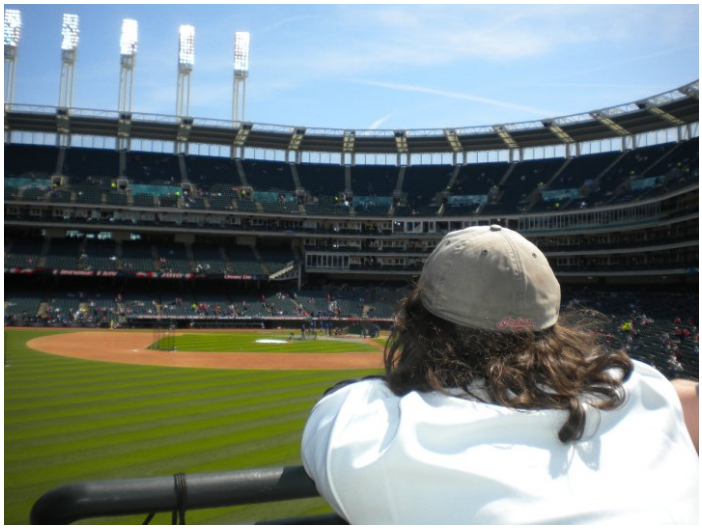

The Central Division is already becoming the division that nobody wants to win. After the Indians gave away their seven game lead, they picked a one game lead back up after sweeping the Pirates last weekend. Now, as the Tigers have lost six of nine, the Indians hold a one game lead because they have played two fewer games than the Tigers, so they have two fewer losses.

Word came out early this morning that Shin-Soo Choo is headed to the disabled list with a broken thumb suffered when Jonathan “I Have No Idea Where The F*** The Ball Is Going” Sanchez drilled him on the hand with a pitch in Friday night’s incredibly frustrating 4-3 loss.

So, with that, this week’s View from the Porch will focus on the Indians best options to replace Shin-Soo Choo and why I loathe interleague play.

Chooooooosing a Replacement

The time has come Indians fans. We have our first major injury with a player that is impossible to replace. While Shin-Soo Choo's numbers have been replaceable, the in-house options are like sticking your hand in a bag full of used needles from HIV patients. Not only is it going to hurt getting poked by dozens of needles, but there are also going to be long-term effects. At least, suicide exempted, it will be hard to get a disease and eventually succumb from it thanks to watching the carousel of incompetence that will inhabit right field.

Let's look one by one at the Shin-Soo Choo replacement candidates.

Austin Kearns: As I said last night on Twitter, I believe that Austin Kearns has eephus bat speed. Maybe, if I'm being generous, he could hit a palm ball. Maybe he could go the Eric Byrnes route and tear up a slow-pitch softball league.

I have nothing against Austin Kearns as a person. I sympathize with his family situation and I think he's a genuinely good teammate. He's just not a very talented teammate. He has been an above average fielder in his time playing this season, but he could not hit a Titanic-sized piñata with a five-foot bat.

Travis Buck: The similarities between Travis Buck and Shin-Soo Choo end after the "Throws: L" on Travis Buck's baseball cards, assuming any are actually printed. Travis Buck is a slap hitter that pulls the ball. Barreling up the ball is an inconvenience for him, and while he has come up with a couple big hits this year, he has been unable to stay with the team all season despite the bench players of the aforementioned Kearns, Adam Everett, Lou Marson, Shelley Duncan, and Ezequiel Carrera being on the team.

There are red flags and then there's that. Part of the reason has been that Buck has a minor league option while Austin Kearns doesn't. I say, if Austin Kearns is so valuable that Travis Buck must be sent down just so Kearns can be kept, therein lies the problem.

Shelley Duncan: Shelley Duncan takes routes to fly balls that Shin-Soo Choo wouldn't even take while drunk. There are American League pitchers who probably hit right handers better than Sloth. He has had success as a pinch hitter and really has not when playing all nine innings of a game.

Duncan is a great teammate and the Indians did struggle while he was gone. I'm sure that there's next to no correlation between the two, but it is good to see Sloth back, even if he has very big limitations.

The Beer Guy: You know the one. The black beer vendor at the Jake who can be heard on the telecast most of the time. He may be a little old at this stage to be running around right field, but he would have no problem calling for a ball or making the catch in his oversized beer tray. I can only imagine him running in for a pop-up, calling for it saying "THE BEER GUY'S HERE!"

Ketchup: Ketchup seems to have the most athleticism of the hot dogs participating in the Sugardale Hot Dog Derby. Based on what I have scouted, he would have no issue running over the catch on a close play at the plate. He is not a grinder because he doesn't play the game the right way, but he has a youthful exuberance that could be a shot in the arm for a ballclub. He's also a better option than the other two because Mustard doesn't seem to be very energetic and Onion can't catch a fly ball while holding a purse.

Also, for what it's worth, I hate the hot dog derby and cannot understand why everyone gets so excited about something we blatantly ripped off from Milwaukee four years ago.

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