With Aaron Laffey clearing out his locker in Buffalo, and his next scheduled start coinciding with Lee's Thursday start against Boston, is the writing on the wall for Cliff Lee? Paul Cousineau feels it may be. and in his latest effort, takes a look at the most likely trading partners for the Indians if they are indeed intent on trading the left handed starter that they recently signed to a four year contract extension.

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It's true that Fernando Cabrera could have been placed on waivers and the Indians won't announce anything until he either clears waivers or is claimed…or Cabrera could be traded. But that means that Laffey will come up to help in the bullpen, which seems like a confusing move as Laffey has never pitched out of the pen and wouldn't get steady work (vital to the 22-year-old's development) as a long man.

It's also possible that Jason Stanford will be traded, Lee will be demoted to the pen (which could happen if Cabrera is sent out), and Laffey will take his spot, but what would Stanford (on his own) bring? A new mascot?

It's entirely possible that Lee could be moved, even if Mike Harrington of the Buffalo News says that he thinks it ’s just Cabrera being on waivers

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Back to Lee, though, as it seems that he has certainly fallen out of favor with his steady decline in all of the important stats and his disagreement with Vic on Saturday. Lee won't be moved for a simple rental player, as his value (due to his left-handedness and club-friendly contract) is greater than just renting a bullpen arm for a few months. That rent-a-body strategy, too, would go against everything that Shapiro has ever done or said.

It's much more likely that the Indians would look a young stud reliever or for a young corner OF that would allow them to move either The Frisco Kid or Gutierrez for that late inning bullpen arm (like Octavio Dotel, which, even for just Ben or Franklin, would be overpaying for 3 months of Dotel with no promise of extending him).

So if Lee is, in fact, on the block, who would be interested?

Because of his fly ball tendencies, let's start with teams that play in larger ballparks that could put Lee in the middle of their rotation and hope that he keeps the ball in the yard.

MLB ballparks, ranked by fewest HR allowed in 2007, break down like this:

AT&T - San Francisco
RFK - Washington
Busch - StL
Metrodome - Minnesota
PNC - Pittsburgh
Petco - San Diego
Fenway - Boston
Angel Stadium - Anaheim
Tropicana - Tampa
McAfee - Oakland

That's the 10 with the least HR hit this year and, as an aside, how depressing is it to just see these corporate names being up there instead of Candlestick, Three Rivers, or The Murph?

Nobody really jumps off the list, though the Padres may be interested in having

some insurance in case David Wells finds a new favorite bar in San Diego. The Padres certainly have some bullpen depth (Linebrink, Meredith, Bell) that would make a match.

How about teams looking to bolster their rotation for a playoff push?

Dodgers - They have young hitters in OF Andre Ethier or OF Matt Kemp (though Ethier would be the more easily obtained), and an excellent bullpen, but how would Lee play out in Chavez Ravine and how close is Randy Wolf to coming back?

Mets - They have dangled OF Lastings Milledge for a while, long enough to take some of the luster off his star, and he is still highly thought of enough that the Indians may have to sweeten the deal. The Mets ' rotation is old, though, and Omar Minaya may want to gobble up a starter via trade.

Braves - The Braves are looking for a back-end of the rotation starter and 1B help, so a Lee/Ryan Mulhern package may work for the Braves, but what they would be able to offer the Indians would be the question. It 's pretty unlikely that they
'
d be willing to part with Rafael Soriano, as that would essentially be like the Tribe trading Senor Slo-Mo to fill a hole.

Phillies - Putting Lee in the HR haven of Citizens' Park would be such a disaster; I shudder at the mere thought of it.

Mariners - Safeco would be a nice fit and the two teams certainly aren't unfamiliar with each other at the trade table (Broussard, Perez, Dangerously), but how much are the M
'
s willing to part with to get Lee? Certainly they wouldn
'
t dip into Adam Jones (not PacMan), even with Ichiro signed to a long-term deal …
would they?

This is really just throwing things up against a wall and seeing what sticks, but the actions in Buffalo could be the first domino to the fall of Cliff Lee in Cleveland.

Of course, if Shapiro doesn’t get what he feels is equal value, he has other options with Lee. It just seems that the fact that they pulled Laffey out of Buffalo means that something may be in the final stages of happening.

Could simply be Cabrera, or something larger may be in the works.