

Offseason Rundown: Trust Us, We Know What We're Doing

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Thursday, December 08 2011 2:00 PM - Last Updated Saturday, December 10 2011 4:56 PM



On the heels of our #MysteryTrade momentum, let's get serious as the Winter Meetings wind down. At least for a few minutes.

[WINTER WRAPUP]

The Winter Meetings are coming to an end here and you should have expected this. Did you really think a deal was going to get done? Did you think something hugely significant was going to come out of this that involved the Indians?

Now that doesn't mean significant progress has been made on some fronts. That is primarily what the meetings are for, laying the groundwork for free agent deals and potential trade avenues. So let's dive in to some of the numerous quotes from [general manager](#) **Chris Antonetti** and [manager](#) **Manny Acta**

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The first is that Antonetti expects to have something done before leaving Dallas.

"I would expect to have something done," Antonetti said. "Now, whether that's a Minor League free-agent signing, or if it's a trade, I don't know. I'd say we have a handful of trade proposals right now out there, at least. Actual proposals. There are a couple that are up to us and there are a handful that are up to other teams."

Bastian seemed to lean toward it being a minor league deal, which would be par for the course with the Indians, would it not?

The second part of that quote, you can take it for what you will. We had a lot of fun with the Mystery Trade stuff yesterday, and some people have actually gone as far as thinking something is actually going to come from that. Again, Antonetti wouldn't say something like that if it was eventually going to happen. That just isn't the way the Indians roll.

Although in that light, Antonetti doesn't seem to be as well trained in Shapiroese as Mark Shapiro was/is. Of course given that it is called Shapiroese, there is no one better at it than Shapiro himself. He made no bones about the fact that the Indians do not plan on selecting anyone in the Rule 5 draft. Way to tip your hand Chris.

Bastian seems to elude to the fact that Carlos Pena AND Derrek Lee are out of the Indians price range. I can buy Pena, but Lee? Is that aging vet really going to command that much on the market? Pena should get upwards of \$10 million or at least could in my mind. Is Lee really going to get that much too?

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Lee made \$7.5 million last year at the age of 35 and with it he hit .267 with a .325 OBP. He was decent. Is he really worth that same price tag this year and is that too expensive for the Tribe who plan to have about that much to play with?

I find that a little hard to believe... But we proceed with that assumption. The feeling is if the Indians are going to make an addition, the market for what they are IDEALLY looking for is so shallow that they'd go for a trade (given also their depth in the pitching department to be a good fit with another team), but then again, a trade is just as hard to find. You need to have a willing trade partner who has what you want, who also desires something that you are willing to part with.

It could be just as difficult trying to find a right-handed hitter with pop that can play first base and left field.

The name that was brought up the other day as having been offered to the Tribe was Carlos Lee, but again, the salary played a significant part in that deal not happening. If the rumor is true that the Astros were willing to take on half of Lee's salary, we can assume anything that costs \$9 million and up is out of the question.

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Jon Morosi of FOXSports is back [saying that Astros will eat salary](#) to move him, but again, they'll need to eat a little more than they might have wanted to if the Indians are going to be a match.

Lee would be a nice fit if you can find a way to get the Astros to eat a lot of his salary. He could primarily play first base, shift out to the outfield when you want to get Santana at first, wouldn't predominantly play there at all. It would be a good match.



In addition to looking incredibly awesome with his stellar looking tie and lovely bald head, Manny Acta was also talking. He said that the depth to the rotation staff is really going to be

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huge for this team moving forward. I'm looking more at what he had to say in regards to Jimenez starting winter ball (come Dec. 20th).

"It's very important," Acta said of having Jimenez pitch some this winter. "He feels that it's going to get him in the best shape possible for Spring Training, and he has experience with that. His best season with the Rockies, he pitched winter ball up until the end of the playoffs over there."

The widespread belief (or if you want to categorize it, hopeful reasoning?) is that Jimenez fell behind last year with injuries and never really caught up with himself, perhaps trying to do too much at times. Let's hope that is the case and that this year from start to finish will get him in order.

So if you proceed with that line of thinking, you have two top of the rotation guys, a veteran, a middle of the road guy who does nothing but give you a chance to win, and an enigma bringing up the rear.

I'm cool with that. It's better than what this team has started with in the past is it not? A Cy Young winner and four guys who we hope will be good. A Cy Young Winner, an enigma, and three randos. Five guys... Four decent starters and Jason Johnson. Whatever right? Baby steps. Baby steps.

In addition to talking about Ubaldo and the rotation, Manny Acta was on MLB Network's Intentional Talk and revealed that Travis Hafner likes Lady Gaga.

Great time doing [@intentionaltalk](#) , but now I'll probably have to wrestle Hafner for saying that he likes Lady Gaga. I don't like my chances. - [@Mactriber](#)

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I'll be honest, I lost a little man-love for Hafner with that. But it isn't anything we already knew after the "Bad Romance" song swept the clubhouse last year after wins. Hafner's always behind the inside jokes.

More Wrap-Up:

HOYNSIE (It's more fun when I say it in all caps) said the Indians talked to Dan Wheeler's agent. Why? I'm not sure. Wheeler was offered arbitration (which he should take, duh) and the bullpen is deep. [Even HOYNSIE knows this.](#)

It would appear that Albert Pujols will not be going to Miami, which is a bit of a kick in the pants for Indians fans hoping it would happen at the oft chance that Gabby Sanchez would be made available in a trade.

But Mark Buehrle is, which is good, because he is no longer in the AL Central and can no longer torment us in Cleveland with his awesomeness. I feel slightly bad for White Sox fans losing a guy they adored, yet I have no sympathy when I think more about it.

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I know people keep bringing up a Hanley-Cabrera swap in the #MysteryTrade suggestions, but look here. It makes no logical sense from the Indians perspective, especially when you break down in a few aspects...

1.) You put a lot of work into Asdrubal Cabrera, both on the field and off. He's matured in a few different ways, both on the field with how he's play and the way he took care of his body and off the field with the way he leads the team. On the flip-side, Hanley Ramirez has had recent issues with not running out plays, playing sloppy, bad attitude, etc. That isn't a fair trade in that aspect.

2.) The money doesn't even come close to adding up. Hanley Ramirez has three years left on his contract extension and he's owed \$46 million dollars. Yikes. Cabrera has one less year of control left, but they are both arbitration.

You also have to look at it this way. The Marlins are looking to move Hanley to third, not second, which is where they'd have to move Cabrera to if they acquired him. It just overall doesn't make a lot of logical sense. It's a nice, interesting idea (and if they cleared up Hanley's contract, maybe they would be more apt to opening up the idea of acquiring Pujols AND CJ Wilson.

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But it ain't happening. Cabrera is staying...

[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

On that note, **Asdrubal Cabrera** made his Winter Ball debut last night for Venezuela. He ripped it up, 3-4 with a double and he scored all three times. Great start, great start chap.

The Rule V Draft is today as the Winter Meetings come to a close and as mentioned earlier, the Indians will not be selecting anyone. That doesn't mean there isn't anything to worry about though as they could have players selected. Last year they lost Josh Rodriguez to the Pirates and Jose Flores to the Mariners. Of course each was returned at some point.

Rodriguez is on the list created by Jonathan Mayo [as potential picks this year](#) . Why he's listed as a member of the Indians is beyond me. But he could get picked again, so good luck to him.

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The concern is with losing Bryce Stowell or Rob Bryson to be quite honest. Other than that, I wouldn't worry a whole heck of a lot about this year's Rule V Draft.

This should effectively end our little week of fun with the Winter Meetings. We'll see what comes of this "deal in the works" and if it really is just a minor league deal and if any groundwork was laid for a potential deal, but it looks like we'll go into the new year still waiting for a new addition, because if the Indians are not going to have the money for a Carlos Pena or a Derrek Lee, the market has to thin out.

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