Shapiro may not tell you something, but he'll be clear and he'll give you the "come on, you know I can't answer that the way you want me to" where as Antonetti makes it seem like he actually believes his answer is sufficient.

[WHERE WE GO FROM HERE]

The fun part is of course, after there is a manager in place, we get to look forward to the moves this team will make and the decisions staring them dead in the face.

I like organized things, so MLB Trade Rumors organized post of twitter links and other random stories is my jumping off point. So if you want the links, you can go there to find them, otherwise, I'm using it as my jumping-off point. If not, refer to the Hoynes and Bastian links from the manager search section.

Let's start with **Chris Perez**, who Chris Antonetti says wants to be a Cleveland Indian next year. The question to me and this is how it has been since I heard him say what he said about Manny Acta, is not whether or not he wants to be in Cleveland, but if he actually will be. Because quite frankly, what he wants went out the window when he opened his mouth, regardless of intentions.

Antonetti said CP's exit meeting was long and that they talked through some things, a lot of

things. So much that it lasted an hour and that he appreciates Perez's honesty, but that he just wishes it came behind closed doors. If anything, he appreciates the fact that Chris Perez wants to win and he wants those types of guys.

I can get that. If you have a problem with me, you tell me, you don't go to the media and be public about it, especially since this a team and you are playing with more than just your own fate and self, but the fate and feelings of others. Of course Antonetti wishes Perez would choose his words more carefully, he would prefer Perez not speak at all, but that isn't CP and that shouldn't stop him from holding people accountable in public if he has to. At least that's how I feel.

The other pressing issue with this team over the offseason is what to do with that **Shin-Soo Choo** . And again it is something we've addressed this week, but have now received more verbiage on the issue.

Antonetti says he 'anticipates' Choo being on the team, which is much different than saying "Chris Perez wants to be on this team" if you ask me. That could be me looking into the words of one man, but you also have Mike B. and the guys at Did the Tribe Win Last Night saying Antonetti would try to pursue a long term contract with Choo again this offseason.

Why continue to bang your head against the wall? The guy clearly has no interest in remaining with this team unless they paid him a king's ransom. He has no faith in them winning, so he wants to scoot. I'm not saying you have to trade him this offseason, because what you can possibly get for him is what should dictate when you trade him, but why waste time trying to sign him and give yourself (and the fans) the hope that something can be done.

Decisions need to be made on the contract options for **Ubaldo Jimenez, Roberto Hernandez, and Travis Hafner** a few days after the World Series. I think we can all assume Jimenez's option will get picked up due to the fact that the Indians will continue to try and clean the egg off their face in regards to that deal. Travis Hafner's option will not be exercised, and that the only real mystery surrounding these decisions is the one to make on Fausto and his weird deal.

I think it is amusing though to think about... Pay Ubaldo Jimenez $1 million dollars to not damage this team any further or nearly $6 million to continue to make us pull our hair out and potentially take a battle ax to the walls.

If Hafner returns, it will be on a new deal, which will also be he way Sizemore returns. Heck though, I don't even think you can offer Sizemore a guaranteed contract. Who gives this man anything higher than a minor league deal? I mean, I guess someone looking to take a shot, but how much do you risk on a guy who did not play at all last year and has persistent injury problems the better part of the past three seasons?

All that in mind though, maybe the Indians are best to just move on from that and decide to rid themselves of that issue, something which Antonetti perhaps was edging towards in what he said. Don't close the book on Travis Hafner just yet, but I think that's where things stand.

And of course, there's the one that makes me angry. While so small and so, well, ridiculous, the fact that Antonetti even alludes to the fact that he is in any sort of plan is irritating. Antonetti says that because Matt LaPorta is out of options, the offseason is very important to him.

What the heck is that supposed to mean? What can he do in the offseason to either destroy his chances, enhance them, or even just remain afloat? What is so important about it? Yeah he's out of options, so that tells me he could be on the chopping block. At this point, the Indians may just have to bargain bin him to someone who thinks they can fix the guy before he looks like an un-resolvable flawed excuse for a major league hitter.

Either way, one thing that Chris Antonetti did say is that the Indians will "do the due diligence" if you will and listen and remain open minded about all their players. If not to trade them but gain an understanding of the value they command.

And to tie into that and sort of giving us an ending point to this fun exercise in examining everything Chris Antonetti said, I give you this gem of an interesting comment. In regards to not making a deadline deal this past summer.

"I'm not sure ascribing too much to that would explain what happened to us in the second half," Antonetti said.

In other words, 'don't blame me for what happened, because by saying that, you are blaming me for the second half. The blame clearly falls square on the shoulders of the guy overseeing the talent I provided. I didn't need to go out and get anyone new, that isn't why we drifted off as a club.

Perhaps that isn't the case. But also perhaps, the Indians fell a little deflated when their front office did not show faith in what they had done to add a piece that could help.

Just something to ponder, among all the other things we must ponder for there rest of the month as many of these situations wait to be played out when the playing is actually all over.

[MY PICKS]

Just for fun, because I always am so good at picking things and because I enjoy playoff baseball way too much. My playoff pick in their full glory.

ALDS: Athletics over Tigers, Rangers over Yankees

ALCS: Rangers over Athletics

NLDS: Reds over Giants, Nationals over Cardinals

NLCS: Reds over Nationals

World Series: Rangers over Reds

Texas finally cashes in, the Reds make a big run with their potent squad. I like the run the Athletics are on and what they have going, but Texas can be too good and it is finally time. Nationals will be a tough out, but are still not quite there. All in all, it will be fun to watch as the postseason always is.

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Nino has a blog! Give it a visit at The Tribe Daily , because Shin-Soo Choo will certainly be dancing 'Gangnam Style' somewhere there.

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