The Indians announced today that closer Chris Perez is dealing with a subscapularis strain in his pitching shoulder and will be out of action for the next 3-4 weeks. For Perez, the injury is a major blow, because it will prevent him from pitching for Team USA in the World Baseball Classic. Perez, and fellow Bullpen Mafia member Vinnie Pestano, were selected to represent the USA in the tournament that begins tonight. Team USA's first game is scheduled for March 8.

Perez will be shut down for 7-10 days and could start a throwing program after that. With the injury, and Perez unlikely to get the necessary Spring Training work in, he would appear to be doubtful for Opening Day on April 2 in Toronto.

This is the second consecutive Spring Training where Perez has been slowed due to injury. Last season, Perez suffered a strained oblique and was doubtful for Opening Day. His rehab took shorter than expected and he was ready to go for the Opener, in which he blew a 4-1 lead in the ninth inning.

If Perez is unable to go at the start of the season, Vinnie Pestano would step into the closer role, with Joe Smith serving as the primary setup man.

In related injury news, the Indians announced that Frank Herrmann has been shut down with a right elbow injury and no timetable has been set for his return.