As the deadline approached this past July 31st for teams to make non-waiver deals, right-hander Bryan Price was on the bus getting ready for his next start for High-A Salem, a Boston Red Sox affiliate. Little did he know that while he and his teammates were making the short trip from the team hotel to the field in Wilmington, DE that his baseball career was about to take a big turn. Tony had a chance to talk to Price about being part of the Victor Martinez trade, and get his thoughts on being an Indian.

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Price, 22, was sitting back with the rest of his teammates catching some last minute updates on any trades that went down in Major League Baseball. Since their team bus was equipped with satellite TV, they could watch ESPN live to get all the latest details. He and his teammates knew that Boston was heavily involved with talks to acquire several different players, and when the news broke on ESPN that the Red Sox had made a trade with Cleveland for catcher Victor Martinez they all watched intently to see who was included in the deal and going to the Indians.

"It's funny, we were on the bus watching it on ESPN and they said "player to be announced" and right then my manager [Chad Epperson] called me off the bus," recalled Price in an interview last weekend in

Wilmington. "He was on the phone and he told me I had been traded. So I was like ‘alright'. We were actually in Wilmington and I was starting that night, so it kind of totally changed things up on me. It was pretty crazy."

Price may have been just a few hours from making a scheduled start, but in the matter of minutes everything in his baseball world had flipped upside down. He remained with his Salem teammates for the game, talked to a few Red Sox and Indians officials throughout the evening, and then after the game went back to the hotel. The next morning he was on his way to his new organization for a fresh start to his career.

"It was one of those things where I did not really know what to think at first," said Price. "The Red Sox were a great organization and I know there are parts of that organization I will miss. But I definitely look forward to a new opportunity and seeing what else another organization has to offer."

Of course, when word broke that he had been traded his teammates playfully gave him a hard time.

"As soon as it popped up [on ESPN], they saw it after I got off the bus and figured it out," laughed Price. "So as soon as I got back on the bus they were giving me a hard time, and what's funny is I have started against them twice since then. So we kind of knew that was coming."

In those two starts against Salem on August 9th and 14th Price put forth arguably his two best outings so far in his short time with the Indians. Now pitching for High-A Kinston, Price went a combined 12.0 innings in those two starts allowing just two runs, ten hits, two walks, and had eight strikeouts. Overall with Kinston in five starts he is 2-2 with a 5.32 ERA (23.2 IP, 30 H, 7 BB, 16 K).

After rolling off three quality starts in his first three appearances, Price has run into a little bit of trouble his last two times out. On August 20th against Myrtle Beach he only went two innings and allowed eight runs on eight hits, a walk, and had four strikeouts. He followed that up this past Tuesday going just 3.2 innings and allowing three runs on six hits, three walks, and had one strikeout.

"It was bad," said Price of the Myrtle Beach outing. "It was just kind of one of those things where it really felt like I was in some kind of dream. Every single thing I threw up there they hit hard, and I could not do a single thing

about it. I tried different stuff, but they hit a fastball, slider and a changeup all out [for home runs]. It was one of those nights where every time I threw a ball in a location they were looking in that location and on it."

His slip in performance of late has Kinston Pitching Coach Greg Hibbard thinking it could be a sign of a tired pitcher.

"Late in the year like this he has been throwing a side every time, so I think we may cut back on his side day a little bit just to give him a little bit of rejuvenation," said Hibbard. "Just let his arm bounce back a little bit."

Even still, Hibbard saw some things in that Myrtle Beach game that are coachable and correctable.

"One of the things I felt like he went through [in that start against Myrtle Beach] is he really didn't feel comfortable with an effort level," said Hibbard. "The ball probably did not feel good coming out of his hand, and it looked like to me he was just trying to force his delivery a little bit and force his effort level. So he was overthrowing and in doing that he probably exposed his slot too soon. His breaking ball was not as sharp as it has been because he was trying to muscle up through it so it had a little bit earlier break. They saw the ball a little bit better out of his hand. That's something we talked about a little bit [the other day]."

His recent struggles in his last two outings have sort of brought up some of the same issues he was having with Salem before being traded. He cruised in the first half of the season for Low-A Greenville going 3-2 with a 2.45 ERA in eight starts (44.0 IP, 37 H, 12 BB, 40 K), but upon getting promoted to Salem he was just 1-6 with a 6.54 ERA in 11 starts (52.1 IP, 62 H, 19 BB, 57 K). Of note, Price was a much different pitcher at Salem his last six starts (1-4, 4.59 ERA, .250 BAA) than he was in his first five starts (0-2, 9.95 ERA, .345 BAA) for them.

"When I started out in Salem I felt like I was trying to do way too much," said Price. "Just trying to make my mark and trying to force things instead of just letting them happen. I felt like the first 20 innings were already past me and I had done absolutely horrible in those innings, but since the All Star break I feel like I have pitched pretty well. I have just gotten on a roll and calmed down a little bit out there and let things happen."

Price has some great stuff, highlighted by a very good fastball-slider combination. His changeup is still very much a work in progress, mostly because he never used it in college at Rice because he was the closer. He is still in the early stages of learning how to command and control his three pitch mix and straightening out his mechanics.

"My changeup has been a work in progress and has been for the past year as I was a reliever and did not have to use it," said Price. "My slider has always been there and is kind of my go to pitch as far as secondary stuff goes. I can go to it at anytime in any count and have a lot of confidence in it. I am going to talk to them about maybe adding another pitch, maybe a curveball or split and see what they think about that."

Price's fastball sits at 91-94 MPH as a starter and tops out at 95 MPH, though as a reliever the velocity is noticeably higher across the board as he will sit at 94-95 MPH and has touched as high as 97 MPH in the past. His slider is a major league offering with good tilt. For now the Indians plan to continue working him in as a starter, but down the road he likely will be transitioned back to a relief role where his true value may lie as a big leaguer.

Whatever path the Indians do choose to go down with Price, he is fine with it.

"I think it is one of those wait and see things," said Price about his future pitching role. "In college I was a closer, and with the Red Sox they always told me I would start early on and that we'll see if they want me to go back to the pen or continue starting. I have not really heard anything from the Indians as far as that goes, and I am kind of waiting for a direction. I feel like down the road they will tell me whichever one they want me to do and I will be more than happy to do it because I actually like both roles for their own reasons. Closing is

more of an any day kind of thing, and with starting you get your programs and know exactly who you are facing and all that kind of stuff. They both have their benefits."

With his up and down performance this year at the High-A level and just a half year's work at a level the Indians deem as one of the most important stops for a minor leaguer, it is very possible that Price could return to Kinston to open the 2010 season. During this offseason and next spring training the Indians will look to make a few adjustments, and depending on how he adapts to those changes could determine if he opens the year in the starting rotation at Kinston or maybe makes the move to the bullpen at Double-A Akron.

"I think they just really want to watch me pitch right now and see what I can do," said Price. "It is kind of like the first year with the Red Sox where they don't want to mess with you too much right away. We have worked on the changeup a little bit trying a few new grips and stuff like that to try and take a few MPH off it, but other than that nothing too much."

Hibbard agrees that right now it is less about any mechanical changes and instead more about instilling in him a mindset to be more aggressive on the mound.

"There definitely are not a whole lot of mechanical things we are working with him on," said Hibbard. "We are just going to let him continue to do what he has been doing. We have kind of challenged him to attack hitters a little bit and to pitch inside a little more. He has the good slider and good opposite arm fastball, but he has got to be able to pitch inside to righties. I think the other day he tried, but it was a ball and he kept falling behind in the count and they looked out over the plate on him."

Hibbard would also like to see an improved changeup and more action with his two-seam fastball.

"He has the fastball and slider, but the changeup is definitely something that he is going to have to develop a little more," said Hibbard. "His two-seamer could probably get more action to it. I haven't really talked to him a whole lot about his two-seamer and we haven't really checked his grip or what he is thinking when he throws it, but it is more of a downhill plane than a two-seam action. The other day he didn't have too much plane because he was

overthrowing it and everything was up a little bit."

As the season ends, Price plans to take some time off from game action this offseason and instead concentrate on working toward completing his degree. By enrolling in classes this fall and winter he will get a much needed distraction from baseball and be able to rest up his arm and body. He will still follow a workout plan the Indians set for him, but there will be no game activity or much throwing.

"It has been a long season," said Price. "Everybody is kind of looking forward to the end just so we can rest our bodies because it has been a long year, especially for most guys on this team being first year guys. It's a grind, and the first time to do it you are kind of looking forward to that break to where your body can rest, heal back up, and hopefully put on some weight and get ready for the next year."

Price was a 1st round pick of the Red Sox just last year, but in just over a year was uprooted and traded to another organization. As the season winds down these last few days - and hopefully an extra week for Kinston as they hope to make the Carolina League playoffs - he is thankful for the opportunity laid before him with a new organization.

"It is almost like you are starting a whole new chapter with a whole new ball club, whole new organization, and you have to learn everybody again," said Price. "But I am very thankful for it, and being a part of the trade is probably a blessing and I can't really ask for much more."