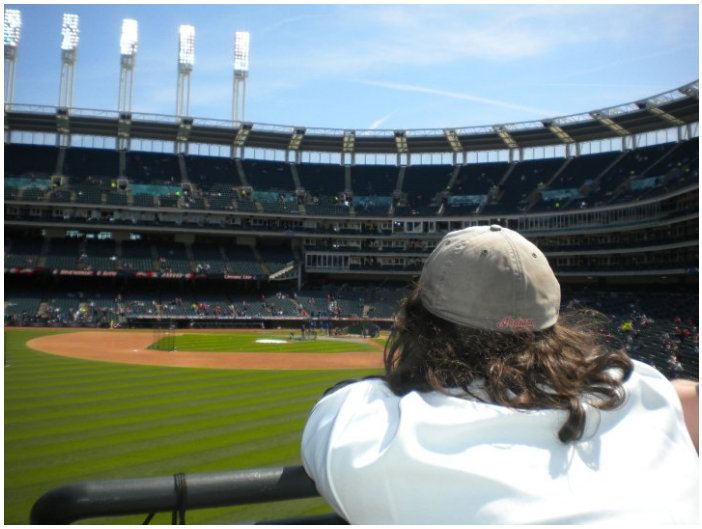


Rumors circulated for the last week that the Indians were in on just about every player whose name was mentioned as a trade candidate and probably some other players whose names were not even mentioned publicly. For the first time since probably the Roberto Alomar trade, the Indians landed the biggest trade target on the market. If there was any question about us being a buyer at this year's deadline, it was answered loud and clear.

Paul Cousineau has already covered the ins and outs, stats and figures, and everything in between about the trade. That said, because of the nature of the weekly column that I write, I felt it necessary to include more of an op/ed piece that represents the idea that I have and the idea I think everyone else should have about the trade, and the trade deadline as a whole.

Taking a backseat this week are the Kosuke Fukudome and Orlando Cabrera trades. I addressed the Fukudome deal in yesterday's View from the Porch, but I will look at the OC trade later in this column.

First and foremost, let's rejoice in the fact that the Indians are a buyer. For the first time since 2007, where our only splash was Kenny Lofton, the Indians were in a position to improve their team for the stretch run. I would say that they did one hell of a job. There were clear and present weaknesses on this team. Fukudome answered the first one, given that Luis Valbuena was playing outfield for the Indians just two weeks ago.

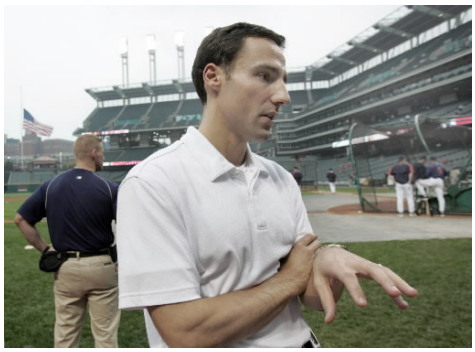
Now, the Indians have a bona fide front/top end middle of the rotation starting pitcher in Ubaldo Jimenez. Jimenez may have regressed from last season, which was to be expected after such a

good 2010 campaign. Rather than examining what might be wrong what Jimenez, which the Indians have done based on their demand to include a physical prior to allowing the deal to be processed, let's look at what this trade means for the fans, the organization, and the team.

For years, all I heard was "Why don't the Indians do something?" or "Why is Dolan so cheap?" The Dolan family has repeatedly said that they will spend when the time is right. The Indians added salary in this Jimenez deal and did so by being able to sign Pomeranz and White to very high signing bonuses. The financial commitment of this trade, from the player acquired to the players signed in order for the trade to happen is evident. And it needs to be commended.

Furthermore, we have seen prospect after prospect flame out after being hyped like they were the second coming of Tom Seaver or Mike Schmidt. You cannot keep waiting for lightning in a bottle with an unproven player. The Tampa Bay Rays have amassed years of top ten, or even top five, first round picks. They have one World Series runner-up run to show for it and began selling off pieces last year. The Padres are obviously doing really well with all the high first round talent they've compiled. The Royals are doing well, aren't they?

This is what happens in the economics of baseball. You have two choices. You draft and develop and hope it pans out or you draft and trade to make your team better. The Indians have tried the draft and develop gameplan for the last 10 years and it, largely, has not worked. In fact, it has not worked at all when you consider that nearly every member of the everyday lineup was a trade acquisition and most of the pitching staff is plucked from other teams.



Let's give credit where credit is due here. Chris Antonetti was mostly viewed as Mark Shapiro Part Deux. Here, you have Antonetti making an enormous splash, the biggest the Indians have made since the Bartolo Colon deal of 2002. In that trade, the Indians were obviously a seller. The Tribe went above and beyond the definition of a buyer and they did so by taking an enormous risk. They mortgaged their top flight prospect talent in exchange for a proven pitcher and confidence in depth guys like Zach McAllister, Mitch Talbot, Jeanmar Gomez, and David

Huff.

For that, I love this trade. It is the kind of risk you absolutely must take in this market. Like I said above, you cannot sit idly by and hope that your prospects come through when you get the chance to get a proven pitcher. The Indians traded from a position of relative strength, kept their top young position players, and sent a strong message to the guys who are here that we are contending right now.

Drew Pomeranz sucks to lose. The kid has tremendous upside, top of the rotation stuff, a delivery that lends itself to staying healthy and an out pitch that puts very little strain on his arm and elbow. Alex White is a question mark. Throwing a split fingered fastball is hell on a pitcher's middle finger and he has already had problems with it at a young age. Matt McBride and Joe Gardner are throw-ins. Gardner might be a decent bullpen arm, but those can be developed easier than top notch starting pitchers.

If, in two years, Alex White can't stay healthy. Matt McBride is a minor leaguer and Joe Gardner is the fourth bullpen option, would you be thrilled that the Indians traded Ubaldo Jimenez for Drew Pomeranz? That's the question you have to ask at this point because there is zero certainty with prospects. As Paulie discussed, the scouting acronym of TINSTAAPP, there is no such thing as a pitching prospect, is a legitimate point. If Alex White and Drew Pomeranz stay healthy and develop in to top of the rotation arms, that's the chance you take. And it's a chance you take 100 times out of 100 in my mind.

For the organization, it means that their prospect pool takes an enormous hit. Given the draft upgrades of the last couple years, I have full confidence in the Indians to replace Pomeranz and White in their system. Maybe not guys with that kind of ceiling, but definitely solid, projectable rotation arms. It also signals the largest shift in philosophy we have seen in a long time. It slowly began through the draft as the Indians backed off their love of finesse soft tossing pitchers and unathletic 1B/DH and started focusing on hard throwers and athletic players with versatility. It was that shift in ideology that gave the Indians the chance to acquire Jimenez.

Also, it sends a message loud and clear that our competitive window is now. The Indians rotation is under contractual control for through 2013 and we kept our

Indians