Opening Day 2009 is here. And in this Monday's Weekend Wrap, Peeks talks about the return of the boys of summer, and also his thoughts on spring training and his expectations of the 2009 Indians. Also, on Sunday, the Cavs righted the ship with a dominating 20 point win over the Spurs after dropping two straight to the Wizards and Magic. Peeks also hits on the Final Four and tonight's title game, as well as his thoughts on how Mangini and Kokinis will handle draft day.

Get it Started

You're not going to get any Bob Costas out of me. I don't see myself as the poet laureate of baseball. I'm not going to talk about the emerald green infield grass contrasted against the orange hue of twilight and the splendor that abounds when the sun slips below the upper deck of Tiger Stadium.

But suffice it to say that I'm a happy man with regular season baseball back on the agenda every day for the next 6 months.

Baseball means lawn mowers and not snow blowers.

Baseball means warm summer evenings on the deck listening to Tom Hamilton instead of dark, cold winter nights huddled under a blanket shaking your head at what just came out of Austin Carr's mouth.

Baseball means burgers and brats and not soups and stews.

Baseball means the pond in the back yard is again for fishing for large mouth bass and blue gill with my two youngest girls and not for the Canucks who live across the way to play hockey.

Baseball means official Wiffle™ bats and balls on the driveway and not Wii remotes in the family room.

I'm ready. I've been ready since last November.

Get it started.

Are They Ready?

Judging by the last week of camp I'd say the Indians were ready to get the hell out of Goodyear days ago.

Training camp, especially one lengthened by the World Baseball Classic, is a grind. And when there's but one or two roster spots available and the drama is gone, it's a grind for the fans too.

The Indians break camp with pretty much who we all thought they would 6 weeks ago. Maybe a minor surprise that Josh Barfield earned a roster spot and that Trevor Crowe is on the big league roster while David Dellucci recovers from a calf injury, but other than those two guys, as well as Scott Lewis winning the 5th starter job earlier in camp, it was basically a young, veteran team getting ready for the regular season.

Hope springs eternal for fans of every team right now. No warts have been exposed just yet, no fatal chemistry flaws uncovered, no one has left a game with elbow stiffness and even the fans of the downtrodden can hope their club turns the corner and shocks the world. No need for that level of prayer here in Cleveland. This a solid baseball team with a few question marks. That hardly makes you unique in the major leagues, but it does give you a

chance. If they stay healthy and if they get some help and production from some of the kids they could make a lot of noise.

I'm still squeamish about the rotation but I'm going with 87 wins and a Central Division title. What comes after that is anyone's guess. But get us to that point and we'll take our chances.

Order Restored

Not to overstate it, but the Cavs win over the Spurs on Sunday afternoon at ‘The Q' may have been their biggest and most important win of the season.

Coming off a terrible 24 hour period last

Thursday and Friday nights against Washington and Orlando that saw their lead over the Lakers for home court advantage throughout the playoffs shrink from three games to just one, the Cavs were stumbling and staggering. They faced the very real prospects of blowing that entire three game lead they've worked all season to gain in one long weekend given the fact they were facing a healthy San Antonio team while they were a bit wobbly.

But on Sunday they rallied and put together a complete team effort and rolled San Antonio in front of a national television audience.

In beating the Spurs 101-81 at home on Sunday the Cavs ran their record at 'The Q' to an amazing 37-1. They also finished play against the Western Conference at 26-4. More important than all of those gaudy numbers was the re-emergence of Delonte West's shooting

stroke.

West went 10-15 from the field, including 2-2 from three point range, in scoring 22 points against the Spurs. West had been struggling with his shot for the better part of the last month after coming back from a fractured right wrist.

A healthy and effective West will give the Cavaliers another scoring option come playoff time. West can get to the basket and he's even more effective at doing so if opponents have to respect his perimeter game.

Now, if the real Daniel Gibson would just stand up.

Etcetera

- One day Tom Izzo is going to be regarded as amongst the best college basketball coaches of his era. Izzo again has his Michigan State Spartans in the NCAA National Championship game, this time against North Carolina on Monday night. Izzo does more with less than any other coach out there (relatively speaking) and despite the fact that the Spartans are 7½ point underdogs to Roy Williams' crew, don't underestimate the Ford Field effect or Izzo's ability to coach his kids up in a big game. Michigan State just has that ‘Team of Destiny' look about them. I'm looking for Izzo and the Spartans to take down the Tar Heels on Monday.

- It's the calm before the storm for the

next couple weeks in Berea. The Browns are busy finalizing their draft board and exploring all their options before the April 25th

NFL draft kicks off with the Detroit Lions making their selection. The Browns are currently sitting with the fifth pick of the day.

This organization makes it difficult to pin down exactly what they're thinking given their CIA approach to disseminating information. All the cloak and dagger stuff is fine by me if there is improvement shown on the field. And despite his Belichikian approach to dealing with the media I actually have an odd confidence in Eric Mangini right now. I like the fact that the man isn't tipping his pitches in regard to the draft and the quarterback

situation and I like the fact that he's making everyone from fans to players a bit uncomfortable with his approach. Things were way too comfortable in Berea for too many years and it led to chaos in the clubhouse and on the field.

Personally, I think Mangini and GM George Kokinis would love to unload a player or two and maybe that fifth pick in order to stockpile some draft picks and they'll do so if the opportunity and value present themselves on draft day.

Warm, fuzzy and media-savvy will not save you if the talent on the field is not

up to par and there are more losses than wins on the scoreboard. Mangini understands this. He has a chance to start turning this franchise in the right direction in three weeks. Let's see what he does with that opportunity before we make any judgments in regard to this regime because nothing else matters at the end of the day.