

After illness, Martin agrees to 1-year deal

By Jordan Bastian MLB.com @MLBastian

CLEVELAND -- Baseball became secondary when it came to Leonys Martin's situation with the Indians in the second half last season. For both Martin and the team, there is a sense of relief that all parties can now focus on the field when looking ahead to next year.

On Wednesday, the Indians reached an agreement on a one-year, \$3 million contract with Martin, avoiding arbitration with the center fielder. That signing this early in Cleveland's offseason was a positive sign that Martin is continuing to make progress in his recovery from a life-threatening bacterial infection that prematurely ended his season in August.

"We have to deal with a lot in the course of our jobs," Chris Antonetti, the Indians' president of baseball operations, said at the end of the season. "Nothing immediately comes to mind that was more difficult for us to work through. That was someone's life at stake, and he was really close to not being here anymore. It quickly puts into perspective a lot of the other things you try to navigate day to day.

"Not that those things aren't important, but when you have a situation like that develop, it hits you really hard. We're so thankful -- we said multiple times -- for the incredible care that he got from everyone at the Cleveland Clinic and everyone in the organization, to put him in a better spot. Thankfully, he should be fine moving forward."

As things currently stand, the 30-year-old Martin projects to be an option for the Indians in center field, especially against right-handed pitching. That was the idea when Cleveland acquired him via trade from the Tigers on July 31, along with Minor League pitcher Kyle Dowdy, in exchange for shortstop prospect Willi Castro. That plan changed when Martin's illness limited him to six games with the Tribe.

Martin was admitted to Cleveland Clinic on Aug. 9 after becoming violently ill. It was then determined that he was dealing with a blood infection that produced toxins, which began to negatively impact the functioning of Martin's internal organs. Over the next few days, his condition improved, leading to his release from the hospital on Aug. 19. Martin was deemed done for the season on Aug. 22 because he needed multiple months to heal.

Martin remained away from the team for the remainder of the season, but Antonetti said after the postseason that the outfielder was recovering well.

"We expect him to be back at full health next year," Antonetti said.

Martin represented one of eight arbitration cases this offseason, along with Francisco Lindor, Trevor Bauer, Danny Salazar, Neil Ramirez, Nick Goody, Cody Anderson and Brandon Barnes. Teams must tender contracts to any arbitration-eligible players by Nov. 30. Sides must then exchange proposed salary figures by Jan. 11 in preparation for a potential hearing to settle any remaining cases.

Overall last season, Martin hit .255 with 11 home runs, 15 doubles, 33 RBIs and a .747 OPS in 84 games between tours with the Tigers and Tribe, while earning \$1.75 million. He posted a .279/.348/.451 slash line against right-handed pitching and turned in three Defensive Runs Saved with a 15.3 Ultimate Zone Rating/150 in 678 1/3 innings in center field on the season.

One of the reasons the Indians acquired Martin was the extra year of control, given that center fielder Bradley Zimmer could miss the first half in 2019 while rehabbing from right shoulder surgery. Greg Allen, Jason Kipnis and Tyler Naquin are other outfield options for the Indians, who will be exploring both the free-agent and trade markets for outfield help this offseason.

Outfielders Michael Brantley, Melky Cabrera, Lonnie Chisenhall, Rajai Davis and Brandon Guyer are among the Indians' free agents this winter.

"The outfield will be an area that we will continue to work through," Antonetti said. "It's probably the area on our team with the least certainty. Exactly what that composition of players will look like, we have a few months to figure out."

Tribe exercises Carrasco's option for 2019

By Jordan Bastian MLB.com @MLBastian

CLEVELAND -- The Indians' rotation is the backbone of the team's roster and the primary reason for Cleveland remaining the favorite to win the American League Central next year. The outfield, on the other hand, is beset with uncertainty as the club begins an important offseason.

Both of those roster realities came into play on Tuesday, when the Indians announced a pair of contractual decisions to begin their offseason overhaul. The Tribe exercised right-hander Carlos Carrasco's \$9.75 million team option for 2019, but it declined a \$3 million team option to retain outfielder Brandon Guyer.

Guyer will receive a \$250,000 buyout, and he now joins an Indians free-agent pool that includes Cody Allen, Michael Brantley, Melky Cabrera, Lonnie Chisenhall, Rajai Davis, Josh Donaldson, Andrew Miller, Oliver Perez, Adam Rosales and Josh Tomlin. Chris Antonetti, the Tribe's president of baseball operations, said the team is still interested in re-signing Guyer, but he noted that the club needs to first sort through other decisions, including determining the 2019 payroll.

"With Brandon, [it was] a very difficult decision for us to make," Antonetti said on Tuesday. "In the end, we had to assess where we are in the offseason and making a decision now to allocate those payroll dollars. Where we ended is that we thought we would be best declining the option, leaving the door open to bring Brandon back, but maybe under potentially different terms."

Cleveland has exclusive negotiating rights with its free agents until 5 p.m. ET on Friday. That is also the deadline for extending a one-year qualifying offer (\$17.9 million) to any free agents in order to potentially net Draft pick compensation if they sign with a new team.

The decision to pick up Carrasco's option was a no-brainer, considering his rise to being an AL Cy Young Award contender over the past few years. After finishing fourth in AL Cy Young balloting in 2017, the big righty followed up that showing by going 17-10 with a 3.38 ERA and a career-high 231 strikeouts vs. 43 walks in 192 innings this past season. In the second half, Carrasco led the AL in strikeouts (119) and innings (89 1/3), and he ranked fourth in ERA (2.52).

The Indians also have a \$10.25 million team option in Carrasco's contract for the 2020 season.

"We believe Carlos has established himself as one of the top starters in the American League," Antonetti said. "So we're obviously elated to continue his time with the team and the organization, and we expect him to make a big impact on our team for the next few seasons."

Carrasco surpassed 200 strikeouts for the third time in his career, joining Corey Kluber, Bob Feller, Sam McDowell and Gaylord Perry as the only pitchers in Indians history to reach that milestone at least three times. The righty topped 200 punchouts in each of the past two seasons, going 35-16 with a 3.33 ERA, 10.5 strikeouts per nine innings and a 5.1 strikeout-to-walk ratio in 392 innings in that span.

Barring any changes this offseason, the Indians can return in 2019 with their entire five-man rotation, featuring Kluber and Carrasco at the top, followed by Trevor Bauer, Mike Clevinger and Shane Bieber. During the '18 season, Cleveland became the first team in Major League history to have four pitchers (Kluber, Carrasco, Bauer and Clevinger) reach 200 strikeouts in the same season.

"It's a much better position going into the offseason knowing that we have continuity and some depth in our rotation," Antonetti said. "That's a very difficult area to build quality alternatives, as we've seen over the course of the last decade or so. We're really excited about the group that we have, and it gives us a leg up on our planning moving forward."

The decision on Guyer was less cut-and-dry, given his recent history of injury and his diminishing production against left-handed pitching. The right-handed-hitting corner outfielder came to the Tribe via trade in 2016, and he was a pivotal part of the Cleveland club that reached the World Series. Guyer hit .336 with a 1.021 OPS against lefty pitching in '16, but he saw the results decline (.243 average and .746 OPS) over the '17-18 campaigns.

"[Guyer] made a very big impact at times," Antonetti said. "He battled through some injuries. When he was healthy, we saw a guy that was capable of impacting our team and hitting in the middle of the order against left-handed pitching."

In 103 games this past season, Guyer hit .206 with seven homers, 27 RBIs and a .671 OPS, while posting an .804 OPS against left-handers. Guyer had a stint on the disabled list due to a left cervical strain this year, following left wrist issues that necessitated surgery in 2017. Overall, the outfielder hit .220 with a 77 OPS+ for the Indians in 173 games over the past two years.

With Brantley, Cabrera, Chisenhall, Davis and Guyer all potentially hitting the open market this offseason, the Indians are examining their options for the 2019 outfield. Jason Kipnis could be an option for left field, and Tyler Naquin might assume Chisenhall's former role in right. In center, Cleveland has a long list of possibilities, including Leonys Martin and Greg Allen. A right-handed complement to the current outfield group will be on the team's offseason to-do list.

"The outfield will be an area that we will continue to work through over the course of the offseason," Antonetti said. "It's probably the area on our team with the least certainty. Exactly what that composition of players will look like, we have a few months to figure out."

Chang hits third AFL homer, second in two days

Indians (Glendale)

Indians No. 6 prospect Yu Chang homered for the third time this Fall League season, his second in as many days, as part of his 2-for-6 day at the plate. Li-Jen Chu went 1-for-4 with a two-run double. Connor Marabell put together his best Fall League performance as he went 3-for-5 with three RBIs, including a go-ahead hit in the top of the 10th. Dalbert Siri yielded one hit but otherwise cruised through a scoreless inning.

Kaminsky, Chang named to Fall Stars Game

The World Series may have just ended, but there's still meaningful baseball being played. The Arizona Fall League is showcasing several of the game's top prospects, and the best of those best will compete against each other in the Fall Stars Game on Saturday.

A dozen of MLB Pipeline's Top 100 prospects will take the field on Saturday at Surprise Stadium, the Spring Training home of the Rangers and Royals. MLB Network will broadcast the 13th annual Fall Stars Game live at 8 p.m. ET/5 p.m. MST, and MLB.com will stream the contest live. This year's Fall Stars Game features baseball's best prospect, Blue Jays third baseman Vladimir Guerrero Jr., and its best pitching prospect, Astros right-hander Forrest Whitley, both of whom have been spectacular in the first half of the AFL season. Guerrero, who won the Minor League regular-season batting title with a .381 average as a 19-year-old, is second in the Fall League in hitting at .458/.491/.604 and has struck out just once in 55 plate appearances. Whitley (No. 8 on the Top 100) whiffed the first seven batters he faced in his first start and tops the developmental circuit with 23 strikeouts in 17 innings.

West

1. Vladimir Guerrero Jr., 3B, Blue Jays
30. Keston Hiura, 2B, Brewers
39. Keibert Ruiz, C, Dodgers
44. Luis Robert, OF, White Sox
45. Estevan Florial, OF, Yankees
68. Cristian Pache, OF, Braves

East

8. Forrest Whitley, RHP, Astros

17. Taylor Trammell, OF, Reds
37. Carter Kieboom, SS, Nationals
55. Andres Gimenez, SS, Mets
58. Peter Alonso, 1B, Mets
80. Jon Duplantier, RHP, D-backs

The West could add a seventh Top 100 Prospect in Rangers outfielder Julio Pablo Martinez (No. 56). He's one of three West candidates whom fans can give the final spot on the roster via the Fall League Bowman Final Vote, along with Yankees shortstop Thairo Estrada and Orioles outfielder Ryan McKenna. For the East, fans can select from among three shortstops: Jazz Chisholm (Diamondbacks), Arquimedes Gamboa (Phillies) and Nico Hoerner (Cubs).

Seven Fall Stars also played in the SiriusXM All-Star Futures Game at Nationals Park: Alonso, Gimenez, Hiura, Kieboom, Ruiz, Trammell and Padres outfielder Buddy Reed. Alonso homered in that showcase and is tied for the AFL lead with four homers with Hiura, who also has a Fall League-best 24 RBIs in 12 games.

The Fall Stars Game annually serves as a preview of coming attractions, with potential National League Rookie of the Year Ronald Acuna Jr. singling and showing off his strong outfield arm in last year's Fall Stars Game. Cody Bellinger homered in the 2016 contest, a prelude to slamming a NL rookie-record 39 homers in 2017. Gary Sanchez went deep and threw out a basestealer in 2015 before becoming the first big leaguer ever to homer 20 times in his first 51 games the next summer.

Autographs, activities await fans at Tribe Fest

By Jordan Bastian MLB.com @MLBastian

CLEVELAND -- The baseball season has officially come to an end, meaning the countdown to Opening Day has started once again. If that feels too far away for Indians fans, there is an earlier date that can be circled on the calendar in the meantime.

On Monday, the Indians announced that the team's annual Tribe Fest is scheduled to return on Jan. 12 at the Cleveland Convention Center. It will mark the event's second straight year at the downtown Cleveland venue, which features a wealth of space to accommodate crowds and a long list of activities.

Tribe Fest will include player autograph sessions, interactive events and speakers on the main stage; multiple baseball diamonds; batting cages; speed pitch; honorary contracts from Indians executives and more.

There will be two sessions for the one-day celebration.

From 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., the Indians will hold a season-ticket holder exclusive event. Tickets for that time slot (\$5, benefitting Cleveland Indians Charities) will go on sale on Nov. 5. The general admission session will run from 1:30-7:30 p.m., with tickets (\$10) going on sale Nov. 7. For both periods, fans can guarantee player or alumni autographs by bundling autograph session tickets with general ticket purchases (limit of four per session).

The list of participating players will be announced as they are confirmed in the weeks leading up to Tribe Fest. For more details, visit Indians.com/TribeFest. The Indians will face the Reds in their first Cactus League game in Spring Training on Feb. 23, with next season's Opening Day falling on March 28 on the road against the Twins.

Otero headed to Japan

Indians reliever Dan Otero is on the planned MLB roster for the 2018 Japan All-Star Series, which will take place from Nov. 8-15 across Japan. Otero will be Cleveland's lone representative at the event, which continues a tradition that dates back to 1908.

The All-Star Series will consist of seven games, including one exhibition against the Yomiuri Giants on Nov. 8 in Tokyo. That will be followed by three games in Tokyo from Nov. 9-11, one game in Hiroshima on Nov. 13 and two in Nagoya on Nov. 14-15. MLB Network will provide extensive coverage of the All-Star Series, including live telecasts of the games from Nov. 9-15.

Otero, 33, has pitched in parts of seven seasons in the Majors, posting a 3.09 ERA in 175 games with the Tribe over the past three years. Last season, the veteran right-hander logged 61 appearances, turning in a 5.22 ERA with 43 strikeouts against five walks in 58 2/3 innings.

Worth noting

- The Indians are currently in a five-day window to negotiate new contracts with their own free agents. That list includes Cody Allen, Michael Brantley, Melky Cabrera, Lonnie Chisenhall, Rajai Davis, Josh Donaldson, Andrew Miller, Oliver Perez and Josh Tomlin.

- Cleveland has until 5 p.m. ET on Friday to decide whether to extend a one-year qualifying offer (\$17.9 million) to any of its free agents in order to potentially net Draft-pick compensation should they sign elsewhere. Donaldson is ineligible for such an offer, since he was acquired via trade from the Blue Jays in 2018. If the Indians do give any free agents a qualifying offer, the player(s) will have 10 days to decide whether to accept.

This is each club's biggest offseason need

By Mark Feinsand MLB.com @feinsand

Now that the World Series has concluded, the Hot Stove will be ignited when more than 100 players hit the free-agent market. The biggest headlines will center around Manny Machado and Bryce Harper, but only two teams (or maybe one if all this "The Phillies can actually get both of them!" talk is for real) will be fitting those superstars for uniforms.

But the coming weeks and months will be an opportunity for all 30 teams to make themselves better for the 2019 season, whether they're swimming in the deep end of the free-agent pool or wading in the shallow end. The beauty of free agency is that there are all types of players available depending on what a team's needs are.

With that in mind, here's a look at each team's biggest need as they embark on another interesting offseason.

American League East

Blue Jays: Starting pitching

Toronto starters ranked 28th in the Majors with a 5.14 ERA, and although prospects Thomas Pannone and Sean Reid-Foley could get a look in the No. 5 spot, the Blue Jays figure to add at least one starter from outside the organization this offseason.

Potential FA targets: Wade Miley, Derek Holland, Jeremy Hellickson

Orioles: Starting pitching

Baltimore starters posted a 5.48 ERA last season, the worst in MLB. Although the Orioles figure to be in the beginning stages of a rebuilding process, they will still need to send a starter to the mound every five days. Dylan Bundy, Alex Cobb and Andrew Cashner will occupy the first three spots, leaving two holes in the rotation. And that's assuming none of them are traded, which is a bold assumption.

Potential FA targets: Hellickson, Holland, Jaime Garcia

Rays: Versatile arms

Given Tampa Bay's frequent use of an "opener" rather than a traditional starter, what would be surprising this offseason would be for the Rays to go out and spend money on traditional starters, especially with prospects Brent Honeywell, Jose De Leon and Anthony Banda all slated to return from elbow surgery by the second half of the 2019 season.

Potential FA targets: Bud Norris, David Phelps, Adam Warren

Red Sox: Closer

Craig Kimbrel is a free agent, though his asking price might be higher than president of baseball operations Dave Dombrowski is willing to pay given the arbitration raises due to Mookie Betts, Xander Bogaerts and Jackie Bradley Jr., among others.

Potential FA targets: Kimbrel, Zach Britton, David Robertson

Yankees: Starting pitching

New York is believed to be enamored with Patrick Corbin, who ranks as the No. 1 free-agent starter on the market (unless Clayton Kershaw opts out, of course). The Yankees could bring back free agents J.A. Happ and/or CC Sabathia. A trade for a controllable starter also remains in play.

Potential FA targets: Corbin, Happ, Dallas Keuchel

AL Central

Indians: Outfield

The bullpen could be a priority given the free-agent status of both Andrew Miller and Cody Allen, but with Michael Brantley also headed for the open market, Cleveland will be on the lookout for his potential replacement.

Potential FA targets: Andrew McCutchen, Adam Jones, Brett Gardner

Cleveland Indians avoid arbitration with OF Leonys Martin, agree on one-year deal

By Joe Noga, [cleveland.com](mailto:jnoga@cleveland.com) jnoga@cleveland.com

CLEVELAND, Ohio — Outfielder Leonys Martin has reached agreement with the Cleveland Indians on a one-year contract for the 2019 season, avoiding arbitration.

The non-guaranteed deal is worth \$3 million according to a report from Jeff Passan of Yahoo Sports.

Martin appeared in six games in 2018 for the Indians after he was acquired before the July 31 trade deadline from Detroit in exchange for minor league shortstop Willi Castro. Martin blasted home runs in his first two games at Progressive Field as a member of the Indians.

But the 30-year-old native of Cuba missed the final two months of the season after he was diagnosed with a life-threatening bacterial infection that landed him in the hospital for several days. Martin recovered and spent the remainder of the 2018 campaign recuperating in Florida.

Indians president of baseball operations Chris Antonetti said the team expects Martin to be back at full health in 2019. He described the period of two weeks in mid-August when Martin was battling the bacterial infection as incredibly difficult for the entire franchise.

"That was someone's life at stake and he was really close to not being here anymore," Antonetti said. "It quickly puts into perspective a lot of the other things you try to navigate day-to-day. Not that those things aren't important, but when you have a situation like that develop, it hits you really hard."

Martin hit .255 with 11 home runs 33 RBI and an OPS of .747 in 84 games between Detroit and Cleveland in 2018. He is a career .248 hitter with a .313 on-base percentage against right-handed pitchers.

After Bradley Zimmer was sent to the minor leagues and subsequently suffered a season-ending shoulder injury, Martin was expected to fill Cleveland's need in center field. When Martin took ill, the Indians turned to rookie Greg Allen in center.

Signing Martin, who was in his final year of arbitration eligibility, gives the Indians a solid defensive center fielder to possibly platoon with Allen against righties while the team waits to see how Zimmer recovers from shoulder surgery.

According to figures provided by Spotrac.com, Martin made \$1.75 million in 2018. MLBTraderumors.com projected Martin's arbitration figure at \$2.8 million for 2019.

Antonetti: Stability, depth of starting rotation gives Cleveland Indians a leg up in roster planning for 2019

By Joe Noga, cleveland.com jnoga@cleveland.com

CLEVELAND, Ohio — One area of the Cleveland Indians' roster that president of baseball operations Chris Antonetti and general manager Mike Chernoff do not have to worry about when mapping out their offseason agenda is the starting pitching rotation. Plans they put in place a while back are making sure of it.

Antonetti reiterated on Tuesday after announcing the Indians had picked up the \$9.75 million team option on 17-game winner Carlos Carrasco that the club has long made it a point of emphasis to try and have continuity in its starting pitching rotation. He said a series of contract decisions has allowed the franchise to keep that group of players together for as long as possible.

"We were able to work towards a contract extension with (Carrasco in 2015) that provided us this opportunity to have subsequent years of club control," Antonetti said. "We remain really excited about the group of guys that we have and we continue to believe that will be a strength of our team."

Since signing Carrasco and Corey Kluber to multi-year extensions in April of 2015, the Indians have watched the duo anchor a starting rotation that's been among baseball's best. In 2017, with Kluber leading the way during a Cy Young Award campaign, Indians starters led the majors in strikeouts and ERA. In 2018, the rotation led the majors in starter wins (76) and ranked third in ERA (3.39) behind the Astros (3.16) and Los Angeles Dodgers (3.19).

Besides Kluber (20 wins in 2018) and Carrasco (231 strikeouts), Cleveland watched Trevor Bauer (2.21 ERA) blossom into an elite starter and Mike Clevinger (200 innings) take the next step toward becoming a mainstay in the rotation for several more years.

Antonetti said the Indians are in a much better position going into the offseason knowing that they have continuity and some depth in their starting rotation rotation.

"That's a very difficult area to build quality alternatives, as we've seen over the course of the last decade or so," Antonetti said. "We're really excited about the group that we have and it gives us a leg up on our planning moving forward."

The emergence of rookie Shane Bieber (11 wins) and contributions from Adam Plutko (2.8 walks per 9 innings) indicate there is plenty of talent waiting in the wings beyond 2020.

According to spotrac.com, Kluber is set to make a base salary of \$15 million in 2019 with escalators that could add up to \$4 million based on performance. His team options in 2020 and 2021 carry \$1 million buyouts. Carrasco's team option for 2020 is estimated at \$9.5 million before he becomes an unrestricted free agent in 2021.

Bauer, meanwhile, is in his second year of arbitration eligibility. He more than doubled his salary from 2016 through the arbitration process last year, and stands to nearly triple that based on his 2018 performance this time around. MLBTradeRumors.com estimates Bauer's arbitration value at \$11.6 million. But regardless, Bauer can not become a free agent until 2021, meaning the Indians will have the opportunity to adjust their budget accordingly, no matter what raises he merits by his performance in the regular season.

With glaring needs in the bullpen and outfield, that's a nice luxury for Antonetti and Chernoff to have right now. By Antonetti's own admission, the front office does not yet have a lot of clarity on what it will be able to spend on payroll in 2019.

"It's something that we continue that dialogue with ownership," Antonetti said. "I would expect as we start to head into the next few weeks ... that we'll get a little bit more clarity around our payroll."

Cleveland Indians exercise Carlos Carrasco's option for 2019 season, while declining Brandon Guyer's 2019 option

By Paul Hoynes, cleveland.com phoynes@cleveland.com

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- The Indians have exercised the 2019 club option on right-hander Carlos Carrasco, while declining the \$3 million club option on outfielder Brandon Guyer for 2019.

Carrasco will make an estimated \$9.75 million in 2019. The Indians hold a club option on him for 2020 as well. Carrasco has become one of the most consistent starters in the AL over the last few years. He went 17-10 with a 3.38 ERA this year, making 30 starts and striking 200-plus batters (231) for the second straight season.

He started Game 2 of the ALDS against Houston and pitched well, but took the loss in 3-1 decision. The Astros swept the Indians in three games.

The Indians acquired Carrasco as part of the Cliff Lee deal in 2009 with the Phillies. Over the last two seasons, he's gone 35-16 in 64 games, including 62 starts.

"We believe Carlos has established himself as one of the top starters in the American League and has become a consistent contributor to our team over the last few years," said Chris Antonetti, Indians president of baseball operations. "We're obviously elated to continue his time with the team and the organization and we expect him to make a big impact on our team in the next few seasons."

Guyer had a tough time staying in the lineup this year because of injuries. He hit .206 (40-for-11) with seven homers and 27 RBI. He hit .233 (24-for-103) with five homers and 17 RBI against lefties.

The Indians acquired Guyer from Tampa Bay in 2016 and he immediately provided offensive help. Guyer hit .333 (27-for-81) with two homers and 14 RBI after the trade. He was especially effective against lefties, hitting .336 (41-for-122) with six homers and 17 RBI with the Rays and Indian. In the World Series against the Cubs, Guyer hit .300 (3-for-10) with two RBI.

"With Brandon it was a very difficult decision for us to make," said Antonetti. "We had to assess where we are in the offseason the offseason, and making a decision now to allocate those payroll dollars, we thought it would be best to decline the option, leaving the door open to bring Brandon back under potentially different terms."

The Indians made Guyer a free agent by declining his option.

"In my conversations with Brandon and his representatives, on his end and our ends, we remain open minded on him coming back to the organization next year," said Antonetti. "It just won't be under the terms of the option."

When the Indians didn't exercise Guyer's option, he received a \$250,000 buyout.

On Monday 145 players became free agents. Here is the list

The Indians had 10 players become free agents on Monday, following the end of the World Series on Sunday. Cody Allen, Lonnie Chisenhall, Melky Cabrera, Andrew Miller, Oliver Perez, Adam Rosales, Michael Brantley, Rajai Davis, Josh Donaldson and Josh Tomlin hit the job market.

The addition of Guyer puts the number at 11.

The next offseason task is determining whether to make any of their free agents a qualifying offer. They have until Saturday to do that. The player has 10 days after that to accept or reject it.

Indians exercise option on Carlos Carrasco, decline option on Brandon Guyer

By Ryan Lewis

The Indians on Tuesday announced two decisions regarding club options for the 2019 season, with one being a no-brainer and the other ending up a little more complicated.

Pitcher Carlos Carrasco had his club option for the 2019 season exercised at a value of \$9.75 million. Outfielder Brandon Guyer had his \$3 million option declined. In the process, the Indians retained a key piece to one of the best rotations in baseball but furthered the fluid situation in the outfield heading into the offseason.

Carrasco's option comes at a price tag far below what his value would be on the open market, the result of an aggressive long-term deal signed in 2015. Carrasco finished fourth in American League Cy Young voting in 2017 and last year put together a season in which he posted a 17-10 record, 3.38 ERA, 2.94 FIP and 231 strikeouts in 192 innings. Carrasco also led the American League with 119 strikeouts and was fourth with a 2.52 ERA in the second half of the season.

The Indians also own a \$10.25 million club option for Carrasco for the 2020 season. Barring a trade or any other unforeseen changes, the Indians can keep their entire starting rotation together for the next two seasons, one that just became the first in baseball history to feature four 200-strikeout pitchers.

"We believe Carlos has established himself as one of the top starters in the American League and has been a contributor to our team over the last few seasons," president of baseball operations Chris Antonetti said. "So, we're obviously elated to continue his time with the team and the organization, and we expect him to make a big impact on our team for the next few seasons."

Guyer will receive a \$250,000 buyout and could become a free agent, adding to a murky outfield situation. Guyer joins Michael Brantley, Melky Cabrera, Lonnie Chisenhall and Rajai Davis as Indians outfielders who can hit the open market this winter. The Indians have the negotiating rights with their pending free agents until 5 p.m. on Friday.

Guyer was a key piece to an Indians lineup as a right-handed hitter known to be able to handle left-handed pitching, but his 2018 season was anything but ideal. He battled multiple injuries and was a disaster at the plate against right-handers. Against lefties, Guyer posted an .804 OPS, which was still below his normal mark when facing left-handers.

Antonetti said on Tuesday that although the Indians declined Guyer's option, they still might be interested in retaining his services on a differently structured deal, which could mean one that leans more heavily on incentives. As a free agent, Guyer would be free to speak with all 30 teams.

"With Brandon, a very difficult decision for us to make," Antonetti said. "In the end, we had to assess where we are in the offseason and making a decision now to allocate those payroll dollars. Where we ended is that we thought we would be best declining the option, leaving the door open to bring Brandon back, but maybe under potentially different terms."

There are potentially five outfielders becoming free agents, but the Indians do have internal options, though replacing Brantley could prove to be an especially difficult task.

Leonys Martin, who dealt with a life-threatening bacterial infection last year, is expected to be healthy and should be the primary center fielder, with Greg Allen also being an option. Bradley Zimmer could eventually work his way back into the mix, though he could also miss much of the 2019 season as he rehabs from shoulder surgery.

Tyler Naquin figures to be an option in right field, and Jason Kipnis could potentially be added to that group in left field.

"I think the outfield will be an area that we will continue to work through over the course of the offseason," Antonetti said. "It's probably the area on our team with the least certainty. Exactly what that composition of players will look like, we have a few months to figure out. But, as we're currently situated today, we have more left-handed-hitting options than right-handed-hitting options there."

Indians, Leonys Martin agree to one-year deal

By Ryan Lewis

The Indians and outfielder Leonys Martin have avoided arbitration by agreeing to terms on a one-year deal for the 2019 season.

The deal is worth \$3 million, a source familiar with the negotiations told the Beacon Journal but opted for anonymity because details of the deal had not yet been released.

Martin's tenure with the Indians never really got off the ground following his midseason trade from the Detroit Tigers. After playing just six games with the Indians, Martin became ill with a bacterial infection that quickly advanced to life-threatening. It ended Martin's season as baseball was pushed aside for more serious health concerns.

Indians president of baseball operations Chris Antonetti said in a news conference shortly after the American League Division Series that Martin is expected to be healthy for next spring training, and that his illness was the most challenging aspect to deal with last year.

"Nothing immediately comes to mind that was more difficult for us to work through," Antonetti said then. "That was someone's life at stake and he was really close to not being here anymore. It quickly puts into perspective a lot of the other things you try to navigate day-to-day. Not that those things aren't important, but when you have a situation like that develop, it hits you really hard. We're so thankful."

Martin figures to at least share the duties in center field — most likely acting as the primary option — along with Greg Allen or, once he recovers from shoulder surgery, Bradley Zimmer. Martin will be eligible for free agency after the 2019 season, as this was his last arbitration year.

Prior to his illness, Martin hit .255 with a .747 OPS to go with seven stolen bases last season. He rocketed to a terrific start with the Indians, hitting two home runs and going 5-for-15.

TRIBE NOTES Indians: Tribe exercises option on Carlos Carrasco, declines option on Brandon Guyer

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CLEVELAND — The Indians have some tough decisions to make this offseason. The one on Carlos Carrasco was simple.

Cleveland picked up its \$9.75 million contract option for next season on the right-hander, who has developed into one of the AL's most consistent and dominating pitchers over the past few years.

The team declined its \$3 million option for 2019 on outfielder Brandon Guyer, who battled through injuries last season. He'll get a \$250,000 buyout and become a free agent. It's very possible he'll re-sign with the Indians, who value what he brings on and off the field.

The 31-year-old Carrasco went 17-10 with a 3.38 ERA in 30 starts last season for the AL Central champions. He also recorded a team-high 231 strikeouts in 192 innings as the Indians became the first team in baseball history to have four pitchers top the 200-strikeout plateau.

The team has another option for 2020 on the right-hander, who has gone 35-16 with a 3.33 ERA over the past two seasons.

"We believe Carlos has established himself as one of the top starters in the American League and has been a contributor to our team over the last few seasons," team president Chris Antonetti said. "So, we're obviously elated to continue his time with the team and the organization, and we expect him to make a big impact on our team for the next few seasons."

Carrasco is one of just four pitchers in club history to surpass 200 strikeouts three times.

The Indians are expected to have their entire rotation — Carrasco, Corey Kluber, Trevor Bauer, Mike Clevinger and Shane Bieber — back next season.

Guyer, 32, batted .206 with seven homers and 27 RBIs in 103 games. He joined the Indians in 2016, coming over in a mid-season trade from Tampa Bay.

Antonetti said the decision on Guyer was "very difficult" but there is mutual interest in him coming back.

"Where we ended is that we thought we would be best declining the option, leaving the door open to bring Brandon back, but maybe under potentially different terms," Antonetti said. "He's been a contributing member of our team for the last two and a half seasons and has made a very big impact at times. He battled through some injuries.

"When he was healthy, we saw a guy that was capable of impacting our team and hitting in the middle of the order against left-handed pitching."

Guyer joins a long list of Indians free agents, which include closer Cody Allen, outfielders, Michael Brantley, Melky Cabrera, Lonnie Chisenhall and Rajai Davis and relievers Andrew Miller and Oliver Perez.

Cleveland has exclusive negotiating rights with its free agents until Friday, which is also the deadline for extend one-year qualifying offers (\$17.9 million) to any free agents in order to potentially get draft-pick compensation if they sign elsewhere.

Indians, Martin agree to \$3 million, one-year deal, avoid arbitration

By TOM WITHERS AP Sports Writer 15 hrs ago Comments

Outfielder Leonys Martin has agreed to a \$3 million, one-year contract with the Cleveland Indians months after he survived a life-threatening illness.

Martin and the club avoided salary arbitration Oct. 31 with the deal.

The 30-year-old was obtained by the Indians last season in a trade before the July non-waiver deadline from Detroit. Shortly after he arrived, Martin contracted a serious bacterial infection that affected his vital organs. Martin's condition rapidly worsened before doctors were able to treat and destroy the infection.

Martin played in six games for the Indians, who acquired him after Bradley Zimmer got hurt.

The Indians are confident Martin will be ready for the start of training camp.

Martin batted .255 with 11 homers and 33 RBIs in 84 games for the Tigers and Indians. He has also played for the Cubs, Mariners and Rangers.

Indians pick up club option on pitcher Carlos Carrasco for \$9.75 million

By Jeff Schudel JSchudel@News-Herald.com @JSProlinsider on Twitter Oct 30, 2018 Comments

The starting rotation is the backbone of the Indians, and on Oct. 30 the Tribe took a step to make sure that won't change by picking up the \$9.75 million club option for 2019 on Carlos Carrasco.

The Indians also announced they declined the \$3 million club option on outfielder Brandon Guyer.

Carrasco, a 31-year-old right-hander, was 17-10 with a 3.38 ERA in 2018. He struck out 231 batters and walked 43 in 192 innings. He is 79-62 with a 3.94 ERA in 207 career games (171 starts) with the Indians.

"It's a much better position going into the offseason knowing we have continuity and some depth in our rotation," Indians president Chris Antonetti said on a conference call. "It's a very difficult area to build quality alternatives, as we've seen over the last decade or so, but we're really excited about the group we have and it gives us a leg up on our planning moving forward."

"We believe Carlos has established himself as one of the top starters in the American League. He has been a contributor to our team the last few seasons. We're obviously elated to continue his time with the team and organization and expect him to make a big impact on our team for the next few seasons."

The Indians also have a club option on Carrasco for 2020.

The Indians' starting rotation of Corey Kluber, Carrasco, Trevor Bauer, Mike Clevinger and Shane Bieber is set, but there is equal uncertainty in the bullpen and outfield because of pending free agency.

Outfielders Michael Brantley, Melky Cabrera, Lonnie Chisenhall, Rajai Davis and now Guyer will officially become free agents on Nov. 3. Antonetti said the Indians might re-sign Guyer at a lower salary if Guyer doesn't get a better offer from another team.

"It (declining Guyer's option) was a very difficult decision for us to make," Antonetti said. "We thought it would be best declining the option, leaving the door open to bringing Brandon back but maybe under different terms."

"Brandon has been a contributing member of our team for the last 2 1/2 seasons and made a very big impact at times. He battled through some injuries. When he was healthy, we saw a guy capable of impacting our team and hitting in the middle of the order against left-handed pitching."

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Guyer played in 103 games in 2018, but batted only 194 times. He hit .206 with seven home runs and 21 RBI.

"The outfield will be an area we'll continue to work through in the offseason," Antonetti said. "It's probably the area on our team with the least certainty. Exactly what that composition of players will look like, we have a few months to figure out. As we're currently situated today, we have more left-handed hitting options than right-handed hitting options there."

Center fielder Bradley Zimmer is recovering from shoulder surgery and expected to miss part of the 2019 season. Tyler Naquin has recovered from hip surgery and should be ready for the start of spring training in mid-February. Both bat left-handed.

Relief pitchers Andrew Miller, Cody Allen and Oliver Perez are all headed to free agency.