



Auction Nomination Strategies

Written by

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Sometimes we spend so much time worrying about what players we'll spend our money on and how much we can get them for yet we often forget to spend time thinking about how we're going to get the best players for the cheapest price. Although every auction is different and the styles of every manager in your league are different, there are still some strategies when it comes to nominating players to give you the slight edge or advantage.

Let's assume a normal 10-14 team, 23 man active roster, \$260 budget and 23 rounds of bidding (this means that each team nominates a player 23 times). Let's also assume that your bench players would be chosen via reserve snake draft.

1. Never nominate a player you want (until the last few rounds of the auction)! Basically, you want to throw out players you feel other people will spend their money on. For better results, nominate players who have the possibility of causing a bidding war. The longer you can keep the players you want in the auction pool, the better chance you have of attaining them cheaper than normal.



2. At the beginning of the draft, throw out every stud 1st-3rd round type player you can that you don't want. Let the other managers fight over the \$40 players. If someone throws out Prince Fielder and he goes for \$40, be the next guy who throws out Ryan Howard and make someone else spend another \$40+. If David Wright, the player you want, continues to stay on the board, the more \$40+ players thrown out, the more chances you could get Wright at a cheaper than normal price. Usually, once a manager spends \$40+ on a player, they usually back down until a little later in the draft. A quality fantasy player won't be scared to spend \$40+ on two players if he/she knows what the bargains could be later on.

3. Sometimes, and we stress sometimes, the very first player thrown out in the auction could go for a bit cheaper than you would expect. For example, take a look at latest The Fantasy Man Auction League 227 Draft. The first player thrown out was Alex Rodriguez, clearly the best fantasy player for 2008. I won him for \$44, which is probably a \$5-10 bargain depending on different leagues. I put that \$44 bid in expecting to go as high as \$50 to make sure I'd get him but to my surprise, bidding stopped at \$44. The next player thrown out was Ryan Howard. I also nabbed him for \$39. What makes these two picks great was that Reyes, Hanley, Wright, Holliday and Fielder all fell between \$44-\$46, making A-Rod look like a steal. Also, Prince Fielder cost \$45 after I nabbed Howard at \$39 which also looked like a steal.



4. On the other side of #3, if you throw out some of the elite players we look for as bargains like Carlos Beltran, Justin Morneau, Aramis Ramirez, Paul Konerko and even Lance Berkman and Vlad Guerrero with that first nomination, you might have an opportunity to steal them for less than \$30 also. Now, we have said all off-season that in most normal auctions, you can realistically grab Aramis Ramirez for \$27 or Berkman for \$29, but throw them out first at the beginning, and you can get them for \$2-\$4 cheaper. Be careful, don't build your nominating plan around Berkman, Ramirez and Morneau. It's possible you could throw them out first and they go for \$35. You just never know. But research this year has shown that you can take advantage of these cheaper players.

5. Always throw out middle of the road, solid, players with upside and hype in the middle rounds! Players like Francisco Liriano, Joba Chamberlain, Dustin McGowan, Rickie Weeks, Jacoby Ellsbury, are a few that managers go nuts over. If you plan on passing these players up (unless you cannot pass up a bargain price), make sure you throw them out in the early to middle rounds as other managers tend to go nuts over them and often spark a bidding war, which makes managers spend extra money they normally wouldn't.

6. In the middle to late rounds, try not to throw out your sleepers in hopes that they will slip by everyone...because they won't. Even in the middle to late rounds, you are still nominating players you do not intend to bid on, just please make sure you don't get stuck throwing out a middle reliever like Hideki Okajima for example thinking people will bid on him, because you'll get stuck with him. If you have one pitcher slot open and you are waiting to throw out Tom Gorzelanny at the last minute and you throw out Okajima on your turn and nobody bids, guess what? You look like an idiot and you don't have room to get the guy you wanted. You'll then have to pray he's available in the snake draft.

7. In the last few rounds, knowing what players are still available, in keeper leagues its wise to draft a solid young rookie/prospect with upside in hopes he can make a splash later in the season. For example, it's more advantageous to nab say Jay Bruce for a buck at the end of the auction than to pick him up in the snake draft at a higher price. In leagues where reserves picks cost more than \$1, this is a strategy that can pay off big time later in the season when it comes to trades...or as a cheap keeper for 2009. Then, in the reserve, you can pick up solid veterans like Garret Anderson or Randy Winn.

8. Do not over pay for rookies and prospects early. If you can't get them for \$5 or less, you don't want them. Jacoby Ellsbury has some serious potential, but still being unproven, spending more than \$5 and he busts, you look like a moron for believing all the hype. Most people are paying upwards of \$12 for Ellsbury, and that is just asking for trouble. Other players that fit this category are Geovany Soto, Clay Bucholz, Evan Longoria, Joey Votto and you can even include Joba Chamberlain. Here are 6 players that managers go nuts for and may spend \$5 or more. So far, only Joba is guaranteed a spot on the major league team barring any set backs. Everyone else's status is still up in the air, although we all know deep down these guys will probably make their respective teams. Point is, don't pay for "probably".

9. Always remember that in normal leagues as described above, there are ALWAYS solid \$1 players with upside available at the end. If you want to spend a little extra on some more solid players earlier, have no fear, there will be bargains late in the auction for a buck! See some of the other draft tools for tips on the cheapies.

10. Let's say a SP like Chris Young lasts until the end of the auction. You have \$15 left and five spots to fill. You are better off spending \$2-\$4 out bidding for solid players with upside than to spend the \$11 on Young and \$1 on the four remaining players. You could potentially nail down five better players overall than Chris Young and four \$1 cheapies that are not as talented.

Auction Quick Tips

- Most solid closers will run you about \$15. So saving \$30-\$35 could get you two solid closers like Mariano Rivera, Bobby Jenks, Billy Wagner, etc. Papelbon normally goes for \$20+, K-Rod about \$20 and Putz/Nathan go \$18+. Realistically, anything under \$20 for the top 4 is a bargain!

- Most 1st round type players and some 2nd round type players should all go for \$40+. A-Rod, Hanley, Reyes, and Wright seem to be the four that could hit the \$50+ mark in some leagues. Pujols can be had for around \$35 or less thanks to his elbow injury which is a huge bargain if it turns out Pujols can play through it like he did last season when he hit .320+.

- Most top 20 starting pitchers all go in the \$20 range (\$15-\$20) depending on bidding wars. But, you can usually nab Scott Kazmir, Aaron Harang, Chris Young, Roy Oswalt, Roy Halladay, Javier Vazquez, Fausto Carmona, Dice-K and Carlos Zambrano for under \$20.

- There are always a ton of quality starting pitching with upside for a buck at the end of the auction. Guys I like are Jon Lester, Kevin Slowey, Tom Gorzelanny, Adam Wainwright, Randy Johnson to name a few. I prefer to take a risk with these young players than to constantly take chances on pitchers like Daniel Cabrera, Jon Garland, Bronson Arroyo, Ervin Santana, Tom Glavine, Greg Maddux, etc. These players don't provide much upside.

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