Owner Paul Dolan conducted pretty extensive interviews with Bruce Drennan and Mike Trivosonno earlier this week ... and if you read between the lines, it's pretty apparent that Eric Wedge is a dead man walking. In Paulie C's latest Tomahawks, he touches on Wedge, the young remade pitching staff, and the impact of Jake Westbrook's setback in his return from Tommy John surgery.

On the heels of a 13-8 run that still has the Indians 11 games back in the Central, let's release some Tomahawks with perhaps a conclusion to the disparity to the continued underperformance of the Indians and, of course, hope for 2010:

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While it seems like the fate of The Atomic Wedgie should have been decided long ago - like after the Cubs' series for example when a change looked to be more than justifiable , based on an underperforming team under his watchful eye for a longer period of time than just the first couple of months of 2009...or, maybe when we realized that even if the second half of 2009 resulted in some momentum wasn't likely to carry over to 2010, using past Wedge-led teams as a guide Wedge question - it certainly seems like there's a lot of people hanging out on the "Fire Wedge" wagon in recent days.

Now, with the Indians in full-court press mode trying to justify the trades of the last couple of weeks, there seems to be a strong intimation that one of the folks hanging out on the "Fire Wedge" wagon may actually have a little more pull than you and me.

While out in front of most every camera or microphone to talk about the future of the Indians, Paul Dolan had this little back-and-forth with WTAM's Mike Trivisonno on Tuesday regarding the future of Mark Shapiro and Eric Wedge beyond 2009:

Paul Dolan *- It's not possible that Mark will be gone, we are not looking for a new General Manager. There's absolutely no way, in my view, that Mark is in any way in jeopardy of losing his job this season. Eric and his staff is different, you know, we will look at it, continue to look at it; they've done a lot of good things while we're here, but we've also underachieved in the last couple of years. We need to know why and we also understand that the fans are looking for something different - we have to take that into account and we have to understand what the alternatives are too.*

WTAM's Mike Trivisonno *- I don't want to put words in your mouth, but after you gave the explanation about Eric Wedge...if that was me, I wouldn't feel very secure. That's the feeling I got from your explanation there, that's all I'm saying. I don't know how accurate my feelings are.*

Paul Dolan *- I can't comment any further on that, I just will say that Eric has done a very good job here and he's a very good manager. Whether he's the right manager for the Cleveland Indians in the future is a determination that we will make in the near future.*

WTAM's Mike Trivisonno *- But it does seem like you have way more confidence in Shapiro than you do Wedge, am I safe in saying that?*

Paul Dolan *- You're certainly safe in saying that Mark is part of our organization in the future...I can't, I can't really quantify that or qualify that any further.*

Allow me to let that sink in for a moment...

If you listen to this portion of the interview, which can be heard here , the words don't quite do justice to the fact that Dolan either could not or would not come out and say that Eric Wedge is managing out the string on his tenure with the

Cleveland Indians.

Couple that with this beauty and we're getting somewhere:

"Eric and his staff have achieved a lot in their time here," Dolan said. "I think fans tend to forget that. When he took over in '03, he took over what was, in essence, an expansion franchise. In a relatively short period of time, he turned it into a competitive team. He and others deserve a lot of credit for that. ***De spite that, we have not been successful the last few years with a team that should have been successful.***
We have to understand why that is. We also have to understand that sometimes fans want or need to hear a different voice. We have to balance that."

Again, I bolded the most important sentence.

This audio doesn't really offer too much more in terms of language from that quote, but it does take the quote above from earlier in the week from Indians.com and puts a voice to it. If you listen to the tone and what isn't being said here, it's pretty obvious that the Dolans are going to have a significant voice in terms of whether Eric Wedge is going to make it through the off-season, with the obviousness of their feelings coming across in front of our eyes and ears.

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Going back to that idea that the Indians have been unable to sustain that "momentum" of a second-half push from year to year under Wedge, how about this knowledge?

Pre-All Star Break Pitching

5.40 ERA, 1.54 WHIP .806 OPS against in 785 2/3 innings over 89 games (35-54)

Post-All Star Break Pitching

3.82 ERA, 1.28 WHIP, .714 OPS against in 219 IP over 24 games (14-10)

Yes, it's a much smaller sample size after the Midsummer Classic, but why do the Indians do this to us every year?

Watching this team turn it around with a lot of these young arms succeeding, when all hope was supposed to be lost, feeds my irrational optimism for this team, even going so far as to look at these individual numbers in the Post-All Star Break timeframe going into Thursday's game:

Aaron Laffey - 1.99 ERA, 1.29 WHIP, 19 K, 11 BB in 31 2/3 IP
Justin Masterson - 1.29 ERA, 1.14 WHIP, 8 K, 2 BB in 7 IP
Jeremy Sowers - 1.80 ERA, 1.10 WHIP, 8 K, 8 BB in 20 IP
Fausto Carmona - 2.65 ERA, 1.47 WHIP, 6 K, 10 BB in 17 IP
Dave Huff - 6.75 ERA, 1.60 WHIP, 12 K, 7 BB in 30 2/3 IP

Kerry Wood - 2.89 ERA, 1.18 WHIP, 12 K, 2 BB in 9 1/3 IP
Chris Perez - 0.00 ERA, 0.69 WHIP, 10 K, 4 BB in 8 2/3 IP
Joe Smith - 0.00 ERA, 0.95 WHIP, 4 K, 0 BB in 6 1/3 IP
Tony Sipp - 6.48 ERA, 1.32 WHIP, 10 K, 3 BB in 8 1/3 IP
Jensen Lewis - 3.60 ERA, 1.00 WHIP, 5 K, 1 BB in 5 IP
Jess Todd - 5.40 ERA, 1.20 WHIP, 2 K, 1 BB in 3 1/3 IP
Rafael Perez - 16.20 ERA, 3.60 WHIP, 0 K, 2 BB in 1 2/3 IP

From the department of irrational exuberance, if this is the rotation and bullpen for 2010 (and...it isn't), here are the numbers for these 12 pitchers in the last 24 games:

Starters - 3.38 ERA, 1.36 WHIP
Relievers - 3.38 ERA, 1.15 WHIP

Yeah, I know...you can have these rose-colored glasses as soon as I'm done with them.

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Speaking of what the rotation in 2010 is supposed to look like, did anyone else

take the news that Jake Westbrook was being shut down again and that he wouldn't pitch in 2009 and wonder if the Indians had some foreknowledge on this in terms of making decisions about what 2010 held?

That is to say, when the Indians were trying to determine if contention was possible in 2010 when deciding what to do with Clifton Phifer and Vic, how concerned were the Indians about Westbrook being able to get back into the groove in 2009 with the idea that he could be starting 2010 as a still unknown quantity?

With Westbrook's return being delayed (again), you have to wonder what the Indians realistically expect from him in 2010 and if it had any bearing (among other factors) in their decision to move Lee and Martinez last week.

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While the delay of Westbrook's return to the rotation certainly casts more doubt on an already tenuous 2010 rotation, how about the fact that Aaron Laffey is now 9th in ERA among players with more than 70 IP in the AL and 14th in FIP (Justin Masterson is now 10th in FIP with the same criteria), with the idea that a spot in the 2010 rotation is essentially his?

Who else might end up there to join what looks to be a grouping of Westbrook (assuming health), Carmona, Masterson, and Laffey?

How about Carlos Carrasco, the much-maligned name (in that his name isn't Kyle Drabek or Tommy Hanson or Clayton Kershaw or Clay Buchholz) that was the "close-to-MLB-ready" arm in the CP Lee deal?

Yes, Carlos Carrasco (no, not this guy who played Ortiz in "Speed" ... the other one) only has three starts in the Indians organization, but how do the last two strike you?

August 6th vs. Buffalo

7 2/3 IP, 5 ER, 5 H, 2 BB, 5 K

What's so great about that?

Well, 4 of those 5 ER of those runs came in the 8th inning as Columbus manager Torey Lovullo sent Carrasco out to start the 8th for the first time in his 2009 season, meaning that his first 7 innings are about as good as you can ask for, considering that Carrasco had allowed 2 hits 1 BB, and 1 ER with all of those 5 K coming in the first 7 frames.

He followed it up with this beauty:

August 11th vs. Indianapolis

8 IP, 1 ER, 4 H, 0 BB, 10 K

Let's magically take away that 8th inning against the Bisons (yes, I know...whole body of work) and Carrasco's last two outings look like this:

15 IP, 2 ER, 6 H, 1 BB, 15 K

With Westbrook out of the mix (and the 40-man roster sitting at 34, with a Swindler now in the house
), a call-up for Carrasco prior to the roster expansion on September 1st is far from out of the question, with the idea that a spot in the 2010 rotation may come down to some sort of competition between Carrasco, Sowers, Huff, and Rondon.

Carrasco will get his shot for the parent club this year to make a first impression as he begins to make his case for a 2010 rotation spot in a rotation that could get very interesting (particularly given Carmona's performance since returning) next year...although "interesting" could be train-wreck-can't-look-away as easily as it can be pleasant.

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Regardless, one thing sounds like a building certainty - it doesn't look or sound like The Atomic Wedgie will be presiding over said 2010 rotation or much else in 2010 pertaining to the Cleveland Indians...not that there's anything wrong with that.