There's no Indians message forum in cyberspace that gets more traffic than ours, and all hell broke loose last week when the Indians acquired utility man Jamey Carroll. Brian McPeek penned a column on the fervor that surrounded this seemingly innocent transaction, and it caught the eye of Jonathon Maurer, Jamey Carroll's agent. Jonathon wanted to get a message out to our readers, and it is the centerpiece of Brian's latest column for us.

I can easily and honestly say this is a first.

A few days back I wrote an article regarding message board reaction to the Jamey Carroll trade that was completed late last week between the Indians and the Rockies. The relatively minor transaction for Carroll, a utility infielder, generated pages and pages of reaction and it led to more than a few bruised feelings as people took sides on the deal.

On opposite sides of the fence were the relatively ambivalent observers who stunningly watched rational and sensible board contributors go ballistic over the Indians trading prospects and paying Carroll in the neighborhood of $2.2million dollars to fill the utility role when less expensive options were likely available.

Later, in the Weekend Wrap , I stated, "The Indians received a marginal major league player who fills out their roster in exchange for a marginal minor league prospect." And while countless people took exception to my first article because I found nothing outrageous about the deal, one man took exception to the second article and me referring to Carroll as

"marginal".

That man is Jonathan Maurer, the agent for Jamey Carroll.

Jonathan Maurer is the president and founder of (and negotiator for) Millennium Sports Management (http://www.msmsports.net/index.htm). His clients include Carroll, Brandon Webb, Mike Bacsik, Daniel Barone and a host of others. Mr. Maurer invited me to post his email in order to provide a little more information on the Indians new acquisition as well as to address my characterization of Jamey Carroll as a "marginal major league player". That email follows in its entirety:

What is sad is that Jamey Carroll has been the most loved player on every team he has ever played for on the field and off. Your use of the words "marginal" major league player is just not fair. Carroll is a "utility player" who Frank Robinson called the best player that ever played for him.

He is a career .352 pinch-hitter, has been in the top 5 for pitches per AB the last 5 years in the NL (2008 will mark Carroll's 7th year in Bigs), always gets the sacrifice down, and when asked to start in 2006, responded with a .300 BA and 1 error all year at 2B in 521Plate appearances and was 2nd in fielding chances only to Orlando Hudson.

Jamey Carroll, as noted by Troy Renck of the Denver Post , is the only player he has ever known that signs autographs before EVERY game for the fans. There is an outrage in Colorado with his trading and soon you will see what a value you got in Carroll. Mark S wants Jamey to flash some glove, and run a little and hit some. Jamey will do ALL that and more!

I am biased of course as his agent, but the above is all "fact" not just

my opinion. I'm not sure how to "post" this email on your website, but please feel free.

Thanks for your time!

Jonathan Maurer

President

Millennium Sports

As I mentioned to Mr. Maurer in my response, my characterization of Carroll as a marginal major league was not intended to insult Jamey Carroll. It was used in context to compare the Carroll deal to the Tigers acquisition of Miguel Cabrera and Dontrelle Willis a few days earlier. That said, ‘complementary player, ‘utility player' or ‘role player'' all would likely have been a better description. In a follow-up email Mr. Maurer went on to say:

I, Jamey and his family are excited to come to Cleveland! The true fans will soon learn to love Jamey on the field and off. I want the people of Cleveland to know that Jamey will not be the "big name," but he will account for a few more wins himself while infecting an attitude of winning, hustle and work ethic that some teammates have never seen.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jonathan

Maurer's decision to email me is, I believe, significant. Cleary, he sees Carroll as more than an ordinary ballplayer and as a person worthy of being defended and given a fair opportunity to make an impression with his new club. He continually alludes to the character and ability of his client and cites sources to back up his claims. He also did so in a professional and friendly manner that sought to be more informative than adversarial, which is appreciated.

In the past I've defended players such as Casey Blake as being a requisite piece of a winning team. Maurer is laying out a similar argument on behalf of Carroll. I'm not saying you want a roster full of Blakes and Carroll's. It's a given that mixing in mega-talents like a Ryan Howard, Miguel Cabrera, Grady Sizemore or Derek Jeter is also a fine way to compete in either league. But typically when someone is willing to go to these lengths to discuss a player's ability, character and class, well, where there's smoke there is often fire.

There's simply no harm in letting that smoke clear before we rush to judge Jamey Carroll or the trade that brought him here. One big hit, one first to third in a critical situation, one successful sacrifice bunt or one turned double play in an important September or October ballgame will have the same folks who are still mourning the loss of a yet to be determined mid-level prospect singing the praises of the man that prospect was traded for.