

5 Reasons Why Rob Manfred Will Be the Next Commissioner of MLB

Written by Maury Brown

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When Bud Selig made his announcement last week that he was, indeed, retiring at the end of his contract in January of 2015, the question on everyone's mind was who will replace him? Thousands of words have been written on the subject such as [here](#) , [here](#) , and as late as 2006, [here](#) . But, with the 2013 postseason looming, Selig is making good on his claim that this is indeed the last contract he will have as MLB's commissioner.

Beyond the announcement, a key move was made yesterday when Rob Manfred was made COO of the league. Manfred has been involved greatly with labor negotiations, the drug policy, and other aspects that made him baseball's #2 exec, even if he didn't have the position. Here's 5 reasons why Manfred is the next commissioner of baseball.

Moving Manfred to COO Officially Puts Him in the #2 Position

When Bob DuPuy left MLB as its COO and President, the position was never filled. Selig took over that aspect of the league, and ever since everything has run across his desk. With moving Manfred into the COO spot, he now occupies the true position as MLB's second in command. As a part of the transition, Manfred will now oversee day-to-day management of the Commissioner's Office in New York.

Selig and Manfred Will Now Work More Closely

The two already worked closely together, but now it appears that moves will be done with Manfred at Selig's side, rather than Manfred taking direction from Selig. In the statement about Manfred's promotion, Selig said, "I am pleased that I will work with him even more closely in the

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near future.” While one might say that regardless of the possible move to the position of commissioner, Selig would be working more closely with Manfred, it’s that promotion to COO that makes it sound more and more like Manfred is being groomed for the position. After all, Selig could work more closely with Manfred in his former role as Executive Vice President for Economics & League Affairs.

Still No Talk of a Search Committee

In all of the statements released by the league around Selig’s retirement and Manfred’s promotion, there has been nothing about a search committee. While the owners will still have to have 75 percent approval voting for Selig’s successor, the longer this goes without a search committee to field multiple candidates for a replacement, the more this is looking like it’s wired for Manfred.

Time To Sell Manfred to the 30 Owners

In making the promotion now, it makes it pretty obvious that Manfred is either “the guy” or at worst, a candidate on a short list. If Manfred is being picked by Selig as the guy he wants to see succeed him, he has 15 months to work the phones as only Selig can to ensure that the vote isn’t just the minimum 75 percent of the owners, but a unanimous vote.

Transitioning to Manfred Sends a Message and Perpetuates the Selig Legacy

This is the most important reason why Manfred is likely the next commissioner of Major League Baseball. Unlike nearly all his predecessors, Selig’s vision has been embraced by the owners and has allowed the league to flourish. With Manfred being the man to do the heavy lifting for Selig all these years, an internal promotion to commissioner sends the message that Selig’s vision is endorsed even after he leaves office. It also shows confidence in the overall direction that the league has been taking, and removes any signs that there is internal strife within the ranks. In that, like Adam Silver with the NBA, or even Roger Goodell with the NFL, lateral moves send a message of stability. It is only when there is dissension within the ranks regarding leadership that you see moves such as the ouster of Fay Vincent and the placement of Bud Selig as interim commissioner back in 1992.

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There is always a case that quietly something else is happening behind the scenes, but to date those close to the league don't show any hint that that's happening. While no one will say that Manfred is going to be the next commissioner, it's only because ultimately the 30 owners will have their say. Selig has been a master at building consensus. If there was someone else he was picking to succeed him, comments in the media would be happening, and he'd certainly be looking to line up the votes like he has so many times before. At least for the moment, it all points to Rob Manfred.



Maury Brown is the Founder and President of the [Business of Sports Network](#), which includes The Biz of Baseball, The Biz of Football, The Biz of Basketball and The Biz of Hockey. He [writes for Baseball Prospectus](#)

and is a

[contributor to Forbes](#)

.

He

is available as a freelance writer

.

[Brown's full bio is here.](#)

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