

MLB - 2010 Fantasy Baseball Cleveland Indians Team Preview

Written by Fantasy Baseball Trade Market

Tuesday, 02 February 2010 13:00 - Last Updated Tuesday, 02 February 2010 14:02

We have many great articles planned leading up to the 2010 Fantasy Baseball season including sleepers, busts, rookies, strategy, full player rankings and projections all wrapped up into a nifty draft kit to help you win your league next year. Stay tuned for more, but for now, here's a team preview for you.

Ask a question about your fantasy team in our [FORUM](#) . Leave a comment about this article down below.

By Bob Sikon, FantasyBaseballTradeMarket.com

2009 RECORD: 65-97, 4th (tied) in AL Central

I've, quite often, been called a Cleveland "homer". Well, when it comes to reviewing last year's performance -- or looking forward to next year's team -- it will seem like that accusation can't be farther from the truth. The fact of the matter is, my favorite team is a flat-out mess. You don't believe me? Check out their pitching, and pay special attention to last year's performance. Then, take a look at this year's "promise". Trust me. It's a mess.

Stat table note: The better the ranking number, the better the stat, in all categories. For example, for the SO cat for hitting, a #2 ranking means that the team tallied the second fewest strikeouts. For the BB and SB cats for pitching, the #1 teams allowed the fewest bases on balls and steals.

Hitting Stats	BA	R	HR	BB
AL	7			
8				
10	5	12		
11				
MLB	10			
12				
14T	13	24		
19				

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Pitching	BAA	ERA	HR	BB
Stats	280	5.06		
183	598	986		
111				
AL	13	13		
11T	13			
13				
8				
MLB	29	29		
24T	24			
27				
22				

LINE-UP

1. Sizemore, Grady CF (elbow, abdominal - should be ready by spring training)
2. Cabrera, Asdrubal SS
3. Choo, Shin-Soo RF
4. Hafner, Travis DH
5. Marte, Andy 1B
6. LaPorta, Matt LF (hip, toe - should be ready for spring training)
7. Valbuena, Luis 2B
8. Marson, Lou C

Talk runs rampant that **Grady Sizemore** is going to be dropped down in the order so that Manny Acta can make room for **Michael Brantley** in the lead-off spot. Frankly, I'm not even convinced that Brantley is going to make the team. Plus, that same talk has floated around for years. You know, Sizemore's skills fit better in the middle of the order, so we have to go out and find us a solid alternative to bat first. Well, they haven't pulled it off yet, so I'll believe it when I see it. As for Sizemore, I think a return to the realm of 30 HRs and 30 SBs might be a bit of a stretch in 2010. I can see him at 25-25 with a .275 BA, however.

In my opinion, **Asdrubal Cabrera** and **Shin-Soo Choo** are going to end up being two of the most over-rated players in this year's fantasy drafts. Oh, it isn't that I don't think they will produce. It is just that I'm not convinced that they'll live up to their lofty round values. Take Cabrera, for example. I've seen him taken as high as the ninth round in mock drafts. Really?

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Yes, he hit .308 last year, but that was on the heels of .259 performance in 2008. Is he truly a .300 hitter? Are his 6 HRs and 17 SBs really worth single-digit round value? Would you be better off with Ryan Theriot (7 HRs, 21 SBs, .284 BA) in the nineteenth round?

Choo seems to be everybody's darling this year. After all, he has 30-30 potential, right? I'm not so sure. A 30-30 player is an elite player. Choo's poor ability to make contact -- you'll find that he lives in the 75% neighborhood -- will prevent him from making that leap. As a fifth round selection -- where I've seen him go in early mocks -- I think I'd rather pass. Do yourself a favor. Aim for Carlos Lee (7th), Hunter Pence (8th), or Torii Hunter (9th) instead.

The balance of the offense is a shambles. OK, maybe that's a bit extreme, but it certainly is a patchwork quilt. Let's face it. How much value will we really find in **Travis Hafner**, **Andy Marte**, **Shelly Duncan**

,
Lou Marson

,
Luis Valbuena

, and

Austin Kearns

? I guess they'll be of some value in AL-Only leagues, but, if you're in a Mixed league, will you even see any of them drafted?

Jhonny Peralta

and

Matt LaPorta

are the only other hitters that will likely provide any Mixed league value, but, frankly, both of them still have a lot to prove. Peralta has to prove that he can rebound, while LaPorta has to prove he's healthy and for real.

STARTING ROTATION

1. Westbrook, Jake RHP (elbow, should be ready for spring training)
2. Carmona, Fausto RHP
3. Huff, David LHP
4. Masterson, Justin RHP
5. Laffey, Aaron LHP
6. Sowers, Jeremy LHP
7. Carrasco, Carlos RHP (quadriceps, should be ready for spring training)
8. Reyes, Anthony RHP (elbow, out until at least June)

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Going into 2008, on the heels of his reasonably hot second half in 2007, and in a fit of sentimentality because he lived down the street from me, I drafted **Jake Westbrook** to hold down the back of my rotation. In hindsight, he wasn't really worth the draft pick. You know what? He certainly isn't worthy of a draft pick now... and he'll likely be the Tribe's "ace". Really? Oof.

Here, let me throw some key stats at you: **Fausto Carmona** (79 Ks in 125 IPs with 70 BBs), **David Huff**

(65 Ks in 128 IPs with 41 BBs),

Aaron Laffey

(59 Ks in 129 IPs with 57 BBs), and

Jeremy Sowers

(51 Ks in 123 IPs with 52 BBs). That's a collective, and quite putrid, K/9 rate of 4.5 and K/BB rate of 1.2. Let's keep in mind that 6.0 and 2.0 would be minimally acceptable. I know. They don't inspire me with mountains of confidence either. Take my advice. When it comes to this quartet, stay away, unless you're in the deepest of AL-Only leagues.

Justin Masterson tossed 119 Ks in 129 IPs with 60 BBs in combined duty with the BoSox and Tribe last year. He's truly the only one of the entire bunch to show any promise, and, by the end of it all, will be the real star of this pitching rotation. The only problem is that poor Justin isn't likely to make enough of a difference all by himself.

BULLPEN

1. Wood, Kerry RHP
2. Perez, Chris RHP
3. Lewis, Jensen RHP
4. Perez, Rafael RHP
5. Sipp, Tony RHP
6. Smith, Joe RHP

Ironically, a meager bit of help for the starting staff may reside in the Cleveland bullpen. **Kerry Wood**

needs to finish 55 games in 2010 in order to vest an \$11 million option for 2011. What better reason for the Tribe to toss him into a starting role where he won't be able to finish

any

games. That would leave

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Chris Perez

as their closer. His 10.7 K/9 rate demonstrates his potential, so as long as he can perform, he's likely their longer-term option. Why not make the move sooner rather than later?

The balance of the 'pen is a bit of a mystery. Can **Jensen Lewis** and **Rafael Perez** regain some of their former dominance? Is

Tony Sipp

real? Can he cut down on his walks? Is

Joe Smith

healthy? Can he make Tribe fans forget that he was the "prize" that we received in trade for Seattle OF Franklin Gutierrez? Where are the southpaws? Are we doomed to rely on Huff, Laffey, and Sowers?

Like I said, friends, my favorite team is a flat-out mess. With questions across the entire roster, and a pitching staff that will struggle hold back their opponents, there is only one thing we can count on in 2010 -- you can bet it will be a long, long Summer in Cleveland.

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