It's been a slow couple of months for Cleveland sports, ever since the Indians fell out of the race in the AL Central. But that's all changing now. The Indians continue to deal, Browns training camp is underway, and the Cavaliers are starting to move to resign some of their restricted free agents. In The Weekend Wrap, Peeker hits on the Casey Blake deal, the first five days of training camp, and Delonte West potentially playing basketball in Moscow next season.

Give Garko That Locker

Casey Blake moved his gear into CC Sabathia's old locker about three weeks ago after the big left hander was traded to the Milwaukee Brewers for Matt LaPorta, Rob Bryson, Zack Jackson and a critical player to be named later.

Less than three weeks later, that locker is again empty.

Blake was dealt to the Dodgers early Saturday morning in exchange for Triple-A pitcher Jon Meloan and hot-hitting Single-A catching prospect Carlos Santana. Almost universally the Indians are being praised for maximizing Blake's trade value while the Dodgers are being panned for paying too steep a price for an aging, if versatile, veteran bat to bolster their lineup.

Give credit to Tribe GM Mark Shapiro for getting a pretty solid haul for Blake. Meloan had dominated minor league hitters as a reliever, even enjoying a late-season call up to the big leagues last season, before the Dodgers inexplicably moved him into the rotation at Triple-A Las Vegas this season. Meloan has struggled in that role even when you consider that Las Vegas is regarded as one of the two or three most hitter friendly parks in minor league baseball.

The 24-year old right hander has averaged over 11 strikeouts per 9 innings in 4 minor league seasons and will likely compete for a spot in the Indians suddenly shaky bullpen next season.

Santana appears to be the key to the deal. The 22-year old converted catcher has put it together offensively this season in the High A California League. Santana was hitting .323 with 14 HRs and a minor league-leading 96 RBI for the Inland Empire 66ers. Even more impressive for Santana is that he's walked more often than he's struck out and his .431 OBP and .563 SLG give him an otherworldly OPS of .994.

Defensively Santana is still a work in progress having been switched from 3b to catcher just over a year ago. His arm is not an issue as he's thrown out over 35% of the potential base stealers who have attempted to run on him. Calling a game and receiving pitches is where he needs work. He'll likely get that work in Kinston initially.

A lot can happen between now and then when you're talking about prospects. But the bottom line in the Blake trade is that the Indians

appear to have maximized Blake's big season and received a guy who can help right away in an area of need and a young catcher who compares favorably to Victor Martinez at the same age. Blake provided the Indians a ton of value during his tenure in Cleveland. If the two players he was traded for continue to progress Blake may continue to provide the Indians with value even though he's gone.

- Blake was a lightning rod for criticism from Tribe fans throughout his 5 ½ seasons in Cleveland. But it's hard to look at his time as an Indian and not appreciate the effort and value he provided. The guy played pretty much anywhere on the field and did so competently. He was a .265-.270 hitter who hit 116 HRs as an Indian and drove in 417 runs in that time. It should be seen as a tribute to Blake, as opposed to a fault of the Indians, that he forced his way into the lineup somewhere for the better part of 5 years. His job was always there to be taken by the next big thing but it never was.

Blake was signed for $330,000 in December of 2002. When you consider the production the Indians got from him and the two highly touted prospects they flipped him for, Blake is a success story for this front office.

- Unfortunately, dealing Cy Young winners and productive everyday players requires that a price be paid in the here and now. The Indians will likely pay that price for the remainder of the season. They certainly did this weekend against the Twins. After getting another terrific outing from Cliff Lee on Friday, and surviving a Masa Kobayashi meltdown in the 9th to win 5-4, the Indians dropped the next two games to Minnesota.

The good news Saturday was that Fausto Carmona returned

and looked healthy. The bad news Saturday was that Carmona returned and couldn't get anybody out. The Twins took a 6-0 lead before most people had found their seats and rolled to an 11-4 win.

Jeremy Sowers looked very good on Sunday, throwing 5 perfect innings, before the twins used a bloop double, a bunt hit that was misplayed by Andy Marte and an infield hit to score a couple runs. The Tribe came back to tie it up before Rafael Perez gave up the ghost and a couple runs in the 9th inning of a 4-2 loss.

All we have as Indians fans right now is the hope that Carmona returning and Sowers making progress is something to build on.

Sorry. That's all I can offer right now. Especially with guys the Tribe counted on coming up snake eyes all season long. Ryan Garko and Asdrubal Cabrera look like every time they step into a batters box it's the first time. Those two guys have got to get their acts together and improve significantly in 2009. Otherwise, for every hole you plug with a LaPorta or a Meloan you see water gushing from another spot on the roster.

No News is Good News

- Five days down in Berea and no one has been carried off on a cart. That bodes well. What also bodes well is that Kellen Winslow Jr. showed a great deal of maturity and reported to camp on time on Wednesday and is taking part in practices and drills. When Winslow voiced his preference to re-do his contract and hired Drew Rosenhaus to represent him in those efforts it sent up warning signs to Browns fans world-wide.

But Winslow has impressed in that he continues talking with the Browns about a new deal while actually working hard in Berea. Perhaps someone has made KW2 aware that he can get a lot more accomplished financially by approaching the negotiations like an adult. Winslow is the heart and soul of this club and he's leading by example right now.

- Kudos also to Browns Head Coach Romeo

Crennel. I like the fact that just 5 days into camp Crennel is showing some discipline and restraint in regard to practice time. Crennel is liberally resting his veterans and more valuable players which can only help them as the season rolls along. Pushing guys like Winslow, Willie McGinest and Jamal Lewis in July isn't going to benefit anyone. These guys all showed up in relatively good shape, know the system and what's expected of them and will benefit in November from the rest during camp.

That's a perk that competitive, experienced teams typically enjoy when roster spots, for the most part, are decided and the goal is to be ready to tee it up on September 7th. And it's good to see a coach act proactively to make sure the best interests of his club are considered.

Must See TV

Cavs guard Delonte West is apparently weighing an offer from a Russian professional team to play there for the next couple years as opposed to settling for less than he thinks he's worth in Cleveland.

The consensus is that West's ‘threat' is more of a negotiating ploy than a serious desire to play in Moscow. But given that the Hawks Josh Childress just accepted $20m+ to play three years in Greece teams have to give some credibility to these overtures.

I like Delonte West and his game. I think he brings a toughness to the floor as well as productivity. But I have to say that if West goes to Russia to play that I will actively campaign that some network looking to strike gold follow him and bring us some entertaining reality TV.

Read this from ESPN.com Page2 and tell me D West's perfect Valentine date wouldn't play even better in Russia.

So, I pick her up in my white convertible. From there, I'd have the music pumping on the radio. The Jim Jones pumping, you know, 'Summer in Miami' song pumping. Got to keep a little gangsta, you can't be too soft. You can't be in there playing some guy that's crying, talking about don't leave me and love me baby, wah wah and all that. So Jim Jones pumping and then from there, wind blowing through the hair, boom, we get straight to the point -- we eat afterwards because I don't want to kiss no onions. I don't want to kiss you tasting like onions and steak and mushrooms and everything."

"So, we are done eating, man, we've got to have someone singing while we're eating. OK, so from there, we're doing a midnight skinny-dipping jump. Alright? From there, hopefully she's got money because I hope Jaws gets her, boom, make sure she got me in the will, bank, I'm good. Oh well, shark got her! Jaws got her. Nah, we ain't going there.

Do some skinny dipping, but keeping it clean fun, don't need to get all right to the point, you know, keeping it clean. Boom, get back, take her back home. Give her a kiss, tell her I enjoyed my night, let's do it again. I don't want her in a situation, because skinny-dipping, she'll already be shaky about doing that if it's an early date, but most likely she will [skinny-dip], but I don't want to end up in one of those situations where you're feeling the mood too much and you try to press the situation and you came all out your hook up. And now you leave feeling

lame because you'd try to force the issue and she really wasn't with it, and I know that's happened to a lot of guys out there, you done and feel the night a little too much. So, just keep it nice and easy, and I think from there she'd have a good enough impression where she might want to do it again."

Someone needs to make D West in Moscow happen. With cameras rolling.

And if you haven't heard ‘The Sock' quote from the guy quickly becoming my all-time favorite Cavalier, click the link.

I'd miss him dearly. But all that D West could accomplish in furthering US-Russian relations and all the entertainment it would bring us

watching might be worth losing him for a year or two.