Yearly Uncertainty: (2% Responsible)

Despite what the Indians were able to accomplish last year, no one knew what the hell to expect from this team in 2012. When in doubt, it's hard committing to a season ticket package of 81 games if there's a realistic chance that, by the all star break, you're selling them to friends for small favors. There's uncertainty around this team every year. 2006 and 2008 taught us to be cautious when this team is coming off of a good year. But it's not like fans are sitting at home, twirling their thumbs, reasoning that the future uncertainty of this team actually prevents them from going to a game. It's something more.

Ownership (and Dan Gilbert): (8% responsible)

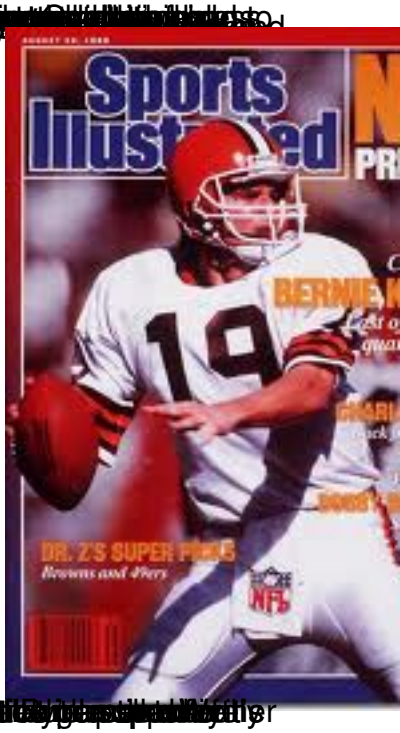
Here in the outskirts of Cleveland, it's not uncommon for a frustrated Indians fan to accuse the Dolan's of being "ass-holes." First and foremost, that label couldn't be further from the truth, but as active owners of a professional sports franchise that's their main downfall— they're not egocentric, money bags living vicariously emotionally psychologically through their 'pat on the back' purchase that they made back in 2000; or, they're not a-holes.

Buying a professional franchise is the biggest pat on the back a person could give themselves, one final "I've arrived" statement you make to yourself. Some people save up their money to purchase a quaint vacation home for retirement, other's buy a 300 foot yacht stocked with foreign escort's and enough drugs to last a lifetime. A professional franchise is that yacht; but not for Larry and Paul Dolan.

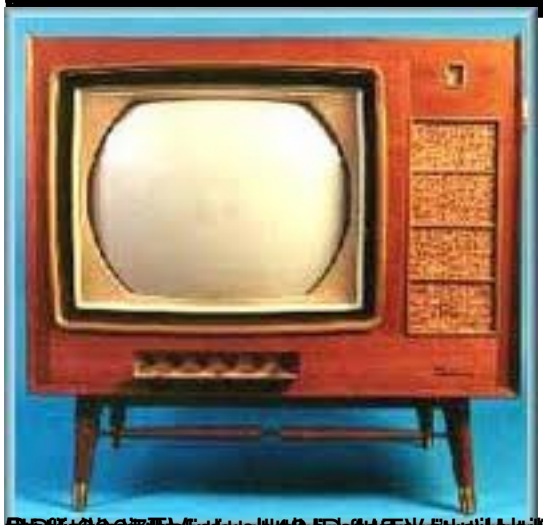
Let's go back to February. When word first broke that the Detroit Tigers had signed Prince Fielder the majority of Indians' fans were all thinking the same thing: "Huh, the Tigers? Detroit's like the mirror city of Cleveland with a parallel economy, how can they afford Fielder and we can't?" Because the Tigers are owned by Mike Ilitch, the founding owner of Little Caesar's Pizza. Although Little Caesars is doing well with their $5 dollar pizza deal, it's not why they were able to up their pay roll to $129 million this offseason. Any day now Frank Ilitch's wife could roll over and find her husband lying next to her, motionless and unresponsive. The man is 82 years old. His age, not his checkbook, was the biggest driving force in the Tigers pursuit of Fielder. But don't think that means he can't afford it, because I can assure you he can just as suspect the Indians could...you know, if they had really wanted to.

When you're an 82 year old owner of a pro-sports franchise you find you're more willing to spend in order to get the last "bang for your buck" that life has to offer. In Ilitch's case, that last bang is a World Series. The Tigers haven't won a World Series in 24 years and Ilitch knows this. What an honor it would be to *go out* as the guy who brought Detroit its first baseball championship in decades. Most likely this is probably his line of thinking.

28


Sports
19
DR. Z'S SUPER
Browns and 49ers

[redacted]



[redacted]