I find it interesting, because a few weeks ago, we openly pondered the shortstop situation with our dear Cleveland Indians.

Then Mike Aviles trade happened.

And now the whole, situation has changed. If you haven't been paying attention, Miami traded their entire roster to Toronto and it has produced a major shakeup in the American League East as now, Toronto is a bonafied threat to not just compete, but win that entire division. Not only did they acquire a potential All-Star shortstop in Jose Reyes, but they acquired a capable Cy Young pitcher in Josh Johnson and a dependable veteran in Mark Buehrle. Their rotation has depth, they've added a significant offensive piece, and also another guy in Emilio Bonifacio that can do some damage in several different spots. Oh yeah, and uh, the Blue Jays signed Melky Cabrera too, so there's that. They still don't have a manager though. What if they did end up hiring Acta? How crazy would that be.
Or they could go with a Rabbi
. Whatever though, that's cool too.

It cleared up the Yunel Escobar situation and the Jays went from Escobar to Aviles to Reyes in a span of, oh several weeks and there is now one less-suitor if the Indians were to be looking to trade Asdrubal Cabrera or if the Rangers wanted to move Elvis Andrus.

It just makes things a little more interesting as far as the offseason landscape goes. An interesting twist that otherwise was not expected.

Of course, with the Rangers, that Andrus-Jurickson Profar situation may resolve itself in the form of Ian Kinsler moving positions, something he is willing to do, which would take Andrus off the market.

It also opens up several more ideas, relating to the Marlins, that have peaked my interest in how it could impact the Indians and their operations this winter.

[MARLINS UNLOADING]

The first topic I want to bring up is one Giancarlo Stanton, and no, the Indians stand no chance at getting him and nor do I think they should try to get him.

But if the Marlins do make him available, which they say they are planning on not doing, it could impact the Indians market for Choo, considering Stanton plays the same position and well, he's young, better, and cheaper, at least in the short term. So the Marlins say he's as close to untouchable as you can get, but they just traded half their team and may not be done, so at some point if, the Indians are in the market to trade Choo, they have to look at the Marlins and their dealing of Stanton.

It could produce two outcomes.

The first, the more logical one, is that Stanton is the more desired option for more of your high-rolling teams and they will aim to get him at all costs. Choo's value is therefore down a little as teams will look at him as the "second prize" in the outfield trade market.

Or, teams that bid for Stanton that do not get him will then look towards finding a suitable backup option, Choo, and offer a package that may be a little bit over-value in order to make up for not getting Stanton.

It could happen and that could be situation the Indians are looking at if they do decide to shop Choo and the Marlins (the least-likelier of the two) do decide to shop Stanton at the same time.

But we'll see if that unfolds that way. I doubt it, but the possibility remains.

The other name mentioned in the MLBTR post that sparked my interest is
Logan Morrison
. Ricky Nolasco is a little ear-pleasing considering he's a pitcher, but his close to 12 million dollar contract for one year seems excessive and, unreasonable for the Indians.

While the Marlins are not shopping their stud in Stanton, they could be looking to trade Morrison.

The most attractive part of Morrison (other than the fact that his first name is actually Justis) is that he plays both left and first. Sure he's a left-handed hitter, but he comes in, cheap, young, and in two spots that the Indians need to fill, so you could put him in either spot and then fill the other. Morrison has come under fire in Miami, but that was with Ozzie, so you don't know what's up there in terms of the organizations true feelings on him, but if he's out there in a possible shopping situation, they are probably open to a deal.

Morrison only played in 93 games last year, but in 2011 he played close to a full season, hit 23 home runs and knocked in 72 runs. He could be a legit bat with pop and under team control for a few more seasons. Not only that, he may be in need of a change of scenery to truly flourish. There is talent there, we've seen it. It isn't a situation where there is Matt LaPorta, who has "talent" and hasn't yet displayed it. Morrison has shown us on a major league level that he can do the job.

This is just me dreaming of course and making up a scenario, but last year Paul Cousineau loved the idea of getting Gabby Sanchez from Miami-then-Florida, and it made sense. To me, this makes some sense if the Indians are truly looking to challenge for the playoffs AND are looking for "low-cost" ways to do so.

[STUPID BORAS]

Look, I'm not going to turn this into a Scott Boras rant, I promise. But it just makes me sick to sit here and read the things this guy has to say. And how he
pretty much is "speaking" for
Shin-Soo Choo
in what he says.

"Choo's let it be known that he has a desire to win," Boras told a group of reporters. "I think the ownership in Cleveland, foundationally, they're going to have to illustrate some dynamics with new revenues and where they stand about what they do to show their fan base and their players who they are in competing. That's a new calling that they are going to have to bring forth to give players, and everybody involved, [an idea] about what their intentions are in their ownership."

To Antonetti's credit, he said that he didn't need to react to that. If I was Antonetti, I would say that I didn't need to address his silly remarks and that Boras can go dig a ditch for fun. Seri ously now. WHO ARE YOU to tell the people that the Indians franchise needs to show their fan base who they are as an ownership group?

Who are YOU to question the Indians commitment to winning? By saying that Choo has a desire to win and then questioning what the Indians foundations as a franchise, to me, says you believe that the Indians don't care about winning.

And before "Blame Dolan Fan" chimes in, let me sit you right down and say something. It doesn't matter if what he is saying, is what you believe to be the truth.

This man is an agent for players. He represents individuals in contract negotiations and deals with the team's front office staff.

He also deals with the media. But his place should be in with his player's well-being, not matters of a specific franchise. And how fair is it to Choo for him to be pretty much blasting the team he plays for? I mean, come on.

This is bush-league and it ticks me the hell off that this rich piece of crap sneak of a lawyer is representing someone like Choo, who is, at the core, a good person who is just looking to be on a winning team. Boras is going to exploit that and exploit Choo and it downright sucks.3

Of course the real topic here is Choo, which we just discussed. The debate wages on and the Indians, as Antonetti said, are looking to improve and make the team competitive, rather than rebuild/reload using the few chips they have in Choo, Cabrera, & Perez.

And if you ask Choo, he wants to stay, but of course he'll say that in public.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

I completely went off on Twitter earlier this week when I read the reports from
MLBTR
&
HardballTalk
that re-posted Paul Hoynes's 'report', 'opinion', 'thought', whatever, on
Jason Bay
.

I quote.

"Count the Indians among the teams interested in pursuing Jason Bay 's services, writes Paul Hoynes of The Plain Dealer in his latest mailbag."

With HardballTalk, they put it in a little more, non-rumor stirring terms, saying the Indians COULD be in on Jason Bay. But of course, my overall problem, as always, is with Paul Hoynes, saying, based off the pure fact that Antonetti didn't deny interest in Bay, that the Indians were interested in him. I love the media. If the Indians are, it would be an interesting fit as he could fit that left field mold, would be reunited with Terry Francona, and could come on a cheapish-one-year-deal as he looks to try and reclaim some value for one more big contract.

Think what the Indians tried to do with
Grady Sizemore
this past year, yet failed.

However, this all being said. It is simply coming from Paul Hoynes asking Antonetti if he was interested in a guy and because Antonetti can't mention a guy by name, he simply said "he'd be interested in people like him." Which automatically gave Hoynes the impression that he was, in fact, looking to inquire on Jason Bay.

Stop it.

The A's have dealt another pitcher, this time
sending Tyson Ross to San Diego
for an infielder and a pitcher. Of course Ross won two games last year with an ERA close to five, but the only reason I find this interesting as it has to do with the trading of a marginally talented pitcher, which I feel like is the market the Indians are looking in this winter.

If you are looking for a market for outfielders, look no further than the rivals up north. Detroit of course inked Torii Hunter to a two year deal worth 26 million (13 per year!) and that means a guy like Shane Victorino will be way out of the Indians price, and probably year range. So forget it, friends. Our friend Hoynes
says the Indians have talked to Victorino
, as well as other guys like Michael Bourn, David Ross, B.J. Upton, and Angel Pagan.

Also in that Hoynes report is the mentioning of some "healthy interest" in Roberto Hernandez. Okay cool man.

I've mentioned the Blue Jays quite a bit, but they've signed former Indian Neil Wagner to a minor league deal, but offered him an invite to Spring Training. If you've never heard of Neil Wagner, that's okay.

The Angels
have signed free agent Luke Carlin
. We'll always remember Snarlin' Carlin around these parts.

And the Aaron Cunningham era
has mercilessly come to an end
as the Rangers have signed him to a minor league deal. He will of course rise up and replace Josh Hamilton. Yeah right.

Speaking of Josh Hamilton, and spinning off the idea mentioned earlier of what to do with Choo, I had an idea in-season after watching the Rangers.

It was a swap that involved Mike Olt and Choo, and it was spawned off the fact that the Rangers have that guy named Adrian Beltre at third and seem pretty set with Mitch Mooreland at first. Of course they have a DH spot, but you just wonder with Hamilton leaving if they wouldn't want to fill that spot for a year with someone who could make up for Hamilton's production, not to mention help give you some flexibility with Nelson Cruz.

So there was that idea. and it appears the Rangers are open to dealing Olt as
they tried to use him to flip Braves prospect Andrelton Simmons
to Arizona for Justin Upton. So in a way, they are saying, yes, let's acquire an outfielder and we know what chip we have in Olt to do it.

So, food for thought friends, food for thought.

The roster deadline is quickly approaching, and by next Tuesday we will know the Indians additions and if they decide to make any more subtractions. More on that, next week, of course.

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Nino can be found with glue and scissors and pictures of Vinnie Pestano and himself on The Tribe Daily, his own Indians blog. Hearts may or may not be invovled.

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