Being out of the collective Tribe loop this past weekend while visiting the in-laws in Wisconsin, Paulie C. succeeded (somewhat) in removing himself from the day-to-day minutiae of the Indians, while he enjoyed the sunshine and the company in Milwaukee - happy to hear the news that the Indians won, but by no means searching out the game recaps or the box scores much more than giving them a cursory look in the morning. Realizing this brought him to an interesting thought on a NINE-hour ride back to Cleveland on Monday - is relative ignorance bliss when it comes to following a baseball team or does reveling in the details through total immersion increase a fan's overall enjoyment?

"There were so many fewer questions...when stars were still just the holes to heaven" - Jack Johnson

Being out of the collective Tribe loop this past weekend while visiting the in-laws in Wisconsin, I succeeded (somewhat) in removing myself from the day-to-day minutiae of the Indians. Sure, I caught the highlights of each game on TV and pounded out a Lazy Sunday; but for the most part, I just enjoyed the sunshine and the company in Milwaukee - happy to hear the news that the Indians won, but by no means searching out the game recaps or the box scores much more than giving them a cursory look in the morning.

You know what?

It was pretty fun, just to see that the Indians were winning games from afar and not worrying too much about the absurdity of Jamey Carroll playing RF or getting worked up over a lack of command from Justin Masterson...remember, I said I was "somewhat" successful.

[redacted] this scouting report on him, which states that White is an extremely risky pick by the Indians, with a big league arm, but with control issues and mechanical shortcomings?

What maximizes enjoyment in this realm of fandom?

I think back to the "Era of Champions" in the mid-1990's, which represented the first taste that most Indians' fans got of winning and of winning consistently and how fun that ride was. While it was happening, I'm sure that people were likely more rabid in terms of their fanhood, if only because it was so wildly enjoyable to watch one of the greatest lineups in recent memory fight off the losses with such regularity. But I know that I didn't sit and worry about Kenny Lofton's service time or anybody's options getting unnecessarily vested, or what the Indians were going to do with their pitching rotation two years down the line with the farm system devoid of quality starters ready to step into the Tribe's five.

In hindsight, I just sat back and enjoyed the ride - maybe because I was a high-school kid more interested in other things - but also because the wealth of information that now exists at my fingertips was simply not there. I watched the games and read the paper and consumed everything that I thought existed having to do with the Indians, and it was a blast.

Now, in this age of instant access and analysis, with information coming out of our ears in terms of baseball statistics and opinion, one doesn't have to work real hard to become a better informed fan by going above and beyond those tools that we all used to ride that mid-90's train. But getting elbow deep in the stuff reveals the dichotomy of being a fan in terms of being entertained by a diversion for enjoyment while attempting to know as much as possible about that entertainment.

By no means am I suggesting that people who know what Zach Putnam's K/9 rate in Akron is makes them any more of a fan than the person who goes to every game and dons the uniform of their favorite player, sticking with the team through thick and thin. The two methods get to the same destination, cheering for the team you've always loved in the hopes that the players that they've cast their lot with succeed to the point of perennial contention. But it gets back to the fundamental question, which is whether the enjoyment of a sport or of a team is raised exponentially through increased knowledge and analysis.

If you're reading this, you likely know where I ultimately stand on this...and again, if you're reading this, you're probably standing right next to me. To me, I like to see the logic (or lack thereof) behind a move or a decision made by the Indians and analyze it to the point that I can come to grips with at least the thought process behind the move, coming to a conclusion after looking at the different aspects.

Ultimately, the Indians remain enjoyable to me, something that interests me and entertains me and while my thirst for more information, more knowledge, and more educated opinion on the Indians remains generally unquenched, it never removes that unbridled joy that I felt in the mid-90s or in 2007, it only enhances it...it just makes waiting for that unbridled joy to occur again a little more painful.