

Tribe reloads for 2007 after disappointing season

BY CHRIS KLINE

After making over an older, overpaid roster in 2002, general manager Mark Shapiro and his rebuilding plan produced rewards right on schedule. The Indians won 93 games and just missed the playoffs in 2005, with a promise of better things to come.

Instead, Cleveland stumbled. The Tribe went 13-12 in the season's first month and never got back into the American League Central race. The Indians dropped to 78 victories and fourth place in the division, 18 games behind the Twins.

The major step backward was mostly the result of inconsistency on the mound, particularly in the bullpen. Rookie Jeremy Sowers replaced Jason Johnson in the rotation and showed promise, but two other farm system products, Fausto Carmona and Fernando Cabrera, failed to shore up the bullpen. Cabrera went 3-3, 5.34 and couldn't convert any of his four save opportunities.

The Indians' handling of Carmona was curious at best and highlighted their big league pitching problems. Carmona opened the season as the No. 1 starter at Triple-A Buffalo, then earned a spot in the Cleveland rotation before moving to the bullpen. After the Indians traded closer Bob Wickman to the Braves, they briefly anointed Carmona closer before using him in middle relief. When Carmona struggled

mightily with 1-9, 5.64 numbers, he headed back to Buffalo as a starter and resurfaced in the Tribe rotation in September.

Though the club has the nucleus of a strong rotation in C.C. Sabathia, Jake Westbrook, Cliff Lee and Sowers, the bullpen still needs an overhaul and there is no clear-cut closer on the roster.

Offense wasn't an issue, as the Indians plated 870 runs and in fact outscored their opponents by 88. Grady Sizemore came into his own as an elite center fielder, while Travis Hafner established himself as one of the game's most dangerous mashers.

One positive the Indians took out of a disappointing year was getting Ryan Garko, Franklin Gutierrez, Joe Inglett, Kevin Kouzmanoff and Andy Marte a chance to contribute. Kouzmanoff showed enough to be used as the primary chip to acquire Josh Barfield in a November trade with the Padres. Cleveland also added position-player talent when it fell out of the race, dealing Ben Broussard, Eduardo Perez and Wickman to get shortstop Asdrubal Cabrera, outfielder Shin-Soo Choo and catcher Max Ramirez.

In the system, Kinston won the high Class A Carolina League title behind strong pitching, particularly from lefthanders Chuck Lofgren and Scott Lewis. Akron came within one game of winning its second straight Double-A Eastern League



LARRY GOREN

Grady Sizemore emerged as an elite center fielder in just his second season in the majors

championship. The Indians spent most of their early draft picks in June on college players with solid if not spectacular ceilings, starting with polished lefthander David Huff in the supplemental first round.

While Adam Miller is the only real blue-chip prospect in the system, the club has a lot of pieces in place to contribute in 2007, as well as the depth to make trades. But life has gotten a lot tougher in the AL Central, as Cleveland discovered.

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OVERVIEW

General manager: Mark Shapiro.
Farm director: Ross Atkins.
Scouting director: John Mirabelli.



2007 Farm System			
Classification	Affiliate	W	L
Triple-A	Buffalo	73	68
Double-A	Akron	87	55
High Class A	Kinston	85	54
Low Class A	Lake County	64	74
Short-season	Mahoning Valley	40	36
Rookie	GCL Indians	21	29
*OVERALL 2006 RECORD		404	349

*Includes 34-33 record at Rookie-level Burlington; Indians dropped affiliation for 2007.

BEST TOOLS

Best Hitter for Average	Trevor Crowe
Best Power Hitter	Ryan Golecki
Best Strike-Zone Discipline	Trevor Crowe
Fastest Baserunner	Jose Constanza
Best Athlete	Brian Barton
Best Fastball	Adam Miller
Best Curveball	Scott Lewis
Best Slider	Adam Miller
Best Changeup	Sean Smith
Best Control	Scott Lewis
Best Defensive Catcher	Wyatt Toregas
Best Defensive Infielder	Asdrubal Cabrera
Best Infield Arm	Asdrubal Cabrera
Best Defensive Outfielder	Jonathan Van Every
Best Outfield Arm	Ryan Golecki

PROJECTED 2010 LINEUP

Catcher	Matt McBride
First Base	Victor Martinez
Second Base	Josh Barfield
Third Base	Andy Marte
Shortstop	Jhonny Peralta
Left Field	Trevor Crowe
Center Field	Grady Sizemore
Right Field	Shin-Soo Choo
Designated Hitter	Travis Hafner
No. 1 Starter	C.C. Sabathia
No. 2 Starter	Adam Miller
No. 3 Starter	Jeremy Sowers
No. 4 Starter	Cliff Lee
No. 5 Starter	Jake Westbrook
Closer	Tony Sipp

1 ADAM MILLER, RHP

Miller learns value of offspeed pitches in Akron

Background: Miller spent 2005 essentially on a season-long rehab stint after straining an elbow ligament while long-tossing in spring training. He pitched just 71 innings and ended the year at high Class A Kinston, the same place he had lit up radar guns to the tune of 101 mph in the Carolina League playoffs in 2004. After regaining command of his slider and slowly working a changeup back into his repertoire, Miller climbed back on track in 2006 at Double-A Akron. Though he was inconsistent during the season's first two months, he finished stronger than he ever had, winning six consecutive starts through July and August, including three straight 11-strikeout performances, the last of which was Miller's first-ever nine-inning complete game. He led the organization in strikeouts and topped the Eastern League in wins, while ranking second in ERA and third in strikeouts. He stayed healthy throughout, tossing a career-high 171 innings (including the playoffs).

Strengths: Miller has blossomed into a potential frontline starter by becoming a more complete pitcher. The velocity on his four-seam fastball returned to 93-95 mph and he hit 98 in his final four starts, including the EL playoffs. He has added a two-seamer to change speeds on his fastball more effectively, and his changeup has emerged as a go-to pitch with good depth and late bite. But Miller's best pitch remains his slider. It's back to where it was in 2004, with tilt, devastating late

Born: Nov. 26, 1984. **Ht.:** 6-4. **Wt.:** 195.
Bats: Right. **Throws:** Right.
Drafted: HS—McKinney, Texas, 2003 (1st supp.).
Signed by: Matt Ruebel.

break and power. He throws his slider at 87-88 mph. Miller finally has come to grips with the fact that velocity isn't everything, and his ability to consistently command his offspeed stuff has him back on the fast track again. The further Miller gets away from injury, the stronger he's become. His delivery is free and easy, so there's no reason his health should be an issue down the road. He has excellent makeup, and he learned more about attacking lefthanders this season from Akron pitching coach Scott Radinsky. Miller dominated lefties, as they hit just .198 against him with twice as many groundouts as flyouts.

Weaknesses: Though his changeup improved by leaps and bounds in 2006, Miller still is learning when and how to use it. His mechanics with the pitch are solid, but he still tends to want to blow hitters away with his fastball or slider. He also can do a better job of locating it. While Miller works quickly to home plate, he still needs to refine his pickoff move to hold runners on base more effectively. He some-

2006 Club (Class)	W	L	ERA	G	GS	CG	SV	IP	H	HR	BB	SO	AVG
Akron (AA)	15	6	2.75	26	26	1	0	154	129	9	43	157	.226
Buffalo (AAA)	0	0	5.79	1	1	0	0	5	4	0	3	4	.235



RICH ABEL

Miller still likes attacking with his fastball, but showed a more complete arsenal in 2006

times rushes his delivery, leading to erratic command of his fastball up in the zone.

The Future: There isn't much left for Miller to prove in the minors. He'll battle for a big league rotation spot out of spring training, but likely will start the year at Triple-A Buffalo under manager Torey Lovullo—the skipper who brought him along during his breakout year in 2004. It's only a matter of time before Miller makes an impact in the major leagues.

TOP PROSPECTS OF THE DECADE

Year	Player, Pos.	2006 Org.
1997	Bartolo Colon, rhp	Angels
1998	Sean Casey, 1b	Tigers
1999	Russell Branyan, 3b	Padres
2000	C.C. Sabathia, lhp	Indians
2001	C.C. Sabathia, lhp	Indians
2002	Corey Smith, 3b	White Sox
2003	Brandon Phillips, ss/2b	Reds
2004	Grady Sizemore, of	Indians
2005	Adam Miller, rhp	Indians
2006	Adam Miller, rhp	Indians

TOP DRAFT PICKS OF THE DECADE

Year	Player, Pos.	2006 Org.
1997	Tim Lincecum, rhp	Out of baseball
1998	C.C. Sabathia, lhp	Indians
1999	Will Hartley, c (2nd)	Out of baseball
2000	Corey Smith, 3b	White Sox
2001	Dan Denham, rhp	Indians
2002	Jeremy Guthrie, rhp	Indians
2003	Michael Aubrey, 1b	Indians
2004	Jeremy Sowers, lhp	Indians
2005	Trevor Crowe, of	Indians
2006	David Huff, lhp	Indians

LARGEST BONUSES IN CLUB HISTORY

Danys Baez, 1999	\$4,500,000
Jeremy Guthrie, 2002	\$3,000,000
Jeremy Sowers, 2004	\$2,475,000
Michael Aubrey, 2003	\$2,010,000
Dan Denham, 2001	\$1,860,000

SCOUTING REPORT: Miller has blossomed into a potential frontline starter by becoming a more complete pitcher.

2 CHUCK LOFGREN, LHP

Born: Jan. 29, 1986. **B-T:** L-L. **Ht.:** 6-4. **Wt.:** 200. **Drafted:** HS—San Mateo, Calif., 2004 (4th round). **Signed by:** Don Lyle.

Background: Several clubs liked Lofgren's bat better than his arm in the 2004 draft, but the Indians' decision to make him a full-time pitcher can't be second-guessed. He emerged as one of the top lefthanders in the minors in 2006, tying for the minor league lead in wins.

Strengths: Lofgren has more velocity than most lefthanders with a fastball that sits at 89-93 mph and tops out at 95. His changeup serves as an out pitch, because he throws it with good arm action and can locate it to both sides of the plate. He also features a spike curveball in the mid-70s, and he has added a slider that has good depth.

Weaknesses: Lofgren only started using the slider at midseason, so he needs to continue to develop it. While his delivery is clean with a quick, easy arm action, he rushes at times in his lower half and needs to keep his hips from opening up too early to stay on a direct line to home plate. This flaw at times costs him control.

The Future: Lofgren took one of the largest leaps developmentally among Tribe farmhands in 2006. With a young big league rotation, though, the Indians see no reason to rush him, so he'll likely spend 2007 in Double-A.

2006 Club (Class)	W	L	ERA	G	GS	CG	SV	IP	H	HR	BB	SO	AVG
Kinston (Hi A)	17	5	2.32	25	25	1	0	140	108	5	54	125	.217



CARL KILNE

3 TREVOR CROWE, OF

Born: Nov. 17, 1983. **B-T:** B-R. **Ht.:** 6-0. **Wt.:** 200. **Drafted:** Arizona, 2005 (1st round). **Signed by:** Joe Graham.

Background: One of the best athletes in the system, Crowe was hitting .329 in high Class A before going down with an oblique injury. After he got healthy, he went to Double-A Akron and tried to move from the outfield to second base. The conversion didn't take, and the Indians gave up on it after instructional league.

Strengths: A switch-hitter with quick, strong hands, Crowe hits with gap power to all fields. An above-average runner, Crowe takes advantage of his speed by taking walks and stealing bases efficiently. He shows enough range and arm strength to stay in center field, though he won't push Grady Sizemore to a corner.

Weaknesses: A better hitter from the left side, Crowe needs to work on keeping his hands inside the ball when hitting righthanded. His power is probably average at best. While he's an above-average defender, he lacks closing speed and could get better jumps.

The Future: Crowe profiles best as the 2005 version of Coco Crisp—a speedy, high-on-base left fielder who hits 10-15 homers annually. He'll start in Triple-A and could be in the majors by midseason.

2006 Club (Class)	AVG	OBP	SLG	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
Kinston (Hi A)	.329	.449	.470	219	51	72	15	2	4	31	48	46	29
Lake County (Lo A)	.000	.000	.000	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Akron (AA)	.234	.318	.325	154	20	36	7	2	1	13	20	24	16



CARL KILNE

4 TONY SIPP, LHP

Born: July 12, 1983. **B-T:** L-L. **Ht.:** 6-0. **Wt.:** 185. **Drafted:** Clemson, 2004 (45th round). **Signed by:** Tim Moore.

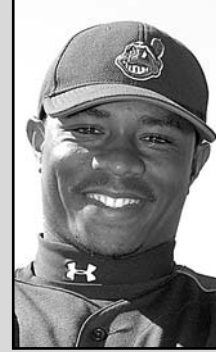
Background: The Indians drafted Sipp, a center fielder/pitcher in junior college and at Clemson, in the 45th round and gave him \$130,000 after he had a strong summer in the Cape Cod League. That deal now looks like a steal after Sipp cruised his way through Double-A after moving to the bullpen full-time. The only hiccup was a strained oblique that cost him two months.

Strengths: Sipp has good deception and a long extension toward home plate that makes his 89-93 mph fastball explode on hitters. His secondary stuff took a major step forward in 2006, as his slider showed much better depth and tilt, and his changeup emerged as a weapon against lefties and righties alike. He controls the running game well, giving up just one steal in eight tries in 2006.

Weaknesses: While Sipp has little trouble throwing strikes, his command can be an issue at times. Though he's athletic, he doesn't field his position as well as he might.

The Future: Sipp no longer looks like just a lefty specialist. The development of his secondary pitches has some Tribe officials thinking he's a closer in the mold of Eddie Guardado. He'll get the chance to prove them right in big league camp.

2006 Club (Class)	W	L	ERA	G	GS	CG	SV	IP	H	HR	BB	SO	AVG
Akron (AA)	4	2	3.13	29	4	0	3	60	44	2	21	80	.201



STEVE MOORE

5 BRIAN BARTON, OF

Born: April 25, 1982. **B-T:** R-R. **Ht.:** 6-3. **Wt.:** 190. **Signed:** Miami, NFA 2004. **Signed by:** Jorge Diaz.

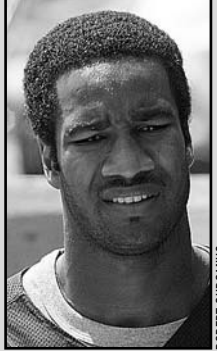
Background: Barton scared off most teams before the 2004 draft because of his academic background, but the Indians were able to sign him as a nondrafted free agent after seeing him in the Cape Cod League. An aerospace engineering major at Miami who interned at Boeing, he turned pro for \$100,000 with an additional \$100,000 in college funds.

Strengths: In his second year as a pro, Barton made adjustments that allowed him to take more advantage of his natural power and speed. He got the load in his swing started earlier and worked hard to recognize offspeed pitches. His good instincts on the bases allow him to read pitchers, and he succeeded on 41 of 49 steal attempts. His plus speed also plays well in center field. Not only is he intelligent, he's mentally tough.

Weaknesses: Barton has trouble with balls in on his hands and his swing gets too long at times. He struggled against lefthanders in Akron, hitting just .219. At 24, he's older than most prospects who haven't gotten past Double-A.

The Future: Barton's power/speed combination makes him a potentially elite talent despite his age. He'll likely return to Akron to start.

2006 Club (Class)	AVG	OBP	SLG	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
Kinston (Hi A)	.308	.410	.515	295	56	91	16	3	13	57	39	83	26
Akron (AA)	.351	.415	.503	151	32	53	5	0	6	26	13	26	15



ROBERT BOURGAINIS

6 JOHN DRENNEN, OF

Born: Aug. 26, 1986. **B-T:** L-L. **Ht.:** 5-11. **Wt.:** 185. **Drafted:** HS—San Diego, 2005 (1st round supplemental). **Signed by:** Jason Smith.

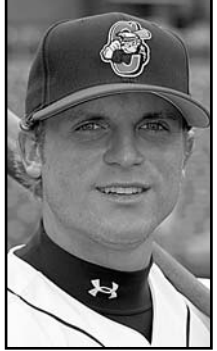
Background: One of the best pure hitters in the 2005 draft, Drennen batted just .238 in his pro debut but didn't disappoint in his first full season. He garnered national headlines after homering against Roger Clemens in the Rocket's first tuneup start in June. Drennen also found it hard to avoid the spotlight as the subject of a documentary on his rise through the minors.

Strengths: While some scouts get down on him for his size, Drennen uses his compact build to his advantage by getting leverage in his fundamentally sound, repeatable swing. He has above-average power, and as he showed against Clemens, he can turn on good fastballs. His other tools all play about average.

Weaknesses: Drennen will have to get stronger, as he wore down during his first full season and started only once in the Carolina League playoffs. Though he has played mostly center field, his fringy range there and his below-average arm mean he'll likely wind up in left.

The Future: His profile has earned comparisons to that of former Tribe farmhand Brian Giles. Drennen likely will return to high Class A for the first half of 2007.

2006 Club (Class)	AVG	OBP	SLG	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
Lake County (Lo A)	.321	.409	.471	240	33	77	12	3	6	30	31	52	6
Kinston (Hi A)	.239	.328	.327	113	15	27	6	2	0	8	12	21	2



MIKE JAMES

7 SCOTT LEWIS, LHP

Born: Sept. 26, 1983. **B-T:** B-L. **Ht.:** 6-0. **Wt.:** 190. **Drafted:** Ohio State, 2004 (3rd round). **Signed by:** Bob Mayer.

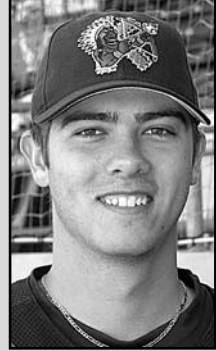
Background: Lewis struck out 16 and 20 in consecutive starts as an Ohio State sophomore in 2003 and looked like a future first-round pick. But he needed Tommy John surgery that spring and fell to the third-round in 2004. Kept on a 60-75 pitch limit throughout 2006, he led the minors in ERA.

Strengths: Lewis' delivery is effortless and extremely deceptive, which helps his 84-88 mph fastball jump on hitters. His curveball rates as the best in the system with true 12-to-6 movement. Lewis' changeup is solid-average, and all of his stuff plays up because of the deception and ability to locate his pitches.

Weaknesses: It remains to be seen how Lewis' below-average velocity will work against more advanced hitters. He has yet to prove he can hold up over a long season without being on tight pitch counts. While his delivery is relatively simple, he sometimes gets out of whack and needs to stay on a direct line to the plate. He throws somewhat across his body, and he worked on staying more compact in his stride.

The Future: Lewis bounced back well after all of his starts, and the Indians will increase his pitch limit to 100 in 2007. He'll start the year in Double-A and could move quickly if he remains healthy.

2006 Club (Class)	W	L	ERA	G	GS	CG	SV	IP	H	HR	BB	SO	AVG
Kinston (Hi A)	3	3	1.48	27	26	0	0	116	84	3	28	123	.203



CARL KILNE

8 BRAD SNYDER, OF

Born: May 25, 1982. **B-T:** L-L. **Ht.:** 6-3. **Wt.:** 200. **Drafted:** Ball State, 2003 (1st round). **Signed by:** Bob Mayer/Chuck Ricci.

Background: Snyder led Akron to within a game of the Eastern League title in 2006, topping the Aeros in homers and RBIs. The Indians batted him second and even lead-off, trying to give him more experience working deep counts, but he still ranked 10th in the minors in strikeouts.

Strengths: Like Brian Barton, Snyder has an intriguing power/speed combination. He has a wide base of tools, plus bat speed and above-average arm strength. While he still struck out a lot, his plate discipline did improve as he set a career high in walks. He's one of the best athletes in the system and an impressive, efficient basestealer who was caught just twice in 2006.

Weaknesses: His inability to make consistent contact mutes Snyder's impressive tools, and he'll probably never hit for much of an average. His main task coming into 2006 was to improve his two-strike approach, and he didn't make much progress.

The Future: Snyder hit .314 with nine of his 18 homers in August, but he still struck out in bunches. He'll compete with trade acquisition Shin-Soo Choo to be Cleveland's long-term right fielder, and the Tribe may have to live with Snyder's whiffs for the tradeoff of his power and speed.

2006 Club (Class)	AVG	OBP	SLG	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
Akron (AA)	.270	.351	.446	523	86	141	28	5	18	72	62	158	20



9 WES HODGES, 3B

Born: Sept. 14, 1984. **B-T:** R-R. **Ht.:** 6-1. **Wt.:** 205. **Drafted:** Georgia Tech, 2006 (2nd round). **Signed by:** Jerry Jordan.

Background: A natural self-starter, Hodges taught himself to bat lefthanded after a wrist injury as a high school senior and still hit .430. A 13th-round pick by the White Sox in 2003, he opted to go to Georgia Tech and became a three-year starter. Hodges' stock slipped in 2006 due to a mysterious leg injury, finally diagnosed in late May as an early stress fracture.

Strengths: Hodges has advanced plate discipline and shows good power with a fluid line-drive stroke. His excellent hand-eye coordination aids his above-average bat speed, as he's able to make consistent contact with pitches all over the strike zone. He has soft hands and above-average arm strength.

Weaknesses: Though he seemed like a shoo-in first-rounder heading into last spring, the injury killed Hodges' range and cost him defensively. The Indians believe he'll have plenty of range for third base and more life in his lower half when he's 100 percent, though he's a below-average runner.

The Future: With Andy Marte ahead of him, Hodges has time to get healthy and develop. His bat could force the issue, though, and Hodges may start at high Class A in his pro debut.

2006 Club (Class)	AVG	OBP	SLG	AB	R	H	2B	3B	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
Did Not Play—Signed 2007 Contract													



10 DAVID HUFF, LHP

Born: Aug. 22, 1984. **B-T:** L-L. **Ht.:** 6-2. **Wt.:** 210. **Drafted:** UCLA, 2006 (1st round supplemental). **Signed by:** Vince Sagisi.

Background: Huff spent his college career at three schools, going from UC Irvine to Cypress (Calif.) JC to UCLA. A 19th-round pick of the Phillies in 2005, he turned down a reported \$500,000 after a solid summer in the Cape Cod League. That decision paid off, as he got \$900,000 as Cleveland's top pick in the 2006 draft.

Strengths: Tribe officials compare Huff to Jeremy Sowers for his ability to command and control his entire arsenal. Another thing the two lefties have in common is fringe-average fast-ball velocity, as Huff works in the high 80s and tops out at 91. His top pitch is his changeup, which may have been the best changeup in the '06 draft. He has excellent balance in his delivery and creates good deception with his arm angle, especially against lefthanders.

Weaknesses: Huff also throws a slurry breaking ball, but it lacks consistent depth and tilt. Without a solid breaker, he has no obvious pitch to combat lefthanders. Without an overpowering fastball, he'll have less margin of error against more advanced hitters.

The Future: Huff will start his first full season in high Class A. He could move quickly, just as Sowers did, if he adapts well to the pro game and sharpens his breaking ball.

2006 Club (Class)	W	L	ERA	G	GS	CG	SV	IP	H	HR	BB	SO	AVG
Mahoning Valley (SS)	0	1	5.87	4	4	0	0	8	9	0	7	8	.300



MIKE JAMES