It's official! Pitchers and catchers have reported to Winterhaven, Florida ... and another season of Cleveland Indians baseball is now underway. And who else but Tony to chime in and let us all know everything we need to know about Spring Training. Key dates, offseason transactions, the spring training invites, and a full schedule. It's all in here. Baseball is back!

Today marks the official start of the Indians season as pitchers and catchers will report to Winter Haven. And with that, as I have done the two previous years, it is time to kick things off with a little Fogerty:

Well, beat the drum and hold the phone - the sun came out today!
We're born again, there's new grass on the field.
A-roundin' third, and headed for home, it's a brown-eyed handsome man;
Anyone can understand the way I feel.
Oh, put me in, Coach - I'm ready to play today;
Put me in, Coach - I'm ready to play today;
Look at me, I can be Centerfield.

Yep, pitchers and catchers report today, which is the official start to the new season, and means the fans will soon finally get some new topics to debate and talk about over the airwaves and in the cyberworld. No more beating to death of the same three to four topics from the past four months of the offseason, as at least these guys are practicing and finally throwing the ball around. Now instead of tearing apart Casey Blake's batting average with runners in scoring position and two out, we can talk about all the guys who came to camp fat and out of shape. Hooray!

There is nothing like the start of the baseball season. While Opening Day is like a national holiday to baseball enthusiasts, the actual start of spring training signifies the official start of the new baseball season. Also, for those of us unfortunate enough to be in a cold weather climate such as Cleveland, it means that warm summer nights watching the Tribe are not too far away.

With the kickoff of spring training, we will enter our third season of Indians coverage here at TheClevelandFan.com. As in the past, we will continue to put forth the best Indians coverage on the web. You'll continue to get site staples such as "The B-List", "Minor Happenings", series previews, weekly roundups, draft talk, and excellent analysis and op-ed pieces from the writers on this site. From the games, to the minors, to the MLB draft, it will all be covered.

Over the course of the next six weeks during spring training here at TheClevelandFan.com there will be many preview and analysis pieces on the Indians, and we will also preview the four full-season minor league affiliates at Buffalo, Akron, Kinston and Lake County at the end of camp. There will also be a weekly recap every weekend highlighting and discussing all the Indians and minor league news in camp from the previous week, firsthand reports from spring training, and more. By the way, you can also check out our payroll chart to view all the vital information regarding the Indians team payroll breakdown, player control for the next several years, options and service time, and contract info.

Also, we will be a part of a cool new feature that will debut this year on www.sportstimeohio.com
. This new feature is a live game page where fans can make nightly prop bets for the game. Things are still being worked out, but there will be a listing of prop bets like "first Indians player to get a hit", "first Indians player to score a run", "first Indians player to hit a home run", "total strikeouts - Indians pitchers", etc. There will be ten prop bets worth ten points each for a maximum total of 100 on the night. The site will keep track of the results as they happen instantly, standings will be shown, and there will be nightly, monthly, and season ending prizes for the top scorers. STO is also going to give out an HD TV to a random person every time an Indians player hits a home run in April. The page will also serve as a home for those that like to be on-line chatting during the game, and all the Indians writers here at TheClevelandFan.com will be actively involved and moderating it. This should be a lot of fun. More on this in our message boards forum as the season gets closer,

and you will likely start to see some commercials about it as well on STO as the season draws near.

We have all the bases covered once again this year, so enjoy another roller coaster ride of a baseball season with us as the Indians begin their journey to what we all hope is a World Series championship this year.

For now, here is a quick primer with some of the key information as Spring Training opens:

Key Dates

Feb. 14: Pitchers, catchers and injured players report
Feb. 15: Pitchers, catchers and injured players take physicals
Feb. 16: Pitchers, catchers and injured players hold first workout
Feb. 19: Position players and rest of team report
Feb. 20: Positions players take physicals
Feb. 21: First full team workout
Feb. 28: First game, vs. Houston Astros 1:05 at Chain of Lakes Park
Mar. 27: Final game in Winter Haven vs Tampa Rays 1:05
Mar. 27: Indians pack and leave Winter Haven and say good-bye
Mar. 30: Baseball opening day, active rosters reduced to 25 players
Mar. 31: Indians opening day, vs. Chicago White Sox 3:05 at Progressive Field

Offseason Transactions

Acquired INF Jamey Carroll from Colorado for a player to be named later.
Re-signed RHP Rafael Betancourt: 2 year/$5.4 million contract with a club option for 2010 at $5 million.
Re-signed INF Casey Blake: 1 year/$6.1 million contract.
Re-signed C Armando Camacaro: Minor League contract with an invitation to Spring Training.
Re-signed RHP Jeff Harris: Minor League contract with an invitation to Spring Training.
Re-signed C Yamid: Minor League contract with an invitation to Spring Training.
Signed free agent RHP Masahide Kobayashi: 2 year/$6 million contract with a 2010 club option for $5 million.
Signed free agent RHP Scott Elarton (RHP): Minor League contract with an invitation to Spring Training.

Signed free agent RHP Brendan Donnelly: Minor League contract with an invitation to Spring Training.
Signed free agent RHP Jorge Julio: Minor League contract with an invitation to Spring Training.
Signed free agent RHP Rick Bauer: Minor League contract with an invitation to Spring Training.
Signed free agent INF Andy Gonzalez: Minor League contracts with an invitation to Spring Training.
Signed free agent RHP Matt Ginter: Minor League contracts with an invitation to Spring Training.
Signed free agent INF Aaron Herr: Minor League contracts with an invitation to Spring Training.
Signed free agent INF Danny Sandoval: Minor League contracts with an invitation to Spring Training.
Designated RHP J.D. Martin for assignment and outrighted to Triple-A Buffalo with an invitation to Spring Training.
Added LHP Scott Lewis, RHP Adam Miller, LHP Reid Santos, C Wyatt Toregas and LHP Tony Sipp to the 40-man roster.

Spring Training Roster

Pitchers: Rafael Betancourt, Joe Borowski, Paul Byrd, Fausto Carmona, Aaron Fultz, Masahide Kobayashi, Aaron Laffey, Juan Lara, Cliff Lee, Jensen Lewis, Scott Lewis, Tom Mastny, Adam Miller, Eddie Mujica, Rafael Perez, C.C. Sabathia, Reid Santos, Tony Sipp, Brian Slocum, Jeremy Sowers, and Jake Westbrook.

Catchers: Victor Martinez, Kelly Shoppach, and Wyatt Toregas.

Infielders: Michael Aubrey, Josh Barfield, Casey Blake, Asdrubal Cabrera, Jamey Carroll, Ryan Garko, Travis Hafner, Andy Marte, and Jhonny Peralta.

Outfielders: Shin-Soo Choo, David Dellucci, Ben Francisco, Franklin Gutierrez, Jason Michaels, Grady Sizemore, and Brad Snyder.

Prospect invites: LHP Chuck Lofgren, RHP J.D. Martin, LHP Rich Rundles, RHP Jeff Stevens, C Armando Camacaro, C Chris Gimenez, C Dave Wallace, INF Jordan Brown, INF Beau Mills, and OF Trevor Crowe.

Non-Roster Invites (NRIs): RHP Rick Bauer, RHP Brandan Donnelly, RHP Scott Elarton, RHP Matt Giner, RHP Jeff Harris, RHP Jorge Julio, C Yamid Haad, INF Andy Gonzalez, INF Aaron Herr, and INF Danny Sandoval.

Indians Spring Training Game Schedule

Date	Time	Opponent	Location
February 28	**1:05 p.m.**	**Houston Astros**	**Chain of Lakes Park**
February 29	1:05 p.m.	Houston Astros	Osceola County Stadium
March 1	1:05 p.m.	Detroit Tigers	Joker Marchant Stadium
March 2	**1:05 p.m.**	**Detroit Tigers**	**Chain of Lakes Park**
March 3	1:05 p.m.	Toronto Blue Jays	Knology Park
March 4	1:05 p.m.	Cincinnati Reds	Ed Smith Stadium
March 5	**1:05 p.m.**	**Atlanta Braves**	**Chain of Lakes Park**
March 6	1:05 p.m.	Houston Astros	Osceola County Stadium
March 7	**1:05 p.m.**	**New York Mets**	**Chain of Lakes Park**
March 8	**1:05 p.m.**	**Philadelphia Phillies**	**Chain of Lakes Park**
March 9	**1:05 p.m.**	**Washington Nationals (ss)**	**Chain of Lakes Park**
March 9	1:05 p.m.	Washington Nationals (ss)	Space Coast Stadium
March 10	1:05 p.m.	Tampa Bay Rays	Al Lang Field
March 11	**1:05 p.m.**	**Detroit Tigers**	**Chain of Lakes Park**
March 12	7:05 p.m.	Atlanta Braves	Champion Stadium
March 13	**1:05 p.m.**	**Toronto Blue Jays**	**Chain of Lakes Park**
March 14	1:05 p.m.	Washington Nationals (ss)	Space Coast Stadium
March 14	**7:05 p.m.**	**Washington Nationals (ss)**	**Chain of Lakes Park**
March 15	**1:05 p.m.**	**Houston Astros**	**Chain of Lakes Park**
March 16	1:15 p.m.	New York Yankees	Legends Field

March 17	1:05 p.m.	Philadelphia Phillies	Bright House Networks Field
March 18		OFF DAY	
March 19	7:10 p.m.	New York Mets	Tradition Field
March 20	**1:05 p.m.**	**Tampa Bay Rays**	**Chain of Lakes Park**
March 21	1:05 p.m.	Atlanta Braves	Champion Stadium
March 22	**1:05 p.m.**	**New York Mets**	**Chain of Lakes Park**
March 23	1:05 p.m.	Detroit Tigers	Joker Marchant Stadi
March 24	**1:05 p.m.**	**Atlanta Braves**	**Chain of Lakes Park**
March 25	**1:05 p.m.**	**New York Yankees**	**Chain of Lakes Park**
March 26	1:05 p.m.	Houston Astros	Osceola County Stadium
March 27	**1:05 p.m.**	**Tampa Bay Rays**	**Chain of Lakes Park**
March 28	TBA	Atlanta Braves	Turner Field
March 29	TBA	Atlanta Braves	Turner Field

* All times local. Home games are in **bold.**

Minor League Spring Training Game Schedules

Each full-season Indians minor league affiliate will play 12 games in spring training, with the opponents being the Detroit, Houston and Atlanta farm teams. The Triple-A and Double-A teams (Buffalo and Akron) will travel together, and the Single-A teams (Kinston and Lake County) will as well. The two groups will always be at opposite sites, so for example if Buffalo/Akron are in Winter Haven, then Kinston/Lake County will be on the road.

The makeup of each team should be an early indication of who

is slated to go where when the season starts, although a lot of players who will play in short-season leagues with Mahoning Valley and the GCL will still be a part of the Single-A teams. A camp day is a regular workout day with all teams/players in Winter Haven.

Game times are at 1:00 p.m., although the start time and schedule is always subject to change.

Buffalo

Akron

Kinston

Lake County

March 14th

vs Round Rock vs Corpus in Winter Haven in Winter Haven @ Kissimm

March 15th

vs Toledo vs Erie in Winter Haven vs Lakeland vs Western Lakeland @ Lakeland

March 16th

Camp Day, all teams in Winter Haven

March 17th

vs Richmond vs Mississippi vs Myrtle Beach in Winter Haven @ Disney

March 18th

vs Round Rock vs Corpus @ Kissimmee @ Kissimmee vs. Lexington Winter

March 19th

Camp Day, all teams in Winter Haven

March 20th

vs Toledo vs Erie @ Lakeland vs Lakeland @ Lakeland vs West Michigan in Winter

March 21st

vs Round Rock vs Corpus Christi in Winter Haven vs Corpus Christi in Winter Haven @ Kissimmee

March 22nd

vs Toledo vs Erie in Winter Haven vs Lakeland in Winter Haven vs West Michigan @ Lakeland

March 23rd

Camp Day, all teams in Winter Haven

March 24th

vs Toledo vs Erie @ Lakeland vs Lakeland @ Lakeland vs West Michigan in Winter

March 25th

vs Richmond vs Mississippi in Winter Haven @ Disney World vs Mississippi @ Disney World vs Richmond in Winter

March 26th

Camp Day, all teams in Winter Haven

March 27th

vs Richmond vs Mississippi @ Disney World @ Disney World in Winter

March 28th

vs Toledo vs Erie in Winter Haven vs Lakeland vs Lakeland in Winter Haven vs Western Michigan @ Lakeland

March 29th

vs Toledo vs Erie @ Lakeland @ Lakeland vs Lakeland vs Lakeland vs West Michigan in Winter