On Friday Tony took a deeper look at some of the players on the proverbial roster bubble and whether or not they may be removed from the Indians 40-man roster before the November 20th deadline coming at the end of this week. Today, it's time to look at the many players in the organization who will be considered to be added to the roster and who is likely to be rostered.

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Today, it's time to look at the many players in the organization who will be considered to be added to the roster and who is likely to be rostered.

For a complete listing of Cleveland Indians minor league players who are up for roster protection go here . From this listing, we can pare it down to a group of about 20 players who should have varying levels of consideration for roster protection or who if not protected may have some interest to other teams in the Rule 5 Draft.

When considering who may be rostered, there are a few things to note with how the Indians handle the management of their 40-man roster and the decisions they make on who and who not to roster.

First off, it is rare for a player below the Double-A level to be protected, especially below the High-A level. The main reason for this is when you protect a player their option clock immediately starts ticking. Once added to the 40-man, a player gets three option years where the team can send the player to the minor leagues as many times as they want within a season for a maximum of three years.

While three years may seem like a long time, in the player development world the clock can expire quickly. For a player who still has two to three development years left end up using all those option years to finish off their development which puts the team in a bind with handling them if they struggle when they finally get to the big leagues because they are out of options.

Teams generally don't like to waste "options" on a player to continue to develop them. They want those players for the most part to be able to contribute right away. In most cases the ideal scenario is to use the first option year as the last complete season to develop them at the minor league level, then in their final two option years be big league capable players that can be used and sent up and down as needed.

As a result, with only three option years before a player must remain in the big leagues or be removed from the roster, the focus is usually on the Double-A and Triple-A players with a small sprinkling of players in High-A.

Last year the Indians did roster two players who spent the entire year at High-A in Hector Rondon and Carlos Santana. Those two players were the exception as they are two of the better prospects in the game, have a much quicker track to the big leagues, and most importantly have proven to be healthy. The Indians are usually pretty hesitant to protect players in Kinston, though as demonstrated last year they have done it before and will do it again.

Now, with the general philosophy known, the tougher question to answer is how many spots the Indians may leave open to allow space to add a player they pick up later in the offseason. Last year the Indians left the roster at 39 players at the roster deadline, choosing to leave a spot open for the addition of Kerry Wood a few weeks later.

Something like this could happen again as they are expected to be in the hunt for a veteran utility player or starter or perhaps both; however, the Indians are expected to be late players in free agency if at all.

Since any action may not occur until January the need to leave a roster spot open is not as important unless they plan to sign someone right away, a trade is imminent, or they have plans to add someone in the Rule 5 Draft. Considering their situation, it does not seem like any free agent signing or trade will happen anytime soon, so if they leave a roster spot or two open it would appear that they may very well consider taking someone in the Rule 5 Draft.

The assumption at the moment is they will fill all the available roster spots, and with 33 players on the roster they will add seven players to fill the 40-man roster. I have broken up the 20 players that are most likely to be added into four groups below: Locks (certain or near certain to be added), Probables (very likely to be added), Questionables (50/50 shot), Doubtfuls (not likely but should be considered).

Locks (100%):
Jordan Brown - First baseman/Outfielder
Jason Donald - Middle infielder
Jeanmar Gomez - Right-handed starting pitcher
Nick Weglarz - Outfielder

This group is pretty much a no brainer, and through sources connected with the team all but one of these players has been more or less confirmed that they will be added to the roster.

Some fans may still believe the Indians do not value Jordan Brown and won't roster him simply because they did not call him up in September; however, not calling up a player in September has almost no bearing on whether that player is added to the 40-man roster in November. If you rewind back to the end of 2008 they did not call up Jeff Stevens, David Huff or Chris Gimenez in September, but rostered them two months later in November.

The Indians love Brown's bat and think it is major league caliber and ready, and that is the key.

They ultimately want to protect what they think are major league players, and they believe Brown is a major league player and he is about ready to put that belief to the test this upcoming season.

He has some issues defensively that they hope can still be ironed out, but Brown is at least a good depth option either at first base or left field that they do not want to lose.

Donald was one of the four players the Indians received in return for left-handed pitcher Cliff Lee back in July. He would have been added to the roster this past September to get a look at him in a super utility role, but a back injury that had sidelined him since mid-August nixed those plans and he never played again the rest of the season. It has been a slow process coming back from the back injury, but the Indians are hopeful they can send him down to Venezuela soon to play winter ball the second half of the season there.

Since acquiring him, they have barely had a chance to get a good look at him and his development path has been fractured at times in the minors because of various injuries.

When healthy they think he is an everyday player, though they prefer to introduce him to the big leagues as a part-time player first.

The ideal scenario they hope to have happen is he and Luis Valbuena form a platoon at some point next year at second base.

Donald is not expected to make the opening day roster and instead they want him to play everyday in Columbus to get his feet wet before calling him up to Cleveland at some point next year.

Gomez mostly pitched at Double-A Akron this year and was named the Eastern League Pitcher of the Year. He had a breakthrough season, and while he is still a year away from getting a chance at the big league level and should pitch almost all of the 2010 season at Triple-A Columbus, he has value right now as a depth big league starter and has potential as a middle of the rotation big league starter. The Indians need pitching, and even though Gomez is not expected to be a high level starter he still has a lot of value as a middle-to-backend of the rotation starter.

Weglarz has battled a leg injury since the end of June, but recently had surgery to put a rod in his leg to help correct the issue. The injury and surgery are not expected to affect his roster standing as he is expected to be 100% and ready to go once big league camp opens at the end of February. His power bat and advanced approach at the plate are too valuable to not protect. He could split most of the season at Akron and Columbus next year to finish him off to where he is big league ready for the start of 2011, but if he is healthy and performs well next year he has a chance to get to the big leagues late in the season.

Probables (75%):
Matt McBride - Catcher/First Baseman/Outfielder
Chuck Lofgren - Left-handed starting pitcher

Yohan Pino - Right-handed starting pitcher
Josh Tomlin - Right-handed starting pitcher

Things get a little more cloudy here as without knowing exactly how many players the Indians will roster, all of these players in this group or only half could be rostered. There are certainly some talented players in this group, but the key is who has the most major league value and who fills a potential need.

The Indians value McBride and certainly do not want to lose him, and knowing this I am fairly certain he will be rostered. I initially would have listed him as questionable, but after the season he is having in the AFL there is probably no way the Indians can leave him exposed.

He has proven to be versatile as his ability to play catcher, first base, and outfield as well as good power in his right-handed bat could be very attractive to really any team.

That versatility and power bat could fit on a major league roster all year next season as a Rule 5 Draft pick as a backup or third catcher with the ability to be a power right-handed bat off the bench who can also play first base and in the corner outfield.

McBride had a great six week start in Kinston this year and then a solid year in Akron, but where he has made the most noise is in the Arizona Fall League (AFL). Even though he has played just 19 games in the AFL he has shown outstanding plate discipline (17:9 BB/K, .506 OBP) and power (.662 SLG), which have helped inflate his stock a ton.

Some may say it is inconceivable that the Indians could have six catchers on their 40-man roster if McBride is rostered to go along with Kelly Shoppach, Lou Marson, Carlos Santana, Wyatt Toregas, and Chris Gimenez, but keep in mind that Gimenez and McBride at this point would be more utility guys who also happen to catch.

From the looks of it, the final roster decision will come down to choosing between three pitchers in Chuck Lofgren, Yohan Pino, and Josh Tomlin. All three are talented pitchers, but roster management is often a numbers game as it is in this case.

At least one of these pitchers should be rostered, and maybe even two.

If they only roster one or two of these pitchers the Indians will have to roll the dice that all they pass through the Rule 5 Draft undrafted , which at this point is hard to predict.

Lofgren had a very good bounce back season where he dominated in a return trip to Akron the first two months (8 starts, 1.48 ERA), but was inconsistent at Columbus (17 starts, 5.31 ERA). Tomlin was an anchor in the starting rotation for Akron all last season and a proven innings eater (14-9, 26 starts, 4.19 ERA), and to go along with his versatility he may be the biggest gamble the Indians take in exposing a player to the Rule 5 Draft.

Pino is the one who kind of threw a monkey wrench into things for the likes of Chuck Lofgren and Josh Tomlin in being rostered when the Indians acquired him from the Twins in late August as part of the Carl Pavano trade. He could end up a serviceable big league pitcher either as a starter or reliever, and is ready to contribute at the big league level.

That versatility to go along with the fact he has performed well at the Triple-A level and the Indians may not want to lose someone they just picked up makes me believe if any of Pino, Lofgren or Tomlin are rostered, it will be Pino.

If a second is rostered, I will predict Lofgren.

Questionables (50%):
Kelvin De La Cruz - Left-handed starting pitcher
Wes Hodges - Third baseman
Carlos Rivero - Shortstop
Josh Rodriguez - Middle infielder

With Brown, Donald, Gomez, McBride and Weglarz predicted as 40-man roster additions, as well as Pino being added over Lofgren and Tomlin, this leaves at most only one spot left to add a player. This is where things get tricky, and a deeper look into things is needed in trying to determine who the final addition may be.

First off, Rodriguez and De La Cruz have almost no shot to be rostered as both missed a lot of time this past season due to injuries. Rodriguez missed over 100 games because of a hamstring issue and De La Cruz missed almost the entire season because of an injured elbow.

De La Cruz's health concerns, a lack of experience with just 11 starts above Low-A, and a much longer recovery and development path make him an extreme long shot to be added.

I could be completely wrong on this, but that's the vibe I am getting from sources. De La Cruz

is certainly a talent, but he is so far from being major league ready at this point the Indians are likely to pass and he is unlikely to be lost in the Rule 5 Draft.

Even if he were to be drafted, there is almost no chance he sticks on a major league roster all year.

Rodriguez would surely create some interest because of his versatility to play third base, shortstop and second base to go along with a good power/speed combo, but the Indians are likely to take the gamble he will not be picked or will not stick on a big league roster.

He definitely could be a Rule 5 casualty.

The way things are shaping up, it really looks like if there is a battle for the final roster spot that it will come down to making a decision on rostering Wes Hodges or Carlos Rivero. This is much like the case last year when the last spot came down to Jordan Brown and Chris Gimenez.
There is certainly a lot to like with both Hodges and Rivero, and there definitely are some concerns with both players.

Hodges is more major league ready and has the better bat, but Rivero has the much better glove while he is still growing with the bat.

Rivero has played shortstop and the Indians still consider him a shortstop, but somewhere down the road it looks like he will move to third base.

Hodges looked like a sure thing to be rostered when the 2009 season started based on his performance at Kinston in 2007 and Akron in 2008, but injuries derailed him all season and now it has put his roster status somewhat in question. At this point Hodges has shown he may be a little more major league ready and a team could be interested in picking him up in the Rule 5 Draft and implanting him at third base if left unprotected.

On the flipside, Rivero is viewed as having big league potential though is still an unknown and is a few years away from the big leagues.

If either one of these players is left unrostered, they will get consideration as a Rule 5 Draft pick.

Bottom line though, of the two players it appears Rivero is more likely to be rostered. Hodges is in almost the exact same situation Jordan Brown was in last year after a disappointing season in Triple-A to go along with questionable health and not being very good defensively.

So, if the Indians only roster one of the Lofgren-Pino-Tomlin combo or they roster an eighth player, Rivero looks to be the guy.

Doubtfuls (25%):
Jose Constanza - Outfielder
Ryan Edell - Left-handed pitcher
Paolo Espino - Right-handed pitcher
Jerad Head - Infielder/Outfielder
Stephen Head - First baseman/outfielder
Frank Herrmann - Right-handed relief pitcher
Carlton Smith - Right-handed relief pitcher
Erik Stiller - Right-handed relief pitcher
Neil Wagner - Right-handed relief pitcher
Steven Wright - Right-handed reliever

These are the rest of the roster eligible players likely to get at least some consideration for roster protection or get a look from other teams for selection in the Rule 5 Draft.

The common theme in this listing is right-handed relief pitching. All of these pitchers were in the Akron and Columbus bullpen last season and had very good years.

The problem here is that aside from Wagner's plus fastball, no one has a truly dominant plus pitch and have limited high upside ability.

All should certainly get a shot at a big league job at some point down the road, but their value right now to the Indians is their strength in numbers.

With so many options here and all of them alike in so many ways, the Indians can afford to gamble on losing one or two of these pitchers in the Rule 5 Draft.

It seems they are inclined to roll the dice on all of these pitchers and see who remains when the dust settles.

The position players in this grouping are all about versatility. Stephen Head can play first base and any corner outfield position very well and provides pop from the left side of the plate, but he is a huge question mark health-wise.

Jerad Head is an interesting player to keep an eye on as he seems to really be growing into a

super utility kind of role in the minors, and if he keeps progressing could be a bench option for the Indians as soon as the middle of this upcoming season.

Of this grouping, Constanza would seem to be the biggest gamble to not roster as he could be gobbled up by another organization because he has the versatility to play anywhere in the outfield with center field his best position, has very good speed, makes good contact, has shown improved plate discipline, and does all the little things well.

Final Prediction

Seven players are added: Jordan Brown, Jason Donald, Jeanmar Gomez, Chuck Lofgren, Matt McBride, Yohan Pino, and Nick Weglarz. If an eighth is rostered, it is Carlos Rivero, and if only six are rostered then Lofgren is not.