Opening Day is as close as it can be (as are the reports of possible snow) and Indians' fans everywhere are chomping at the bit to get out of the gate. With time on your side until 3:00 on Friday afternoon, allow me to suggest some possible uses for your time. After you take a quick look into Anthony Castrovince's efforts in suggesting At-Bat music for the Indians (with his usual Springsteen-centricity) while watching/listening to all of AC's suggestions and after you've run through this video a couple of hundred times, allow me to present one more option to spend your time leading up to Friday's first pitch, a season preview…as unorthodox as it may be.

It won't tell you what players will win what awards or how the majority of the 2011 MLB season plays out. Instead, it will take you a bit deeper…into one prediction for the Indians' season, circa 2011.

April 1st vs. White Sox, Opening Day

In what will become a recurring theme for the 2011 Indians, a Tribe victory over the White Sox is accomplished thanks largely to the contributions from Shin-Soo Choo, whose solo HR in the 3rd inning and 2-run 2B in the 7th inning constitute the only runs driven in by any Indians player in the 3-2 win over the White Sox. Choo's heroics are not limited to the plate however, as he throws out Alexei Ramirez at home plate in the 8th

inning, getting Tony Sipp out of the inning with the lead still intact. Chris Perez emerges from the Indians' bullpen to notch the first of his 42 saves, closing out an excellent pitching performance from the Tribe, started by Carmona and continued by Sipp.

April 13th vs. Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim in Orange County from California

Despite giving up 3 solo HR to Angels' hitters, Carlos Carrasco secures a 5-3 victory for the Indians by going 8 strong innings, notching 11 strikeouts. Throughout the season, the longball will plague Carrasco, who is still able to build upon his strong finish to 2010. Despite leading the AL with 35 HR allowed, CarCar finishes the 2011 season with the best ERA among Tribe starters at 3.91, as he finishes the season with 172 strikeouts, the highest total for any Tribe pitcher since CC whiffed 209 in 2007.

April 23rd vs. Minnesota Twins

Replacing Jack Hannahan's .258 OBP (but sterling defense) at 3B, Jason Donald returns from the wrist injury that sidelined him in Spring Training and makes his presence felt as he hits a 7th inning double that plates Orlando Cabrera, giving the Indians a 8-7 lead. The lead will be given away in the 8th inning as Rafael Perez's early-season struggles result in a loss for the Tribe, who find themselves heading into the last week of April 9-12, "good" for 4th place in the AL Central.

April 26th vs. Kansas City Royals

As the Indians return from their second road trip of the season, they are joined by Grady Sizemore, fresh off of a week of rehab games in Akron. In his first game, Grady scares the home crowd as he lays out for a Billy Butler ball in the gap in the 4th inning. After securing the

catch, Sizemore spends a few seconds on the ground as the assembled crowd waits in stunned silence. When he rises to his feet and jogs off of the field, the standing ovation begins and does not end until Sizemore crosses home plate after leading off the bottom of the 4th with a solo HR. Though Sizemore is unable to play every day for the first 3 months of the season, his defensive play is reminiscent of the Grady of old, even if his lack of power at the plate (particularly in the early going) is not.

May 6th vs. Oakland Athletics

Sitting on an ERA over 6.00 and a WHIP over 2.00, Mitch Talbot comes out of the game against the A's in the 3rd inning after grabbing at his side with the Indians already trailing 6-0. After the game, Talbot will be placed on the 15-day DL with an abdominal strain which will plague him throughout the season as he spends much of the year bouncing between the last spot in the rotation, the DL, and rehab starts. With Talbot hitting the DL, the Indians make a surprise move and promote Zach McAllister to the big league rotation, on the strength of his dominant start in Columbus, instead of the assumed 6th and 7th starters in the organization, Dave Huff and Jeanmar Gomez, who will log a total of 3 starts for the Indians on the season…between them. The spot in the rotation owned by Talbot to start the season will remain in constant flux as Talbot, McCallister, and Corey Kluber log time in the rotation, with none of them experiencing sustained success and with Kluber's stint being the most confidence-inspiring.

May 16th vs. Kansas City Royals

After largely sitting for two weeks since the return of Grady Sizemore despite a strong start in the first month during Sizemore's absence, Travis Buck is inserted into the lineup as the everyday LF, replacing Mike Brantley, who is sent to AAA Columbus after compiling a .220 BA / .274 OBP / .324 SLG / .599 OPS over the first six weeks of the season. Buck responds by falling a triple short of the cycle as he begins to show that his early-season success was no mirage, stabilizing the lineup by settling into the #5 spot behind Santana. Buck will end the year ranked 3rd on the team both in HR with 25 and in OPS as he finishes the year with an .815 OPS to go along with 34 2B. Brantley remains in Columbus until the September call-ups, when he will continue to struggle to parlay his on-base success in AAA to the Big Leagues.

May 22nd vs. Cincinnati Reds

A Sunday afternoon game in Cleveland takes on historical significance as Josh Tomlin does not walk or strike out any batters, the 4th consecutive start in which he "achieves" this feat. In finishing his 4th consecutive game without a walk or a strikeout as a starter, Tomlin breaks the MLB record for consecutive games by a starting pitcher not walking one batter or striking one hitter out, surpassing the old mark of 3 consecutive starts held jointly by Sloppy Thurston and Bill Hubbell. Tomlin somehow gets through 6th innings, despite not missing many bats, with the Indians clinging to a 6-5 lead, a lead that will quickly evaporate as Frank Herrmann and Justin Germano give up a pair of runs each in the 7th and 8th innings as the Indians bullpen continues to struggle to get a lead to Chris Perez in the 9th inning. After the game, Acta doesn't want to talk about the loss, instead talking up Tomlin's strike-throwing ability and how the fact that he hadn't walked a hitter in 4 straight games was the "big story" of the game. Acta fails to mention the astonishing lack of strikeouts or Tomlin's 4.96 ERA through the first two months of the season, as his ERA fluctuates around the 5.00 mark throughout his time in the 2011 rotation.

June 1st vs. Toronto Blue Jays

No Blue Jays player reaches 2nd base as Fausto Carmona efficiently cruises to a complete game shutout in a 3-0 victory over Toronto. The game lowers his ERA to 3.78, thanks largely to AL-leading groundball percentage and (more importantly) a defensively sound infield behind him. The Indians turn 4 double plays on the day and Lou Marson throws out 3 would-be

basestealers while going 2 for 4, pushing his OPS on the year over .700, compiled in the 15 starts he's made in the team's first 56 games. With the victory against the Blue Jays, the Indians run their record to 24-31, threatening to surpass the injury-riddled White Sox into 3rd place but undermined by a lack of production from the bottom 1/3 of their lineup, a shaky back-end of the rotation, and a still evolving middle relief corps.

June 12th vs. New York Yankees

The Indians complete an improbable 3-game sweep of the Evil Empire in the Bronx, with the final victory coming in a game started by former Yankee farmhand Zach McAllister (in what will represent the high point of his uneven MLB season) and with the sweep paced by Carlos Santana hitting 4 HR over the course of the weekend and driving in 11 runs in the 3-game series. While Indians' fans are forced to remind Yankees' fans (intent on using the "he'll look good as in a Yankee uniform when Jorge retires" argument) that Santana remains under Cleveland's control through the 2016 season. Santana's production is assisted by him getting a couple of days off every week from behind the plate as The Axe Man's 1B glove starts to get broken in by Memorial Day and with Santana serving as the club's DH against tough LHP. This particular weekend's HR outburst assists Santana in besting Buck and Choo for the club lead at season's end as Santana will finish the year with 27 HR, eking out Choo's 26 and Buck's 25. Though Choo will top Santana in the OPS column (final OPS for Choo - .898, final OPS for The Axe Man - .881) in terms of individual accomplishments, the duo will combine to drive in nearly 30% of the teams' total runs for the year, a fact that will not go unnoticed by All-Star Game voters.

June 22nd vs. Colorado Rockies

After an 0 for 4 day at the plate with two GIDP in an Indians' 7-2 loss to the Rockies, Orlando Cabrera's OPS drops below .600 and he is removed from the everyday lineup, replaced by Cord Phelps, who arrives from Columbus where he is outhitting both Lonnie Chisenhall and Jason Kipnis while moving around the diamond as a Super-Utility player. In joining the parent club, Phelps will go back to playing his natural position of 2B while Orlando Cabrera slides over into the Utility IF role as Adam Everett finds his way off of the roster, having only batted 25 times in nearly 3 months as an Indian. While Phelps will represent a bit of a downgrade defensively from Cabrera, he will represent a significant upgrade from The OC (which isn't difficult given Uncle Orlando's struggles at the plate) and will finish the year with a .735 OPS.

July 1st vs. Cincinnati Reds

The Indians beat the Reds in the series opener 6-5 to improve their record to 40-43 as the Indians move as close to .500 as they've been since the first week in April. The victory is sealed by Matt LaPorta's solo HR in the 8th inning which provides hope that LaPorta has finally figured it out, though the 3 K on the day for him certainly tempers too much enthusiasm. In a way, the game is a microcosm for LaPorta's season as he shows some of the power that once made him one of MLB's top hitting prospects, but his propensity for striking out and for long stretches of ineffectiveness that the Indians endure to see those glimpses of power make him the most maddeningly inconsistent player on a young team full of them. At the end of the year, LaPorta will finish with 21 HR and 75 RBI, but with only 24 2B and with an underwhelming .256 BA / .332 OBP / .425 SLG / .757 OPS final slash line. While LaPorta's HR total gives the Indians four players with more than 20 HR (something they've done only 12 times in their history) and though the Indians remain publicly upbeat that LaPorta can still re-capture some of the shine on his apple, with LaPorta turning 27 in January of 2012, the realization starts to set in that LaPorta may never emerge as much more than a "placeholder" in the lineup and far from the fixture in the middle of the lineup that was predicted for him in July of 2008.

July 9th vs. Toronto Blue Jays

In a match-up pitting former top Philadelphia prospects Carlos Carrasco and Kyle Drabek, the Indians pound the Blue Jays 12-3 en route to their 4th consecutive win, pulling them over the .500 mark for the first time since Opening Day at 46-45. The Indians establish a lead early against Drabek as Santana, Buck, and Kearns go back-to-back-to-back, beginning a hit parade that will not end until Drabek is chased from the game and, it is learned after the game, all the way down to Syracuse as Drabek is demoted after giving up 7 runs in 2 1/3 innings. Conversely, Carrasco gives up 2 solo HR to Jose Bautista, but is able to go 7 innings giving up only 3 runs. Without the option of Chris Perez, having pitched in consecutive 3 games against the Yankees and in the first 2 games against the Jays, at the back end of the bullpen, the Indians rely on Vinnie Pestano in the 8th inning and Tony Sipp in the 9th inning as both young relievers have established themselves over the first half of the season as viable set-up options for Perez. After much movement in the Indians' bullpen, the emergence of Pestano and Sipp in the 7th and 8th innings finally begins to settle what has been an unsettled, and unsettling, relief corps in front of Chris Perez.

All-Star Break

Though his teammates Carlos Santana and Shin-Soo Choo are off in the desert as members of the AL All-Star team (Choo being the final selection via the Internet voting…much of which is later traced back to South Korea), Asdrubal Cabrera has a nice couple of days himself despite not making the All-Star game. Fully healthy for the first half of the season, Cabrera's OPS of .798 and sterling defense prompt the Indians to call a press conference to announce that they have inked their young SS to a 4-year contract with an option for a 5th year that buys out two (and possibly three) of Cabrera's Free Agent years. In a humorous twist, Eduardo Perez introduces Cabrera at the press conference full of tongue-in-cheek jokes about HE was the person most responsible for bringing Asdrubal from the Mariners to Cleveland. Unlike Indians of the recent past who have signed extensions, Cabrera will remain healthy and actually improve as the season goes on, finishing the season with a .812 OPS and leading the team with 42 2B while finally showing the solid (and sometimes slick) glove that had been assumed of him (often incorrectly) since his acquisition from the Mariners.

July 20th vs. Minnesota Twins

After a game in which he gives up 14 hits while again not striking out any batters in 4 innings, Josh Tomlin is sent to AAA with the Indians now losers of 4 of their last 5 after being swept by the suddenly resurgent Twins in Minnesota. The game will represent the last start for Tomlin in Cleveland as he heads to Columbus, where he will begin his transition to a long reliever/middle relief option as the local writers (who love their underdog stories) decry the move despite Tomlin's 5.35 ERA. Promoted to take Tomlin's place in the rotation is 2009 1st Round Pick Alex White, who has recently caught fire in Columbus, going 7 innings or more in each of his last 6 starts and who will almost immediately establish himself as the Indians' 3rd most consistent starter as he will finish the year with a respectable 4.39 ERA and a groundball percentage that justifies the Jake Westbrook comparisons. In a surprising move, the Indians promote 2010 1st Round Pick Drew Pomeranz from Akron (after just 2 starts there) to Columbus to take White's spot in the Clippers' rotation. To this point, Pomeranz has been absolutely dominant at every Minor-League stop he's made, including striking out 15 in his second (and final) start as an Aero.

July 29th vs. Kansas City Royals

After driving in the game-winning run in the 9th inning, Jason Donald is called into Manny Acta's office, where he is informed that he has just been traded to the Philadelphia Phillies along with RHP Chad Durbin. The Phillies, having learned that both Chase Utley and Brad Lidge will miss the remainder of the season earlier in the day and 5 games back of the Braves in the NL East, go into full-scale panic mode and begin to load up on both relievers and infielders to stabilize what have been the Achilles' Heels of the team to this point. In exchange for Donald and Durbin (who has finally acquitted himself as a 7th inning option), the Indians receive power-hitting 1B/OF Jonathan Singleton, who is leading the Florida State League (High A) in both HR and OPS as a member of the Clearwater Thrashers. In meeting with the media to discuss the trade, Indians' GM Chris Antonetti explained the rationale of the move as, "not a move that we really wanted to make as Donald has come on and stabilized 3B for us since he's returned, both offensively and defensively, and Durbin has provided some much-needed veteran leadership in that bullpen. But the Phillies were looking for help and they obviously knew both of these guys. When we realized what they were offering us in Singleton, who is one of the most projectable power hitters in all of the Minor Leagues, we knew that it was a deal that was too good to pass up." In corresponding moves, Columbus

reliever Zach Putnam is called up to replace Durbin and a young 3B who has been blistering AAA pitching, particularly in the month of July (when he has posted an OPS of 1.345…with no errors) arrives in Cleveland to take the spot of Donald.

The Indians' new 3B is referred to only as…The Chiz.

July 31st vs. Kansas City Royals

Just prior to the game against the cellar-dwelling Royals, the Indians trade LHP Rafael Perez to the Texas Rangers for a low level minor league RHP named David Perez. After struggling early in the season, Perez had found his rhythm (along with the rest of the bullpen) over the last six weeks and began to pitch in more meaningful situations after being relegated to the 5th and 6th innings for a short time in April and May. The Rangers, desperate for bullpen help to hold off the A's in the AL West, make the move for Perez, who says nothing to the assembled press corps, ending his tenure with the Indians having never given an interview. In Perez's place, the Indians promote LHP Nick Hagadone, who as acquitted himself nicely in a relief role, moving quickly from Akron to Columbus once he was told by the Indians to concentrate on refining a two-pitch mix, which improves his control greatly as he becomes the hard-throwing LH reliever that many envisioned when he was included in the Victor Martinez trade from the Red Sox.

August 4th vs. Boston Red Sox

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