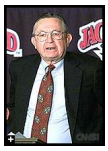
Because he isn't getting off the pot anytime soon. This is the argument of Jarad Regano in this scathing indictment of Indians owner Larry Dolan. Regano argues that failing to live up his "I will spend when the time is right" argument is putting him at risk of losing a substantial portion of the fan base. And that watching our division rivals add payroll (read: talent) as they blow by us in the standings is downright maddening. 

# Indians Owner Not Getting Off Pot Anytime Soon

It was supposed to be a wild summer ride. A magical journey catapulting the Indians to the playoffs and thus justifying the rebuild once and for all. We anticipated talking about who we would match up against favorably in a best of five. Instead, the most heated debate is over which double-A prospect Bob Wickman will bring in a late July trade. What a difference three months makes.

No argument can be made excusing Mark Shapiro for a horrendous offseason. Whether the team really had extra money and no one to give it to will remain a mystery. Your interpretation of this, though, will lead you to one of two equally disturbing conclusions. Either Larry Dolan failed us, and after a 93-win campaign increased payroll to the 5th lowest in baseball. Or, Mark Shapiro is not as sharp as his division rival Kenny Williams, who added payroll (urrr, talent) via two creative trades.

With the infant 2006 season already out with the bathwater, this team needs to look forward. Regardless of what the front office spins, they are no doubt directing every effort to 2007. Lip service of “not over yet” is simply management’s attempt of getting people out to Uncle Larry’s inferior product.

Despite an increase in ticket sales this season, the fan base has reached a high point of disdain and even apathy towards the organization. After the initial sell off in mid 2002, the tribe brass began their poor public service. Swinging and missing twice on Jim Thome and once on Omar Vizquel, the Indians showed to be as in touch with their fans as the blue states with middle America. The Tribe’s inability with Thome came down to the usual roadblocks; money in round one, and prospects in round two. The Vizquel situation was a little more bizarre. Despite being a fan favorite and wanting to stay, Mark Shapiro basically gave Vizquel’s money to a crippled Aaron Boone. See you later casual fan.

Without the casual attendee, the seasoned fan has soured as well. Patiently waiting for the rebuild to be completed, they anticipated this era’s Dennis

Martinez, Orel Hershiser, and Eddie Murray. Instead they got Brady Anderson. And Aaron Boone. And Jason Bere. And Ricky Guitierez. And Ramon Vasquez. And Jason Bere. And Jason Johnson. And Alex Cora. And Jason Bere. You get the point.

The bottom line is that the combination of no long-term tie to players and unfulfilled promises by ownership, disinterest has never been higher. The solution is a new commitment to spending by ownership. This, of course, is after a heartfelt apology to the fans. Included in this apology should be definite numbers for the Tribe's payroll going forward. Phrases like "top fifteen in baseball" and "70 million" should be included to show fans a numerical commitment.

The Tribe's brilliant "Blueprint for Success" will enter its 6th season next year without a playoff experience. The "Trust Me" banter from management does not carry any weight with the fan base anywhere this side of the Mike Trivisono Show anymore. It is time for Dolan act like the owner he has told us he is. He is all we have, and he is not going anywhere anytime soon.