So my question right now is a rather simple one. It's a good question for a team like the Indians to have at this current state.

And of course that is the question that we'll be evaluating and discussing right now. But before I get to that question, let me pose this, somewhat rhetorical but also one that I'm going to try and answer before we discuss the other question.

Nino, what the hell are doing?

Friends, it's the offseason, my intros get a little weird, so stick with me for a second. But I ask this...

Who are these Cleveland Indians?

Seriously. Like I said, it sounds rhetorical, like OH MY WHO ARE THESE INDIANS!? But no really, who are these Cleveland Indians? In several ways this question needs answered.

Who are these Cleveland Indians named Aviles, Swisher, Reynolds, Bauer, Stubbs, Shaw, Albers, and now Myers?

Who are these Cleveland Indians who have suddenly decided that they're players in the offseason?

Who are these Cleveland Indians that have previously made moves like signing Kerry Wood for a few years be a huge risk, to signing a guy to a multi-year contract worth $60 million dollars?

Who are these Cleveland Indians that have decided to sign a manager who has won a World Series, and not only decide, but convince him to come and build something in a city that last won a World Series, 11 years before he was even born?

I'll stop, but really. Who are these Cleveland Indians? I don't recognize them. I almost feel as if I've been duped into thinking that this was how it was. The Indians don't have the money, they can't take the risk that other teams take. They are this way because that is baseball and that is the economical climate they have to operate in.

I'm not trying to sound salty. I'm not trying to sound like an ungrateful child the day after Christmas who asked for Princess Unicorn (my horn can pierce the sky!) and got the cheap knockoff that breaks five minutes after playing with it.

Bad example.

But look, for years I've beat my chest about this issue, told the naysayers to stop ragging on an

ownership group that had their hands tied. To stop blasting a management contingent that had to work with what they had and get creative in some aspects.

And now, here we sit in 2013, officially, and not a damn day into it, I sit here, looking like a bit of a fool.

So is my question valid? Can I ask who these Cleveland Indians are and pose all these questions you surely answered in your head as you were reading this and be met with some sort of bright light of enlightenment?

Eh probably not. Because I figured out the answer to this question long before I posed the question.

[INDIANS INK MYERS, CONTINUE ROTATION REBUILD]

The first question that I had, relates directly to the Indians signing of **Brett Myers**. The second question relates directly to not just the signing of Myers, but this offseason as a whole, so let me once again set something aside to tackle something else. I promise the pay-off all makes sense.

This is the question I want you to keep in my as I rundown this signing.

Who's out?

It'll make more sense in a bit.

But the Indians sign Brett Myers . Yeah, that Brett Myers. The 32-year-old who's pitched with the Phillies, Astros and last year for part of the year with Chicago. He's a National League lifer until this season who's filled multiple roles as a reliever, starter, closer. He has 90 wins and 40

saves in his career.

This is the same Brett Myers who had several decent years in Philadelphia as a young starter in the early 2000's. He wont 14 games in his first full season as a starter. For four straight years the Phillies could count on him to start 30 games and pitch pretty decently.

Then in 2007, the Phillies moved him to the bullpen. They made him their closer. His results were mixed, so next year they had him back in the rotation. Since then, he's been bounced back and forth on a yearly basis and has gone through a stint with Houston and finished last year as a White Sox reliever, not even their closer.

Myers won 14 games again in 2010 with Houston. With HOUSTON! The Astros! They were not good last year, and they were not good in 2010. They lost 86 games, won 76 and Myers was responsible for 14 of those wins, probably played a hand in more than that considering his 3.14 ERA.

Myers has also threatened to beat up media personnel (and called a member of the Philadelphia media an insensitive name in the process) and been arrested because of a domestic violence incident in which a witness claimed to have seen Myers punching his wife.

Richard Justice even said that Myers may do all those things he has become known for in Cleveland and that could be a bit of a headache (when is the last time the Indians brought in a player like that? John Rocker?).

Okay, so you know the good and the bad.

Myers has had his struggles on the field. He's had bad stretches, bad years, but he's also had some good years. For awhile, he was one of the better starters the Phillies had. He went to Houston to try and rebuild his career and did just that with a two-year extension and some good numbers. He is a versatile guy, but he can be an effective starter more than anything.

And that is exactly what the Indians signed him to do. He's in his early 30's. He's an experienced arm that does one thing very well. He gives his team a chance to win. He's a guy who has a knack for going at least six innings and giving up no more than three runs. That's all you can hope for out of a pitcher 30 or so times out there every year and that's exactly what Myers has shown the ability to do throughout his career. He started his first 32 games with Houston in 2010 by throwing a quality start. That is insane!

The Indians will comfortably slot this guy right into the middle of their rotation. Somewhere between a Justin Masterson and a Trevor Bauer. They're going to pay him, sources say, around $7 million dollars. You don't pay a reliever that much money.

And that's where we start to understand my question from earlier. Who's out?

This is what the Indians are now rolling with.

Masterson, Ubaldo Jimenez, Bauer, Myers, Zach McAllister, Corey Kluber, and a returning Carlos Carrasco.

Carrasco doesn't figure to be full-go, he's going to be limited in some capacity because of the return from Tommy John surgery. It just happens, whether it's innings or whatever.

You can't count on Jimenez, you have young guys who may deserve a shot in McAllister and Kluber, and you have Masterson, who is all-but guaranteed a spot. And then you have Trevor Bauer, who the Indians went out and traded for as the center-piece to their deal of Shin-Soo Choo to Cincinnati.

He's got to be in the rotation, right?

I would think so, so I don't think this is a move to hold Bauer back. If anything, it's a move to not

have to start Corey Kluber. Who I like, but is that really who you want to gamble on? You're essentially hoping Corey Kluber and Zach McAllister can piece together a season worth a number three starter. You can hope for Ubaldo to do something and you can hope Carrasco comes back with everything, but those are bets that you are likely to place with some longer odds rather than better odds.

And then we ask, who are these Cleveland Indians?

These Cleveland Indians want to compete, whoever they are. That is their mission, that is their goal, that is what they seem to be trying to accomplish with this offseason, from Francona to Swisher, to every other move they've made.

So whether or not you agree with picking someone like Brett Myers over Corey Kluber, the one thing that the Indians have needed, before they acquired Bauer and after. Before they signed Swisher and still after. Before they signed Myers and now even, after...is starting pitching.

Simple as that. This club needs some options, it needs starting pitching if it wants to do anything. And that's what they just did, they added some starting pitching.

They need more, a whole heck of a lot more. And that goes along with the Indians needing a Justin Masterson to be pretty darn good as a number one. It isn't just about adding Myers, it's about production out of the guys they have and are going to count on.

But you need backup depth options, you need guys to come in, just in case there is an injury, because you know there will be one, if not more. All those names I mentioned up there? They're all likely to get a start for the Indians in 2013. All of them that were in this organization, aside from Carrasco who was hurt, did in 2012 and then some. You need not five starting pitchers to get through a season, but perhaps six, even seven.

No team ever has that, but the more viable options a team builds up, the better off they are. That is simply what the Indians are doing with this. I like Corey Kluber, but I like him a lot more if he's the 'backup plan" and sixth starter to this club.

I like Zach McAllister, but if the Indians can continue their aggression and go one step further and continue a pursuit of
Shaun Marcum, I like him even better as the sixth and Kluber as the seventh.

I like Carlos Carrasco, but I don't put all my eggs in the basket that says he pitches 160 innings (something he has yet do even do in his professional career) in 2013. Could he? Sure. But don't bet on that.

You can bet on Myers doing it. You can bet on Myers giving you 30 starts in 2013 and be a lot more easy about it. Nothing is ever a sure thing in this game, but if you can get as close to possible to a sure thing, you stand a much better chance.

There is no telling right now in January how the rotation will look in April. Pitchers and catchers report rather soon, like, we've reached "next month territory" in terms of talking about baseball activity. But there is still more than a month left for the Indians to make another move. I no doubt feel foolish saying that, but in the past when the Indians wouldn't really sign anyone til, like now, they've already made several key acquisitions and they don't appear to be done.

Myers is going to help this team. You can argue about the money. $7 million is actually a lot for the Indians. This is a team that wouldn't dare give that much money to someone, especially a starting pitcher unless it was incentive money that the pitcher earns by having a good year. But Myers is a proven talent who has shown he can give you innings and more importantly, a good chance to win a ballgame. And with upgrades in left field and at first base, you stand a better chance to win those ballgames.

[SO WHO ARE THESE INDIANS?]

Maybe I'm getting a little too in-depth right now and maybe it shouldn't be centered around the signing of Brett Myers, but the news coincides with it thanks to timing.

One of the worst kept secrets around the Indians has been the sale of SportsTime Ohio to Fox Sports. Something I've avoided even touching for a few reasons. While it was pretty much a given, and widely reported, it was not official. And because it was not official, as someone who is a part of a site that provides content to STO, I'm not sure it would have been right to say anything, as for me, it is hard to remain impartial in the matter.

But here we are. The Indians have sold off the cable company that they thought would help them bring in an additional source of revenue to their baseball team. That hasn't exactly happened in the way they thought it would, but the end result, is, well, a financial windfall for the 2013 season and the 2012 offseason which has produced the likes of Swisher, Myers, and Reynolds. Cash, cold hard cash, went the Indians way for the STO sale and it is cash that they can use right now, that they should use right now.

There are rights fees also involved, which will help the Indians as well, and financially it is a good move for the team in the future, which is why they're able to take these risks of signing Nick Swisher to a long term deal.

If you haven't read into particulars of this move, it really is a power move by FOX Sports as they are going around the league and trying to acquire the rights to other teams as well. They're throwing big cash around and what they've thrown towards the Indians for STO is peanuts compared to what they're willing to pay for the likes of the Dodgers and just a share of the Yankees network.

The Indians are going to benefit from it and the Dolans get a chance to move on from the venture of STO, which may be considered a bit of a failure, but also could be considered a worthy effort into giving the Indians an economical boost because of the end result.

This means a return to FSOhio for the Indians. Your favorite faces of Underwood and Manning will probably still remain, as they also buy the contracts of those guys and everything STO owned and set up. No one can even guess what STO/Fox Sports Ohio's version of Indians baseball will look like in 2013 in terms of the television product, but the on the field produce of Indians baseball?

Well, it's going to be interesting. And it answers that question I posed earlier. Who are these

Cleveland Indians? They're a freshly infused baseball team that is looking to compete. They've got a little more financial flexibility and a new aggressive nature that you can only assume has been brought on by the failure of 2012 and commitment to Francona as manager.

Hey I really like what the Indians did with STO. They tried to go out and get themselves a share of that pie that teams like the Yankees and Red Sox ate up all themselves. That isn't to say they were directly competing with those teams in that regard for money, but it was a pie they've never tasted. It was a chance to maybe do a little bit more and get a little back in return.

They had great production value, with the games looking really good on a high definition television and some of their content, was actually pretty entertaining. Not just in terms of providing some historic Indians content, as well as current analysis and news content, but content for the state of Ohio. I'm not a Cavaliers or Browns fan, but the STO venture provided some nice content for fans of all Ohio sports teams to keep some viewers around all year when the Indians were not playing.

And well, they mentioned me a few times on air during an Indians game, so yeah, I like STO. That's a little surreal for a lifelong Indians fan, is it not?

But this is a move that the Indians probably had to make at this juncture. With FOX coming calling and the network not really hitting on the initial objective like they thought they would when they started, it makes sense financially for the club to make this move. They could have stuck with it and maybe got to where they wanted, but they can't be ashamed of the effort and the end result.

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

A lot of people still do not understand why a guy like **Terry Francona** would come to Cleveland. And still, even people like myself, believe it is strictly about his friendship with Antonetti and Shapiro, and that has mostly everything to do with him saying just that.

But not after long, I bet Francona is going to start thinking this is more about proving the

naysayers and shutting up a lot of critics and also answering the bell as to why he would pick Cleveland. Why do you want a challenge?

Um, well, I can think of one thing. Who wants to shoot fish in a barrel? Things have to be a little exciting and for someone who has already won a World Series, I would think he would get a lot more satisfaction of going to a place like Cleveland, that has not won in a while, and bringing in a World Series. Man, that wouldn't be a bad way to cement a legacy and show people how good you really are.

"Having a challenge isn't bad," Francona said during the Winter Meetings in December. "Trying to find a way to tackle it is actually pretty exciting. And I'm not delusional. We have challenges. We have some things we've got to overcome, but trying to do that, I'm looking forward to it."

Following that little intro about Francona, Bastian presents 10 question the Indians "face" in 2013. All really good questions, but none of which we need to tackle at this time and some of which have already had added depth to them with Myers signing.

Great story on MLB.com about Indians prospect **Trey Haley**, who was the best prospect that Bernie Pleskoff saw in the Arizona Fall Leauge. Pleskoff said Haley had one of the best arms he saw during the AFL season and that despite only making eight appearances.

Using a fastball that sat at 95-96 mph and touched 98, plus a curveball he threw in the mid-80s, Haley had hitters completely off balance. He threw an occasional slider that changed hitters' eye levels as well.

Haley showed he knows how to pitch. He relied on his two-seam sinker to induce ground balls and keep himself out of trouble. He was economical in his quest for outs, but he didn't always look for a strikeout. He struck out only three batters. He walked four.

He notes that he could see Haley as a potential closer and that a lot of teams saw how good Haley's arm was, and perhaps validates why the Indians added Haley to their 40-man roster this offseason to protect him from the Rule V Draft.

Speaking of great stories, there's a really cool one on MLB.com about **Vinnie Pestano** and **Jason Kipnis**
. It isn't often that position players and pitchers bond like Pestano and Kipnis. I mean, especially the bullpen sticking together like their own little pod. But Pestano and Kipnis are roommates in Arizona for spring training and even have lockers next to each other.

And they both look good together playing a round of backyard golf or whatever it is that they did last year.

But the Indians are using the two as their top marketing choices, putting Kipnis in the limelight and also using Pestano as a more recognizable face. Heck, he's a mini-celebrity after getting name dropped on How I Met Your Mother.

"Sometimes things just come easy with people," Pestano said with a laugh. "We share similar tastes in music and movies, and we're both unafraid to make idiots of ourselves. When two kind of like-minded individuals get together, you just kind of have a good time."

Deeper than that though, besides the friendship, the fact that both are being used as guys the Indians are promoting as faces of the team, there's a little bit of young leadership that is shining through with this squad. And heck, with some of the older faces exiting, there's no better time than now for the two to step up in that regard.

"When everything started to go awry in August," Pestano said, "we didn't have a clubhouse presence or somebody to step up and try to figure this thing out. We were all just kind of wandering around aimlessly. We tried team meetings, but sometimes it's tough in your first couple years. You don't know how you'll be perceived, so you kind of bite your tongue. Part of it needs to be not caring about it and just speaking up. That's something that me and Kip and Brantley and Asdrubal need to start focusing on more, being more of a clubhouse presence and trying to get things going in the right direction. I think we're ready for it."

That right there is very telling. A quote that goes unnoticed in the offseason and is thrown in a light-hearted story about two teammates having fun and goofing off and being really good baseball players after really good years.

Vinnie Pestano just said it in black and white.

"We didn't have a clubhouse presence." There was no body last year for the Indians to step up. You saw him say it right there, in quotes. That team didn't have anyone to say anything to rally the troops and everyone was "wandering around aimlessly" in August when things went south.

Like, really?

The nice thing is Kipnis and Pestano are more vocal guys. Hafner, great guy, great player. Not really much of a vocal leader as has been document. Asdrubal Cabrera, a good player, someone who has been a little more vocal, but still, a little bit timid in terms of being that leader and also, a Latin player who still doesn't have the full grasp of the English language. So it may be a little different in terms of being able to speak up and command the entire clubhouse.

Pestnao and Kipnis are two guys who can do that, perhaps together, for years to come. Which wouldn't be a bad thing at all.

Finally, there is a little bit of an interesting tidbit floating around about the Indians telling the media about something going down tomorrow. Their media department sent out a little note to members of the media that to expect a press conference at 4 PM on Thursday.

I personally think it is just them having Nick Swisher's introductory press conference, perhaps Myers AND Swisher in one fail swoop if they both pass physicals. But who knows. There's speculation about it being more than that, but who knows at this point, right?

I figure this, why would you announce something new at a press conference? At least a team personnel move that involves a free agent or a trade? I think it is simply Swisher's formal introduction as he has still not taken and passed his physical and been added to the roster.

-

Nino, willing to remove the "I Hate Nick Swisher" line from his Facebook profile is also on The Tribe Daily, his own Indians blog. As long as JoAnna Garcia-Swisher's "Better With You" gets another shot on television.

Follow @TheTribeDaily