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Can We Get Another Round Over Here?

You thought we'd lead off The Wrap with the Indians? Please. Like with the AL Central standings, you'll have to check near the bottom if you want to find the Tribe.

No, we're going to open it up this week with positive Cleveland sports news.

The Cavaliers second round flotsam has been identified: It's the Cavs and Atlanta Hawks Tuesday night at 8pm from ‘The Q'. Personally I would have liked to see the Miami Heat served up on a platter, they of the ‘Dwyane Wade and 11 Guys' persuasion, but Atlanta works just fine. The Hawks took care of business against a gassed Wade on

Sunday afternoon and won their Game 7 going away, 91-78.

Wade scored 31 points in Game 7 but it took him 25 shots to get there.

The Hawks do present the Cavs some challenges. They are very good at home and they are young and athletic. Josh Smith, Joe Johnson and Mike Bibby are dangerous players and Flip Murray has also been playing very well for Atlanta. But Atlanta is in the deep end of the pool for the first time with this team and they can become unglued and undisciplined at the drop of a hat. They also won less than 40% of their road games during the regular season. Throw in the fact that Atlanta was forced to seven games in their first round series while the Cavs will have had nine days of relative rest after sweeping the Pistons and you have to feel pretty good about round two.

When faced with the prospects of rest versus rust with the nine day layoff I'd like to think that players like LeBron James, Zydrunas Ilgauskas, Joe Smith, Mo Williams and the remainder of the experienced roster would benefit from allowing a season's worth of bumps and bruises to heal a bit and that the focus and intensity the Cavs have shown all season long will again be on display Tuesday night.

I do think the Hawks will win a game in the series and that by doing so they'll be doing Cleveland a favor. Nothing gets this team's attention like a loss.

But when it's all said and done, I like the Cavs to move on against the Boston-Orlando winner and to do so in just five games.

Gentlemen, please re-start your engines and get it done.

The Draftermath

After the initial shock (disappointment?) of last Saturday when the Browns traded down numerous times in the first round and ultimately selected Cal center Alex Mack when so many hoped the defense would be the first order of priority, it's Kool-Aid time again in Cleveland. Browns fans want so badly to believe in this organization, regime and roster that they're willing to convince themselves and each other after a week of thought and draft analysis that this team is a lot closer to contending than rebuilding.

That all remains to be seen but I will say The Wrap is smart enough to know that it isn't that smart. We mentioned last weekend that if nothing else it appears this version of the front office at least has a concept for what type of players they want here in Cleveland to compete on Sundays. It's true that the 2009 draft class could likely run a business or design bridges but we'll have to wait four months before we really begin to see what kind of football players these intelligent athletes turn out to

be.

As for the head-rattling, snot-displacing hitter many of us would like to see who would embody the image of what the team and defense would stand for? Well, the fans and Browns are still searching. But we are willing to settle. By that I mean it appears that 5'11", 230lb linebacker Kaluka Maiava will suffice due to the fact that the dude apparently hunts wild boar with a knife .

The Wrap has no idea if Maiava will get knocked back three yards after contact or if he'll even make the club. But we don't recall Andra' Davis taking to the mountains and sticking wild hogs with a blade.

Hey, it's a start. It's an odd start, but it is a start.

Guess We Have To

When your favorite team, after just 25 games, has as many or more roster moves as wins, well, you're probably suffering through a miserable start to the Major League

season. And regardless of whose fault that may be you really have to wonder if the manager is going to survive such a start.

That's the situation that the Indians and Eric Wedge are looking at after dropping two of three games to the Tigers this weekend to slip to 9-16 on the season. If the offense isn't sucking then the bullpen is blowing. If both the offense and bullpen have a decent night then the starting pitching and defense are faltering. It's been one lapse or another for the 2009 version of the Indians nearly every night. Indian fans all over the country are looking to apply ‘Lemon Law' principles after buying into the ‘Season of Hope & Promise' that they signed up for a couple months ago.

The Wrap has neither allegiance to, nor distaste for, manager Eric Wedge. He's just a manager. He's solid in some areas, lacking in others. It wasn't Eric Wedge that led the Indians to within a game of the 2007 World Series any more than it was Eric Wedge's fault for 2008. The man is reliant on the performance of the players that put on the gloves and pick up the bats. Wedge handled Fausto Carmona the same way in Carmona's mediocre

2008 as he did in Carmona's breakout season of 2007.

That said, you have to wonder if the final grains of sand are filtering through Wedge's Indians hourglass. Someone always pays for disappointment and losses in the major leagues. And that someone is almost always the manager.

The season is still young, yes, but it's older today than it was a week or two weeks ago. And the poor results are still the same. It's time for this team to put things together or we're headed squarely for another miserable summer on the corner of Carnegie and Ontario. All of us.

Except for maybe the current skipper.

Can You Help?

A good friend of TheClevelandFan.com is seeking

your help for a terrific and important cause.

Dave Middleton passed along this request on behalf of the father of his nephew, Timmy Gallagher, and I'm doing the same.

Timmy Gallagher Memorial Red Cross Blood Drive

This is a Red Cross Blood Drive in memory of my son Timmy Gallagher who lost a very brave battle to cancer in 2005. These blood donations are our way of helping the Red Cross the way they helped Timmy during his fight.

There are several ways to reserve a time slot:
· Go to GIVELIFE.ORG and type in sponsor code TIMMY
· Call Jean or me at home (440) 943-1071
· E-mail me at TGALLAG278@AOL.COM
· WALK-INS are always welcome!!!

Lake Hospitals will be donating food for after your donations.

Please forward this to all of your friends. Help us spread the word of this drive. Please help us make it a GREAT success. The better we do the more people we help! Each pint of blood donated can help three people! Thank You!!

The event is Thursday May 7th at the Dudley Field house in Dudley Park, 31500 Willowick Drive, Willowick, OH and it runs from 2pm to 730pm.

Timmy was just 14 years old when he died after a 2 ½ year battle with cancer. The Eastlake North baseball team honored Timmy and his

family by retiring his number when he died. If you can spare an hour and a pint of life it would be a wonderful tribute to a brave kid and a gift to those who are fighting an on-going battle of their own.