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## Cleveland Indians praised for shelving Chief Wahoo logo for Toronto series

'We were very pleased,' says Indigenous activist's lawyer

Gregory Strong · The Canadian Press · September 7



The controversial Chief Wahoo logo normally appears on the sleeve of Cleveland's jerseys, but it was dropped for the team's series in Toronto. (Mark Duncan/Associated Press)

The Cleveland Indians are giving fans a preview of their new-look uniforms this week in Toronto by dropping the Chief Wahoo image from their hats and jerseys.

The logo is something that has long bothered Blue Jays president Mark Shapiro, who spent more than two decades as an Indians executive.

• **THE CURRENT** 'Stop caricaturing us': Why removing Chief Wahoo as Cleveland Indian mascot matters

"I never said it when I was in Cleveland, but I struggled with Chief Wahoo from the day I got there in 1992 to the day I left," Shapiro said Friday. "I was happy to see it consistently get diminished.

"I will shed no tears when it's gone completely."

Chief Wahoo will return to the Indians' uniforms on Monday at Tampa Bay and will remain for the rest of the 2018 season. The Indians and MLB announced plans last January to remove the logo from their uniforms completely beginning in 2019.

Shapiro, who joined the Blue Jays in 2015 after 24 seasons with the Indians, played a lead role in establishing a block "C" as Cleveland's logo. It replaced the cartoonish image of a big-toothed First Nations man with a scarlet face and single feather in his headdress.

Shapiro touched on the logo issue during a wide-ranging afternoon media availability in a stadium boardroom.

"It doesn't mean that much because I'm focused on the Blue Jays," he said. "I guess there's like a small part of me that kind of says, 'Good. It's about time.'"

MLB has said the decision to scrap the logo came from the league's commitment to "building a culture of diversity and inclusion throughout the game."

Longtime Blue Jays radio announcer Jerry Howarth, who retired in the off-season, made a point of not saying Cleveland's nickname after a First Nations fan wrote to him explaining how hurtful the name and logo were to Indigenous people.

- **Cleveland Indians' logo still under fire from Canadian activist**

Shapiro, meanwhile, weighed in on a variety of subjects during a 40-minute question-and-answer session.

He declined comment on reports of interest from the New York Mets, but said he has received "strong support" from Blue Jays' ownership and wants to stay in Toronto.

"This is where I want to be," said Shapiro, who is signed through 2020.

Also Friday, top prospect Vladimir Guerrero Jr. was named Baseball America's minor league player of the year. The Blue Jays declined to include the triple-A star with their September callups and instead sent him to the Arizona Fall League.

"I feel strongly that the best thing for Vladdy's development is the path that we laid out," Shapiro said.

The Indians-Blue Jays series continues through Sunday.

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