In his famous pitch to Kodak, the ever-charismatic Don Draper describes nostalgia as “a twinge in the heart, far more powerful than memory alone.” Well, not unlike a carousel projector, sports can help crystalize those otherwise distant recollections of the past, as well—giving us context and a “feel” for the way things were; even if we weren’t actually there ourselves. Case in point, have you ever been watching an episode of *Mad Men* and thought to yourself, “I wonder what the Cleveland Indians were up to at this exact moment in history?” If so, you’re way too involved with your baseball team… and this is the article for you!

The Cleveland Indians MAD MEN Timeline: 1960-1966

Beyond mere entertainment, a sports team is a collection of moments and characters that can eventually become useful mile-markers on the pothole-ridden roads of our memories. Len Barker brings hazy visions of 1981 into focus, while Jose Mesa’s shadow still lurks over 1997. If you lived through the 1960s, there are certainly dozens of examples of this phenomenon back then, too—be it the trade of Rocky Colavito or the strikeout exploits of “Sudden” Sam McDowell. For those of us who missed out on this almost obnoxiously pivotal decade, however, we’re left to live it out vicariously through the colorful cast of characters on *Mad Men* (or *The Wonder Years* , if you’re nostalgic for the ‘90s version of ‘60s nostalgia).

All we’re missing is a little baseball context to these retro adventures, and Lane Pryce’s ill-fated Mets pennant just isn’t sufficient.

So, without further ado, here is what your Cleveland Indians were doing while various

memorable events were unfolding at Sterling Cooper Draper Pryce*.

*With the understanding that *Mad Men* is a fictional television show and—like nostalgia—only a loose, soap operatic approximation of the past.

WARNING: SPOILERS AHEAD

March 18, 1960

A young, naïve Peggy Olson arrives in the big city and becomes the new secretary at Sterling Cooper. Meanwhile, in Hollywood, Florida, the impressive Indians have stockpiled some ambitious youngsters of their own— Rocky Colavito (26), Herb Score (26), and newcomer Nor m Cash
(25) among them. Tragedy strikes on March 18, however, as 40 year-old pitcher
Dixie Howell
collapses and dies of a heart attack during running drills. Roger Sterling takes no notice.

April 12-18, 1960

Don Draper's world is turned upside down when his profile in *Advertising Age* brings his long lost brother back into his life. Frank "Trader" Lane throws Tribe fans into a similar state of panic when he trades away Cash, Score, AND the beloved Colavito in three separate deals just days before Opening Day.

July 13, 1960

As JFK wins his party's nomination and the former Dick Whitman dreams up campaign strategies for Dick Nixon, the Indians send pitcher Dick Stigman to the All-Star Game at Yankee Stadium. Vic Power, Harvey Kuenn, and Gary Bell also make the American League squad. Across town in Manhattan, Peggy is starting to look plump. And out in the burbs, Betty Draper is capping pigeons in the backyard.

September 2-5, 1960

The aimless Indians have swapped managers with the Tigers (goodbye Joe Gordon, hello Jimmy Dykes), and Don Draper is looking for a client to replace Dr. Scholl's. "The day you sign a client is the day you start losing them," says Roger Sterling, right before taking Draper out for a night on the town to get over his sorrows. "When God closes a door, he opens a dress." Over this same weekend, the Indians sweep four straight from the Royals and split a Labor Day double-dip with Detroit. Mudcat Grant strikes out 10 and Tito Francona homers in a losing effort in the matinee. But Woodie Held hits his fourth homer of the weekend and Barry Latman goes the distance in the nightcap. Sterling is so stunned that he has a heart attack of his own. He survives, but the Tribe does not—doomed to a final record of 76-78.

1961

Mad Men gives '61 a miss entirely, leaving out the heroics of *former* Tribe prospects Norm Cash (.361) and Roger Maris (61 HR), as well as the slightly less noteworthy remaining Tribesman Willie Kirkland, who paces the club in homeruns and ribbies. Central Catholic grad Sam McDowell also makes his Major League debut—at just 18 years of age—tossing six shutout innings in a 3-2 Tribe loss on September 15. Cleveland finishes 78-83 for the season.

April 10, 1962

[redacted]

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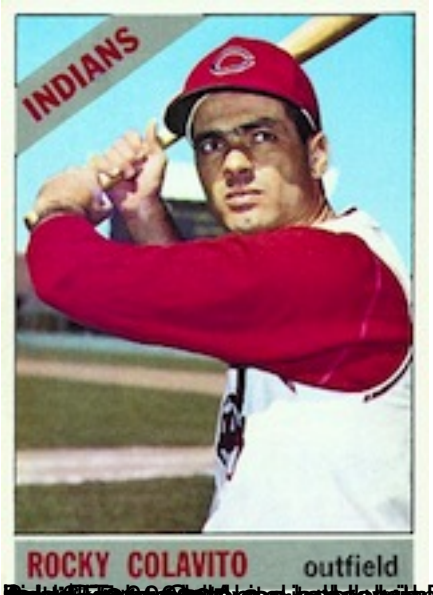
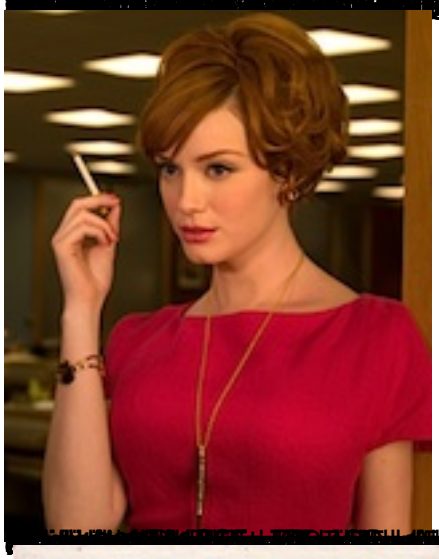
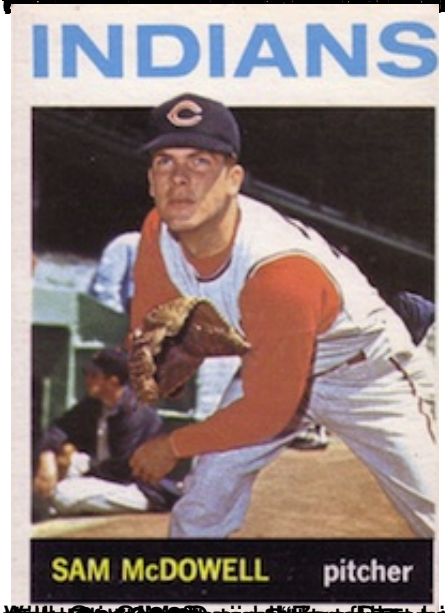

INDIANS
ROCKY COLAVITO
outfield




INDIANS
SAM McDOWELL
pitcher

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