Welcome to Batting Around, where we bring up nine different names, only to end up back around with the one we started. Yep, it's a cheesy baseball lingo-named column!

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Where is Ben Broussard? Is he out recording a country album or something? Wherever he is, someone better track him down because I'd like to send him a gift basket.

Turtles and honey mustard pretzels included.

Perhaps I should send one to Bill Bavasi as well for being foolish enough to deal **Shin-Soo Choo (1)**
away for Broussard. Bavasi clearly stated his desire to acquire country music talent for his ballclub.

Anyway we can sign Kenny Chesney? He has to be worth at least Adam Wainwright, right?

The more remarkable thing about that deal is how **Mark Shapiro (2)** gets constantly dogged for some of the deals he makes. You make bad trades, you get fired, see Bavasi. Shapiro has made his fair share of questionable deals, but did he ever give away two players like Choo and Cabrera for a horrible first base platoon?

Stop, don't answer that.

As Shapiro is out-going here as General Manager of our Tribe, let's celebrate the good that he did for this franchise.

Did he give Travis Hafner a contract that now looks silly and has virtually handcuffed their payroll and designated hitter position? Yes he did, but don't tell me you didn't support signing Hafner to a long term deal after the MVP numbers he put up. And don't you dare forget the fact that to get Hafner all he did was trade Einar Diaz and Ryan Drese

If his worst move was one that is only bad because the player he signed to a long term deal got injured, then I don't think he has any reason to be unhappy about the job he did as the General Manager.

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One thing that I don't think Mark Shapiro gets enough credit for is the right hook he had to take to his ego by replacing **John Mirabelli (3)** in the draft department. It takes a big man to admit when he is wrong and Shapiro was wrong by putting Mirabelli in charge of the draft.

Mirabelli gave us gems such as Trevor Crowe and Jeremy Sowers in the first round. He also

gave us one of the more intriguing quotes I've ever read in regards to draft strategy and what regions his team scouts the most.

"We scout the areas where the best players are in that given year. Each draft year brings a completely different market of players."

Did I say intriguing? Sorry about that, I didn't mean to lie. You obviously went to the wrong places, because the players you drafted were not the best. Go ahead and take note how every other scout actually named states or a general region. Obvious statement of facts in a comical manner aside, how brain dead does Mirabelli think we are to assume any follower of the minor league organization would be satisfied with that answer?

It has become painfully obvious that Mirabelli did a horrific job heading up the draft and that this club should do everything in its power to move on from what's left of his handy work as soon as possible.

And on an aside, I really hope the title of "Assistant General Manager, Scouting Operations" is the Indians way of saying "John Mirabelli doesn't actually DO anything. He just has that fancy title so we were allowed to take the important and flashy buttons away from him awhile ago."

Back in 2007, the Indians, I'm not sure if you can say, promoted Mirabelli, but they certainly gave him less flashy buttons to play with. Purposely or not, the Indians publically credited the brilliant signing of Masahide Kobayashi to Mirabelli and also said he was responsible for a few other international doings, namely Sung-Wei Tseng and Jason Smit.

From what I can collect, Mirabelli's contract is up after this year. Unless he was secretly signed to give us more pain that I'm unaware of, I would hope this is the end for Mirabelli and the Tribe.

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The thing about Mirabelli's drafts that are so disheartening is the fact that he didn't really pick even one good player. If you look at this little period of…horrific-ness…between 2007 and now, the club may have been able to stay afloat post-ALCS run if they had a few more guys come up through the system. That was supposed to be players like Crowe and Sowers, who would be arriving just in time to maybe save this club from becoming crap and having to readjust.

Look at the few drafts **Brad Grant (4)** has had thus far. He's got not just his first round picks, but multiple players busting down the doors at Akron and Columbus. As well, the excuse of "he got higher picks than Mirabelli!" is also not valid considering Lonnie Chisenhall was selected lower than any first round pick Mirabelli had, supplemental picks aside.

Oh and how about that old draft budget? Sure the Indians have taken a more aggressive approach to drafting high-ceiling talent and giving them healthy signing bonuses. But did anyone ever think to credit Grant with that strategy?

From Mirabelli's incredibly entertaining part of that Q&A, he also notes that the Indians select the best players available.

I again say, you must have had a different definition of the best players available, because you certainly did nothing of the kind.

If you will once again notice the answers from other scouts, you would read more favorable answers about how they trust scouting reports and how they draft based on needs and all this other stuff. Mirabelli simply says they rank everyone according to ability. Gee, enlightening!

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I'll stop short of worshiping the ground that Brad Grant walks on and just continue to fawn over Triple-A Columbus and Double-A Akron. Take a look.

Clippers: Jason Kipnis (2009, 2nd Round), Cord Phelps (2008, 3rd Round), Bryce Stowell (2008, 22nd Round)

Aeros: Alex White (2009, 1st Round), Eric Berger (2008, 8th Round), Tim Fedroff (7th Round, 2008), Jordan Henry (2009, 7th Round), Lonnie Chisenhall (2008, 1st round), Matt Packer (2009, 32nd Round)

Nine players drafted in the past two years are already at Double-A or higher. Let's take a look at the 2007 draft class, Mirabelli's last run at things.

2007: Beau Mills (1st, AA), Bo Greenwell (6th, A+), Chris Jones (15th, A+), Doug Pickens (50th, A+), Joey Mahalic (32nd, A+), Josh Judy (34th, AAA), T.J. McFarland (4th, A+).

There you go. The 2007 draft class or what's left of it. The first round pick is at the same level the other two first round picks are at and the highest is a relief pitcher selected in the 34th round.

Of those names, Greenwell and Judy are the only ones that really excite anyone. McFarland had a good year, but with the options the Indians have loaded up on in the pitching staff, is he anything more than depth?

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Speaking of depth, this club has absolutely none at shortstop, which made the signing of **Tony Wolters (5)**
very much needed.

Is Wolters going to stay at short for his entire minor league career? Who knows. But if Asdrubal Cabrera goes down, what does this club have at shortstop? Hopefully after loading up on arms, outfielders, and second baseman, shortstop is one of the areas they'll continue to target.

Josh Rodriguez (6) is viewed more as a utility player, especially since he's closer than anyone to the major leagues and Cabrera is entrenched at short. But if you'll back up for a second and just remember that sometimes these "ceiling as high as a utility player" talents sometimes become more than that. Isn't Jason Donald's ceiling a utility player?

Does anyone remember the time when Josh Rodriguez was regarded as the second baseman of the future? It was right around the time that Wes Hodges was regarded as the third baseman of the future.

Literally two drafts later that all changed. Of course defensive issues with Hodges and some injuries to Rodriguez helped that, but I think it says more for how many strides the farm system has taken in the past two to three years.

Not only that, I think it says a lot about how we tend to forget about some players if they have a down year in the minors or go through some injuries. Let's not be so quick to write off J-Rod in terms of contributing to the big league club.

On that strengthening of the farm system note though, it sure is nice to be having Cord Phelps play other positions in preparation for him not being able to play second base. Please continue Mr. Kipnis.

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Staying with this farm system theme, I think the Indians would be crazy to not do everything in their power to keep **Mike Sarbaugh (7)** in this organization for as long as possible.

Don't go naming him as Manny Acta's successor just yet, that is a little hasty after one year of Actavision, but I don't think it is a stretch to say that Sarbaugh should be on the major league staff before the start of 2012. Heck, I wouldn't complain if he replaced Steve Smith after this season. Isn't Smitty on the older side of coaching?

You can tell Sarbaugh is one of those guys genuinely loved by his players, and I think to be a successful manager in the minor leagues, that has to be the number one trait. If you can't get these youngsters, who are on the road constantly getting paid peanuts compared to what the big leaguers are making to play day in and day out, you aren't going to win the titles Sarbaugh has won.

I don't think it is a coincidence and while talent has something to do with it, he had different kind of talent at each level. Sarbaugh is one of the crown jewels of the Indians farm system right now, right up there with young prospects like Lonnie Chisenhall and Jason Kipnis.

I think everyone wanted to see Torey Lovullo on the big league staff after last year because of what he did in his career as a minor league manager. But Lovullo hasn't really accomplished all that Sarbaugh has, so that tells me we need to try twice as hard to keep Sarby around.

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Compared to last offseason, this year's winter is going to be a rather boring one, unless you are a fan of seeing Justin Germano and Luke Carlin removed from the 40-man roster.

It sounds as if everyone on the staff is safe, unless of course Steve Smith maybe retires, which would be convenient to getting Sarbaugh on staff. That leaves us with predictable 40-man roster moves, followed by speculative additions in preparation for the Rule V draft.

There is one subtraction that needs to be made, or else I might break into the Indians clubhouse and cut him myself. Okay, maybe I won't cut him, but definitely take some scissors to that hair of his.

Alright, his hair isn't the reason I've seen enough, but rather his play on the diamond. The boiling point for me was a game this past weekend against Kansas City when **Trevor Crowe (8)** came charging in from center and dove at a ball.

An "atta' boy" in Crowe's direction for the effort, but I couldn't help but hang my head as Crowe's effort was no where close to where the ball had actually landed.

I think if anything this season has done in terms of "finding out what we have" on this team, we've found out what we don't have in Crowe. He can't hit very well, despite a small part of the season in which he was the guy in run-scoring opportunities. His fielding is best summed up in that play in which he dove for a ball and it landed about five feet to his right.

At this point I'd much rather see more of **Jordan Brown** (9), even though he's more likely to botch a play in left field even worse than Crowe, we haven't seen him be bad as long as we've watched Crowe.

I'm also pretty sure the Indians PA system plays the sound of a crow crowing when he gets a hit. That stuff needs to end.

Brown meanwhile has received just 81 at-bats this season in two separate stints. He's only hitting .235 and for someone who's won a batting crown in the minor leagues, this isn't what you'd expect.

If Jordan Brown is one of those "professional hitters" though, I think I'd like to see him get steady playing time before I determine if he isn't someone worth looking at in the future. I know players like Nick Weglarz and Matt McBride make Brown more of an expendable, but while he's here, why not?

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For as many options this club has for its outfield, they don't have any options for their outfield. We think Grady Sizemore is going to be healthy for next season, but we thought that last year as well. We think Michael Brantley will be worth exploring, not just maybe in center but in the leadoff spot full-time, but ditto the Sizemore situation.

This all brings me back to the gift basket that I'd like to send Ben Broussard for helping us ring the one constant that this team has, not just in the outfield, but perhaps in the entire offense.

Granted that constant has had some injuries, but Shin-Soo Choo is finally a bonafied threat. In fewer games than last season, he's going to eclipse his RBI total, at least match his home run and stolen base numbers, surpass his walks, cut down his strikeouts drastically, and if he had a better lineup around him, he would have scored more runs.

He's on the brink of his third straight season of a .300 average and .390 on-base percentage, with a realistic shot to surpass .400. There is only six other players in the game that are going to finish with a .400 on-base percentage.

Thank you Bill Bavasi, thank you Ben Broussard. Your gift baskets are on their way.

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You can follow Nino on Twitter @ TheTribeDaily where he often tweets about his parties with Andy Marte and sometimes about the Indians.