After a late-night shocker, CP Lee finds himself back in the City of Brotherly Love to join a rotation of Halladay, Oswalt, and Hamels as the Phillies catapult themselves to the head of the NL class. While it was widely reported that only the Yankees and the Rangers were in on Lee and that the Yankees would simply outspend any competition (and drastically so) as they did with Sabathia two years ago, the Phillies were able to add Clifton Phifer back into the fold, presumably on the idea that the Phillies are a better bet to win in the coming years than the Yankees (no...seriously) and than the Rangers.

While it has been widely reported that Lee left money on the table to join the Phils, it is worth noting that it looks like he signed a 5-year, $120M deal with the Phillies, netting him an annual salary of $24M, which makes him the highest paid pitcher...earning $1M per season more than CC. The Yankees' reported final offer was for 6 years and $132M ($22M per season) with a player option for $16M in 2017, which would have lowered the AAV of the final Yankees' offer to $21M per year.

Did Lee pass up a guarantee of more money from New York?

Yes, but he'll actually earn more per year in Philly and he'll become a FA two years sooner, with his thought process perhaps being that he can earn more on the open market prior to the 2016 season than he would have signed away by joining the Yankees.

Regardless of whether that decision is a prudent one or not, Lee will join the better team in the Phillies for a higher annual salary than the Yankees were willing to offer. Whether the Yankees were unwilling to go above $23M (CC's salary) is up for debate as Sabathia can opt out of his Yankee deal after next season, which he very well could based on the demand for Lee. While the fact that Lee will not be donning the pinstripes in the Bronx gives some measure of satisfaction, he WILL be donning pinstripes of another color in Philadelphia for a team that is quickly making it's claim as the Yankees/Red Sox of the NL.

From an Indians' perspective, Lee ($24M) and Sabathia ($23M) are now the two highest paid pitchers in MLB, three years after each started the season for the AL Central defending champs in 2008, a team that is now only remembered for what never was...