Something's happening here ... what it is ain't exactly clear

We're still trying to wrap our head around the thought that the Cleveland Indians are actually doing baseball things in the free agent market.

The latest being the signing of outfielder Michael Bourn to a four-year, $48 million contract.

Add that to the Nick Swisher signing (four-years, $56 million) and the Indians have invested more than $100 in a pair of over-30 outfielders (but who are still younger than Johnny Damon and Shelley Duncan, so that's nice).

Just what is general manager Chris Antonetti up to and what has he done with the Dolans?

Bourn is an interesting pickup, especially on the defensive side as he is a Gold Glove winner. According to Jonah Keri at Grantland , since 2010 Bourn has 51 defensive runs saved, tops among all center fielders in baseball. If Tribe manager Terry Francona decides to with an outfield trio of Michael Brantley, Bourn and Drew Stubbs, the Indians could have one of the best defensive outfields in the majors (although Stubbs told *The Plain Dealer* he hasn't played right field since high school, so ... there's that). And that's kind of important when you realize that the starting rotation gave up a league-high 845 runs and posted an ERA

of 5.25 in 2012.

Offensively, it may be a different matter. While Bourn may be Kenny Lofton-lite on the bases - he's averaged 51 steals a year over the past five years and has an 81 percent success rate in his career - he's no Lofton at the plate. Bourn's career OPS of .704 is one point lower than Brantley's and Tribe fans would probably lose their minds if the Indians handed Brantley $12 million a year.

And Bourn, Stubbs and Brantley combined to hit just 29 home runs last year. In fact, as Jon Heyman at CBSSports points out , Bourn's $48 million is the largest free agent guarantee handed out to a player who has never hit 10 home runs in a season or had a slugging percentage of more than .400 in a season in his career. That's kind of of important, too, as the Tribe scored the second-fewest runs in the American League last season.

So we're not exactly talking about the second coming of Albert Belle, Lofton and Manny Ramirez here.

And, oh baby, the strikeouts.

With Bourn (155 Ks in 2012), Swisher (141), Stubbs (166) and Reynolds (159), the Tribe will have four players in their lineup that fanned at a staggering rate last year (h/t Jim Kanicki). Throw in Jason Kipnis (109), Carlos Santana (101) and Asdrubal Cabrera (99) and strikeouts could be this year's version of last season's left-handed dominant lineup. (Unless you want to debate the merits of having an outfield of all center fielders. The Indians are nothing if not different.)

OK, enough with the negatives. The big question is: are the Indians better off now than they were a year ago?

If you look at the potential Opening Day lineup for this year compared to last year the answer seems pretty obvious. When the Tribe opens the season on April 2 in Toronto, the lineup could

look like this:

Bourn CF
Kipnis 2B
Cabrera SS
Swisher 1B
Santana C
Reynolds DH
Brantley LF
Lonnie Chisenhall 3B
Stubbs RF

Now think back to the lineup one year ago against those same Blue Jays:

Brantley CF
Cabrera SS
Shin-Soo Choo RF
Santana C
Travis Hafner DH
Duncan LF
Casey Kotchman 1B
Kipnis 2B
Jack Hanahan 3B

It would be hard to argue that, at least on paper, the Tribe isn't in a better place today.

And the players are buying into the moves, which can't hurt.

"I didn't see it coming," reliever Vinnie Pestano said on the team's website . "I thought that after Nick and some of the other signings that we made, that we were done as far as big contracts go. I don't think the media or anybody else expected us to go out and sign Nick Swisher and Michael Bourn and make all these additions. It's great. It's awesome from a player's perspective to see that."

"Just look at his numbers," said Brett Myers, who played with Bourn in the Phillies' farm system and with the Astros. "He goes after baseballs in the outfield. It's the same with Drew Stubbs and Michael Brantley. Those guys are fast guys, man. They run down everything. It's fun to watch him play. I like watching him run, too. When he gets on and gets a single, it's going to be a double in a second. He's that fast."

Now, did the Tribe do enough to make up the 20-game differential with Detroit in the Central Division? Or the 25-game differential with Texas in the wild card standings?

Well ... it's a long, long season; there will be plenty of time to debate the moves in the weeks between the end of the Cavs season and the start of training camp for the Browns.

For now, it's enough that the Indians are making the type of moves that don't leave fans scratching their heads. And it's refreshing to not have to describe Bourn as one of those "low-risk, high-reward" type of signings that is growing in popularity across Cleveland.

Because sometimes, just doing something - even if down the road it turns out that it's not the right something - is better than doing nothing.

(Photo by Getty Images)