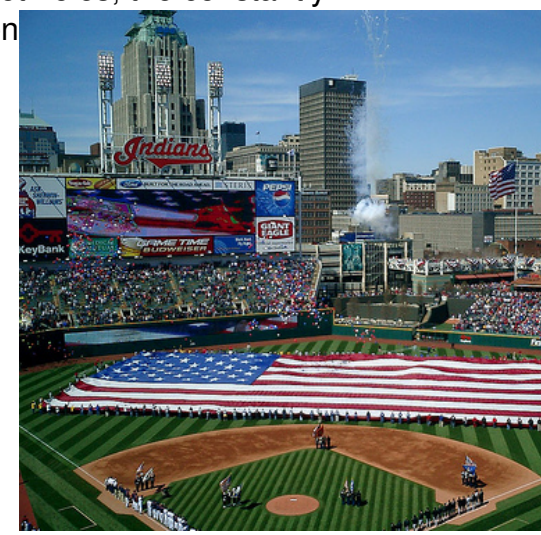
Baseball is finally here! It makes the five months of running over pot holes, the constantly salt-stained doors of your car, and the muttering of expletives when



stepping outside and feeling that frozen Cleveland breeze worth it. The winter wonderhell we endure all melts away when the calendar's pages finally turn far enough to signify the start of our national pastime once again.

Our poor Indians travel from sunny and 90 Goodyear, AZ to hopefully 40 and as-long-as-it-isn't-raining-or-snowing Cleveland to open the season for the first time since 2008. Ozzie Guillen is already annoyed with traveling to Cleveland to start the 2011 campaign. I did not realize it was so much warmer in Chicago on April 1. Well, Ozzie, here is my response to you: tu eres un pinchazo y nadie te quiere (to translate: You are a prick and nobody likes you).

The Indians finished Spring Training 2011 with a 15-14 record. I speak for all of us when I say that we will gladly take a .517 win percentage for the regular season. That would be about 84-78. It would show steps in the right direction for the future. Speaking of steps in the right direction, the key Indians bats finished off the spring on a positive note. Choo finished the spring hitting .322. Asdrubal Cabrera hit .364 (with a .600 slugging percentage!). Travis Hafner hit .304. Carlos Santana hit an even .300. Orlando Cabrera tailed off after a hot start to hit a respectable .267.

Some pitchers also finished on a positive note as well. Justin Masterson only walked two batters in his final 16.2 IP while striking out 20. Fausto Carmona rattled off two quality starts and one spectacular five-inning effort in his last three outings.

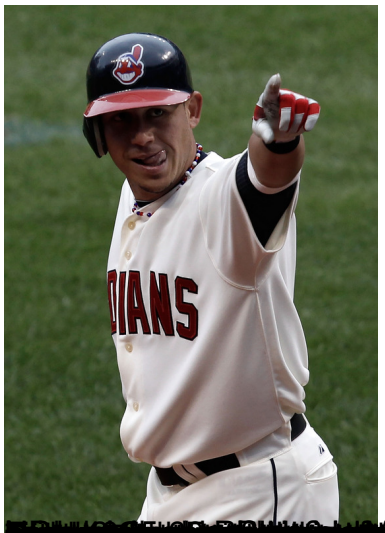
Other pitchers ended with an outing to forget. Mitch Talbot was roughed up for seven runs in his last spring tune-up. Rafael Perez surrendered four runs in one-third of an inning in his last outing. Chris Perez became light-headed and threw up.

Either way, the roster is set and the rotation is in order. Travis Buck, Jack Hannahan, and Justin Germano all made the team as non-roster invites to Spring Training. All three deserve their spots. Hannahan became the third baseman by default following the Jason Donald injury, but still hit .340 for the spring. Travis Buck raked from day one and the Indians had a desperate need for a left handed bench bat. Justin Germano has the ability to go multiple innings in relief and was not scored upon in all eight appearances this March.

Rather than look back, as is customary in a column entitled Wahoo Week in Review, Opening Day is a chance to look forward and so that is what I will do. Every year I get excited about baseball season. I wonder if the Pirates and Royals fan base is able to do the same. I cycle through “What if” scenarios in my mind. Ways that the Indians can contend and surprise people.

Much like the last couple of seasons, this year’s team should be judged based on wins and losses. Individual development is the key. The players coming up through the system, the Carlos Santanas, Lonnie Chisenhalls, and Jason Kipnises of the world have helped create a culture of winning in the minor leagues, and that should go a long way to their success. For the guys who are already here, developing their skills, both at the plate and in the field is how to create their identity.

Questions need to be answered and 2011 is a landmark year for those queries. Who is Asdrubal Cabrera? Is he a slightly above average fielder who will hit .280



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