2020 Internet Baseball League: Rules Governing Play

(updated 21 Nov 2019)

Commissioner: Sue-Hyung Shin

Email: suehyung.shin@live.com

# League overview

* 1. **Concept**

This keeper league loosely simulates the management of an MLB team. Owners can choose to build a team for the present or for the future. Because prize money is dependent on each team’s record, any team can be profitable if it performs well relative to its payroll.

* 1. **League structure**

18 teams, mixed AL and NL.

* 1. **Roster requirements**

The active roster, comprised of up to 25 players, must have the following composition: 1-2 C, 1 1B, 1 2B, 1 SS, 1 3B, 1 CF, 2 OF, 2 DH, and 14 P. Any hitter or pitcher qualifies at DH. Up to 12 additional players may be named to the reserve roster, for a total of 37 MLB players. There is no limit to the minor league roster.

There is a combined maximum of 162 games played for the 2 C slots. Your starting Cs cease to accumulate hitting statistics after they reach 162 games played.

If a team exceeds roster limits, the commissioner may drop players alphabetically until roster requirements are met.

**d) Position eligibility**

Position eligibility is gained upon 10 games played in the current or previous season.

1. **Fees**

$6 admin fee covers costs for Fantrax and web hosting for the league auction. In addition, there’s your team payroll, ranging from $50-$120. It is not necessary to pay your payroll in advance; however, a refundable $34 deposit will be required to ensure all owners are compensated at season’s end.

1. **Prize money**

The prize pool generated by teams’ payrolls will be paid as follows: 1st place: $100, 2nd place: $30, 3rd – 5th places: $20 each. The remainder will be divided amongst each team according to games won. The balance of payments due to/from each owner will be remitted by personal check, Google Pay, or Venmo. Prize money may be reduced by any unpaid negative balances.

1. **Website**

The league will be run from Fantrax. There is also a Slack group for the league.

# Scoring system

The league scoring system will rely upon each team’s Pythagorean won-loss record. This formula uses a team’s runs scored and runs allowed to calculate its winning percentage: RS2 / (RS2 + RA2)

* 1. **Offense**

The number of runs scored by a team is the sum of the runs created by its active position players. Runs created is similar to batting WAR. As an example, here is Edgar Martinez’s 1998 season:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Stat | **Weight** | **E Martinez, 1998** | **Value** |
| Singles | .500 | 103 | 51.5 |
| Doubles | .720 | 46 | 33.1 |
| Triples | 1.040 | 1 | 1.0 |
| Home Runs | 1.440 | 29 | 41.8 |
| Stolen Bases | .180 | 1 | .2 |
| Caught Stealing | -.320 | 1 | -.3 |
| Walks | .340 | 106 | 36.0 |
| Hit By Pitch | .340 | 3 | 1.0 |
| Intentional Walks | -.090 | 4 | -.4 |
| Sacrifice Hits | .040 | 0 | 0 |
| Sacrifice Flies | .370 | 7 | 2.6 |
| Strikeouts | -.008 | 96 | -0.8 |
| Grounded into Double Play | -.370 | 13 | -4.8 |
| Batting Outs (AB-H) | -.090 | 377 | -33.9 |
| **Runs Created** |  |  | **127** |

* 1. **Pitching**

The number of runs allowed by your fantasy team is simply the sum of runs allowed by your pitching staff. Your team must pitch a minimum of 1458 (9 x 162) innings. For every inning short of this requirement, you will be penalized one run. If you finish with more than 1458 IP, your run totals will be downwardly adjusted to 1458 innings.

Note: Fantrax cannot calculate the IP penalty. The *official* league standings report is updated weekly at https://ibl02.suehyung.me.

**III. Player selection**

* 1. **Auction**

The auction will open on March 1. The player pool will be randomly pre-divided into four groups, with each group closing on a different day:

Group 1 – closes ~11pm ET, Sun, March 8

Group 2 – closes ~11pm ET, Wed, March 11

Group 3 – closes ~11pm ET, Sun, March 15

Group 4 – closes ~11pm ET, Wed, March 18

The minimum bid is $.40. Bids can only be made in $.20 increments. The bidding system is like eBay; you enter the maximum bid you're willing to submit for a player, and it automatically bids on your behalf against other owners. If you submit the highest maximum bid, it guarantees you win that player for the lowest possible price, i.e., the 2nd highest bid plus $.20. In the event of identical maximum bids, the earlier bid wins.

Tips:

1. As a guide to bidding, $1 is roughly equivalent to $1M in real life in 2005.
2. You can raise your maximum bid. You cannot lower or retract bids – all bids are final.
3. Last minute bidding is probably a bad idea, as each player auction is automatically extended by 2 minutes after the last bid. It’s better to discover prices earlier, when alternatives are still available, than to be stuck in late bidding against someone who also has no alternatives.
4. It helps to enter bids on the best players as early as possible. The bidding on average players doesn’t really pick up until owners move on from their top choices.
5. Budget carefully.
   1. **Player contracts/retention**

The minimum player salary is $.40. There is no maximum salary. Players with 1 or fewer seasons of MLB experience OR fewer than 350 career plate appearances/100 innings pitched at the time of signing (“rookies”) are eligible for long-term contracts up to a maximum of 4 years. The owner must inform the commissioner of the length of the contract before opening day in the preseason in which they were signed. The default contract length is 1 year. The length of the contract is irrevocable. There is no limit to the number of rookies that can be signed to long-term contracts.

Players who are not rookies (“veterans”) are eligible for long-term contracts no longer than 3 years in length, under the same conditions specified above. However, a team is only permitted to have two (2) veterans signed to long-term contracts at any one time. A veteran with one year remaining will not count as a veteran with respect to this limit.

There is a second avenue to retaining players. An owner may extend up to two (2) existing contracts for one additional season at a salary $5 above that of the previous season. Player retentions for the upcoming season must be declared by November 30.

* 1. **Payroll floor/cap**

There is a minimum payroll of $50, a soft payroll cap of $120 and a hard cap of $130. An owner that exceeds the hard cap will be charged 20 additional runs allowed for each week that her payroll exceeds the hard cap.

* 1. **Luxury tax**

Owners will be charged luxury tax on a weekly basis for the portion of their payroll exceeding $120. The luxury tax rate is 5000% per season. The owner will be required to increase their deposit to cover the estimated luxury tax.

**IV. Transactions**

**a) Roster moves**

Roster moves are free, unlimited, and processed weekly on Fantrax. The scoring period is Monday through Sunday. All transactions must be made before the first game of the week in order to be effective.

**b) Releasing players**

A team can release a player on Fantrax. The team is still responsible for the released player's entire contract, including long-term deals. Preseason releases made before the first auction closing do not count against the cap. In-season releases do count against the cap, and merely free up a roster spot. A player cannot be released in the same preseason in which he was signed. For September call-ups, owners will be permitted to leave players not on an MLB roster as of August 31 on their minor league roster for the remainder of the season. However, a player can only be placed back on the minor league roster if he is actually demoted to the minor leagues.

**c) Signing free agents**

Free agents can be signed for the remainder of that season in the weekly free agent auction on Fantrax. It’s straight bidding; there is no proxy to process maximum bids.

**d) Trades**

When a trade is made, player contracts will count against the new owner’s payroll cap as of that week. All trades must include at least one player on each side.

If a veteran signed to a long-term contract is traded to an owner who already has two veterans signed to long-term deals, the traded veteran will become a free agent at the end of that season. No trades are permitted between September 1 and December 1.

**e) Disabled List**

Only players actually on the DL of their MLB teams can be placed on the DL. Their salaries continue to count against the team’s payroll cap.

# V. Rules of procedure

* 1. **Trade approval**

The commissioner reserves the right to reject any trade that damages the integrity of the league or shows evidence of collusion between owners.

* 1. **Rule amendments**

An owner may petition the commissioner to amend or create a rule. The league will discuss it and decide.

* 1. **Departing owners**

If an owner decides to leave the league, all of her players will become free agents available at the next league auction. She is not responsible for any payments left on unfulfilled long-term contracts as long as she informs the commissioner that she is not returning by February 1st, to allow time to find a replacement owner.

If you are interested in joining this league, you will need to submit $40, which covers the $6 admin fee and a $34 refundable deposit. I accept Venmo, Google Pay, or personal checks to:

Sue-Hyung Shin

120 Broadway

Unit 648

Seattle, WA 98122