

Offseason Rundown: Mystery Team? How about a #MysteryTrade!

Written by {ga=ninocolla}

Wednesday, December 07 2011 8:10 AM - Last Updated Wednesday, December 07 2011 8:51 AM



You have to love the Winter Meetings. They produce so many unfounded rumors. It's hard to get excited about something because you don't want to buy into something that will inevitably not even be true and if you do, you will be extremely let down when you find out that some rumor was just an errant rumor.

[MYSTERY TRADE]

And that's why I simply laugh at this idea of a Mystery Trade.

Chris Antonetti got Twitter all a-stir when he said... this... [Via Bastian](#)

Antonetti said Tribe has one trade proposal that "you guys wouldn't believe. I could probably give you 50 guesses & you wouldn't get it."

Okay so 50 guesses?

Fausto Carmona for Joey Votto?

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Travis Hafner for Roy Halladay?

This isn't getting anywhere.

Luis Valbuena for Cash?

Wait that happened already.

I got it... Chad Huffman for Jason Heyward... Perfectly fair.

Jokes aside, why would Chris Antonetti say this? I mean, is he just trying to get everyone off his tail and thinking about something else? I mean this is clearly not going to happen because if Antonetti says that we wouldn't believe it, it either means... A) Indians were offered a trade that is completely ridiculous that no one would believe nor accept, therefore it is not happening or B) Indians offered a trade to a team that you would not believe almost got accepted, but again, is not happening.

In addition to that though, Antonetti added that he was active in discussions on the trade and free agent front. And as mentioned earlier weird things happen at these meetings. I mean, we've all been in a fantasy football or baseball league and gotten a ridiculous trade offer, right? Or made one, right?

I mean hey, you get Billy Beane a few drinks in him and who knows. Maybe that's how the Matt Holliday trade happened, you know?

So let's get goofy with this, it is the offseason after all and if all we are going to get is a Mystery Trade out of this, we might as well abuse it.

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We're now taking your best [#MysteryTrade](#) proposals on Twitter. Remember they have to be something you would never believe. They can be real, fake, involving Andy Marte or any other sort of useless baseball equipment. Here are some of the better ones that were submitted last night. As you can see there is a mix of ridiculous and serious. Mine mostly border on the side of ridiculous or Andy Marte.

- *we got someone from the giants, no not those giants.....* [#tanaka](#) 'sback - [@Gozjr](#)
- *Kipnis and Masterson for Matt Kemp.* - [@SkatingTripods](#)
- *its gotta be hanley for asdrubal and jeanmar haha* - [@Tbolt7](#)
- *roberto alomar for matt lawton and billy traber and alex escobar ; oh wait its 2011 not 2001* - [@nextyearinCLE](#)
- *Albert, Omar, Manny, And Thome for ... Nothing but broken hearts* - [@Richie927](#)
- *Trade the rights of the Rock N' Roll Hall of Fame to St. Louis for Albert Pujols* - [@SamAmeen](#)
- *How about Carlos Baerga for Trevor Crowe and a couple of King Cobra 40s?* [#MysteryTrade](#) - [@Rocket2Me](#)

Make sure you include the hashtag #MysteryTrade so we can make it awesome.

[WINTER MEETING RUMORS]

On a serious note, there are some real rumors that came out. One came from FOX Sports' Jon Paul Morosi that said [the Indians were looking](#) at right-handed hitters Derrek Lee, Andruw Jones and Mike Cameron. Lee is on our offseason chart and has garnered some interest from the Pirates, the team he was traded to at the deadline last year.

There was a rumor from Danny Knobler of CBSSports that the Indians [were approached with](#) a **C**

Carlos Lee

offer from Houston, with the Astros paying half of the salary on Lee this year (\$18.5 Million) but Knobler claims that it was too much for the Indians still. \$9 million is within the budget line thought of, but after Lee hit just 18 home runs last year, I'm not sure that is what the Indians are looking for for that price. Lee will turn 36 in June next year. So he is definitely on decline.

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And I don't think this is the Mystery Trade either, Lee and half of his contract does not seem like a deal that is "unbelievable" in any sense.

This could be the "activity" that Antonetti was talking about in terms of discussions. It would not be out of the realm of possibilities that Antonetti is kicking the tires on these types of players. They'd be more cheaper options, but again, probably most feasible. Lee on the other hand? The Indians would need to give the Tribe something more worthwhile or take off some of that salary.

Morosi went on to add that the Indians are [willing to deal their bullpen depth](#) to get the bat they want. The Indians, if they do make a deal, would likely do just that. If you remember to last week, I brought up the

Chris Perez

thing and it seems like a lot of people would be okay with that. It would take a lot to get me over that emotionally, but you simply cannot deny the idea of the return on a closer and how that sandwich artist that sets him up could easily slide into ninth inning duties.

One team was taken out of the race for a closer, as they join the Marlins in teams who have solidified their need for a closer and that is the Toronto Blue Jays. They acquired Sergio Santos from the White Sox to close out games for them.

Bastian said [that a few teams have called](#) on Chris Perez about his availability and noted that the Jays were not interested and nothing else significant has come out on that front.

The only thing you need to remember now is that just because a team calls on a player, doesn't mean the team he is on is interested in dealing him.

One thing that you have to continue to wonder is if the Indians will use this depth they talk about in their pitching staff to swing a deal for a first baseman and then use the money not spent to sign a first baseman to sign a pitcher. That could be a route given the depth of the starting pitching in the free agent market compared to the first baseman market. Not that it is incredibly stellar, but it is more deep.

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[RANDOM RUNDOWN]

The Indians finally made their move to clear room for Grady Sizemore's re-addition to the 40-man roster and as expected by some, it was **Hector Rondon** [that got ousted](#) . Rondon is still in the recovery stages of Tommy John surgery and now he has another set-back in his latest issue, a fracture in his elbow. This will keep him out anywhere from five to nine months depend on who you ask. There is little to no chance that a team selects him given this development with a new injury. Rondon had surgery in November.

Bastian adds that if Rondon clears and is outrighted, he [will not receive an invite to big league camp](#) and will start his spring in Minor League camp. He won't pitch well into the season if he pitches at all.

Tough road for someone who was, just a few years ago, the next Indians starter. The Indians haven't had much luck in that regard. After Adam Miller, it was Hector Rondon. We've seemed to move onto a new era of starters now and Rondon's outrighting just kind of puts us at that point.

The Indians met with **Jack Hannahan's** agent Joe Speed [about Hannahan's contract situation](#) . Some work has to be done with players who are arbitration eligible by Dec. 12 and the Indians and Speed reportedly did just that.

In other arbitration news, it seems as if the Indians are going to shy away from the contract extension, just a day after there was talk about the Indians interested in extending Shin-Soo Choo. Hoynes [notes that instead of buying a few years of free agency](#) with extensions, the Indians have simply stopped making these deals with their players after Fausto Carmona.

Maybe so, but maybe the Indians haven't had a reasonable person to extend? Asdrubal Cabrera is the only one you can really make a case for and he hasn't had a two consistent seasons in a row to make anyone believe he deserves a contract extension.

Choo? They've tried, but Boras has had no interest in that.

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Who else were you going to extend? Back in the early 2000's they had players to do that. CC, Cliff, Peralta, Hafner, Sizemore... They call came a long at different times. The Indians really only have had two of those players that you could consider and they both had circumstances that made it not possible or not a good idea.

Now it seems like a good idea, at least in the case of Asdrubal Cabrera and it may even seem possible in the case of Shin-Soo Choo. Hoynes goes on to note that an agent said it would be a good time for Cabrera to get an extension from his own perspective. The agent said it would be too expensive for the Indians right now.

In addition to trying to add a first baseman, the Indians are looking to be really flexible. So Jason Donald is getting time in the outfield and now it looks like **Michael Brantley** [will get time at first base this spring](#)

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If Brantley does play some first base this year, like Donald in the outfield, it will probably be minimal. It is not intended to switch Brantley to first, why would you do that to an excellent center fielder? You wouldn't, but like they did with Carlos Santana, Brantley has some ankle injury issues and you'd like to preserve him while keeping his bat in the lineup.

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