

Decision on Indians' logo about bigger picture

By Anthony Castrovince MLB.com @castrovince

A fellow Northeast Ohio native who works in the construction business once told me about a work trip that required a drive through the Arizona desert. He had stopped at a convenience store owned and operated by Native Americans and found they had the most amazing selection of real meat jerky. Beef jerky, elk jerky, boar jerky, venison jerky. You name it. If you were jonesing for jerky, this was the place to be.

So this guy made a few selections and brought them to the register.

"How much?" he asked the Native American woman behind the counter.

She just stared at him in disbelief.

"How much?" he asked again, and again she just stared, before summoning an older gentleman.

The guy was really getting confused.

"How much?" he asked a third time, and the Native American man now standing behind the register just stared, with an angry and suspicious look on his face.

Finally, the guy gave up and walked out of the store. As he went to get into his car, he looked down at the T-shirt he had totally forgotten he was wearing. And there, emblazoned on his belly, were the wide grin, bulbous nose, triangular eyes and blood-red face of Chief Wahoo.

Forget the jerky. Now he just felt like a jerk.

This is what happens when the quirky cartoon of our youth faces a reality we weren't exposed to or couldn't quite comprehend. Like so many other Cleveland kids, I didn't know a single Native American growing up. But I did grow up with Chief Wahoo. He was on my clothes, he was on my cards, he was one of the many things I'd sketch in my notebook when I should have been paying attention to my teachers. And in his 28-foot form high atop Cleveland Municipal Stadium, he was a reference point, my childhood compass guiding me to Gate D (my preferred access point, because it led you directly to seats near right field, where the immortal Cory Snyder played).

And so I've always understood the sentimentality associated with Wahoo. I get why people here view the logo as some intrinsic piece of this ballclub's brand. It's why many fans will be upset with Major League Baseball's announcement Monday that the 2018 season will be the last with Chief Wahoo on the Indians' uniforms.

But the inconvenient reality of sharing a planet with other human beings is that you don't get to decide what is or what is not offensive to people. And if you divorce yourself even momentarily from the laundry you've grown up rooting for, it's really not difficult to understand why Native American groups would be offended by this exaggerated, unflattering, cartoon portrayal of their people.

The Indians have been wearing Wahoo on their uniforms in one shape or another since 1947, and American Indian groups have been protesting it since at least 1971. So for the majority of the time this logo has been in use, it has been met with opposition. But until very recently -- when Commissioner Rob Manfred pressed Indians chairman and chief executive officer Paul Dolan on the matter after the Tribe's 2016 run to the American League pennant amplified the public discussion about Wahoo -- that opposition has pretty much been ignored.

Dolan has been the man caught in the middle of this clash between the fans married to team tradition and the others who are understandably upset with what this image represents. And Monday's announcement seemingly comes with middle ground. The Indians won't wear the logo on the field, but they'll still sell it in their shops. One reason for that is a "use it or lose it" legal issue associated with the logo. If the Indians lose the trademark, another business could claim it, and then who knows where Chief Wahoo pops up.

Wahoo has endured because Native Americans make up such a small percentage of our populace (0.3 percent of the Cleveland population, as of the latest census) and have so little voice in our politics. And Wahoo has endured long enough that many of us have become totally desensitized to how others with different viewpoints or life experiences might perceive it. It would be inconceivable in the year 2018 to launch a business bearing a logo that characterized an ethnic group in such a fashion, and that's long been the bottom line here.

Monday's announcement obviously doesn't put the Wahoo issue to bed. People will still wear it, and people will still protest it. But the Indians' agreement with MLB ought to have all of us who grew up with this little image on our hats and hearts thinking about the bigger picture. What matters, what doesn't. What's respectful, what isn't.

Personally, I can't say I've ever looked into the eyes of a Native American while wearing Chief Wahoo gear. And I really can't say I'd want to, either.

Indians to stop using Wahoo logo starting in '19

By Jordan Bastian MLB.com @MLBastian

CLEVELAND -- A point of contention for some and beloved by others, the Chief Wahoo logo will be removed from Cleveland's uniforms beginning with the 2019 season.

On Monday, Major League Baseball announced that the Indians will discontinue the use of the divisive logo on their uniforms after the 2018 campaign. The decision was made mutually by MLB and the team, which had been working together to come up with an appropriate timeline and solution to the issue, as it gained steam in recent years.

"Major League Baseball is committed to building a culture of diversity and inclusion throughout the game," MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred said in a statement. "Over the past year, we encouraged dialogue with the Indians organization about the club's use of the Chief Wahoo logo. During our constructive conversations, [Indians owner] Paul Dolan made clear that there are fans who have a long-standing attachment to the logo and its place in the history of the team.

"Nonetheless, the club ultimately agreed with my position that the logo is no longer appropriate for on-field use in Major League Baseball, and I appreciate Mr. Dolan's acknowledgement that removing it from the on-field uniform by the start of the 2019 season is the right course."

MLB and the Indians opted to have the Native American caricature removed from the on-field uniforms next year, but the logo will still have a limited retail presence in Northeast Ohio and Goodyear, Ariz. In order to maintain control of the trademark, ensuring that another group could not seize it and profit, the Indians needed to retain some level of retail involving the logo.

Cleveland may consider adding a new complementary logo in the future, but it will focus on the Block C as the primary symbol for now. There are no plans to change the team's name.

"We have consistently maintained that we are cognizant and sensitive to both sides of the discussion," Dolan said in a statement. "While we recognize many of our fans have a long-standing attachment to Chief Wahoo, I'm ultimately in agreement with Commissioner Manfred's desire to remove the logo from our uniforms in 2019."

The decision to remove the logo on the Indians' uniforms next year coincides with Cleveland hosting the 2019 MLB All-Star Game, which was awarded to the franchise last January. The Indians have indicated that MLB did not force the team to remove the logo in order to be granted the right to host the Midsummer Classic. Cleveland's pitch to hold the event began years ago, and it became a strong focus during the team's postseason run in '16.

During the 2016 American League Championship Series between the Indians and Blue Jays, the logo and team name were thrust to the forefront in a legal battle in Toronto.

Douglas Cardinal, an advocate for indigenous people, filed a request for an injunction with the Supreme Court of Justice in Toronto in an effort to block the use of the name and logo during the games at Rogers Centre. That initial request was rejected, but the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal ruled in June that an Ontario court could hear the case. In December, MLB lawyers argued that such a case should be heard in Canadian federal court.

Prior to the 2014 season, the Indians began the process of gradually moving away from the Chief Wahoo mark, designating the Block C as the team's new primary logo. The secondary logo continued to be used on some home caps, as well as a sleeve patch on the club's uniforms. Last season, the Block C replaced the other logo as the sleeve patch on MLB's holiday-issued uniforms.

Imagery similar to Chief Wahoo can be traced back to use in the Cleveland Plain Dealer in the 1930s, and the team used different versions of Native American-themed logos throughout its early history. The Chief Wahoo, which evolved over the years, was originally created in 1946 by the late Walter Goldbach, and it did not appear on Cleveland's uniforms until '47.

Since becoming MLB Commissioner in 2015, Manfred has been open about the desire to work with Dolan and the team on finding a solution for the logo situation. Both sides worked to find a resolution that respected those offended by the caricature, as they heard the arguments of those in support of the historic logo and also found a way to keep the image's rights out of the hands of another party.

With Chief Wahoo gone, what could the Cleveland Indians' uniforms look like in 2019 and beyond?

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

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- Chief Wahoo is going away beginning with the 2019 baseball season, and Cleveland Indians fans already have questions about what the team's uniforms could look like moving forward.

Major League Baseball announced Monday that Chief Wahoo would no longer appear on the field beyond the 2018 campaign. The Indians later released a brief statement on Twitter acknowledging that there will be changes to their uniforms after the upcoming season.

But just what will those changes entail? Will the team's uniforms remain largely the same, with the primary Block-C logo replacing Wahoo on the sleeve and cap? Or will the club take the opportunity to completely redesign its uniforms and go after a completely new market of fans?

Here are five burning questions we have about the Indians' uniforms for 2019 and beyond:

In 2013 the Indians moved away from Chief Wahoo as the team's primary logo and began using the Block-C to represent the franchise. The Block-C appears on the team's current primary road uniform cap and its alternate home red cap. The logo also adorns the gates outside

Progressive Field and countless other areas of the park. But should the team take the opportunity with Wahoo's demise to introduce a new version of the Block-C, which is sometimes criticized for looking "too plain?"
Could a new Indians logo come from somewhere local?

If the Indians are in the market for a new logo for 2019, local artist George Vlosich could offer some suggestions. His GV Artwork studios Cleveland Baseball collection is a favorite among fans and Indians players alike. Corey Kluber, Michael Brantley and Jose Ramirez are among players who have been spotted wearing GV Artwork designs.

The studio, in the past, has been a proponent of keeping Chief Wahoo, but with the chief's demise, perhaps a new take on the team's Block-C logo could come from a local source.

What should replace Chief Wahoo on the jersey sleeve?

With rare few exceptions such as the team's sleeveless jerseys in the 1960s and alternate sleeveless uniforms in the early-to-mid 2000s, Chief Wahoo has had a regular spot on Indians' jersey sleeve for more than 70 years.

In 2019, the Indians will wear a commemorative All-Star Game patch in the place occupied by Wahoo on the current Tribe jersey. But beyond 2019, the question remains, what patch will the Indians wear there?

An All-Star Game logo will replace this Chief Wahoo sleeve patch on Indians jerseys in 2019.

Will the Tribe's home caps still have red bills?

While Cleveland's all-blue primary road caps already bear the Block-C design, the team's primary home caps have typically had a blue top and red bill with Chief Wahoo front and center.

While the All-Star patch solves the Wahoo issue on the jerseys, the only current replacement for Wahoo on the cap would be the Block-C. But the Block-C, at least until this point, has only appeared on solid-colored caps, including the all-red alternate home cap.

Will the team announce a completely different home cap for 2019? Or simply put the Block-C on a cap with a red bill and move forward?
The Indians updated their uniforms in 2011.

Could the team go in a radically different direction?

Fire engine red? Pinstripes? Slider on the sleeve? There is precedent for a completely new look for the Indians at Progressive Field beyond 2018.

The team occasionally wears throwback 1975 fire-engine-red pants and tops (as it did for a road game in Tampa Bay last year), and the team's home uniforms from 1958-61 featured blue pinstripes. How much of a change are fans willing to tolerate, and what changes would be a welcome accompaniment to Wahoo's departure? As long as they steer clear of Arizona Diamondbacks-level ugly, they'll probably be ok. Cleveland Indians throwback uniforms, including the classic fire engine red 1975 version, could inspire a new generation of Tribe threads beyond 2018.

Commissioner Rob Manfred should have stayed out of the Cleveland Indians' business about Chief Wahoo: Paul Hoynes

By Paul Hoynes, cleveland.comphoynes@cleveland.com

CLEVELAND, Ohio - I think the Indians could have told Commissioner Rob Manfred to get out of their face a long time ago when it came to Chief Wahoo.

I don't think it's the commissioner's job to tell a team what logo they can and cannot put on their uniforms unless it's a symbol of unadulterated evil. Doesn't he work for MLB's 30 teams, not the other way around?

Maybe owner Paul Dolan just got tired of the debate, like a lot of people in Cleveland. Over the years there have been many in the front office who have pushed for the end of Chief Wahoo. They finally got their wish Monday with The Chief coming off the team's uniforms for the 2019 season by Manfred's order.

But you'll notice, they didn't completely turn their back on one of the organization's enduring cash cows. They will retain the trademark and retail value of The Chief. Meaning they're still going to make a buck off him even if Francisco Lindor is no longer wearing him on his cap and uniform jersey in 2019.

I guess that's a compromise. But what if Manfred insisted that the organization cut off ties with Chief Wahoo entirely? Would they have had fashion police waiting at the gates of Progressive Field to turn away fans wearing his image? Would that really have happened?

Look, I like Chief Wahoo and I'm not going to apologize for it. I grew up in Cleveland Heights and The Chief meant baseball and summer to me. He meant trips to the old Stadium with my mom and dad to watch Rocky Colavito and Minnie Minoso.

It meant sitting in the bleachers with my wife when Dick Bosman threw a no-hitter against Reggie Jackson and the A's. Throw in the Beer Night riot as well.

I didn't equate it to racism and injustice. I equated it to baseball.

If a Native American felt differently, I could understand. But I never felt the two were the same. One was an image on a baseball cap. The other was a human being, someone to be treated like you wanted to be treated.

The Indians could have ended this years ago if they really wanted. The fact that they didn't is a reflection of who owns the club and how hard a decision this really was. Who do you think has a better feel for the Indians' fan base: Dolan, whose family has deep roots in Cleveland, or Manfred?

Shouldn't this commissioner have bigger things to do than pushing teams to change over 70 years of their history? Manfred certainly didn't take this deep a dive into Miami's Derek Jeter gift-wrapping MVP Giancarlo Stanton to the Yankees.

In 2019, the Indians will host the All-Star Game. The only sign of Chief Wahoo will be in the stands.

MLB and the Indians say the two events - the dropping of Chief Wahoo and Cleveland being awarded the All-Star Game - have nothing to do with each other. The Indians' bid for the All-Star Game has reportedly been in the pipeline for years. But it sure seems like 2+2 equals 4 in this case.

Would the All-Star Game be enough of a payoff for dumping Chief Wahoo? It's a fun four or five days and will bring millions into Cleveland.

But what if a part of their history was sold to make it happen? I'm sure there are many who would be only too happy if that were true. But there are plenty more who disagree, who believed Chief Wahoo was about nothing more than a day in the sun at the ballpark.

Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson cheers Indians' decision to retire Chief Wahoo

By Robert Higgs, cleveland.combhiggs@cleveland.com

CLEVELAND, Ohio - Mayor Frank Jackson on Monday applauded the decision by the Cleveland Indians to retire the Chief Wahoo logo.

The team no longer will wear the controversial logo on uniforms or caps after the 2018 season. The logo has been a flashpoint for the team for several years, drawing criticism and lawsuits from Native American groups who consider it racist.

"The decision by the Cleveland Indians to retire Chief Wahoo from team uniforms is wonderful news for the city," Jackson said in a statement. "I applaud the team's decision to show the city, nation and world that Cleveland is an inclusive place that values all diversity -- in this case showing greater honor to our nation's first people by retiring the Wahoo mascot from uniforms," Jackson said.

But the Indians have been downsizing their use of Chief Wahoo for the last several years. The team's more recent primary logo has been the block C.

When the team is in Goodyear, Ariz., for spring training, Chief Wahoo is nowhere to be found on uniforms or advertising. The only place it can be found is in the gift shop.

Team officials say the Indians name will remain unchanged. The charter member of the American League has been called the Indians since 1915. The Block C and script Indians will be the team's main logos after 2018.

Chief Wahoo is out: Penobscot Nation chief pleased even though Indians name is staying

By Nathaniel Cline, cleveland.com

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- Chief Kirk Francis of the Penobscot Nation said he's extremely pleased with Monday's decision to eliminate Chief Wahoo logo from the team uniforms starting in 2019.

In comments Monday, Indians owner Paul Dolan made it clear that the name is staying. "Not only are we adamant about keeping the name Indians, but the Commissioner (Rob Manfred) is similarly supportive of the name," Dolan said. However, Francis said that decision should not overshadow the importance of dropping Chief Wahoo.

"I think by and large we are not crazy about these terms, but I think the biggest problem for us is how we are depicting native people in this country," said Francis. "I don't want to take away from the huge step forward that this is, but people should be applauded for that."

Francis has contested the use of the name Indians for a long time, including in Skowhegan, Maine, in 2015. An area high school's sports teams were nicknamed "Indians," and after an 11-9 vote by the school board, it kept the nickname.

Francis said he hopes the goal to remove "unrealistic and false imagery of Native Americans" will keep the conversation going after Monday's announcement.

"In terms of how Indians is used going forward, I think that's a broader conversation that we can continue to have," Francis said.

"We just really want to focus on the success, and that it took a lot of strength I'm sure to remove something that has been part of an organization for so long, and we're just pleased they saw the value in doing that."

Louis Sockalexis (1897-1899), an outfielder for the Cleveland Spiders, was a member of the Penobscot Nation and legend has it was the inspiration for the Indians team name, although that has long been debated.

Benching Chief Wahoo is the right thing for the Cleveland Indians to do: editorial

By Editorial Board

In deciding to retire Chief Wahoo, the Indians acted wisely. Wahoo should have made his exit years ago, and the offensive symbol should not have returned to Indians uniforms after the team moved in 1994 to what's now Progressive Field, leaving the giant Wahoo statue behind.

But fans loved the Chief, and that made it tough for Indians management.

Which is why, even with prodding from Commissioner of Baseball Rob Manfred, today's announcement was a brave move by the Indians organization and by owner Paul Dolan.

The Indians name will stay but Chief Wahoo will vacate uniforms after the 2018 season. The team will keep merchandising rights to avoid pirated versions, but marketing will be de-emphasized, as it should be.

Next year, instead of Wahoo, the Indians will wear a sleeve patch for the 2019 All-Star Game, to be played in Cleveland. For 2020 and beyond, Dolan predicted to cleveland.com's Paul Hoynes a "fair amount of time to explore what, if any mark, we want to put on the sleeve."

Why was this the right thing? Let us count the ways.

* Generations of Indians fans may have grown up viewing this long-nosed, red-faced, broadly grinning symbol as harmless and lovable. But the Chief, viewed dispassionately, and particularly through the lens of Native American sensibilities, was a racist stereotype. It had to go, as we editorialized four years ago.

The Cleveland Indians should retire Chief Wahoo even though many fans, understandably, will be upset, the editorial board writes.

* It diminished the team to continue using the offensive logo -- and the Indians organization knew it. Lawsuits, threats of lawsuits, protests and the team's own recognition of these problems in its "demotion" of Wahoo in recent years all underscore this. So did the team's decision not to have a Wahoo in sight at spring training in Arizona, where Native American sentiments against it were strong.

* Wahoo isn't just a baseball image. It's part of what helps define Cleveland, along with the team itself. But this patently racist, stereotyped symbol undercut the welcoming, forward-looking image Cleveland sought to project. We are better than that. We need our symbols to support it.

As we said in our 2014 editorial calling for the Chief to go, this decision will no doubt disappoint many Tribe fans, whose emotional bonds to Chief Wahoo, often going back to childhood, are deep and abiding. But "a demeaning symbol is a demeaning symbol," as we wrote then.

It does nothing to taint one's love of team and long affection for an image beloved in childhood to let it go. Rather, it is a uniquely human attribute to be able to reflect, to change attitudes, to see issues from a new perspective.

Nor is it simply political correctness to recognize that Wahoo is an offensive image to those whom it caricatures and a corrosively stereotyped exaggeration to all who embrace it.

Fans, with the team, must absorb this reality, bid farewell to the Chief, and move on.

About our editorials: Editorials express the view of the editorial board of cleveland.com and The Plain Dealer -- the senior leadership and editorial-writing staff. As is traditional, editorials are unsigned and intended to be seen as the voice of the news organization.

The Indians reached a compromise on Wahoo that should placate fans (but probably won't) -- Bud Shaw

By Bud Shaw, cleveland.com

CLEVELAND, Ohio - The Indians won't wear the Chief Wahoo logo after next season.

The outcry should be muted - I wouldn't predict "erased" -- by a compromise reached with Major League Baseball. I suspect it won't be. But it should be.

A friend who knows I've long thought the logo should go away jokingly called to congratulate me and "all the other liberal snowflakes" after Monday's announcement that the Indians won't wear Chief Wahoo on their uniforms after the 2018 season.

I know what you're thinking. You're thinking he probably wasn't joking, right?

OK. But can we agree this decision is not a victory for my side or your side? That is after all the nature of compromise -- try as some people do to give compromise a bad name.

The fact the Indians will own the retail rights and continue to sell some Chief Wahoo merchandise means the logo will live on.

You can wear it in the seats and buy it at the ballpark after all, if that's important to you. My correspondence with readers over the years tells me it is.

And since proponents of the logo have long argued its popularity is about Cleveland and a life-long emotional connection to a beloved sports team - and furthermore that they're not being at all tone-deaf to Native Americans -- that should be enough, no?

Nobody is telling you what you can wear.

Major League Baseball wanted it gone. We could rehash an argument waged since I came to Cleveland in 1991 (and probably before). The salient points of each side are still the same.

I think there's a better argument supporting the logo's complete abolishment than for making the case that those who find it offensive should simply get over it.

That counterpoint doesn't constitute making an argument. That's dismissing an argument. But we're not going to start agreeing today of all days.

As for the name of the team, owner Paul Dolan told The Plain Dealer that Major League Baseball is not seeking changes.

"Not only are we adamant about keeping the name Indians, but the Commissioner (Rob Manfred) is similarly supportive of the name," said Dolan. "Yes, some people will continue to make noise about that, but I'm not troubled by its use.

"The Commissioner is not troubled by the use of the name. We are confident the name will continue on."

No doubt it will. The name never struck me in the same way "Redskins" does, but I'm sure some would make a passionate argument for eliminating the name, too.

For now, can we all agree the logo on the uniforms did the name no favors?

Just kidding. Of course, we can't.

Commissioner Rob Manfred wanted Chief Wahoo gone to promote diversity, inclusion in baseball

By Paul Hoynes, cleveland.comphoynes@cleveland.com

CLEVELAND, Ohio - Commissioner Rob Manfred, the driving force behind the removal of Chief Wahoo from Indians uniforms in 2019, said it was done to promote diversity and inclusion throughout MLB.

"Major League Baseball is committed to building a culture of diversity and inclusion throughout the game," said Manfred in a statement released on Monday. "Over the past year, we encouraged dialogue with the Indians organization about the club's use of the Chief Wahoo logo. During our constructive conversations, Paul Dolan made it clear that there are fans who have a longstanding attachment to the logo and its place in the history of the team.

"Nonetheless, the club ultimately agreed with my position that the logo is no longer appropriate for on-field use in Major League Baseball, and I appreciate Mr. Dolan's acknowledgement that removing it from the on-field uniform by the start of the 2019 season is the right course."

Said Dolan, the Indians owner, in the same statement, "We have consistently maintained that we are cognizant and sensitive to both sides of the discussion. While we recognize many of our fans have a longstanding attachment to Chief Wahoo, I'm ultimately in agreement with Commission Manfred's desire to remove the logo from our uniforms in 2019."

Chief Wahoo has been a point of contention with critics of the Indians for years. Under Commission Bud Selig, he always maintained that the fate of the logo was a team decision. Manfred changed the direction of that dialogue when he replaced Selig.

The Indians will host the 2019 All-Star Game at Progressive Field. The Indians say that was not an inducement to dump The Chief. But the Indians were somewhat of a surprise selection to host the Midsummer Classic.

The organization will maintain the Chief Wahoo trademark and retail rights. It will maintain a local presence for Chief Wahoo.

The Chief Wahoo logo, which has gone through several variations, has been a part of the Indians uniform since 1947. The block C and script Indians has become the main logos of the team over the last few years.

Cleveland Indians owner Paul Dolan speaks out about dropping Chief Wahoo

By Terry Pluto,

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- Removing Chief Wahoo from the Cleveland Indians uniforms in 2019?

That's exactly what is happening as the Indians and Major League Baseball made that announcement Monday.

The Indians will keep their nickname, Indians owner Paul Dolan told The Plain Dealer.

"This is the hardest decision we've had to make during our entire ownership," said Dolan, whose family bought the franchise after the 1999 season.

Dolan grew up in Northeast Ohio. He played baseball at Gilmour Academy. As a kid, he wore Tribe shirts and caps, some of them with the Chief Wahoo logo.

"You can't help but be aware of how many of our fans are connected to Chief Wahoo," he said. "We grew up with it. I remember seeing the little cartoon of The Chief in the paper each day, showing if the Indians won or lost."

The usually reserved Dolan's voice cracked a bit at different times during this interview.

He believes he struck a fair compromise with Major League Baseball.

Fans can wear Chief Wahoo items to the games. There will be no Chief Wahoo police harassing fans at Progressive Field.

There will still be some Chief Wahoo items for sale at the park. The Indians didn't want to lose the merchandising rights and create a black market where anyone could legally do anything they wanted with the logo.

For years, the Indians have been making the Block-C the main logo of the team. He has indicated that to me in previous interviews.

Dolan said as far as he's aware, there have been no pictures of Chief Wahoo at the park for several years -- other than historical photos.

"Those will stay," said Dolan. "We are not erasing our history."

But the franchise has felt the pressure from different groups and now, Major League Baseball, to change the logo.

"Some people are impacted by the logo," said Dolan. "Even if it's a small minority or more than that, it's a fact. In this day and age, that kind of caricature is subject to various interpretations."

THE NAME STAYS

Some people also wanted the Indians to change the nickname of the franchise.

"Not only are we adamant about keeping the name Indians, but the Commissioner (Rob Manfred) is similarly supportive of the name," said Dolan. "Yes, some people will continue to make noise about that, but I'm not troubled by its use. The Commissioner is not troubled by the use of the name. We are confident the name will continue on."

Dolan said there has been "a long dialogue" with the Commissioner's office about Chief Wahoo.

"I think the Commissioner has begun to understand how important the logo is to the local community," said Dolan. "This discussion has been on our plate for a year. Our willingness to do something significant with Chief Wahoo has been there from the get-go."

Dolan meant from the start of serious talks with the Commissioner's office, which began more than a year ago.

Dolan said the struggle was to find "a compromise" between the people who love Chief Wahoo and others who are offended by it.

"There are people who have a strong emotional tie to Chief Wahoo and see it as a positive symbol of our community," said Dolan. "They don't see it as anything negative toward Native Americans. It's about Cleveland and the Indians and what all that means to us."

But Dolan knows times have changed.

"We also want to respond to people who we think have legitimate considerations that the logo is no longer appropriate," he said.

TIED TO ALL-STAR GAME?

This season, there will be no change in the uniforms. The Chief Wahoo logo will remain as a patch on the sleeves. The Indians have been wearing different caps for years -- some with Chief Wahoo, most with the block-C.

In 2019, Chief Wahoo is retired. On the sleeves, there will be a patch for the 2019 All-Star game -- which is set for Cleveland.

Did the Tribe have to do something with Chief Wahoo to keep the All-Star game?

"We have been on the path to do something with Chief Wahoo," Dolan said. "I wasn't sure how long it would take us to get there. The Commissioner has pushed us faster -- and that enabled this compromise."

Dolan said at one point, it seemed the Commissioner wanted Chief Wahoo gone ... period. Not just from the uniforms.

"Then he came around to understanding its relationship to the community and the team," said Dolan.

But did the Commissioner insist it be changed or lose the All-Star game?

"He never made that threat," said Dolan. "He said we'd have the game because he was honoring the commitment made by the former Commissioner (Bud Selig). He was going to honor it, regardless of our position on Chief Wahoo."

WHAT COMES NEXT?

In 2020, the Indians have to come up with something for a patch on the sleeves.

The answer is not another Block-C.

"We have a fair amount of time to explore what, if any mark, we want to put on the sleeve," said Dolan.

For more than 20 years, I have been suggesting the team hire some top artists from various Indian tribes to submit new logos. Pick several then create a contest where the fans vote for their favorite.

By the middle 1990s, it was obvious the Indians would eventually have to change the Chief Wahoo logo.

Dolan has never been especially impressed with my idea. As usual, he smiled and sort of shrugged at my suggestion.

But the team needs to do something by 2020.

"I realize that," he said. "But for right now, I just want to stress we're sensitive to both sides of the (Chief Wahoo) issue. We wanted to find the best compromise possible, and I think we did."

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Cleveland Indians will discontinue use of Chief Wahoo for 2019 season

By Paul Hoynes,

CLEVELAND, Ohio - Chief Wahoo, the longtime logo of the Indians, will be gone after the 2018 season.

The Indians will disassociate themselves with the logo and will no longer wear it on their uniforms or caps following the 2018 season. The logo has been a flashpoint for the team for several years, drawing criticism and lawsuits from Native American groups who consider it racist.

The New York Times was the first to report the story.

Chief Wahoo, in one rendition or another, has been worn on Indians uniforms since 1947. Then-owner Bill Veeck made it part of the team's uniform. Walter Goldbach, a 17-year-old draftsman, designed the first logo. Goldbach, 88, died in December.

The Indians name will remain unchanged. The charter member of the American League has been called the Indians since 1915. The Block C and script Indians will be the team's main logos after 2018.

The logo recently has drawn criticism from Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred. Owner Paul Dolan and Manfred have met several times since 2016 to discuss the matter. When Manfred awarded the Indians the 2019 All-Star Game, it seemed unlikely that any Cleveland player participating in the Midsummer Classic would be wearing Chief Wahoo on his uniform.

When the Indians played Toronto in the AL Championship Series in 2016, Douglas Cardinal, a member of the Blackfoot nation and a Native American activist, brought a lawsuit against MLB and the Indians. The suit sought to ban Cleveland from using its team name and logo in the series. A judge in Toronto rejected the request and dismissed the suit.

Last May, the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal ruled that an Ontario court can hear a case contending that the Indians team name and Chief Wahoo logo are discriminatory. The ruling was an offshoot of Cardinal's suit in 2016.

In response to that court ruling, Manfred said, "We were hoping that case was going to be dismissed. It was not. I think it points out the ongoing practical problems that are posed by this particular logo."

The Indians have been downsizing their use of Chief Wahoo for the last several years. Their more recent primary logo has been the block C. When they conduct spring training in Goodyear, Ariz., Chief Wahoo is nowhere to be found on their uniforms or advertising. The only place it can be found is in the gift shop.

The team does not use it there out of respect for the heavy Native American population in Arizona.

The Indians will maintain the trademark and retail rights to Chief Wahoo. They will maintain a local presence for The Chief, meaning they'll still sell merchandise bearing its image.

Cleveland Plain Dealer LOADED: 01.30.2018

Chief Wahoo to be removed from Indians' uniforms after 2018 season

By Ryan Lewis

Chief Wahoo's days as part of the Indians' uniform are numbered — this will be the logo's last year on the field.

Starting with the 2019 season, the Indians will no longer feature Chief Wahoo on their uniforms or hats, as outlined in a release from Major League Baseball on Monday.

Chief Wahoo, a caricature-like logo of a smiling Native American, has been the cause of tense debate and protests for many years. The insignia was deemed a racist representation of a race of people by many and simply a nostalgic logo by others. Protests, particularly before the team's home opener each season, had become commonplace outside the gates of Progressive Field.

MLB and Commissioner Rob Manfred had been pushing for the Indians to limit Chief Wahoo's exposure for several years. The league had some added leverage once the Indians were awarded the 2019 All-Star Game. That meant Progressive Field would be on the national stage, as it was during the 2016 World Series. During the 2016 American League Championship Series, an injunction was sought in Canadian court to prevent Chief Wahoo from being used in Toronto while the Indians faced the Blue Jays.

Dialogue between the Indians and MLB relating to Chief Wahoo had increased over the past year or so, as had criticism from many both in and outside of Cleveland regarding the logo's usage.

"Major League Baseball is committed to building a culture of diversity and inclusion throughout the game," Manfred said in a statement. "Over the past year, we encouraged dialogue with the Indians organization about the club's use of the Chief Wahoo logo. During our constructive conversations, Paul Dolan made clear that there are fans who have a longstanding attachment to the logo and its place in the history of the team. Nonetheless, the club ultimately agreed with my position that the logo is no longer appropriate for on-field use in Major League Baseball, and I appreciate Mr. Dolan's acknowledgment that removing it from the on-field uniform by the start of the 2019 season is the right course."

The Indians have been distancing themselves from Chief Wahoo slowly over the last several years, putting more emphasis on alternate logos, such as the current Block C insignia.

In August, Dolan talked during a speaking series in Akron about Chief Wahoo and acknowledged that he could see why some were offended by the logo. He also referenced how many fans are nostalgic toward the logo, with those memories being tied back to baseball. At the time, he

said he and the league weren't seeing eye to eye, but that a resolution was likely to be found soon. Because of public pressure and the impending hosting of the All-Star Game, though, it was clear that Chief Wahoo likely wouldn't remain on the uniforms for long.

"We have consistently maintained that we are cognizant and sensitive to both sides of the discussion," Dolan said in a statement on Monday. "While we recognize many of our fans have a longstanding attachment to Chief Wahoo, I'm ultimately in agreement with Commissioner Manfred's desire to remove the logo from our uniforms in 2019."

The Indians will retain the trademark and thus control over the Chief Wahoo logo. While the logo will be removed from the field of play, it could still appear on merchandise sold in or around the stadium. It means the Indians could still make a profit off Chief Wahoo. Maintaining the trademark of the logo also means that no other group can seize control and do the same.

In 1947, former Indians owner Bill Veeck commissioned the creation of what would later come to be known as Chief Wahoo as the primary logo for the club, though similar illustrations had appeared in local newspapers since the 1930s.

The man who designed the logo, Walter Goldbach of Medina, died on Dec. 13 at age 88. He was a 17-year-old working at his uncle's emblem company when he sketched Chief Wahoo.

"The last thing on my mind was trying to offend anybody," Goldbach, an avid Cleveland sports fan and U.S. Army veteran, told the Associated Press in 1999.

It has undergone some alterations over the years, namely the changing of the skin color from yellow to red in the early 1950s, but has been a part of the imagery of Cleveland baseball ever since. That will now only last for another year, at least as it relates to the uniforms.

According to the AP and the New York Times, there were no discussions between the Indians and MLB relating to the changing of the team name.

Akron Beacon Journal LOADED: 01.30.2018

Indians removing Chief Wahoo logo from uniforms

By Tom Withers, The Associated Press

CLEVELAND >> The Cleveland Indians announced Monday they are dropping the Chief Wahoo logo from their uniforms next year, bowing to decades of complaints that the grinning, red-faced caricature used in one version or another since 1947 is racist.

The move came after protracted discussions between team owner Paul Dolan and baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred.

The cartoonish image of a big-toothed American Indian with a scarlet face and a single feather in his headdress will come off the team's jersey sleeves and caps starting with the 2019 season.

"Major League Baseball is committed to building a culture of diversity and inclusion throughout the game," Manfred said in a statement. He said the logo "is no longer appropriate for on-field use."

The decision is unlikely to quell complaints from Native American organizations and others who see the symbol as offensive. The Indians will continue to wear the Wahoo logo in 2018, and even after it is gone from the uniform, the club will still sell merchandise featuring the mascot in the Cleveland area.

"I'm elated," Philip Yenyo, executive director of the American Indian Movement of Ohio, said of the decision to take Wahoo off uniforms. "But at the same time, I think it should be this year. I don't understand why they're drawing this out. It doesn't make any sense to me, unless they want to continue to make what's basically blood money."

He added: "Just make the leap already."

Yenyo and others have demanded that the team go further and drop "Indians" from its name: "If they don't get rid of the name, then you're still going to have fans going down there wearing headdresses and painted in redface."

Under growing pressure, the club has been moving away from the Chief Wahoo logo in recent years. The Indians replaced it with a "C" on some of their caps and removed signs with Chief Wahoo in and around Progressive Field, the team's ballpark.

National criticism and scrutiny over Chief Wahoo grew in 2016, when the Indians made the World Series and Manfred expressed his desire to have the team drop the symbol. During the playoffs, a lawsuit was filed while the club was playing in Toronto to have the logo and team name banned from Canadian TV. A judge dismissed the case.

The Indians' successful bid to host the 2019 All-Star Game further heightened the debate.

"While we recognize many of our fans have a longstanding attachment to Chief Wahoo, I'm ultimately in agreement with Commissioner Manfred's desire to remove the logo from our uniforms in 2019," Dolan said in announcing the decision.

The team will continue to sell Chief Wahoo gear because if it stops doing so, it will lose ownership of the trademark, and others will be able to use the symbol as they please.

Reaction to the announcement was swift on social media as fans took sides on a touchy topic that has become part of the Cleveland sports landscape for generations.

Every year, Native American groups have protested outside the stadium before the home opener in hopes of getting the Indians not only to abolish Chief Wahoo but to change the team name.

Many fans are dedicated to preserving Chief Wahoo and see the logo as a symbol of the city's resurgence in the mid-1990s, when the Indians opened their new ballpark and the team made the World Series for the first time since 1954.

The presence of the Wahoo logo is likely to remain strong in the stands on caps, T-shirts and signs, and other Native American references in the stadium will probably persist. For over 40 years, one fan, John Adams, has pounded a tom-tom in the left-field bleachers.

The NFL's Washington Redskins have come under similar pressure to change their Indian-head logo and their name but so far have resisted. Last year, a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in another case made it clear that the Redskins name cannot be stripped of trademark protection just because some find it offensive.

Stanford, Illinois and Dartmouth are among the colleges and universities that have dropped Native American nicknames or symbols for their teams over the years.

Rob Oller | Indians are right to remove Chief Wahoo mascot

By Rob Oller The Columbus Dispatch

My first memory of Chief Wahoo is from the politically charged summer of 1968, seeing the neon Cleveland Indians mascot smiling down from Municipal Stadium. It was a divisive time for our nation, but I was 6. Vic Davalillo was my hero, not Bobby Kennedy.

Now I know better, which is to say I know more. I know people twist anything for political purposes. I know about the hidden agendas of political correctness. I also know about just plain correctness, which is why I approve of the decision, announced Monday, that beginning in 2019 the Cleveland Indians will remove Chief Wahoo from their uniforms.

Nothing political about it. Just correct. Like holding the door for someone whose arms are filled with groceries.

My viewpoint is neither saintly nor sinful. I do not lock arms and march with those who declare, "It's about time that racist logo went away." Neither do I wag a finger at those who think banning the feather-adorned Chief is a crime against individual rights. To lock arms with the "winners" and claim the higher moral ground feels hypocritical.

Somewhere in my boxed collection of ball caps is an Indians hat with the Chief Wahoo logo affixed. My kids own Chief Wahoo caps. Evidently, I am not so offended by the logo as to burn anything it touches. Either that or I am too indifferent to protest against what has become an insensitive use of the cartoon Indian. Sometimes apathy needs a stronger push than our own efforts provide.

Fortunately, the Indians just pushed. Good for them. Did they only cave because of pressure applied by Major League Baseball? Did they fear the protests that likely would occur with Cleveland hosting the 2019 All-Star Game? Probably, but so what? Give me results over good intentions any day. For those choosing to smolder because the change is not immediate, isn't any progress worth applauding?

As for those fuming that a minority of thin-skinned "do-gooders" helped kill off a perfectly acceptable Indians logo, I feel your frustration. I disagree that Wahoo is a harmless caricature but understand that the logo represents a relationship between fan and franchise. Wahoo connects adults to their childhood. I don't remember much about those games I attended as kid, but a few memories linger. How green the grass appeared upon first entering through the tunnel. The beer vendors' calls. The sound of plastic cups being crushed under foot. And the ubiquitous Chief Wahoo.

Especially after wins, I recall sitting in the back of my family's Chevy Impala thinking that the huge Wahoo sign was smiling as we pulled away because the Indians won.

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But here's the thing: The current Chief Wahoo has been in existence only since 1951, so we're not talking about a legendary logo dating to ancient Greece. A previous version of Wahoo was even less flattering to Native Americans, but the earliest Cleveland logos (the first Indian head logo appeared in 1928) were more respectful in their appearance. Personally, I preferred the "carved C" logo of the mid-1970s and later cursive "C" to toothy Wahoo.

Chief Wahoo no more properly defines the Indians than a swashbuckler defines the Cavs or Brownie defines the Browns. (One could argue Brownie should be more clown than elf.) And Wahoo has brought negative national attention to the Tribe. (We can still call them Tribe, right?)

Do me a favor and take a good look at Chief Wahoo — stare into those ridiculous triangular eyes — and tell me it's not time for him to go.

The Indians can do better. And now they are.

Josh Tomlin looks to continue track record of success for Indians

By David Glasier, The News-Herald

Chances are, veteran starting pitcher Josh Tomlin will go largely unnoticed when Indians pitchers and catchers report to spring training in Goodyear, Ariz. on Feb. 14.

The spotlight will be on Corey Kluber, who earned his second American League Cy Young Award last season but struggled in the American League Division Series loss to the New York Yankees.

Sure to get plenty of attention, too, are hard-throwing right-handers Carlos Carrasco, Trevor Bauer and Danny Salazar.

And then there's Mike Clevinger, the right-hander with the trademark flowing locks and whipsaw delivery who carved out his place last season on the starting staff that was the tops in Major League Baseball with an 81-38 record and 3.48 ERA..

Being overlooked or taken for granted comes with the territory for Tomlin despite his 59 career victories, a total exceeding those of Bauer (47), Salazar (38) and Clevinger (15).

In 26 starts last season, Tomlin was 10-9 with a 4.98 ERA.

The lack of buzz for the 33-year-old native of Texas is mostly about his laid-back personality and pitching style based on consistency and guile rather than sheer power.

Tomlin has been that kind of pitcher since the Indians took him in the 19th round of the 2006 draft out of Texas Tech University. He didn't light up radar guns during four-plus seasons in the Indians' minor-league system and hasn't since making his big-league debut with a victory against the New York Yankees on July 27, 2010.

During a recent interview at Progressive Field, Tomlin was asked how he's managed to cobble together such solid career numbers (59-48, 4.65 ERA) with a fastball that seldom touches 90 mph.

"Just trick 'em," Tomlin said, smiling

Tomlin has been a model of strike-throwing consistency throughout his career. Last season, his strikeout-to-walk ratio of 7.79 was the best on the staff.

"You can throw as hard as you want. But if you can't throw strikes, you won't get anybody out," Tomlin said.

That he issues so few walks mitigates the fact Tomlin typically surrenders high numbers of home runs. He gave up a team-high 36 home runs in 2016 while finishing 13-9 record with a 4.49 ERA in 174 innings. Last season, he surrendered 23 home runs in 141 innings.

"The challenge I have is to be effective in all the zones and minimize the damage," Tomlin said.

From a team standpoint, Tomlin said the Indians have moved past the disappointment of the five-game loss to the Yankees in the ALDS after a 102-60 finish in the regular season.

"We're not thinking about what could have been anymore. It's time to move forward and get better for this season," he said.

Tomlin and his fellow pitchers will go to spring training next month with a new pitching coach. Mickey Callaway, who had the job for five seasons, left the team in October 2017 to become the manager of the New York Mets. He was replaced by Carl Willis, pitching coach for the Indians from 2003 to 2009. Willis also was pitching coach in Seattle and Boston.

"We'll definitely miss Mickey (Callaway). He did great work when he was here and was a huge part of our success," Tomlin said. "He definitely earned this opportunity to manage and I'm sure he'll do a great job. But there won't be a huge change here. Carl (Willis) has a great track record."

Tomlin said he and his teammates will go to spring training next month with the loftiest of goals.

"We have that hunger to get back to the World Series and win," he said.