John Canning, Jr. the Chairman and CEO of Madison Dearborn Partners, has been adding all-star investors to an already solid group in an attempt to place the winning bid for the **Chicago Cubs** at the end of the season, with the deal finalized by the owners before the start of next season.

As we covered in ***Who Might Be Owning the Cubs?*** Canning is a near lock to land the storied franchise. As **Maury Brown** wrote in late June:

Canning, and Madison Dearborn Partners are based in Chicago. While MDP will not be in the mix, Canning has strong ties to Chicago, with exceptionally deep pockets.

He also has something that the other suitors don't have: ties to Selig. Canning is currently a minority owner in the Brewers, has known Selig and the ownership brethren for years, and actually tried out for the Milwaukee Braves at one point as a catcher.

Canning is already well positioned. The addition of others to the fold will leave nothing to chance, and follows the model of groups that have landed the winning bids for MLB clubs recently, including the marriage of **Stan Kasten** with **Ted Lerner** for the **Washington Nationals**, and the grouping of **John Henry, Larry Lucchino, and Tom Werner** for the **Boston Red Sox**.

As the man that currently owns 11 percent of the Brewers, he and **Andrew McKenna**, chairman of McDonald's Corp. and Cubs chairman during the '80s began assembling a group to purchase the Cubs when the Tribune Co. announced that they were intending to be put up for sale. As reported by the *Chicago Tribune*, Canning has recently added the following heavy-hitters to the group:

- **Larry Levy**, founder of Levy Restaurants, and industrialist **Craig Duchossois**, who had initially been looking to place a bid for the Cubs independently.
- Restaurateur, **Richard Melman** of Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises, owner of Tru, Brasserie Jo and Ben Pao.
- **Patrick Ryan**, the founder of Aon Corp., and the man leading the Chicago's bid to host the 2016 Summer Olympics.
- Billionaire **Michael Krasny**, founder of Vernon Hills-based computer seller CDW Corp. (Madison Dearborn is purchasing the computer giant).
- **Edward Kaplan**, co-founder of Vernon Hills-based Zebra Technologies Corp.
- **David Donnini,** a principal in another major Chicago-based private-equity firm, GTCR Golder Rauner.
- **Michael Sacks**, chief executive of Chicago-based Grosvenor Capital Management, a fund of hedge funds.
- **Michael Ferro**, a Chicago entrepreneur who founded software maker Click Commerce Inc., which last year was sold to Illinois Tool Works Inc.

As **The Biz of Baseball reported in June** , Canning should be a shoo-in for the Cubs. At the time, we rated Canning a 4:1 favorite to land the Cubs. With the latest additions, we are bumping Canning up to a 2:1 favorite. Short of some radical unforeseen event, Canning will become the next managing partner of the Chicago Cubs.

Special thanks to XM 175's Brent Gambill for the heads up on the Tribune article.

Other articles on the sale of the Cubs, here on The Biz of Baseball

- **Who Might Be Owning the Chicago Cubs?**
- **Colangelo to Meet with Potential Investors for Cubs**
- **Cuban Tight-Lipped on Interest in Cubs**

- **Colangelo Continues Interest in Purchase of Cubs**
- **Zell Wins Bid for Tribune. Cubs Sale By End of Season**
- **Sale of Tribune Co. and Cubs May Be Near**
- **Not a Slam Dunk: Cuban Owning Cubs**
- **Selig on Retirement, DirecTV, Steroids, MLBAM as IPO, More**