The streak lives…for now, as the Indians avoided arbitration with Asdrubal Cabrera , keeping their streak of 20 years since going to an arbitration panel intact. While this time of the year always reminds the folks on the North Coast of Jerry Browne (as this seems to be his lasting impression as an Indian), the Indians have agreed to pay Cabrera $2.025M in 2011, which is his first year of arbitration eligibility.

After a 2009 season that saw him post a .799 OPS (114 OPS+) as a 23-year-old middle infielder, Asdrubal looked ripe for a contract extension that would buy up his arbitration years as well as perhaps some of his Free Agent years. The Indians decided against it and were likely waiting to see what Cabrera put forth in 2010 before making any decision on long-term deals, a decision that looks prescient for now as Cabrera struggled to begin, sitting on a .699 OPS with just 8 extra-base hits (6 2B, 1 3B, 1 HR) in the 33 games he played in prior to a broken forearm, caused by a collision with the former Tribe SS.

Still just 25 (he won't be 26 until next November), Cabrera seems to have hit a plateau offensively and looks to have regressed in the field as the idea that he is a slick-fielding SS has given way to the idea that he is an average defender who makes a memorable play now and then. That's not to say that there isn't room for Cabrera to grow (and I don't mean around his waistline) as his .799 OPS in 2009 as a 23-year-old is higher than all but one of Omar Vizquel's 22 seasons at the plate, but the time has come for Cabrera to reach for that ceiling that looked high in 2007 and again in 2009.

Perhaps the Indians' reluctance to approach him about a long-term deal will provide that motivation, but whether it does or not, Cabrera is the Indians' SS of the present and the future

as he remains in the fold for $2.025, avoiding arbitration.

Whether the Indians will continue their avoidance of an arbitration panel remains to be seen as Chris F. Perez and some other guy from South Korea are still in the queue.