The Tribe reupped Cliff Lee yesterday, signing him to a three year extenstion for fourteen million dollars with a team option for 2010. The deal takes Lee through his arbitration years, eliminating the song and dance the team and Cliff would have had to go through the next three off-seasons. Cassano is here with analysis.

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Apparently, four months of lousy baseball wasn't enough to scare Cliff Lee out of signing on with the Indians for a few more years.

Lee, who had a much-publicized non-signing of a contract extension this spring, has reportedly agreed to a three-year, $14 million contract

Lee was fingered as a party pooper when he didn't sign a deal on the heels of Jhonny Peralta and Grady Sizemore's extensions. Apparently, that started his season off on the wrong foot, because the normally rock-solid Lee has been positively mediocre this year, amassing a 9-8 record with a 4.75 ERA.

He has shown a knack for hitting the wall in the sixth or seventh innings, leaving the bullpen to clean up the mess, which they normally don't, a big reason why his ERA is so high.

I still think it was a smart move. Lee has amassed a 44-25 career record playing largely on a non-contending ballclub. If the Indians ever have a great start-to-finish season, Lee is my pick to be the first 20-game winner in Cleveland since Gaylord Perry in 1974.

There's no arguing Lee's consistency and pitching know-how, it's just a matter of getting him to not fizzle in the later innings, or finding a manager who has a better idea of when to pull a pitcher.

After the signing, Indians GM Mark Shapiro released a statement to the media with this buzz-phrased quote:

"This signing is a continued demonstration of the Dolan family's commitment in maintaining the present core of Cleveland Indians players."

Great. We know they love the core. The core rocks. The core is hard. Hardcore. What about

building around the core, though? That's what I want. I don't want a core. I want a team. that could reach up to $23 million in value if Lee meets all the built-in incentives and has his club option picked up. The contract runs through 2009 with a club option for 2010.