Yesterday was another first in the lifetime of any Cleveland fan younger than 35. For the first time since 1972, the American League Cy Young Award is coming to the shores of Lake Erie. C.C.'s 2007 season will unfortunately be remembered for his three unspectacular postseason starts, but from April through September, you would have been hard-pressed to find a better pitcher in the game. In his latest, Erik Cassano talks about C.C. winning the award, and the effect this may have on contract negotiations with the big man.

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For the first time since 1972, the American League Cy Young Award is coming to the shores of Lake Erie.

C.C. Sabathia, come on down. You've earned it. Just be glad that the voting ended before the playoffs began.

Unlike Cleveland's last Cy Young winner, Gaylord Perry, C.C. probably didn't dabble in the dark art of ball doctoring. When you have a 95-m.p.h. fastball and a mid-80s slider, you don't need to hide a dab of petroleum jelly under the sweat band of your cap, or whatever Perry allegedly applied to grease the ball.

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C.C.'s 19 wins tied with John Lackey, Chien-Ming Wang and Fausto Carmona for second among AL pitchers, and he likely would have won 22 or more if not for the offense's six-week vacation in July and August. His ERA of 3.21 wasn't Pedro

Martinez in his prime, but rock-solid nontheless, good enough for fifth place in the AL.

He finished the season ranked fifth in the AL in strikeouts (209), fifth in innings pitched (241) and tops in strikeout-to-walk ratio (5.65).

Second-place finisher Josh Beckett had more wins, third-place finisher Lackey had a lower ERA, but neither of them had better across-the-board stats than C.C., who landed on top despite having his two main challengers play for the much higher-profile Red Sox and Angels, and the threat of teammate Carmona taking votes away.

For the record, Carmona received seven Cy Young votes, placing fourth. It was the first time since the award's inception in 1956 that two Cleveland pitchers finished in the top four.

Already, some fans are wondering aloud if this will affect the forthcoming contract negotiations between C.C. and the Indians. The answer is probably "no."

C.C. is almost certainly going to make $20 million per year or more starting in 2009. Cy Young Awards and postseason struggles aren't going to affect his earning potential all that much, certainly not enough to mean the difference between a near-record payout and chump change. No matter what hardware he does or does not win, he's still a left-handed ace who hasn't yet hit the age of 30, and someone is going to pay him as such.

Mark Shapiro will pull out all the stops he can to ink C.C. to an extension. But something tells me that if the Indians are going to get something done, it will happen between now and the start of next season. By the time April rolls around, offseason matters will be placed on the back burner, and by the all-star break -- during which the Indians have had some recent success in getting extensions finalized -- C.C. will almost certainly be looking ahead to testing the market during the following winter.

Unfortunately, this is the ticking clock that haunts every midmarket and small market team. The Indians have one more guaranteed season with two of the top five starters in the American League under contract. Shapiro has to win now, but he can't sacrifice the future to do so.

C.C.'s newly-minted Cy Young Award doesn't guarantee much for the future, except that the Indians will receive no hometown discount when they sit down at the bargaining table.