We've had a ton of emails come in asking for Tony's take on the deal the Indians and Brewers made last night. Always wanting to do all of his due diligence, T has been burning up the phones, talking to people that have seen the four new Indians play. Brian Kapellusch over at BrewerFan.net was kind enough to respond to Tony's call this morning and provide some insight on the four players the Indians are getting in this deal.

One thing I always like to get, is a perspective from the other side of the deal. In this case, the Milwaukee Brewers. Brian Kapellusch over at http://www.brewerfan.net/ was kind enough to respond to my call this morning and provide some insight on the four players the Indians are getting in this deal.

He and the rest of the guys over there, like here, have followed these guys extensively and may know more about these guys than anyone in the media. Here is what he said about the deal:

On Matt LaPorta - "Pat Burrell clone. Walks, strikeouts, homers, but also carries a decent batting average as well. He projects to be an average-to-above average 1B, or a sub-average OF. The ability to DH obviously makes him more valuable to Cleveland than Milwaukee, but I haven't heard anything that tells me he couldn't be a 1B at worst. His right-handedness made him a bit more available than Mat Gamel, but he's a player with a great deal of character... You won't ever have to worry about him in the clubhouse. Laporta was my favorite minor league player. I think he'll be special."

On Zach Jackson - "I wouldn't call him a prospect, more like a "change of scenery" guy. He's got a funky Dontrelle-Willis-esque delivery which can be tough on lefties at times. He's a bit older, but his arm isn't as old, as he didn't get a ton of playing time in college. He probably projects as a long-reliever or LOOGY at best, but you never know."

On Rob Bryson - "Draft & Follow guy, with a really great strikeout rate. He's got a very plus slider, and a decent fastball. I think he projects as a reliever, possibly a closer, but I suppose he could start if he developed a third pitch. Obviously he's only in A-ball, so he's got a

way to go ... but the Brewers wouldn't have signed him as a DFE player if they didn't think he was worth it."

On Taylor Green - "The best way to put it, is that he's a Jeff Cirillo clone. Not the neurotic Jeff Cirillo that only seems to perform well in a Brewers uniform, but an all-around solid 3B. The knock on him will be the lack of pop at the hot corner, but he's a plus defender, and has great plate discipline. He's not the prospect that Gamel is, but if he's the PTBNL, it'll sting a bit for me, personally."

Other Random Thoughts

This is not the haul some fans were "dreaming" for over the weekend, but at first impression it is still a very good collection of talent the Indians can use. I have a hard time giving a straight opinion on this trade though at this point, as it would not be fair to the Indians, Brewers, the players, and anyone who reads this as I would be giving a kneejerk opinion about four new prospects coming into the Indians family who I HAVE NEVER SEEN. Up until about a week ago, I knew who LaPorta was and the bat he had, but really knew much else about him. I had barely heard of Green, and I had never read or heard about Bryson.

Anything I would say now would be an opinion based on stuff I am reading from other places.

That all said.....if I had to give a quick take on the deal knowing about as much as you and everyone else about these guys....while I am not blown away by this deal or downright giddy about it yet, I am very satisfied with it.

In no way do I think this was a bad trade, as Sabathia was likely to be gone anyway. Plus, to me, the destination of Milwaukee for CC was perfect for us. It does not change one bit our ability to resign CC.

We already have months of negotiations logged, and while they are tabled now, we will get the same crack at him as everyone else assuming the Brewers don't resign him (they likely won't).

Indians GM Mark Shapiro even said in his press conference today that the Indians would pursue signing Sabathia this offseason.

So, while the chances of resigning him were very low to begin with, our chances are the same today as they were yesterday, two weeks ago, a year ago, etc.

They have not changed. The only thing we have done is ensure we get something of value for him.

We obtained a player in LaPorta who is heralded as a guy with "game changing power" and "an advanced, polished bat and approach". We need guys like him in the middle of our lineup, and the comps of him to Matt Holiday and Lance Berkman have me

salivating.

While I am confident in LaPorta's abilities, what will make this a make or break deal for Shapiro and the Indians is who the player to be named later (PTBNL) is and how he pans out. Shapiro said the PTBNL will be the second most important player in this deal, and while he declined to provide the list of players they wanted some additional scouting on, it is believed one of them is highly regarded infield prospect Taylor Green.

The Indians have until the end of the regular season to make their choice on the PTBNL, but make no mistake about it, this player will be significant and a top prospect in their system.

It really sounds like Green is the player they have targeted and that he may be moved from third base to second base. Everything I have read on him so far with his approach, size, and ability screams Dustin Pedroia. I'd be happy with that. Bryson sounds like a promising power bullpen arm, and Jackson is just a thrown in to fill the rotation spot left by Sabathia since we really had nothing in Buffalo ready to fill in for him.

I already talked to a high level scout the other night for another team and he loved LaPorta and considered the Brewers system a top five system in baseball. One scout for another team got back to me this morning and said that of the players included in the deal, he had only seen Zach Jackson this year. Scouts typically decline to comment on players that have not seen over the course of the season, but this is what he said about Jackson:

"Zach Jackson is a nice lefty with an average fastball and has quality to his secondary pitches, who can benefit by a change of scenery in order to help him harness his delivery to bring out his ability.

He's still young and has some definite upside, as we all know how southpaws can develop late in their career."

I have been in contact with several scouts this morning and am still awaiting some replies. I'll have much, much more on this over the course of the week.

LaPorta is being assigned to Akron, and I will actually be there tomorrow and probably on Wednesday, so I hope to get a chance to talk to him while I am there.

Also, Bryson could very well be assigned to Lake County, and if so I would see him this coming

Sunday and talk to him then.