

Gameplan Baseball



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INTRODUCTION

Gameplan Baseball is a simulation of Major League Baseball. The game concentrates on the decisions you would make as a team manager, dealing with decisions about which players to sign and draft, balancing the finances, player development and team selections.

In Gameplan Baseball we try to make the game work the same way as in real life. The decisions you make about your team are the same as the decisions that a manager would make in real life. Sometimes you have to balance one aspect against another (for example whether to spend on signing better players, or to coach your existing players, or to invest in increasing your future income).

In the reference rules you'll find there are a lot of cross references to other sections, but you won't necessarily want to look these up when you first read through the rulebook. Cross references are given mainly to avoid having to repeat things too often and to make it easier to find the section you want when you refer back to the rulebook during play.

DON'T PANIC!

Whether you're new to play-by-mail or not then you'll probably find this rulebook fairly hard going to start with. The rulebook itself is written mainly for use as reference, once you're already playing the game, and the need to state every rule with the greatest possible precision does not make for easy reading. You will probably find that after an initial attempt at reading through the rulebook you'll be best advised to join a game. Once you have a set of game reports in front of you then you'll find it easier to digest the rules.

Don't be surprised if it takes you some time to digest and understand all of the rules. The game is intended to be sophisticated, which is why many players are still playing it after ten or more seasons. Expect to make a few mistakes early on but you'll find you soon "grow into the game."

If you're new to play-by-mail games then you will probably want to read the section "About Play By Mail" before delving into the rest of the rulebook.

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ABOUT PLAY BY INTERNET/MAIL

Gameplan Baseball began as a Play By Mail, having been running since before the appearance of the Internet. Nowadays, many people will choose to use the Internet to submit their orders and receive results, but it can still be played by "snail mail" if you so choose, though certainly the Internet allows it to be played more quickly and conveniently.

Play By Mail (PBM) games have been around for quite a long time and it's generally recognised that chess players were the first to play through the post. Diplomacy was the first game to be played by post on a wide scale. Commercial play by mail games, board games adapted for postal play like Chess or Diplomacy first appeared during the late 1970's and have been growing in popularity ever since.

The main advantages of postal play are the availability of opponents, impartial umpiring (the umpire or moderator is generally known as the GM – this is just a piece of jargon, and stands for Games Master) and the complexity of the games that can be played. You will find that play by mail games are normally far more detailed than computer or board games, and although the game is run by computer you do not need a computer to play – all you need is a pen and paper, and the enthusiasm to be a successful manager in Gameplan Baseball.

In a simulation game like Gameplan Baseball there is another advantage, which is that players never get to know the exact rules or quite how everything works. Information remains secret to the computer and the programmer, so that players have to play the game as they see it, rather than simply "playing the rules". This is much more like real life.

The fact that in a play by mail game you're playing against other active players rather than against the computer means that every game is different (unlike a computer game where you soon learn what your computer will do in each situation). Many players enjoy the challenge of a battle of wits against active opponents, which is almost impossible to arrange with any other sort of game.

Most established players will tell you that postal games are a very exciting way to play. Two weeks or so per turn may seem slow at first, but you'll soon find that you're using a lot of that time for thinking and planning. Everyone sends in instructions on the order sheets provided and once the deadline is past all the orders are run through our computer and the results are sent out. You'll probably find yourself patrolling your inbox or doormat in anticipation of receiving your results. I know I still do, and I've been playing postal games for more than ten years.

Play By Mail games are not normally very easy to play, at least to start with. A game that you can pick up and fully understand in the first ten minutes is usually not one that you will still be playing several years later!

One unique feature of PBM games is that the GM only actually makes a profit if you continue to play for a reasonable length of time. The cost of design, development, advertising, producing rulebooks, buying computers and so forth is much higher than the amount you pay to join the game. In a PBM game no-one is going to make any money if you don't like the game – companies can't sell you a pretty box or impressive graphics and leave you with a box full of air.

Another important feature of PBM games is that the designers and programmers are able to make improvements while the game is in play. Usually we get a lot more feedback from our customers than other game designers can hope for and this means that the same PBM game designers adopt a policy of "continuous development" where the game is constantly evolving, improving and expanding. This is especially appropriate for simulation games.

The usual method of payment in PBM is to send a sum of money to buy "turn credits". Each turn you play, one credit is deducted. When your turn credits are running low then you top up by buying some more. Most GMs give a discount for buying lots of turn credits in one payment (this rewards players who stay with the game for a long time or play lots of games at once). If you run out of turn credits then you drop out of the game. Turn credits are normally returnable if you resign from the game and want your money back, but there's an administration charge to be deducted (you pay our bank charges for the transaction).

1 GENERAL RULES

1.1 THE GAME There are twenty four teams in each game. The league structure is similar to that of Major League Baseball, arranged in the American and National leagues, each of which has three divisions (four teams per division, so one team is missing from each of the divisions). All regular season games are played against teams within a league (though interleague games may be introduced if the real-life Major Leagues adopt them following the 1997 experiment with interleague games) culminating in the playoffs to select the two teams (one from each league) to compete for the World Series. In this rulebook the players of the game are generally referred to as "managers".

Note: When the real life leagues change to 30 teams Gameplan Baseball will probably remain with the existing 24 team structure. This provides a better schedule, makes filling leagues with active managers easier and has generally been found to be an ideal number of teams for a game. If the real life leagues reorganise their divisions Gameplan Baseball divisions will not necessarily be reorganised.

1.2 SCHEDULE Each team plays three "series" per turn (or "week", though it doesn't actually represent a week in game time, more like ten days) each consisting of three games against the same opponent (so a total of nine games each turn). You will play either one or two series at home. There are 18 weeks in the regular season, so that each team plays a full 162 game schedule. Each week you will play one series against a divisional opponent (so you play a total of six series against each divisional opponent during the season) and two series against non-divisional opponents (so you play four or five series against each non-divisional opponent during the season). The regular season is always preceded by a full week of pre-season games.

1.3 THE GM The "GM" is the person responsible for the operation of the game. The game is actually processed by computer, but is supervised by the GM.

1.4 DEADLINES The GM sets a deadline each turn and games are normally processed on the day of this deadline. Your orders must arrive on or before this deadline. You should, if possible, allow three days for first class post (our experience is that next day delivery has a way of failing at the vital moment). If your orders arrive late then they are discarded. If you miss a turn there is no way to make it up.

1.5 TURN CREDITS One turn credit is deducted for each turn played. In addition you may have further part credits deducted to pay for optional listings (see 6.31-6.35 and section 14). If you do not have sufficient credits for the optional listings then any such requests will be denied. Unpaid turns may be mailed at the discretion of the GM (second unpaid turns are not mailed).

Current turnfees are indicated in startup information and game reports. When the prices of turn credits are changed any credits already bought are normally still worth a full turn.

1.6 TURNSHEETS Your orders should always be submitted on the turnsheet provided. Think BEFORE you fill in the turnsheet. The recommended method is to write out your plans on another sheet of paper and transfer the final version to your turnsheet only when you're finished.

1.7 CORRECTIONS In any play-by-mail game, it is necessary to be precise with your instructions. It is NOT the job of the GM to interpret your orders, but only to enter whatever orders he's given (even though there are some "automatic" corrections that are made by the computer to prevent some of the most obvious foul-ups).

1.8 MESSAGES You may send private messages via the GM. These should be written on message cards (postcards or index cards preferred), clearly labelled with the game name and number, your name and team, and the name and team of the player you intend the message to go to. Inappropriate messages (anything likely to cause offence) will not be forwarded.

1.9 LOSING POINTS The currency used in the game is losing points, usually abbreviated to LPs (so called because you gain more if you lose, making it tougher for the more successful teams to stay at the top). Losing points are used to coach players, sign new players, attract more fans, merchandising operations, stadium facilities, etc. Each week your basic income is 50 LPs plus 4 LPs per defeat (so your basic income is 50 LP for nine wins, and 86 LP for nine defeats). If a team has a balance of more than 100 LPs at the end of a season (after the special actions following the third round of the draft) then half of the excess LPs are lost (eg 200 LPs are rounded down to 150 LPs).

1.10 STADIUM FACILITIES Each team also gains LPs each turn according to the current Stadium Facilities (see 6.7), representing increased income due to higher ticket prices courtesy of better stadium facilities. At the end of the season the Stadium Facilities level drops by two. The maximum level of Stadium Facilities is 15.

1.11 MERCHANDISING Each turn a team receives additional LPs based upon the total previously spent on merchandising (see 6.8), representing sale of shirts, bats etc. The current total of merchandising is reduced by a percentage equal to the number of wins gained during the turn (rounded down) for the first 100 points of merchandising, and half of this percentage for any merchandising above 100, but double this amount is added to the team's income. The merchandising total is carried forward in full from season to season. You cannot have more than 200 LPs invested in merchandising at any time.

Example 1: A team has spent 80 LPs on merchandising and wins 5 games. The merchandising total is reduced by 5% (4 LPs) and double this amount is received as income (8 LPs).

Example 2: A team has spent 180 LPs on merchandising and wins 5 games. The merchandising total is reduced by 5% of 100 (5 LPs) and 2.5% of 80 (2 LPs) and double this amount is received as income (14 LPs).

1.12 FANS Each team receives extra LPs each turn equal to 1 LP per one thousand fans (see 6.9). At the start of each new league, each team starts with 20000 fans. At the end of a season the level of fans is halved, with a minimum number of 20000 fans. Each turn your fans number increases by 1% plus 0.5% for each win achieved. The maximum income from fans per turn is 40 LPs, though the maximum number of fans allowed is 48000 (so you can have more than 40000 fans, but these will only increase the number that carryover at the start of a new season).

1.13 WAGES Each team must also pay its players their wages each turn (including players on the reserve and draft squads). Each player has a given wages level, which is normally equal to one tenth of their current value (rounding down, minimum 1 LP). A player's wages are normally fixed at the start of the season, unless he holds out (see 3.19) or signs for a new team, so if a player's value increases during the season (for example if he is coached) his wages will not increase at the same time. Note that as players decline in ability their wage demands do not necessarily drop!

1.14 STADIUM TYPE Each team also has a home stadium, whose field is rated by size (small, medium or large), playing surface (grass or astroturf) and its building type (either dome or open). Teams will play better at their home stadium and at stadia which are similar in layout to their home stadium (fielders used to fielding on grass are most effective on other grass fields, and less effective on astroturf, etc.). You may change the nature of your home stadium using the appropriate special actions (see 6.12, 6.13 and 6.14) at the end of a season (the final turn of the playoffs, after games have been played). You cannot have a stadium with a grass surface and a dome building type (grass won't grow indoors).

Note: Changing your stadium type is expensive and it isn't intended managers will do it often. The option has been included so that a manager who is desperate to change the stadium type can do so, but at a high cost.

1.15 NOTATION Players are identified by their shirt numbers (from 1 to 99). Player abilities are identified by three letter codes. Players are referred to as either pitchers or batters (catchers are batters who can play at the specialist catcher position).

1.16 DESIGNATED HITTER RULE Gameplan Baseball uses the "designated hitter" rule for both leagues, so pitchers don't bat and a batter who doesn't field bats in his place.

1.17 ROSTER Each team has a roster of up to thirty one players. Twenty five players form the ACTIVE squad (this is the same size as an active squad in real life) available for selection each turn, three players form the RESERVE squad, minor leaguers who can be promoted on demand to the active squad. In addition, you may have up to three "draftees" signed on your DRAFT squad. During the first season the draft squad is empty. In later seasons you're advised to clear your draft squad (promote or release them) as soon as possible to minimise your wages bill. In pre-season games you are not restricted to selecting players who are on your active squad; you may select ANY player on your roster regardless of which squad he is on (so you may select reserve and draft squad players in pre-season to see how well they perform before deciding whether to keep or waive them).

1.18 TRAINERS Each team has a level for its trainers, from 0 to 20 (see 6.10). Trainers reduce the severity of injuries suffered and also reduce the amount of fatigue suffered by players from game to game. At the end of the season your team trainers' level drops by two.

1.19 TRADING DEADLINE At the end of the regular season a trading deadline is imposed. After this time you can no longer complete trades (see section 7) and sign free agents (see section 8).

1.20 TEAM CODES The divisional structure and team codes for the teams in Gameplan Baseball are as follows (remember that one team will be absent from each division).

American League East

BA Baltimore Orioles
BR Boston Red Sox
NY New York Yankees
TB Tampa Bay Devil Rays
TO Toronto Blue Jays

American League Central

CW Chicago White Sox
CL Cleveland Indians
KC Kansas City Royals
DT Detroit Tigers
MT Minnesota Twins

American League West

LG Los Angeles Angels
OA Oakland Athletics
SM Seattle Mariners
TR Texas Rangers
TR Texas Rangers

National League East

AB Atlanta Braves
FM Florida Marlins
WN Washington Nationals
NM New York Mets
PH Philadelphia Phillies

National League Central

CU Chicago Cubs
CI Cincinnati Reds
HA Houston Astros
PI Pittsburgh Pirates
SL St Louis Cardinals
MB Milwaukee Brewers

National League West

AD Arizona Diamondbacks
CO Colorado Rockies
LA Los Angeles Dodgers
SD San Diego Padres
SF San Francisco Giants

2 STARTUP RULES

2.1 INTRODUCTION These rules apply only to setting up a team in a new league.

2.2 INITIAL BALANCE Each team starts with a balance of 1000 LPs and no players signed. There is a single setup turn, in which you select your initial squad. Each team receives an initial draft list of forty batters (five of whom are also catchers) and forty pitchers, from whom they should make their initial selections.

You are advised to leave yourself with a small reserve of losing points (about 50 LPs) for the future, to spend on stadium development and merchandising or you may find you are forced to deplete your squad in order to balance your books.

2.3 INITIAL SELECTION For your initial squad you should pick exactly twenty eight players from the draft list provided (the first twenty five form your active squad, the remaining three form your reserve squad). You must pick at least eleven batters (two of whom must also be catchers) and eleven pitchers in your initial active squad and whilst your other three active squad selections may be batters or pitchers you are strongly advised to select a balance. For your pitchers you should select at least four pitchers suitable as starters and four pitchers suitable as relief pitchers. The cost of players is related to their abilities and potential, so the more skilled players are more expensive.

If you fail to send in your initial selection by the first deadline then a selection will be made for you.

2.4 INITIAL PITCHING ROTATION The first four pitchers you select form your initial Starting Rotation (see 4.3). The next four pitchers selected form your initial Relief Depth Chart. The ninth pitcher selected is your initial Closing pitcher. At the start of the game each team has a starting rotation of four pitchers, a relief depth chart of four pitchers and a closing pitcher. These numbers may be changed later.

2.5 INITIAL FIELDING LINEUP The first nine batters you select form your initial fielding selection. In order these are the Catcher, 1st Baseman, 2nd Baseman, 3rd Baseman, ShortStop, Left Outfielder, Center Outfielder, Right Outfielder and the Designated Hitter (see 3.7). Any further batters selected are placed "on the bench". Note that your catcher must be a batter classified as a catcher (see 3.6).

The primary fielding positions (see 5.10) for your first eight batters are automatically set the same as the position they will occupy in your initial fielding lineup. Your reserve catcher is automatically set as a catcher. For your designated hitter and all other batters you should specify the player's primary fielding position. You are advised to have no more than two players at any one position (some positions you will only have one player) and to select a balance of reserve infielders and outfielders.

2.6 INITIAL BATTING LINEUP You should specify your initial batting lineup (see 3.8), giving the position in the batting order each of the first nine batters selected will occupy. These values should be from 1 to 9.

2.7 PLAYER NAMES Initial shirt numbers and names for your players are given on your initial turnsheet, and you cannot change these numbers during the setup phase. You may change numbers and names later using the appropriate special actions. The real-life positions are also shown, but this is only given as a guide when naming your players. You do not have to match the real-life positions with player positions in the game, except when a player selected has to be a batter, catcher or pitcher (see above).

You should note that the players' names and abilities have no connection with the real life players and real life teams. The names used are generally the same as real life to add flavour and enjoyment to the game, but the skills and abilities are completely independent of real life and you do not have to match your players' skills and names to those in real life, particularly if players in real life retire or change clubs.

Note: This is done simply to aid the GM. Typing in twenty eight names for twenty four teams EVERY time a new game is started up is tedious, and rather a waste of time as the names concerned will usually be more or less the same from one game to another.

2.8 STADIUM TYPE You should also decide on your stadium type (see 1.14) for your home ballpark. Your stadium is defined according to three characteristics, its surface, size and building type. Surface may be grass or turf (meaning astroturf). Size may be large, medium or small (the smaller a stadium, the better it is for power-hitting batters) and the building type may be Open or Dome (indoor stadium). Note that you cannot have a stadium which is Grass and also a Dome.

The stadium type for your team in real-life is shown on your initial turnsheet. You do not have to conform to this definition, but many players may wish to do so.

2.9 FREE AGENTS At the start of a new game a free agent list is also generated, giving a selection of players who may be signed to replace your existing players (see section 8). This list is issued along with the first set of pre-season games.

2.10 LEAGUE ROUNDUP After all teams have made their initial squad selections the fixture list is produced for the first season and the league roundup is issued. This lists all the teams/managers involved in the league along with outline information about their squads.

2.11 FINANCIAL ACTIONS In the setup turn you also have the opportunity to specify an initial level for your stadium facilities, merchandising level and initial expenditure on recruiting extra fans. These are processed via a STADIUM action (see 6.7), MERC action (see 6.8) and FANS action (see 6.9). You may wish to use these actions in the setup turn to conserve special actions for the following turns when you may well be busy changing game parameters, selecting platoon and pinch hitters and so on.

2.12 INITIAL PARAMETERS At the start of each new league your MINLEAD (see 4.18) is set to zero, MAXLEAD (see 4.17) is set to 3, STARTINN (see 4.7) is set to 3, BLOWOUT INNINGS (see 4.12) is set to 6, BLOWOUT MARGIN (see 4.12) is set to 9, OPPHAND (see 4.13) is set to NO, PINCHINN (see 5.7) is set to 7, PINCH DEFICIT (see 5.8) is set to 1 and your platoon and pinch hitter slots (see 5.4 and 5.6) are left vacant. Each pitcher's MAXBATS (see 4.5.1) is set to 21, MAXHITS (see 4.5.2) is set to 4, MAXEXTRA (see 4.5.3) is set to 6 and FIRSTINN (see 4.5.4) is set to 1. You will want to reset many of these parameters as quickly as possible as you learn what you can expect from your team and players.

2.13 STANDBYS New managers may be appointed to an existing team where the old manager has dropped out. If the team has an LP balance below 100 then the balance is increased to 100.

2.14 PRE-SEASON WEEKS The setup turn includes a set of pre-season games, played using the lineups determined by your initial selections. This turn is followed by a second round of pre-season games. Player fatigue and form gains/losses are recorded during pre-season, but form and fatigue are all reset to zero prior to the start of the regular season. There is also no income for pre-season weeks and nor do you have to pay your players wages. You should also note that in pre-season you are not restricted to selecting players from your active squad – in pre-season any player on your roster may be selected regardless of which squad he is on.

3 PLAYERS & SQUADS

3.1 YOUR SQUAD Each team always has an active squad of exactly twenty five players, a reserve squad of three players and a draft squad of up to three players (so a full squad always consists of at least twenty-eight players, and can be as many as thirty-one). Whenever you sign a free agent to your squad he replaces another player who is waived.

You must always have at least ten pitchers and eleven batters on your active squad and at least two catchers on either your active or reserve squads (you must have at least one catcher on your active squad, but the second catcher may be on your reserve squad). These restrictions should ensure that you can always put out a full selection of uninjured players. You are strongly advised to have a good balance of players on your active roster, so that your squad can adjust to all eventualities.

3.2 PLAYER TYPES Each player is classified as either a pitcher (Pit) or a batter (Bat). Only certain batters have catching ability and are either labelled with a "C" after their abilities or referred to as a "Cat" instead of as a "Bat".

3.3 PITCHERS Your pitchers are normally divided into three groups, Starters, Relievers (the Bullpen) and Specialist Relievers (the setup and closing pitchers). Each team normally has a "rotation" for its Starters and a "depth chart" for its Relievers. The first Starter in the rotation will pitch one day, the next starter the next day and so on until the start of the rotation is reached again.

3.3.1 STARTERS Starters are the most important pitchers on the team, and selecting how many batters a starter will pitch to is an important decision. A team must have four to six pitchers in their starting rotation and they start games in a strict rotation.

3.3.2 RELIEVERS (THE BULLPEN) Relievers come in after the Starter has pitched to the desired number of batters or has been benched for pitching poorly. A team must have between four and six pitchers in its Bullpen, and these are ordered in the form of a depth chart, with the highest ranked, unfatigued pitcher normally being the one selected to play when a reliever is needed.

3.3.3 SETUP AND CLOSING PITCHERS The Setup and Closing pitchers are specialist pitchers who normally "finish off" a close game, pitching the eighth and ninth innings respectively, instead of using the bullpen pitchers. Since the setup and closing pitchers only pitch one inning per game, they can usually pitch in most games. You do not have to use setup and closing pitchers. If you choose not to have them then your bullpen pitchers take responsibility for the eighth and ninth innings.

3.4 PITCHER ABILITIES Each pitcher is rated according to four abilities, each of which reflects a different aspect of his pitching skill. These abilities are Accuracy, Control, Quickness and Stamina. Each is detailed below, along with the three letter codes that identify them in reports and orders.

3.4.1 ACCURACY (ACC) A pitcher's Accuracy represents his ability to throw "strikes" (successful pitches) rather than "balls" (inaccurate pitches). A pitcher with good accuracy is less likely to "walk" a batter (allowing him to reach first base without having to hit the ball). To strike a batter out a pitcher needs to get three strikes, if he pitches four balls first then the batter walks to first base.

3.4.2 CONTROL (CON) A pitcher's Control represents his ability to avoid throwing "gimme" pitches, which are much easier for the batter to hit for a Home Run, scoring a run for the batter and also batting in all other runners already on base.

3.4.3 QUICKNESS (QUI) A pitcher's Quickness represents his speed of delivery and ability to pitch the ball quickly, making it difficult for runners to steal a base. Once a pitcher has begun his pitching motion he must pitch the ball, and runners may try to steal a base.

3.4.4 STAMINA (STA) A pitcher's Stamina represents his ability to continue pitching without becoming fatigued. There is a limit of how long a pitcher can continue to throw at speeds around 90 mph and a pitcher's effectiveness rapidly decreases once he starts to get tired. As a general rule of thumb each increase in class for a pitcher's stamina allows him to pitch to around three more batters without becoming fatigued.

3.5 BATTERS A team should also have reserve batters on the squad in addition to the nine starters. The number of batters on a squad is limited by the squad limits (see 3.1).

3.6 CATCHERS Certain batters also have abilities as Catchers (indicated by a "C" on the initial selection sheet). The catcher in your fielding selection must have catching ability. A second player with catching ability may be selected to field in positions other than catcher. A catcher's level simply reflects his batting abilities, but catchers' values are higher than their batting skills warrant because of their catching ability.

3.7 FIELDING POSITIONS All batters (except the designated hitter) also have to field, and each batter occupies one of nine fielding positions, each of which has an associated code. The Designated Hitter (DH) bats instead of the pitcher, and does not field. The Center Fielder (CF), Left Fielder (LF) and Right Fielder (RF) form the "outfield", and are the fielders furthest from the bat. Their main jobs are to be able to catch high balls, move quickly to reach the ball and to be able to throw in from long distances. The "infield" is formed by the First Baseman (1B), Second Baseman (2B), Third Baseman (3B) and the ShortStop (SS), who acts as an infield sweeper. The basemen's main jobs are to take throws and "tag" out runners, while the shortstop has to be able to stop fast-hit ground balls travelling past him. The final fielder is the Catcher (C), who calls the pitches, catches them and if necessary, tries to beat a runner trying to "steal a base" by throwing quickly to a baseman to get him out.

There are also two utility fielding positions, used primarily for backups who specialise as reserves rather than in one particular position. A Utility Infielder (IF) covers all four infield positions (1B, 2B, 3B and SS) and a Utility Outfielder (OF) covers all three outfield positions (CF, LF and RF).

3.8 BATTING ORDER Batting order is very important in Baseball, with different batters fulfilling different tasks. The first batter, often known as the "lead-off" is expected to be able to get on base, distracting the fielding side. Once a batter is at first base the pitcher has to be aware of the possibility of a "steal" attempt and both first and second basemen have to stay closer to their bases. The second batter should also be able to get on base allowing the first batter to advance into scoring position. The third batter is often a team's best batter, as he will get to bat in the first inning and may also drive the first or second batter in to score. The fourth and fifth batters generally need to be big hitters and are known as "clean-up" hitters, as their jobs are to drive in those of the first three batters still on base. The sixth batter usually has abilities similar to the lead off batter, as hopefully he will come to the plate with the bases empty after the clean-up hitters have driven the others in. The seventh, eighth and ninth batters tend to be the least effective in the lineup, and are usually the players whose places in the team are due to their fielding ability (eg the catcher).

3.9 BATTING ABILITIES Each batter is rated according to four abilities, each of which reflects a different aspect of his batting and fielding skills. These abilities are Hitting, Power, Speed and Fielding. The three batting skills tend to mirror the first three pitching skills (Hitting/Accuracy, Power/Control and Speed/Quickness). Each of these abilities is detailed below, along with the three letter codes that identify them.

3.9.1 HITTING (HIT) A batter's Hitting represents his ability to actually lay the bat cleanly on ball and make a base hit (allowing him to reach base and runners to advance).

3.9.2 POWER (POW) A batter's Power represents his ability to turn base hits into deep hits (allowing him to get beyond first base) and home runs. It is also a factor in determining the effectiveness of the outfielders throwing the ball in from long distances.

3.9.3 SPEED (SPD) A batter's Speed represents his ability to run between bases, reducing the time for the fielders to "ground him out" (run him out) and also his ability to steal bases. It also affects his speed when closing in on the ball when fielding.

3.9.4 FIELDING (FLD) A batter's Fielding represents his general ability when fielding. This includes his ability to catch the ball and also quickly make the correct decision as to where to throw the ball when necessary.

3.10 PLAYER ABILITIES AND CLASS Each player's batting or pitching abilities are rated from 1 to 35, but the actual values are hidden. Instead these abilities are rated according to "classes" – Poor (Po), Fair (Fa), Average (Av), Good (Go), Excellent (Ex) or World Class (WC), each of which covers a range of 5 or 6 ratings.

Note: This means that a player's ability can increase, without the class changing (eg the player improves from the lower end of "Average" to the upper end of "Average").

3.11 PLAYER LEVEL A player's total abilities are also expressed as an overall level, usually accompanied with his best ability (so a pitcher 8 CON means level 8, best pitching ability Control). A player's level represents his overall skills, whereas classes (see 3.10) reflect his skill levels in individual abilities.

3.12 FATIGUE Baseball is a very demanding sport, which can have a team playing a game almost every day, averaging six games a week. It is important to have extra players, batters and pitchers, to put into your lineup in order to rest your best players.

3.12.1 PITCHING FATIGUE A pitcher's fatigue is expressed in terms of the number of days it will take him to recover from pitching (hence pitching fatigue is a short-term rating). A pitcher with average stamina can normally face around twenty-four batters and take three days to recover. A pitcher who faces a handful of batters may not suffer any fatigue, though will do so eventually if he plays in consecutive games.

The exact number of batters a pitcher can face without becoming fatigued will vary from game to game, partly due to some variation in how fresh he is after warming up and partly dependent upon his performance during the game – if he's striking out batters he doesn't get as tired as quickly as he does if he's being hit all around the park! A pitcher's fatigue can never rise above five, though you are strongly advised to ensure that a pitcher's fatigue never reaches this threshold, where his performance will be way below par and the chance of suffering injury significantly increased.

3.12.2 BATTING FATIGUE A batter's fatigue is expressed as a rating from zero to ten and his effectiveness begins to decline once his fatigue reaches four. The rate at which a batter suffers fatigue is dependent upon his stamina, but this is always hidden from the manager. You can judge how good a batter's stamina is by the rate at which he suffers fatigue. A batter generally recovers at about three times the rate he suffers fatigue. Catchers generally get fatigued more quickly than other batters, whilst the designated hitter (who does not have to field) and pinch hitters (who only play a fraction of a game) fatigue less. Remember to plan ahead and rest batters in advance, so that your batters don't all become fatigued at the same time. Note that platooning helps to rest players, as certain starters are rested from games when replaced by the platoon.

Note: Batting fatigue is expressed as a long-term value and batters with low fatigue (under four) are not less effective when playing (and four or five lead to very little drop off in performance). Pitching fatigue is expressed as a daily rating and if a pitcher is fatigued then he will be less effective. Pitching fatigue increases more quickly than batting fatigue, but is also recovered more quickly.

3.13 INJURIES At the end of each turn (ie after all games have been played) one of your active-squad players will normally suffer an injury. The chance of suffering an injury is dependent upon a number of factors, how much the player played, how much fatigue he suffered during the turn (the more fatigued a player is the more likely he is to suffer an injury), his age and the quality of your trainers. Good trainers will also reduce the amount of fatigue your players suffer during the season, making them more effective and also less susceptible to injury. No new injuries are suffered in pre-season or during the playoffs.

When a player suffers an injury its seriousness is expressed in terms of the number of games that the player will miss, starting with the first game of the following turn. The majority of injuries will be relatively minor, involving a player missing a dozen or so games, but occasionally injuries may be more serious.

Rarely you may have to select an injured player to play in a game (only if your squad is very unbalanced). In such cases the player's performance will be negligible and his injury will not recover whilst he continues playing. Players may recover fatigue whilst they are injured. As far as recovery from injuries is concerned it is assumed that each team plays a game every day, and odd days "off" are ignored.

Note: There are a number of restrictions on injuries, included to prevent squads being decimated by poor luck, and to ensure managers can balance their rosters. Only one new injury may be suffered per turn and no more than four players in total, two pitchers, two batters or one catcher will be injured at any one time (so the minimum eleven active batters will ensure you always have at least nine fit and available for selection).

3.14 HOLDOUTS If, at the end of a turn, a team's LP balance would drop below zero then their highest value player (unless injured) or players will hold out. The team saves a number of LPs equal to the holdout's wages (essentially the player is fined) but he is unavailable for selection the following turn. In addition the player's value increases by 2 LPs and his wages are recalculated (see 3.19).

The restrictions on injured players (see 3.13) includes players holding out. A team may never have more than two batters, one catcher and two pitchers injured or holding out at any time.

Holdouts are intended to penalise teams who don't balance their books and will generally occur at the start of the season (as the season progresses your fans increase, so your income also increases). At the start of each season you have an LP windfall (because you are waiving three players to make space for your draftees) so you'll only get into difficulty if your wages are excessive and you don't invest these LPs wisely. If you're sensible you'll keep a reserve of LPs in case your finances get tight early in the year.

3.15 HANDEDNESS Handedness is probably more important in Baseball than in any other sport. Left handed batters are generally much more effective against right handed pitchers and vice versa. Consequently there tend to be a high proportion of left handed batters in Baseball, and a high proportion of left handed pitchers to counter them. Left-handed batters with lesser ability may be just as effective as more talented right-handed batters, because of their extra effectiveness against right-handed pitchers. There are also a smaller number of batters who are able to bat either left or right handed with equal (or almost equal) effectiveness, according to the pitcher. These batters are known as "switch hitters" and their values are generally slightly higher than "one-handed" batters of similar abilities. A batter or pitcher's handedness is shown after his level as a one letter code (eg a player referred to as Bat L is a left-handed batter).

3.16 POTENTIAL A player's potential represents his ability to improve during and between seasons. A player with potential may be coached (see 6.5) during the season to improve his abilities. At the end of a season a player with good form throughout the season and potential is also likely to translate this potential into permanent increases in abilities, which may or may not be reflected in a change of classes and/or level (see 3.10 and 3.11).

3.17 EXPERIENCE A player's experience represents the number of seasons he has spent playing in the Major leagues. Players with high experience are generally more effective than those with similar abilities but less experience.

3.18 VALUE Each player has a value, which is a reflection of his ability (or more accurately, a reflection of his opinion of his ability). Catchers and switch hitters have higher values than their basic batting skills warrant, having a bonus because of their specialist abilities. Once a player has lost all of his potential then as he gets older his abilities start to diminish, but it's unlikely his value will also do so.

Younger players (rookies, first and second year players) are generally shown with lower values than their abilities merit, and consequently have lower wage demands.

Notes: generally younger players are less effective because of their lack of experience. This encourages managers to retain and develop their younger players, both by reducing their value (so reducing the income gained if they are waived) but also by reducing their wage demands in their first few seasons. However, be warned that as they develop and grow older they'll soon be demanding increased wages to suit their improving effectiveness!

3.19 WAGES A player's wages are fixed at the start of a season (at one tenth of his value, rounding down, minimum 1 LP) unless he moves team (via trade or free agency) or holds out. Consequently if a player starts the season with value 28 LPs (and therefore wages of 2 LPs) and is subsequently coached (increasing his value to 30 LPs) his wages are unchanged at 2 LPs for that season unless he moves team or holds out.

3.20 RESERVE SQUAD You have three players held on your reserve squad, players normally playing in the minor leagues for a "farm team". Such players will usually gain form whilst on the reserve squad and may be activated to your active roster (see 6.2).

3.21 DRAFT SQUAD Your draft squad is not used during the first season. During the draft, draftees are automatically placed in your draft squad. You can promote players to the active or reserve squad from the draft squad during the season (see 6.3) or release them (see 6.4).

A player on the draft squad is considered to be playing in the minor leagues and gains form in the same way as a player on the reserve squad (see rule 3.20). Your draft squad is cleared immediately after your special actions are processed on the final week of the regular season. Any players remaining on it at this stage are auto-waived. Half the value of a player auto-waived is now recovered when he is waived, but such players do not appear on the free agent list.

*Notes: if you leave a player in your draft squad then you still pay them wages, and they cannot contribute to the team without being promoted. However, it does enable managers to leave them on the draft squad for most of their rookie season to allow them to develop should they so wish. Remember however that if you leave them there until the final week of the regular season then they will be **auto-waived after** your special actions for that turn have been processed. If you haven't promoted or released them before the final week of the regular season you should do so then.*

3.22 FORM A player's form is a temporary modification to his abilities, representing whether he is playing well or poorly. Form cannot drop below -9, nor increase above 9. At the end of the season all form is reset to zero, though players with good form throughout the season are more likely to convert potential into improved abilities. As a general rule of thumb a player whose form is 9 is playing about one class above his normal abilities. Consequently you may find that for short periods an in-form player of lower level may well be more successful than an out-of-form higher level player.

Each turn a player is rated for how successfully he performed during the week and is given a weekly form rating between -5 (very poor) and 5 (superb). A player's overall form rating for the next week is the sum of his weekly form rating and half his previous form rating, rounded down (so a player whose form was 5 carries over 2 points into the next week). The weekly rating for form is dependent upon two factors, how the player actually performed (batting average, scoring runs, ERA, pitchers winning/saving/losing games) and also how well the player is expected to perform. Lower level players will gain more form than more talented counterparts for similar performances. Reserve squad players are assumed to be playing successfully in the minor leagues (unless injured), so will generally gain form. Inactive players will have weekly form ratings of zero, so their form will quickly tend to zero.

Note: Form is extremely volatile, and you will notice significant swings in a player's form from week to week. Remember the maxim "form is temporary, class is permanent". Just because a player is out of form doesn't mean he's utterly useless, just that he isn't performing up to scratch. The quickest way to get an out of form player back into form is to keep playing him, though by doing so you are taking a gamble on his performance. If a player is struggling for form then you have a number of options for helping him out of the slump:- put him on the reserve squad (i.e. send him to the minors), select him as the bonus player or use an ADDFORM action (see 6.36) to help him.

3.23 SEASON FORM A player's total weekly form for the season is also recorded to determine whether he will convert any remaining potential into improved abilities after the draft (see 11.8). The higher a player's total form during the season the more likely he is to improve at the end of the season. Note that this total form is the sum of the weekly form values (from -5 to 5) and does not take into account form carried over from the previous week (so the total form values shown on team reports is NOT the sum of the form ratings shown on the reports – these ratings include the carried over form).

3.24 TRADE LEVEL Each player has a Trade Level, which represents his "value" in a trade (see section 7) and is his level plus one fifth of potential, rounding down. A player may only be traded for another player with the same Trade Level. Trade Levels are shown on each team's squad listing and also on the league roundup.

Note that coaching a player (see 6.5) may lead to a change in his trade level, as his skills increase but his potential drops.

4 PITCHERS

4.1 INTRODUCTION A team's pitchers can be divided into two basic groups, starting pitchers and the "bullpen" (relief pitchers). The starting pitchers tend to play once every four or five games, with their jobs being to play as much of the game as possible, ideally (but rarely) seeing it through to a victorious finish.

Relief pitchers are ranked in terms of a depth chart and come in to play when the starter is removed, either through fatigue or poor performance. There tend to be a variety of relief pitchers. "Long relief" pitchers come in fairly early (fourth or fifth inning or earlier) when the starter has been pulled. "Short relief" pitchers are those whose normal job is to pitch one or two innings, either finishing off a game mainly pitched by the starter or before handing over to another short-relief pitcher. Two short-relief pitchers have specialist jobs – the "closer" normally pitches the ninth (final) inning to protect a small lead while the "setup pitcher" pitches the eighth in similar circumstances, to "set up" the closer. Some teams choose to nominate a specialist setup pitcher and closer to finish a game and some teams prefer to use bullpen pitchers to finish off games.

4.2 BASIC PITCHING SELECTIONS Each turn you should specify your rotation for your starting pitchers, your depth chart for your bullpen and your specialist setup and closing pitchers (the latter two being optional). A pitcher cannot be selected more than once and cannot fulfil more than one role. You must have a minimum of four pitchers in your starting rotation and four pitchers on your bullpen depth chart. During the playoffs the minimum number of pitchers on the starting rotation is three.

4.3 STARTING ROTATION Your starting pitchers play in strict order of the starting rotation. For each game the pitcher at the head of the rotation is selected to start and after the game this pitcher is moved to the end of the rotation, with all other starters moving forward one place.

Note: Typically a team has either four or five pitchers on its starting rotation. Four pitchers can normally cope with starting duties, as long as no-one is injured and no pitcher suffers any above-average amounts of fatigue. With five pitchers on the starting rotation each starter gets an extra day of rest, allowing a little more flexibility.

4.4 SELECTING INJURED PITCHERS In Gameplan Baseball you are allowed to select an injured pitcher in the starting rotation, bullpen depth chart or specialist relief slots (setup pitcher or closer) if the pitcher concerned will return to fitness during the current turn (ie is injured for less than nine games).

In this case the computer will always ignore the pitcher concerned whilst he is still injured (so if an injured pitcher rotates to the head of the starting rotation, it will rotate again to bring up a fit pitcher, dumping the injured pitcher to the back) but the pitcher will then be available as soon as he is fit.

Note: This rule is included so that a pitcher who is due to return from injury halfway through the turn can be used for those later games. Be careful that you don't make a mess of your starting rotation and bullpen depth chart for the early games by, for example, only having two fit starting pitchers available.

4.5 PITCHING PARAMETERS Each individual pitcher has four pitching parameters, values which are set by the manager, which determine when he will be lifted from the game and replaced by another pitcher. The values you select will depend upon the role the pitcher is being asked to fulfil and will also be dependent upon his abilities. These parameters, along with the three letter codes that identify them are outlined below. None of these parameters can be set below 1.

4.5.1 MAXBATS (MxB) A pitcher's MAXBATS parameter determines how many batters a pitcher is allowed to face in a game before he is lifted. The primary factor in determining how long a pitcher can last is his stamina, though the pitcher's performance during the game may also affect this. See section 3.12.1 for details of pitching fatigue.

4.5.2 MAXHITS (MxH) A pitcher's MAXHITS parameter determines how many batters a pitcher may allow to reach base in a single inning (either through a base hit or walking, but not because of a fielder's error) before normally being taken out of the game (exceptions, see 4.6 and 4.7).

4.5.3 MAXEXTRA (MxE) A pitcher's MAXEXTRA parameter is only considered when the pitcher is a starter with the opportunity to pitch a complete game, which is likely to lead to greater increases in form, particularly for winning games, shutouts (no runs allowed) or "perfect games" (no hits or walks allowed). If the pitcher is due to be taken out of the game because he has faced MAXBATS batters BUT the number of outs required to complete the game is less than or equal to his MAXEXTRA then he is allowed to stay in the game until the game finishes, or this criterion is no longer fulfilled.

Once a game goes beyond the ninth inning (into extra innings) then MAXEXTRA is ignored. If a starting pitcher is pitching in the bottom of the ninth inning and the scores are tied then MAXEXTRA is ignored, as the pitcher cannot pitch a complete, winning game. The best he could do would be to take the game into extra innings.

Example: A starting pitcher with MAXEXTRA set to 6 has reached his MAXBATS at the start of the eighth inning, but because only 6 more outs are required to finish the game he is not lifted. If he allows any batter to get on base (so he cannot complete the game within MAXEXTRA outs) then he will be replaced immediately. If his MAXEXTRA had been set to 7, then he could allow one base-runner before being lifted.

4.5.4 FIRSTINN (FIn) A pitcher's FIRSTINN is only used to determine whether he will be called on to play as a reliever out of the bullpen. FIRSTINN represents the first inning in which the pitcher may be used. If the computer has searched through the depth chart and cannot find a single, unfatigued relief pitcher eligible to pitch because of the FIRSTINN criterion then it repeats the search, ignoring FIRSTINN.

Note: FIRSTINN effectively enables you to make the distinction between "long relief" and "short relief" pitchers. For example, setting a pitcher's FIRSTINN to 7 (perhaps with a low value for MAXBATS) and putting him above a pitcher with FIRSTINN set to 4 in the depth chart effectively sets the two pitchers as short and long relievers.

4.6 INNINGS RESTRICTIONS In addition to the restrictions upon pitchers given above (see 4.5) there are a number of innings restrictions which apply to pitchers being lifted. The third pitcher cannot come in before the start of the sixth inning (so your first two pitchers must pitch the first five innings), the fourth pitcher cannot come in before the start of the eighth and the fifth pitcher cannot come in before the start of the tenth, the sixth pitcher cannot come in before the start of the fourteenth and the seventh pitcher cannot come in before the start of the eighteenth (assuming you have enough pitchers in your bullpen to bring them in). No more than seven pitchers may ever be used in a game. If at the start of the eighth inning a team has already used three pitchers then the setup pitcher cannot be used (the same applies for the closer in the ninth if four pitchers have already been used).

Notes: These restrictions prevent managers making a mess by yanking pitchers too early. If you need more than four pitchers in regulation innings you're almost certainly doing so badly it's a hopeless cause anyway. The fifth, sixth and seventh pitchers are for exceptional circumstances, namely extra innings. They are allowed simply to avoid the scenario where one particular pitcher might have to pitch a huge number of innings, although if your bullpen isn't well populated this might occur anyway.

4.7 STARTER INNINGS You may specify a minimum number of innings which your all starters must pitch before you will consider benching them, using the parameter STARTER INNINGS (see 6.24). This value represents the number of innings your starters MUST pitch before you will consider removing them, even if they fail one of the usual criteria for being benched (see 4.5). The initial value for STARTER INNINGS is 3, and the value must be from 0 to 6 (inclusive).

4.8 BENCHING A PITCHER A pitcher will normally be replaced if he exceeds his MAXBATS or allows MAXHITS runners in a single inning, subject to the innings restrictions outlined above (see 4.6) and your starter innings parameter (see 4.7). He will also be replaced if his fatigue level reaches 5 (exhausted). If a pitcher allows MAXHITS runners during an inning but cannot be benched because of innings restrictions (see 4.6) then he will be benched at the end of that inning, as long as the innings restrictions allow. If he is not allowed to be benched then his "failure" in that inning does NOT carry over to the end of the next inning.

Example: a starting pitcher "fails" his MAXHITS during the third inning with STARTER INNINGS set to 3. He still has to complete the inning but is benched at the start of the fourth. If he had failed during the second then he is not benched before the third, and any decision about benching him at the end of the third is based only upon his performance during the third, not the second.

4.9 CLOSING PITCHER If during the ninth inning (either at the start of the inning or any later stage during it) the score is within MAXLEAD (see 4.17) and MINLEAD (see 4.18), inclusive, then your closing pitcher is brought in to replace the current pitcher UNLESS you have already used four pitchers OR the starter is trying to complete the game OR the closer is fatigued. A closer will only be benched if he exceeds his MAXHITS, or at the end of the ninth inning (the closer never pitches beyond the ninth inning), so MAXBATS is irrelevant for closing pitchers. If you do not wish to use a specialist closer then simply select number 0 as your closer.

You may also select your closer to pitch the eighth innings (see 4.10).

4.10 SETUP PITCHER The setup pitcher is used with similar criteria as the closer (see 4.9) except that he pitches the eighth inning provided that you have not already used three pitchers. If you do not wish to use a specialist setup pitcher then simply select number 0 as your setup pitcher.

Note that you cannot have a specialist setup pitcher if you do not have a specialist closer. If you have a setup and a closing pitcher nominated and for a particular game the closer cannot play (because he is fatigued or injured) then the setup pitcher will take over the closing role instead of playing the setup role.

You may choose to have your closing pitcher come into the game during the eighth innings and pitch both the eighth and ninth. To do so simply select the same pitcher in the setup and closing pitcher slots. The same criteria used for selecting a closing pitcher in the ninth apply (he'll never pitch beyond the ninth inning, and may not be brought in if you have already used four other pitchers in the game).

Note that the "two innings closer" is different from the situation whereby if your nominated closer is unavailable to pitch in a particular game the setup pitcher steps up to pitch in the ninth inning (see above, second paragraph) in his place – a "promoted" setup pitcher won't pitch the eighth innings as well as the ninth in these circumstances.

Notes: Be aware of the drawbacks – a pitcher required to last two innings can pitch far less frequently than one required to pitch one innings. In addition, much of the benefit of pitching just the one innings (whereby

he only needs to warm up once, and pitch for a short period) are also lost. Most teams in real-life will use a separate setup pitcher and closer to cover the 8th and 9th innings rather than a single pitcher.

4.11 BULLPEN PITCHERS When a bullpen (relief) pitcher is needed your team searches through the bullpen depth chart for the highest unfatigued pitcher who satisfies the FIRSTINN criterion. If no such pitcher can be found then the search is repeated ignoring FIRSTINN. If this also fails then the search is repeated, with pitchers having a fatigue level of 1 being allowed and so on. Once a pitcher has been found then he will normally be the pitcher selected (see 4.13 for a possible exception). You are advised to have as many pitchers in the bullpen as possible, as it is almost always better to have an unfatigued pitcher of lesser abilities on the mound than a superior pitcher who is fatigued.

4.12 BLOWOUTS You may specify two parameters which define the point at which you consider a game to be a "blowout" – to all intents and purposes over. These parameters are Blowout Innings (see 6.27) and Blowout Margin (see 6.28). If, at any time, the computer is going to search through your bullpen depth chart for a relief pitcher and the scoring margin in the game is the same as or greater than Blowout Margin (either if you are winning or losing) and the current inning is the same as or greater than Blowout Innings, then instead of searching through the bullpen depth chart from the top downwards, it searches from the bottom upwards. If no unfatigued pitcher is available, then the computer searches for a fatigued pitcher using the normal rules.

This system only applies to the SELECTION of a bullpen pitcher. If the computer is due to bring in a specialist long relief pitcher, setup pitcher or closing pitcher then it won't bring in a blowout pitcher, and it doesn't bring in a blowout pitcher until you've decided to remove the current pitcher for normal reasons. Similarly once a blowout pitcher is in the game he'll stay there until he fails any of his normal criteria.

Note: This gives a manager the option of deciding that at a certain point a game is "over" (either because he's so far ahead he feels he can't lose, or so far behind he feels he can't win) and to rest his better bullpen pitchers and use his lesser pitchers to close out the game. Typical parameters might be 7 for Blowout Innings and 8 for Blowout Margin, so that if a team were trailing (or leading) 10-2 in the seventh inning a blowout pitcher might be used. If you do not wish to use blowout pitchers then set Blowout Margin to 99. Blowout Innings must be set between 4 and 9 and Blowout Margin between 4 and 99.

4.13 OPPOSITE HANDEDNESS If a team has its OPPHAND set to YES (see 6.22 and 6.23) then any time a relief pitcher is selected as above (see 4.11) and is the same handedness as the pitcher being replaced then the computer checks to see if the pitcher directly below him on the depth chart is of the opposite handedness. If he is and he also satisfies the other criteria then this pitcher is selected to play in preference.

Note: If your OPPHAND is set to NO, then the computer will always select the highest available pitcher on the depth chart. However, if it is set to YES then it will always look one spot further down for a pitcher with a better handedness matchup. Some managers prefer to replace a left handed pitcher with a right handed pitcher, to keep the batters off balance and to counteract batters who (presumably) are being successful against the left handed pitcher. Note that only the pitcher directly below on the depth chart may be "promoted" in this fashion. You may want your no.2 relief pitcher to come in ahead of your no.1, but you almost certainly don't want your no.6 reliever in his place!

4.14 SPECIALIST LONG RELIEVER You may nominate a particular relief pitcher to come in and play "in long-relief" if you decide to replace your starting pitcher early in the game. If you have decided to bench your starter (and only your starter) and the current inning is less than or the same as your LONG INNINGS parameter then the computer will consider bringing your LONG RELIEF PITCHER (assuming you have one) to the mound instead of searching through your depth chart in the normal manner. If you have not nominated a LONG RELIEF PITCHER, or he is injured, fatigued, not on your active squad, or is already your specialist setup or closing pitcher then the computer will search through your bullpen depth chart in the normal manner.

Your long relief pitcher MAY also be selected in your bullpen. This option effectively allows you to promote a pitcher from your bullpen in long relief when you've had to yank your starter earlier than you'd intended. Your LONG INNINGS and LONG RELIEF PITCHER parameters may be changed using the special actions LONGINN (see 6.25) and LONGPIT (see 6.26).

4.15 EXTRA INNINGS If at the end of nine innings the scores are level then up to three extra innings are allowed to try to break the tie. If the tie is unbroken with one out left at the bottom of the twelfth then the batting team scores a run to break the tie.

4.16 PITCHING PARAMETERS Each turn you have the opportunity to change all four pitching parameters for up to three pitchers. In each case you should give the pitcher's shirt number, and the new values for MAXBATS, MAXHITS, MAXEXTRA and FIRSTINN. These changes are made before games are played. No parameter can be set below 1 and you should only enter the values for the parameters you wish to change when writing orders.

4.17 MAXLEAD The MAXLEAD parameter (see 6.20) for your team determines the maximum lead at which your setup pitcher and closer (assuming you have them) will be brought in to play the eighth and ninth innings respectively. MAXLEAD cannot be set below zero.

4.18 MINLEAD The MINLEAD parameter (see 6.21) for your team determines the minimum "lead" at which your setup pitcher and closer are brought in to play the eighth and ninth innings. MINLEAD may be set below zero, and a negative value means a deficit of this score (eg if MINLEAD is set at -1 then your closer will pitch if you are trailing by one run).

4.19 FATIGUED PITCHERS If a pitcher is fatigued when he comes to the plate (ie plays without being fully rested) then his MAXBATS for that game is adjusted accordingly. The value is reduced by $(F+1) \times (F+1)$ where F is the number of days fatigue the pitcher has remaining when he plays.

Note: The reduction in a pitcher's MAXBATS due to being fatigued is also reflected in his stamina and performance during the game, hence the necessity of modifying his ordered time at the plate, which you have determined under the assumption that the pitcher is not fatigued. However, you are strongly advised to avoid selecting fatigued pitchers to play as their effectiveness is significantly reduced in such circumstances.

4.20 SUMMARY FOR SELECTING RELIEF PITCHERS

1. See if current pitcher should be relieved.
2. Ensure inning restrictions allow the current pitcher to be relieved.
3. See if setup pitcher or closer should be brought in to play (eighth or ninth inning).
4. If the starter is being benched see if the specialist long reliever should be brought in to play.
5. See if the game is a "blowout". If so the depth chart will be searched from the bottom upwards, instead of from the normal top downwards.
6. Search through depth chart for unfatigued pitcher fulfilling criteria to relieve.
7. If successful in 6 and team has OPPHAND set to YES check whether pitcher below in depth chart is a better choice according to the handedness criteria.
8. If unsuccessful in 6 then search for unfatigued pitcher ignoring FIRSTINN.
9. If unsuccessful in 7 then return to 6, but allow 1 day fatigued pitchers to play.

5 BATTERS

5.1 BATTING LINEUP Each turn you should select your basic batting lineup for that turn's games. In each case you should give the shirt number of the player concerned for each fielding position (including the designated hitter). Remember that only a player with catching ability can be selected to play as the catcher.

5.2 BATTING ORDER In addition to selecting the nine players according to their position in the field you should also specify the position in the batting order (a number which will always be from 1 to 9).

5.3 BATTING CHANGES In addition to specifying your base fielding selections and batting order for a turn's games you may make three substitutions into the basic lineup during the turn. In each case the player picked simply replaces the player dropped, occupying his fielding position and place in the batting order, for the game specified and all subsequent games. In each case you give the shirt number of the player to be picked, the shirt number of the player to be dropped and the game from which the change applies (a number from 2 to 9). You cannot bring in an injured player to bat during the turn whilst he is still injured.

If you make a batting change involving two players who are both already in the starting lineup (probably swapping the DH with an active fielder) then the players retain their places in the batting order (they only swap fielding positions).

Note: if you want to make a batting change from the first game onwards then don't use the batting changes, put the change in your initial lineup. The batting changes are for changes to your lineup made after the first game.

5.4 PLATOON BATTERS Each team can select up to four "platoon batters" (see 6.15), who are substituted for certain starting batters when your team faces a left-handed starting pitcher (presumably bringing in right handed batters). For each of the platoon slots you specify the shirt number of the player concerned and the fielding position he will occupy. The platoon batter occupies the same position in the batting order as the player he replaces.

You cannot select the same player in more than one platoon, and you cannot select two different players to platoon the same position.

5.5 USE OF PLATOON BATTERS Whenever your team faces a left-handed starting pitcher the computer will select your two platoon batters to play instead of the regular batters at the two positions specified as long as the platoon batter concerned is not already in the starting lineup, is not injured and is on the active squad. If not, or if the platoon batter is set as number 0 then no substitution is made. The batting change ONLY applies for the game concerned and after the game the regular starter returns to the lineup.

Note: The first platoon substitution is made before the second, so you have the option of bringing in a player to replace one regular batter and then using the regular batter just replaced to replace another regular at a different fielding position using the second platoon substitution.

5.6 PINCH HITTERS Each team may also select up to four "pinch-hitters" (see 6.16), batters who will come in to play at the end of the game in place of a struggling starter. For each of the pinch-hitter slots you specify the shirt number of the player to act as the pinch hitter and either a fielding position or a utility fielding position, utility infielder (IF), utility outfielder (OF), middle infielder (MIF, covering 2B and SS), corner infielder (CIF, covering 1B and 3B) or corner outfielder (COF, covering RF and LF). The pinch hitter occupies the same fielding position and position in the batting order as the player he replaces.

5.7 PINCH INNING Your pinch inning parameter (see 6.17) determines the first inning in which your pinch hitters might replace starting batters. Pinch inning must be set between 6 and 9. The normal value will be 7 or 8.

5.8 PINCH DEFICIT Your pinch deficit parameter (see 6.18) determines how far behind your team must be before your pinch hitters might come in to replace starting batters. A negative value indicates that your pinch hitters will be used if you are in the lead. eg if Pinch Deficit is set to -1 then your pinch hitters will play if you lead by one run or less.

5.9 USE OF PINCH HITTERS Your pinch hitters come in to play if it's the PINCH INNING (see 5.7) or beyond, you are PINCH DEFICIT (see 5.8) or more runs behind, the pinch hitter is uninjured and hasn't already played in the game, his position is the same as that of the batter due up on plate AND if the batter due to be benched does NOT have a base hit for the game concerned (if he's hitting the ball you don't want to bench him). The pinch hitter then replaces the batter concerned for the remainder of the game.

A pinch hitter will never replace another pinch hitter, only a player who started the game. If two pinch hitters are eligible to play in the same position (e.g, one is selected as an OF, and one at CF) then the first pinch hitter is always brought in first.

Utility pinch hitters are used in exactly the same way, except that a pinch hitter selected as a utility infielder (IF) may replace any one of the infielders (1B, 2B, 3B or SS) and a utility outfielder (OF) may replace any one of the outfielders (RF, CF or LF). A utility middle infielder (MIF) covers second base and short stop ("b or SS), a utility corner infielder (CIF) covers first and third base (1B or 3B) and a utility corner outfielder (COF) covers right and left field (RF or LF).

5.10 PRIMARY FIELDING POSITIONS Each batter has a Primary Fielding Position, which represents that player's "specialist" position in the field. A batter's primary fielding position is shown on the appropriate listings.

Players may be selected to field away from their Primary Fielding Position but will be less effective when doing so. The degree is dependent upon the difference between their Primary Fielding Position and the position they are playing, but typically a fielder may play as if he is up to one class lower (so a "good" fielder out of position might only be "average"). The loss of effectiveness caused by one outfielder playing in another outfield position (eg CF playing RF) is small, and the three basemen are relatively interchangeable (particularly first and third base, second base is closer to Shortstop). Outfielders playing as infielders and vice-versa are less effective and players playing out of position as shortstops are generally much less effective (shortstop is the most difficult and specialist "normal" fielding position). Only a player with catching ability can play at the specialist catcher position, though players with catching ability do not have to have catcher as their Primary Fielding Position.

A player may also be considered as being a specialist utility infielder or outfielder (see 3.7). A utility infielder will be more effective fielding at an infield spot than a player fielding out of position (eg a 1B fielding at 2B) but will be less effective than a specialist fielding in position (eg a 2B fielding at 2B). Utility fielders by their very nature spend some of their time practicing at each position they cover, but not as much time as a specialist fielder.

Note: You will inevitably find that you will have to select players out of position, or make use of utility fielders. In real life most teams have starters at each position, and a mixture of reserves who are specialists at one position (though often also fielding in other positions) and utility fielders who practice at covering more than one position.

5.11 CHANGING POSITIONS Any batter may have his Primary Fielding Position changed using the special action NEWPOS (see 6.19). When a player's Primary Fielding Position is changed his fielding is less effective for a number of games while he adjusts to the new position (this is indicated by a "*" after his position in listings, and the player typically fields up to a class below his actual fielding ability). The amount of time it takes him to adjust may vary from a handful of games to almost a full season, depending upon the positions he is converting from and to, and modified by his fielding rating. You are not told how long a player will take to familiarise himself, simply when his conversion has been completed. A player does not have to actually play in a game to adjust to a position (much of it is done in practice, and he may even be on the reserve or draft squad) but he cannot be injured. You may "re-convert" a player in mid-conversion, but he will still suffer the normal penalty for conversion to a new position.

Converting outfielders to other outfield positions is relatively simple (10-30 games), as are interconversions of first and third basemen. Conversion of second base to first and third typically takes a dozen games longer. Conversion of basemen to shortstop takes significantly longer (50-80 games). Shortstops can generally convert to other infield positions relatively quickly. Catchers may be converted to other fielding positions, typically taking 50-80 games. Interconversion of infielders and outfielders is relatively slow (from 50-130) games, particularly for outfielders converting into infield positions. It also takes longer to convert a player to one of the two utility fielding positions (IF and OF) because the player concerned has to learn more than position.

Note: Don't go overboard on converting players. You should only consider converting a player if your squad is particularly unbalanced, or you don't expect a player to be playing a major role for some time (eg rookies). You should be able to cover most injuries by simply selecting a backup out of position, as long as the difference isn't too drastic.

COACHING AND SCOUTING PLAYERS

6.5 COACH The special action COACH is used to increase one ability of a given player (see 3.4 and 3.9). The cost is 10 LPs and one point of potential and the player's value increases by 2 LPs (but his wages don't increase for the current season). The shirt number of the player to be coached should be given in the NUM box and the skill to be coached should be given in the NAME box. You can only coach batters/fielders in batting/fielding skills and pitchers in pitching skills. The actual gain in ability due to coaching depends on the current ability of the player and may or may not lead to a visible gain in class. The higher that player's current skill rating, the lower the gain from coaching.

After a player has been coached his level is also recalculated. Consequently coaching a player may lead to a change in level or class, but not necessarily in either. Coaching will ALWAYS improve a player's ability, but this will not always result in a visible change of class (because each class covers a range of abilities).

ACTION [**COACH**] NUM [**34**] VALUE [] NAME [**FLD**]

coaches batter number 34 in Fielding at a cost of 10 LPs and one point of potential.

6.6 SCOUT & STATS The special actions SCOUT and STATS are used to scout a player's abilities or season stats. To scout a free agent or draftee you should give the player's free agent or draft number in the NUM box and leave the name box blank. To scout a player signed to another team you should give the player's shirt number in the NUM box and his team's TWO LETTER team code in the NAME box. SCOUT reports back the player's current level, value, potential, experience, skill ratings and any injury he is carrying. STATS reports back the player's stats for the current season. There is no cost in LPs. If one of your players is scouted by another team (perhaps interested in a trade) then this team's two letter code is shown in the ScT column of your team report.

ACTION [**SCOUT**] NUM [**104**] VALUE [] NAME []

scouts free agent number 104 for his player details.

FINANCIAL AND TRAINER ACTIONS

6.7 STADIUM The special action STADIUM is used to increase your team's Stadium Facilities Level (see 1.10). The cost is $N \times N - O \times O$ where N is the new level of Stadium Facilities and O is the old level of Stadium Facilities. The new level of Stadium Facilities should be given in the NUM box.

ACTION [**STADIUM**] NUM [**6**] VALUE [] NAME []

increases a team's Stadium Facilities to level 6. The cost would be 36 LPs developing from level 0 ($6 \times 6 - 0 \times 0 = 36$) or 11 LPs developing from level 5 ($6 \times 6 - 5 \times 5 = 11$).

6.8 MERC The special action MERC is used to increase your team's Merchandising (see 1.11). The number of LPs to be spent on merchandising should be given in the NUM box. If you try to increase your merchandising total above 200 LPs the computer will reduce the amount spent to ensure a maximum total of 200 LPs invested.

ACTION [**MERC**] NUM [**16**] VALUE [] NAME []

increases a team's merchandising by 16 at a cost of 16 LPs.

6.9 FANS The special action FANS is used to recruit extra fans for your team (see 1.12). The number of LPs to be spent on recruiting fans should be given in the NUM box. Sixty fans are recruited for each LP spent.

ACTION [**FANS**] NUM [**6**] VALUE [] NAME []

spends 6 LPs on recruiting fans, increasing the number by 360.

6.10 TRAINER The special action TRAINER is used to increase the level of a team's trainers (see 1.18). The cost of the action is $N \times N - O \times O$ where N is the new level of trainers and O is the old level of trainers. The new level of trainers should be given in the NUM box.

ACTION [**TRAINER**] NUM [7] VALUE [] NAME []

increases a team's trainers to level 7 (at a cost of 49 LP from level 0, or 24 LP from 5).

6.11 REHAB The special action REHAB is used to decrease the number of games required for a player to recover from injury (see 3.13). The cost of the action is the number of games remaining divided by ten (rounding up), minimum 5 LPs. The player's injury time is reduced by a third (rounding down). The shirt number of the player should be given in the NUM box. Each team may only make one REHAB action per turn. REHAB orders are processed after games are run (so an injury will have nine days recovery before any rehabbing).

ACTION [**REHAB**] NUM [25] VALUE [] NAME []

rehabilitates player number 25, reducing his remaining injury time by a third.

STADIUM CHANGES

6.12 SIZE The special action SIZE is used to change your team's stadium size (see 1.14). This special action can only be used in the final (third) week of the playoffs. The new size of the stadium (SMALL, MEDIUM or LARGE) should be given in the NAME box. The cost of the action is 25 LPs.

ACTION [**STADIUM**] NUM [] VALUE [] NAME [**LARGE**]

changes a team's stadium size to large.

6.13 SURFACE The special action SURFACE is used to change your team's stadium field surface (see 1.14). This special action can only be used in the final (third) week of the playoffs. The new field surface of the stadium (GRASS or ASTROTURF) should be given in the NAME box. You cannot change the surface to Grass if the Stadium Building type is a Dome. The cost of the action is 25 LPs.

ACTION [**SURFACE**] NUM [] VALUE [] NAME [**ASTROTURF**]

changes a team's stadium surface to Astro turf.

6.14 BUILDING The special action BUILDING is used to change your team's stadium building type (see 1.14). This special action can only be used in the final (third) week of the playoffs. The new building type of the stadium (DOME or OPEN) should be given in the NAME box. You cannot change the building type to Dome if the Stadium Surface type is grass. The cost of the action is 25 LPs.

ACTION [**BUILDING**] NUM [] VALUE [] NAME [**DOME**]

changes a team's stadium building type to a Dome.

BATTING ACTIONS

6.15 PLATOONx The special actions PLATOON1, PLATOON2, PLATOON3 and PLATOON4 are used to select platoon batters (see 5.4). The shirt number of the batter concerned should be given in the NUM box and the fielding position for the batter should be given in the NAME box. If you do not give a fielding position then the same position as the previous platoon will be used. To cancel a platoon selection simply select number 0 as the platoon batter.

ACTION [**PLATOON1**] NUM [23] VALUE [] NAME [**LF**]

selects number 23 to occupy the first platoon batter slot, fielding at left fielder.

6.16 PINCHx The special actions PINCH1, PINCH2, PINCH3 and PINCH4 are used to select pinch hitters (see 5.6). The shirt number of the batter concerned should be given in the NUM box and the fielding position (or utility fielding position) for the batter should be given in the NAME box.

If you do not give a fielding position then the same position as the previous pinch hitter will be used. To cancel a pinch hitter selection simply select number 0 as the pinch hitter.

ACTION [**PINCH4**] NUM [**17**] VALUE [] NAME [**IF**]

selects number 17 to occupy the first pinch hitter slot as a utility infielder.

6.17 PINCHINN The special action PINCHINN sets your team's PINCH INNINGS value (see 5.7). The new value should be given in the NUM box. The value must be between 6 and 9.

ACTION [**PINCHINN**] NUM [**7**] VALUE [] NAME []

sets a team's PINCHINN parameter to 7.

6.18 PINCHDEF The special action PINCHDEF sets your team's PINCH DEFICIT value (see 5.8). The new value should be given in the NUM box.

ACTION [**PINCHDEF**] NUM [**4**] VALUE [] NAME []

sets a team's PINCHDEF parameter to 4.

6.19 NEWPOS The special action NEWPOS is used to change the Primary Fielding Position (see 5.10 and 5.11) of any batter on your roster. There is no cost in LPs but one point of potential is deducted. The batter immediately converts to the new position BUT takes an unspecified time to adjust fully to the position (see 5.11). The shirt number of the batter to be converted should be given in the NUM box and the new position (1B, 2B, 3B, SS, C, RF, CF, LF, IF or OF) should be given in the NAME box. NEWPOS actions are not allowed after the end of the regular season.

ACTION [**NEWPOS**] NUM [**34**] VALUE [] NAME [**RF**]

converts batter shirt number 34 to RF.

PITCHING ACTIONS

6.20 MAXLEAD The special action MAXLEAD is used to set the MAXLEAD parameter for your team, the maximum lead at which your setup pitcher and closer are brought in to play (see 4.9 and 4.10). The value should be given in the NUM box. MAXLEAD must be set between 0 and 99 (inclusive).

ACTION [**MAXLEAD**] NUM [**6**] VALUE [] NAME []

sets the MAXLEAD parameter to 6.

6.21 MINLEAD The special action MINLEAD is used to set the MINLEAD parameter for your team, the minimum lead at which your setup pitcher and closer are brought in to play (see 4.9 and 4.10). The new value should be given in the NUM box. MINLEAD may be set below zero, with negative values representing a deficit in the score.

ACTION [**MINLEAD**] NUM [**0**] VALUE [] NAME []

sets the MINLEAD parameter to 0.

6.22 SETOPP The special action SETOPP is used to set OPPHAND (see 4.13) to YES.

ACTION [**SETOPP**] NUM [] VALUE [] NAME []

sets OPPHAND to YES.

6.23 CANOPP The special action CANOPP is used to set OPPHAND (see 4.13) to NO.

ACTION [**CANOPP**] NUM [] VALUE [] NAME []

sets OPPHAND to NO.

6.24 STARTINN The special action STARTINN is used to change your STARTER INNINGS parameter (see 4.7). The new value should be given in the NUM box and the value should be between 0 and 6 (inclusive).

ACTION [**STARTINN**] NUM [**2**] VALUE [] NAME []

changes STARTER INNINGS to 2.

6.25 LONGINN The special action LONGINN is used to change your LONG INNINGS parameter (see 4.14). The new value should be given in the NUM box and the value should be between 1 and 4 (inclusive).

ACTION [**LONGINN**] NUM [**1**] VALUE [] NAME []

changes LONG INNINGS to 1.

6.26 LONGPIT The special action LONGPIT is used to select your SPECIALIST LONG RELIEVER (see 4.14). The shirt number of the new pitcher should be given in the NUM box.

ACTION [**LONGPIT**] NUM [**53**] VALUE [] NAME []

selects pitcher no.53 to be your specialist long reliever.

6.27 BLOWINN The special action BLOWINN is used to set the Blowout Innings parameter (see 4.12). The new innings should be given in the NUM box.

ACTION [**BLOWINN**] NUM [**7**] VALUE [] NAME []

sets a team's Blowout Innings parameter to 7.

6.28 BLOWMARG The special action BLOWMARG is used to set the Blowout Margin parameter (see 4.12). The new margin should be given in the NUM box.

ACTION [**BLOWMARG**] NUM [**8**] VALUE [] NAME []

sets a team's Blowout Margin parameter to 8.

RENAMING ACTIONS

6.29 RENAME The special action RENAME is used to change the shirt number and name of a player on your roster. There is no cost in LPs. The shirt number of the player to be renamed should be given in the NUM box, the new shirt number in the VAL box and the new name for the player in the NAME box. The new shirt number must not match the shirt number of another player on your roster. You may only use the RENAME action in the final (third) week of the playoffs.

If, at the end of the season, you wish to rename more players than your special actions that turn will permit then your GM may allow you to do so at a cost of 0.5 credits. If you do so you should provide your GM with a full list (separated into batters and pitchers) of players with their old shirt numbers and names and new shirt numbers and names.

Note that if you take this option then your team listing that turn will NOT be up-to-date, but your players' up-to-date shirt numbers and names will be shown on the league roundup which is also issued that turn. Your GM cannot process the renamings until after your team report is produced but will do so before producing the new season's league roundup.

ACTION [**RENAME**] NUM [**23**] VALUE [**47**] NAME [**DAVE JOHNSON**]

renames number 23 as number 47, Dave Johnson.

6.30 SWAP The special action SWAP is used to swap the names and numbers of two players on your roster. There is no cost in LPs. The shirt numbers of the two players whose names and numbers are to be swapped should be given in the NUM and VAL boxes. You may only use the SWAP action in the final (third) week of the playoffs.

ACTION [**SWAP**] NUM [**16**] VALUE [**68**] NAME []

GAME REPORT ACTIONS

6.31 SETFULL The special action SETFULL is used to set the Full Reports option (see section 14), specifying that you wish to receive full (extended) game reports. You will be charged an extra 0.2 credit for receiving one turn's extended game reports.

6.32 CANFULL The special action CANFULL is used to cancel the Full Reports option (see section 14), specifying that you do not wish to receive full (extended) game reports.

6.33 ROUNDUP The special action ROUNDUP order an up to date league roundup (see 10.9). There is no cost in LPs but you will be charged an extra 0.3 credit.

6.34 SCHEDULE The special action SCHEDULE orders an up to date league schedule (see 10.9). There is no cost in LPs but you will be charged an extra 0.2 credit.

6.35 STATS LISTINGS There are a number of special actions which you may use to order extended stats listings (for every single player in the game). There are four of these listings: American League Batters, American League Pitchers, National League Batters and National League Pitchers. These listings are different from the statistics regularly issued to all managers in the game (see 10.5). The regular statistics only show the league leaders, these optional listings show all players (usually between 100 and 150 players in each listing). There is no LP cost for ordering these listings, but you will be charged an extra number of part credits to pay for them.

The special actions for ordering these listings, their costs (in credits) and the listings they order are as follows:

<i>ACTION</i>	<i>COST</i>	<i>LISTINGS ORDERED</i>
ALPITCHERS	0.2	American League Batters
ALPITCHERS	0.2	American League Pitchers
ALPLAYERS	0.3	American League Batters and Pitchers
NLBATTERS	0.2	National League Batters
NLPITCHERS	0.2	National League Pitchers
NLPLAYERS	0.3	National League Batters and Pitchers
BATTERS	0.3	American and National League Batters
PITCHERS	0.3	American and National League Pitchers
PLAYERS	0.5	American and National League Batters and Pitchers

FORM ACTIONS

6.36 ADDFORM

The special action ADDFORM is used to increase the weekly form rating of a given player by 0-3 points for up to three weeks. It is not permitted for postseason weeks. The shirt number of the player concerned should be given in the NUM box and the number of weeks required in the VAL box. The cost is 1 LP per week. There is no cost in potential.

The increase in weekly form is dependent on a number of factors – it's more effective for lower value and less experienced players, as well as being much more effective in offsetting poor current form rather than boosting good current form. Only one ADDFORM action may be ordered per turn. If a player will have his form increased on the following turn because of a multi-week ADDFORM action he is shown on the team report with a + after his weekly form figure.

ACTION [**ADDFORM**] NUM [**34**] VALUE [**2**] NAME []

increases the weekly form rating for player number 34 for this week and the next one, at a cost of 2 LPs.

Notes: The ADDFORM action is intended primarily to allow you to boost the form of young, struggling players during the season. It won't generally be as effective as putting a player on the reserve squad (i.e. sending him to the minor leagues) and although it can be used on a player who is on the reserve squad it's effectiveness will be much reduced.

7 TRADING RULES

7.1 INTRODUCTION Teams may conduct "one-for-one" trades of players in their squads using three trading actions – ACCEPT, OFFER and LIST. Trading actions are processed AFTER other special actions (see section 6) but before free agents (see section 8) are signed. You can only trade a player who is on your active or reserve squad.

Trades take place in three stages over the first three turns using three special actions. On the first turn a team places a player they wish to trade on the Trading List, using a LIST action (see 7.2). On the second turn any team who wish to make an offer for a player on the trading make an OFFER (see 7.3), offering a player of the same TRADE LEVEL (see 3.24) in exchange for the player previously LISTed. Finally on the third turn the team which originally LISTed the player decides which (of any) of the OFFERs to ACCEPT (see 7.4). All other offers are automatically rejected.

Note: The Trading List shows all players who have been LISTed for trade that turn. A player cannot be LISTed for trade on consecutive turns, and if no-one makes an OFFER for him then the LIST on him is cancelled. All OFFERs for a player MUST be made the turn after he is listed and ACCEPTs must be made the turn after an OFFER has been received. Note that the second and third stages of a trade (OFFER and ACCEPT) are processed AFTER a player disappears from the Trading List (the Trading List is only used to set the ball rolling). An example of how a trade is conducted is shown below:

Turn 1 – Atlanta LIST 32. Atlanta no.32 appears on the Trading List.

Turn 2 – Boston OFFER 23 32 AB. Cleveland OFFER 14 32 AB. Both Boston and Cleveland have offered players to Atlanta in exchange for no.32.

Turn 3 – Atlanta ACCEPT 32 23 BR. Atlanta accept Boston's offer (and by default reject Cleveland's offer). Atlanta's no.32 and Boston's no.23 are automatically traded. Each team paying a quarter of their incoming player's value as a signing bonus. Each player takes the same shirt number as the player he has just replaced (so Atlanta's no.32 becomes Boston's no.23 and vice versa).

General Notes: Trades in Gameplan Baseball must be limited. Trades involving multiple players and/or draft picks are not practical because it is important to ensure that trades are "fair". In real-life the managers of teams are being paid to run their teams, and getting the rough end of a trade is a hazard of life. In a PBM game there is far too much scope for managers to do private deals, take advantage of other managers or compromise the development of their team to win quickly (then they simply drop out of the game). Other PBM games have shown that if a system is too flexible then managers will get their friends to join a league, trash their teams by trading their best players to their friend and then drop out, ruining the game for everyone else in the league. The same applies with draft picks, the essential long-term building block of a team – if trading for picks is allowed then too many managers simply trade their draft picks for players, win straight away and then drop out having compromised their team's development. The restrictions on Trading Levels are intended to prevent these abuses while allowing a limited degree of trading.

7.2 LIST The special action LIST places a player on the trading list. The shirt number of the player must be given in the NUM box. There is no cost for LISTing a player. You may LIST up to three players per turn but you cannot LIST a player if he was also LISTed the previous turn (as you will be awaiting OFFERs for him). You cannot LIST a player less than two weeks before the Trading Deadline (as any trade could not be concluded prior to the Trade Deadline).

When you list a player for trade you have the option of specifying a player type you would particularly like to be offered in exchange for your player (to give other coaches an idea of what you are looking for).

There are eleven player types you may specify, each of which is made up of two letters: R/L/S/none for right/left/switch/not bothered handedness and P/B/C for batter/pitcher/catcher (so LP is a left handed pitcher, B is any batter and SC is a switch hitting catcher).

ACTION [**LIST**] NUM [**12**] VALUE [] NAME [**LP**]

puts player no.12 on the trading list, hoping to be offered a left handed pitcher in exchange.

7.3 OFFER The special action OFFER is used to offer one of your players in exchange for a player LISTed on the Trading List the previous turn. Your player MUST have the same Trade Level as the other team's player. The shirt number of YOUR player should be given in the NUM box. The shirt number of the other team's player should be given in the VAL box and his team's two letter team-code should be given in the NAME box. You cannot make an offer for a player who was not on the Trading List the previous turn. You may make up to three OFFERs per turn, but you cannot OFFER the same player more than once in a turn.

Note: There is no cost for an OFFER action and all OFFERs remain secret to the two teams concerned in the offer. Only the team who originally LISTed the player know exactly who has been offered to them, though all teams making offers are informed whether their offers are valid, and subsequently whether they are accepted or rejected.

ACTION [**OFFER**] NUM [**34**] VALUE [**12**] NAME [**DT**]

offers player no.34 to Detroit in exchange for no.12.

7.4 ACCEPT The special action ACCEPT is used to accept an OFFER for one of your players which was received the previous turn. The shirt number of YOUR player should be given in the NUM box. The shirt number of the other team's player should be given in the VAL box and his team's two letter team-code should be given in the NAME box. If the ACCEPT is valid (see also 7.7) then the trade is immediately conducted and the two players swap teams. Each player takes the shirt number and squad position of the player he is replacing. BOTH teams pay the player they sign a quarter of his value as a signing bonus (note that this payment is made even if the team's LP balance drops below zero), though neither player's value increases. Once conducted, all trades are shown on the league actions report.

ACTION [**ACCEPT**] NUM [**12**] VALUE [**34**] NAME [**BR**]

accepts the offer of Boston's no.34 in exchange for no.12.

Note: You need to be very careful with your trade orders. If you make a mess of an order then it will take you another three turns to reorganise and complete the trade.

Once you OFFER a player in exchange for a trade then you have no control over the completion of the trade. If the other team decides to ACCEPT your offer the trade goes through; you cannot cancel the trade if you have second thoughts.

7.5 TRADING DEADLINE You cannot complete a trade after the trading deadline (see 1.19). Note that to complete a trade before the trading deadline you will have to begin the trading process (with a LIST action) two turns earlier, so LIST actions are not permitted within two turns of the trading deadline.

7.6 WRITING TRADING ORDERS You need to be very careful when writing trading orders. For OFFER and ACCEPT actions you must give the team code and the shirt number of the other player involved in the trade, and if you fail to do so the action will fail. If you mess up a trade it'll take you a few turns to redo the trade, so make sure you write your orders correctly and clearly.

7.7 NEWLY SIGNED PLAYERS You cannot trade away a player (either by ACCEPTing a trade, or following an OFFER you previously made) the same turn as you sign him to your team (otherwise there would be a chance of a team accidentally signing a player in one trade, and immediately trading him away again.)

8 FREE AGENTS

8.1 INTRODUCTION Free agents are players who are currently unsigned, and are available to be signed by any team. Free agents are not available after the trading deadline (see 1.19). Each free agent has a value, which represents the minimum cost of signing him and his value when signed. Free agent bids are processed after all special actions and trading actions have been processed but you cannot sign as a free agent a player who was waived earlier that turn by another team. If a free agent is injured this is indicated by an "I" on the free agent list after his name and the number of days it will take him to recover.

8.2 SIGNING FREE AGENTS Each team may sign one free agent per week. When you sign a free agent he is placed on your active or reserve squad, and the player he replaces is automatically waived. When you make a free agent bid you should specify the list number of the player to be signed, the shirt number of the player to be replaced, the amount you are offering (which must be at least as high as the free agent's current value) and the new shirt number and name (assuming the player isn't already named) for the player to be signed. You cannot allocate an incoming free agent a shirt number of a player already on your roster.

8.3 WAIVER VALUES AND COMPENSATION When a player is waived, either as a result of a promote action (see 6.3), release action (see 6.4) or a free agent bid (see 8.3) then half of his value (rounded down) is recovered unless the player is injured. These LPs are available for any free agent bid concerned and the player normally becomes a free agent. When a free agent is signed his previous team receives half of his value (not half of the amount bid) as compensation regardless of whether he is injured or not.

This system means that if you waive an uninjured player and someone else (or even you) picks him up later you actually recover his full value (in two portions). It allows teams in financial difficulties to release a high value player and sign a cheaper player to increase their LP balance and reduce their wage bill.

8.4 FREE AGENT LIST When a player is waived he normally goes onto the free agent list, as long as there is a space available for him, or a lesser player (lower level and/or value) occupying a spot. In the latter case the lesser player is automatically replaced, and simply disappears, without the usual advance warning (see 8.6). This will generally only happen to lower level players.

8.5 SIGNING VALUES AND TIED BIDS When bidding for a player you may offer more than the minimum amount required. If more than one team bid for the same player then the highest offer wins. If two teams make equal bids then the winner is the team with the better record, or the higher LP balance, or if equal the winner is determined randomly. The value for a player is not affected by a bid which is higher than his current value, the player takes the extra LPs bid as a "signing bonus".

8.6 UNSIGNED FREE AGENTS If a player remains on the free agent list without teams signing him his value will slowly drop, reflecting his keenness to be picked up by a new team. Eventually a player will decide to retire, though you are usually given warning of this (see 8.4 for an exception). A player about to retire will appear with a "+" sign next to his number, and will retire after the following turn's bids. When a new free agent is added to the list (ie not having been waived by another team) he is automatically assigned a "previous team", so compensation is always awarded to someone when a free agent is signed, reflecting the fact that all free agents will have spent time in someone's farm system.

8.7 INSUFFICIENT LOSING POINTS Normally you cannot make a free agent bid for a player if you do not have sufficient LPs to cover the cost of signing him (including any compensation you may receive for the player you are waiving). If you do try and bid more LPs than you are legally allowed to, the computer will automatically reduce your offer to the highest legal bid.

However, if the cost of signing a player is equal to or less than the LPs which will be recovered by the waiver of the player he will replace (which is only half his value) then the bid will be allowed, even if the team's LP balance is below zero. Such bids can only be made at the minimum value of the free agent concerned. There will usually be some cheap, low quality players available on the free agent list so teams in financial trouble can make bids for players, but they can only sign free agents whose values are up to half those of the players they will replace. Effectively this means that they can sign lesser players to replace their better players, enabling them to reduce their wage bill.

Example: A team's balance is -3 LPs. They can sign a free agent value 14 LP to replace a player value 30 LP, as the net gain is 1 LP (they spend 14 LP on the signing, but recover 15 LP from the waiver). A free agent value 16 LP could not be signed to replace a player value 30 LP as this would entail a further reduction in losing points.

8.8 NEWLY SIGNED PLAYERS You cannot waive (see 8.3) a player the same turn as you sign him (otherwise there would be a chance of a team accidentally signing a player by a trade, and then waiving him in a free agent deal).

9 GAME ADJUDICATION

9.1 INTRODUCTION Game results are determined by an "at-bat by at-bat" procedure. The batters and pitchers are rated according to their abilities, form and experience, with some modifications according to their familiarity with the stadium type (for example fielders used to playing on grass are at a disadvantage on astroturf).

9.2 GAME PROCESSING In batting order, each batter on the batting team comes to the plate to face the current pitcher. The following steps are then processed in order until the batter's appearance at the plate has been resolved. Once three batters have been retired then the inning ends and the other team take its turn to bat and so on until the game has been completed (usually after nine innings per side).

1. See if the pitcher strikes the batter out. This is dependent upon a combination of the pitcher's abilities and an individual matchup between the pitcher and batter.
2. See if the pitcher walks the batter, allowing him to reach first base for "free" (also known as a Base on Balls).
3. See if the batter makes a base hit. If successful the fielding side have an opportunity to "save" the hit, with one fielder having the chance to make a "field save", an outstanding fielding play that turns a potential base hit into an out.
4. Assuming a successful base hit the batter may turn it into a home run, triple or double. The chance of a home run is mainly dependent upon the batter's power and a matchup between the batter's power and pitcher's control. The chance of a triple or double is mainly dependent upon the batter's speed and power.
5. Assuming the batter fails to make a base hit he may still make a sacrifice play, either a sacrifice fly or bunt, where he deliberately hits a shot which allows base runners to advance even though he'll be out. A sacrifice may bat in runs, but doesn't count as an At Bat for the batter. A sacrifice cannot occur if two batters have already been retired in the inning, as the batter represents the third out, ending the inning.
6. If the batter fails to make a base hit then he will normally be out, and the fielding side have the opportunity to make the "put out". One fielder is selected to make the play. If he fails (drops the catch, fails to collect the ball and throw the batter out) then the fielder is credited with an error and the batter reaches first base (he is not credited with a base hit but is charged an at bat). Sometimes base-runners may have the opportunity to advance (on a deep "fly-out"), without counting as a sacrifice for the batter and without being visible in the stats.

If a batter does not make a base hit but forces other runners to try and advance (for example if a runner is on first, who has to try and advance to reach second because the batter is trying, unsuccessfully to reach first) then the defense may manage to get out the base-runner AND the batter (so two batters are "put out" on one play). This is known as a "double play".

7. If the batter does succeed on getting on base (by a base hit, walk or a fielder's error) then all other base-runners may advance, and may score.
8. After the at-bat has been processed then all base-runners are checked for stealing a base. Normally steals are from first to second, second to third is possible but rarer.

9.3 EXTRA INNINGS If at the end of the ninth inning the scores are tied then up to fifteen extra innings may be played to try and break the tie. If the score is still tied with one out left in the bottom of the twenty fourth then the final batter will ensure his team scores to win the game.

9.4 HOMEFIELD ADVANTAGE For each game the visiting batters are slightly less effective than the home team's. The degree is dependent upon their familiarity with the surroundings. Fielders used to playing on grass are less effective on astroturf, power hitters used to playing in small stadia will be less effective in large stadia, etc.

9.5 BATTING AND PITCHING A batter's Hitting is the major factor in determining his chance of making a base hit, representing the "quality" of the direction of the hit.

However, a batter with good speed gets to first base faster (so the quality of his hit doesn't need to be as good) and a batter with good power hits the ball harder (so it gets past infielders quicker, giving them less time to move and intercept the hit). Similar criteria apply to pitchers. It isn't simply a case of whether they can hit the edge of the strike zone (Accuracy) but also how fast they get the ball there (Quickness) and the consistency of their pitching (Control). A pitcher with poor control is less likely to lure a batter into swinging at an inaccurate pitch, as he knows he can wait for an easier pitch to hit.

9.6 TRAINING, BONUSES AND KEYS For each series you play in a turn you should specify one training skill, one bonus skill, one bonus player and one key player. Training and bonus skills should be one of the batting or pitching skills (HIT, POW, SPD, FLD, ACC, CON, QUI or STA). The bonus player should be a player in your team and the key player should be a player in your opponent's team.

9.7 TRAINING SKILLS Training skills accumulate from turn to turn and have a small effect on the current series (about half the effect of bonus skills) but more importantly, affect the balance of players' skill gains (if any) at the end of the season (see 11.8). They don't affect whether a player gains skills, only affect WHERE any gains are made.

Notes: As a general rule of thumb, each differential in training from skill to another changes the relative chances of each player gaining or losing a skill by about 1%. Thus players whose team has 15 training points in POW and 5 in HIT are about 10% more likely to gain skills in POW at the end of the season than HIT (and 10% less likely to losing skills for players losing skills).

9.8 BONUS SKILLS Bonus skills are not cumulative and only affect the current series. Your players will be more effective for the given series in the skill bonused.

9.9 BONUS PLAYER For each series each team will select one "bonus player", from their team, who will be more effective during that series.

9.10 KEY PLAYER For each series each team will select one "key player", from the opposition, who will be less effective during that series. If you try to key a player who doesn't exist then the computer will change your key for a random opposition batter. However, if you order a key for an opponent who does not play in the series then your key is wasted (you can't prepare for someone who doesn't exist, but you can prepare for someone who doesn't actually turn up to play against you).

Training, Bonuses and Keys allow you some form of adjusting your team balance for individual series. They reflect that teams will prepare for their opponents by studying film of particular players, tendencies and trends, and allow a limited element of modifying your game performances for particular opponents.

Don't overestimate the effectiveness of Bonuses and Keys. A poor player won't become a good player by being bonused, and a good player won't be reduced to mediocrity by keying. You'll have to decide whether it is more effective to use your keys and bonuses to slow down or boost star players or to modify the performances of lesser skilled players. Keying someone's star pitcher may simply result in reducing his performances, without ever dragging him down to a level at which your batters can actually cope with him.

10 STANDARD GAME REPORTS

10.1 INTRODUCTION The game reports give you full details of the key aspects of the game throughout the turn. A number of reports are common to all players in the game, brief details of all games, etc. Each team also receives a number of individual reports, giving more detailed information pertaining to their team. Full details of the various stats given in these reports can be found in section 12.

10.2 LEAGUE RESULTS Each turn you receive details of the results for all games played in the league that turn. In each case the score is given, along with the total number of base hits and walks (bases on balls) allowed by the opposition. Brief details are also given for the opposition's starting pitcher, indicating the number of innings he pitched, runs, hits and walks allowed by the pitcher.

Note that the details for Team B's starting pitcher are given along with Team A's batting stats and vice versa.

10.3 LEAGUE STANDINGS The league standings are also issued each turn, detailing the divisional rankings, games behind the divisional leader, record over the last nine games, current winning/losing streak, runs scored and conceded, home and road records, LP balances, numbers of fans, stadium facilities levels, merchandising and trainers levels for each team.

During the playoffs the league standings section is replaced by a number of different tables (as it is meaningless at this time).

In the first playoff week the regular season head to head records are shown for each team.

In the second playoff week records are shown for each team and their opponents in various miscellaneous statistics:- Shutouts (times the teams failed to score), Ten Plus (times the teams scored ten runs or more), High Score (season high score for teams), By One (record in games decided by a margin of one run), ExInn (record in games that went to extra innings), Right Hand and Left Hand Starters (record in games when the team started right and left handed pitchers), versus Right and Left Hand Starters (record in games when the opponent started right and left handed pitchers), By Starters (won-lost records for starters) and By Bullpen (won-lost record for bullpen pitchers).

In the third playoff week the breakdown of each team and their opponent's total runs scored by innings is shown (the three extra innings are shown combined).

10.4 ACTIONS REPORT The actions report gives details of the schedule for the following turn, new injuries suffered and holdouts, players waived (if any), players made available for trade and trades completed (if there are any), free agent signings and the current list of available free agents. Free agents and players available for trade are shown along with their current/previous team, any injury, level and best ability, experience, potential, trade level and current value. A "+" sign after a free agent's number indicates he is about to retire (see 8.6). Players available for trade may also have a "wanted position" shown (see 7.2), indicating the type of player his current manager is hoping to be offered in the trade.

10.5 STATISTICS A number of statistical reports are also periodically issued, team stats (which give details of batting and pitching stats for all teams), individual batting and individual pitching stats, listing the individual leaders throughout the game. The overall leader in each category is shown with the relevant statistic underlined.

10.6 TEAM REPORT Your team report gives full details of all players currently on your roster (level and top skill, experience, potential, trade level, fatigue, current form rating, season total form, injury, value, wages, skill ratings, squad and whether any team scouted the player that turn), batting and pitching lineups, team parameters and full financial details. Details of any free agent bids, special actions, trading actions, holdouts and injuries suffered the previous turn are also reported.

10.7 STANDARD GAME REPORTS Standard game reports give full linescores and boxscores for the games played by your team that turn. The linescores give the inning by inning scores, along with the number of base hits and walks allowed in the inning. A "d" in the linescore indicates that the inning included a double play made by the fielding side. The boxscores give full details of the statistics (at bats, runs scored, base hits, total bases, doubles, triples, home runs, runs batted in, bases on balls, sacrifices, stolen bases, strikeouts, double plays participated in and fielding errors committed) for each batter that played in the game, in order of their appearance at the plate. You also have the option of receiving full play-by-play reports on all of your games (see section 14).

In addition the statistics (innings pitched, base hits allowed, runs given up, earned runs given up, home runs allowed, walks allowed, batters on base allowed and strikeouts made) for the opposition's pitchers are also detailed. The fatigue level for each pitcher after the game is also shown along with a one letter code indicating why the pitcher was lifted. "S" indicates that the pitcher was replaced because the setup pitcher was due to come in, "C" indicates that the closer came in. "H" indicates that the pitcher was benched because he'd allowed MAXHITS base-runners, "B" indicates a pitcher had pitched to MAXBATS batters, "I" indicates that the pitcher was replaced because of innings restrictions (eg the closer at the end of the ninth) and "F" indicates that the pitcher's fatigue reached 5, the maximum permitted. If a pitcher is fatigued when he comes to the mound then this is indicated with a star "*", for one day's fatigue, or two stars "**" for two or more. Finally the number of runners left on base (LOB) when the pitcher left the mound is also shown.

10.8 SEASON TOTALS Your team's season totals report gives full details of your players' performances for the current season. In addition full details of your team selections, batting and pitching changes are also reported, along with any corrections made by the computer and the reasons for these.

10.9 ROUNDUP AND SCHEDULE The league roundup and schedule are issued at the start of a new season. The roundup gives outline details of each team in your game: stadium layouts and all players, including player type, handedness, level and best ability, experience, potential, trade level and value. The schedule gives the full fixtures for the regular season.

11 POSTSEASON AND DRAFT

11.1 INTRODUCTION At the end of the season the three divisional winners and the divisional runner-up with the best record (known as the Wild-Card team) in each league move forward to participate in the playoffs, competing for the "Championship Pennant" and the right to participate in the "World Series". The three divisional winners are ranked 1, 2 and 3 according to their regular season records and the wild card team is ranked 4, with 1 playing 4 in the first round of the playoffs and 2 playing 3. If the wild card team is from the same division as the no.1 seed, then the no.1 seed plays the no.3 seed in the divisional round, and the no.2 seed plays the wild card team.

The next best four teams in each league move forward into a similar competition to compete for the "Continental Series" whilst the worst four teams move forward to compete for the "National Series". Tiebreakers for teams with equal records are runs difference (runs scored minus runs conceded), runs scored or the toss of a coin.

11.2 PLAYOFF FIXTURES The first round of playoffs are all played over the best of five games, with a 2-2-1 format (the higher "seeded" team plays games 1 and 2 at home, then games 3 and 4 on the road, and game 5 at home). There is a "free day" after games 2 and 4, so that players' fatigue and injuries get an extra day's rest. There is only one free day before the start of each playoff series, but if a team finishes its playoff series early then the players get an extra day's rest for each scheduled game not required to complete the series.

All further playoff rounds are played over a 2-3-2 format (so the higher seeded team plays games 1, 2, 6 and 7 at home, and games 3, 4 and 5 on the road). There are "free days" after games 2 and 5.

The extra rest your players get prior to playoff series includes all free days detailed above (so your team report gives the status of your squad immediately prior to the start of the first game of the turn).

Also note that during the playoffs the minimum number of pitchers on your starting rotation is three (during the regular season the minimum is four). In the playoffs you will never play more than three games in a row without a "rest day", so a team which normally plays with a four man rotation should be able to play with a three man rotation.

11.3 PLAYOFF ELIMINATION Teams that have been eliminated from their respective playoff series will have pre-season (practice) games scheduled against other teams who have also been eliminated (three series of three games each). There are no "free days" in between these pre-season games, but remember that all fatigue, form and injuries are cancelled before the start of the regular season.

11.4 DRAFT The Draft is run at the same time as the playoffs. There are three rounds in the draft, each of which is run at the same time as one round of the playoffs. At the end of the regular season the draft order is determined, in reverse order of teams records during the regular season (tiebreakers as per section 11.1).

11.5 DRAFT LIST During the draft the special actions report is replaced by the draft list (free agents are not available during the playoffs), which contains full details of about 80 rookies along with the draft order and schedule for the turn. The details shown for each rookie are similar to those for regular free agents, type, handedness, level, best ability and current value. Once a player has been drafted this is shown.

The draft list is issued three weeks before the end of the regular season. Once the draft list has been issued you may scout potential draftees (using their draft numbers) before or during the draft.

11.6 DRAFTING PLAYERS During the draft each team, in order, signs one "rookie" player to their draft squad. There is no cost for signing these players. Your turnsheet will have a number of spaces available for choices equal to your position in the draft order. When your turn comes to draft the computer searches through your list of preferences until it finds an available player. In each round of the draft you must select a player. If you really don't want to sign anyone then you are advised to take the highest value player available and release him as soon as possible, as you pay nothing for signing him and get LPs when you release him and more if someone else then signs him.

At the same time as you give your draft selections you should also give a shirt number and name for the player you will select. You may give two numbers and names for the player, one if the player selected is a batter and one if the player selected is a pitcher. If you do not give a name for the player then the computer will make a name up for you as soon as the player is drafted.

11.7 DRAFTEES You may promote (see 6.3) or release (see 6.4) signed draftees whilst the draft is still in progress, but you cannot promote or activate (see 6.2) a draftee to your active squad whilst ANY playoff series are still in progress. Remember that in pre-season games you may select players on your draft squad (see 2.14) so you don't need to promote a draftee to try him out during pre-season.

11.8 END OF DRAFT At the end of the draft each of your veteran players is assessed for gain or loss of abilities. Each player loses one point of potential. If a player has potential to lose then he will probably gain in abilities (the balance of these gains is partly but not wholly determined by your accumulated team training, see 9.7), particularly if his total form throughout the season was good, whilst if a player has no potential left to exploit then he will probably lose abilities. If a player has low potential then his skills are likely to remain unchanged, though good form may lead to them increasing slightly.

When a player is assessed at the end of the draft his skills may increase or decrease slightly, regardless of his potential and/or form, in addition to any potential driven changes (ie skills will ALWAYS fluctuate slightly, but generally players with potential and form will have their skills fluctuate upwards!). This may lead to a change in a player's skill classes and even his level.

Note: A player who is right at the top end of a class or level (which covers a range of abilities) only needs a small improvement in ability to gain a class or level, whereas a player at the bottom end of a class or level can gain significantly in skill without it being reflected in a change of class or level. Don't assume that a player's skills haven't changed just because his classes and level haven't changed.

A player's value (reflecting how much he thinks he is worth) will usually increase at the end of a season. The amount will be dependent upon his performances and whether his abilities improved, but you may find that a player's value increases after a poor season or when his abilities are declining. All injuries are also cancelled (the player recovers fully during the off-season).

In Gameplan Baseball players do not retire whilst they are signed to a team. Instead their abilities diminish and their values (and wage demands) increase until their current team decide to release the player. With high experience a veteran may still be very effective once his abilities begin to fade, but eventually he will reach a stage when his high salary can be better employed amongst more talented younger players.

Notes: There are a number of factors which determine whether a player gains or loses skills at the end of a season: potential, experience, total season form, team training totals, current skill levels, and a random factor. Most changes in a player's skill level will not be visible to you – though sometimes it will also be reflected in a change of level or class. Just because a player's level or class does not change does **not** mean his skills haven't changed. Furthermore you should note that player skills may fluctuate regardless of any of the factors above. On average these fluctuations will offset (i.e. you'll have as many skills increase as decrease, and some skills may increase while others decrease) but that may also lead to a change in level or class. The key thing to remember is that overall a player with more potential, season form, less experience and so forth is more likely to gain skills (or not lose skills) – though this will never be exactly reflected in his actual changes. Regardless of how many factors are in his favour, a player **may** see his skills decline, and vice versa. However, the more positive factors in a player's favour, the more likely it is that his various skills will improve.

11.9 SQUAD BALANCE Remember that each season you'll be signing two or three new players through the draft (your third round pick may well not be up to the job) and probably on average at least one free agent, so the average "career" of a player will be about ten years. Don't be afraid to "use up" players' potential in coaching, but also don't assume that just because a player has run out of potential he is automatically past it, though that point may well be approaching.

12 STATISTICS

12.1 INTRODUCTION Baseball is a statistical game, some obvious and some obscure. Many statistics will appear in Gameplan Baseball results, so these statistics, along with brief explanations and their common abbreviations are detailed below.

12.2 BATTING STATISTICS

12.2.1 GAMES (G) The number of games in which the batter has appeared.

12.2.2 AT BATS (AB) The number of times the batter appeared at the plate and made a base hit, reached base on a fielder's error or was out (appearances which led to a "walk" do not count). If the batter "sacrifices", intentionally sacrificing his chances of getting on base to allow base runners to advance then this does not count towards his At Bats either.

12.2.3 RUNS (R) The number of runs scored by that player, by reaching home base.

12.2.4 HITS (H) The number of base hits made by that player – the number of times the player got on base, not including errors by fielders.

12.2.5 TOTAL BASES (TB) The total number of bases made by the player (doubles count two, triples count three and home runs count four).

12.2.6 DOUBLES (2B) The number of base hits made by the player that allowed him to reach second base.

12.2.7 TRIPLES (3B) The number of base hits made by the player that allowed him to reach third base.

12.2.8 HOME RUNS (HR) The number of base hits made by the player that allowed him to reach home base (almost always a hit over the park's perimeter walls).

12.2.9 RUNS BATTED IN (RBI) Runs scored due to a batter making a base hit, sacrifice, walk etc. Note the difference between a Run and a Run Batted In – if Batter A makes a base hit, reaching first base and this allows Batter B to score from third base then Batter A is credited with a Run Batted In (in addition to his "hit"), whilst batter B is credited with the run. If a run is scored because of a fielder's error the batter concerned (who does not get a base hit) is not credited with a RBI. This may mean that a run is scored but no RBI credited.

12.2.10 BASE ON BALLS (BB) A batter is credited with a Base on Balls (commonly known as a "walk") when he advances to first base without a hit, either because the pitcher threw four balls to him or actually hit him with the pitch. Good batters will tend to be walked more by pitchers, who are wary of pitching to the batter.

12.2.11 SACRIFICES (SA) A batter is credited with a sacrifice when he deliberately hits a ball that gets him out to allow a base-runner to advance. A "sacrifice bunt" will normally advance a batter on first or second base, a "sacrifice fly" will normally allow a batter on third base to score. A sacrifice does not count as an at bat, but may allow the batter to "score" an RBI (so a batter can be credited with a sacrifice and an RBI, but has no base hit and no at bat recorded).

12.2.12 STOLEN BASES (SB) If a runner manages to move from one base to another without the batter hitting the ball (he runs while the pitcher is pitching the ball and beats the catcher's throw) then he is credited with a stolen base.

12.2.13 STRIKE OUTS (SO) A batter is "credited" with a strike out when the pitcher gets three strikes and retires him this way. If a batter "flies out" (caught) or is "ground out" (run out) then this does not count as a strike out.

12.2.14 FIELDING ERRORS (Er) If a fielder makes an error which prevents a batter being put out (drops a catch, fumbles a pickup, throws to the wrong base) then the fielder is "credited" with an error.

12.2.15 BATTING AVERAGE (BAvg) A batter's Batting Average represents his ability at making base hits. It is calculated by taking his number of Base Hits and dividing by his number of At Bats. Batting appearances which end in Walks or Sacrifices do not count.

12.2.16 ON BASE PERCENTAGE (OB) A batter's On Base Percentage is similar to his batting average but includes appearances which led to walks. It is calculated by adding his Base Hits and Walks and dividing by the sum of his At Bats, Walks and Sacrifices.

12.2.17 SLUGGING PERCENTAGE (SP) A batter's Slugging Percentage is similar to his batting average but is calculated by dividing his Total Bases by his number of At Bats.

12.2.18 PUTOUTS (PO) Putouts are not shown in boxscores but are given in stats listings. Whenever a fielder retires a batter (catching a flyball or tagging out a runner) he is credited with a putout.

12.2.19 ASSISTS (As) Assists are not shown in boxscores but are given in stats listings. Whenever a fielder assists in retiring a batter he is credited with an assist (eg if the shortstop fields the ball and throws to first base where a runner is tagged out then the shortstop is credited with an assist and the first baseman a putout).

12.2.20 FIELDING PERCENTAGE (FldP) Fielding percentage is a reflection of his effectiveness in the field. Fielding percentage is calculated by dividing the sum of his putouts and assists by the sum of his putouts, assists and errors. Fielding percentage should normally be expected to be above .950 (95%).

12.2.21 FIELD SAVES (FS) Stats listings also show an unofficial stat for fielders, Field Saves. These are putouts or assists made by a player which involve a test against his fielding skill. The majority of plays made by fielders are routine; field saves are extraordinary plays and give you a further guide to the efficiency of your fielders. Simply put, an error can be considered as a routine out which a fielder converts into a base hit by messing up, a field save is a routine base hit which a fielder turns into an out by making a great play.

12.2.22 DOUBLE PLAYS (DP) Double Plays are plays when the fielding side manage to "ground out" two runners in the same play (usually a base-runner, forced to advance because of the batter grounding the ball, and the batter). On each double play all fielders involved get credited with a double play (usually three players, the player who initially fields the ball, and the two basemen who tag out the two base-runners). Double plays do not usually occur on fly-balls, as base runners are only obliged to try and advance if the attempted hit is a ground ball (and another runner is trying to reach their base).

Note that only one double play is added to the team total, so the team total for double plays will usually be about a third of the sum of the individual players' totals. Also note that a double play cannot occur if there are already two outs in the inning, as the first out of the play ends the inning.

12.3 PITCHING STATISTICS

12.3.1 GAMES (G) The number of games in which the pitcher has played.

12.3.2 GAMES AS STARTER (GS) The number of games the pitcher started.

12.3.3 COMPLETED GAMES (CG) The number of complete games a starter has pitched.

12.3.4 GAMES FINISHED (GF) The number of games the pitcher finished.

12.3.5 INNINGS PITCHED (IP) The number of innings pitched. A pitcher is credited with a third of an inning when he gets ONE batter out. It is possible for a pitcher to play for "zero" innings, eg if he comes in, gives up three hits and is promptly benched.

12.3.6 HITS (H) The number of base hits given up by the pitcher.

12.3.7 RUNS (R) The number of runs scored off the pitcher, including those due to errors by the fielding team. Note that when a pitcher is lifted from the game he retains responsibility for any runs that may be scored by base-runners left behind by him when he was benched.

12.3.8 EARNED RUNS (ER) The number of runs scored off the pitcher, except for runs which are scored as a result of a fielding error by the pitcher's team.

Whether a run is earned or not is quite complicated. In Gameplan Baseball a run is "unearned" if the scoring runner got on base because of an error, or if the inning is only still in progress when he scores because of an error (ie there should have already been three outs and the inning over, but it isn't because one of the "outs" became a base hit because of an error) or if the runner scores on a base hit because of an error. As a general rule of thumb you'll find that about 90% of runs are earned runs.

12.3.9 HOME RUNS (HR) The number of home runs scored off the pitcher.

12.3.10 BASE ON BALLS (BB) The number of batters "walked" by the pitcher.

12.3.11 STRIKEOUTS (SO) The number of batters "struck out" by the pitcher.

12.3.12 WON-LOST DECISIONS (W-L) A win is credited to a starting pitcher who held the lead when he left the game and whose team never lost the lead subsequently, or to the pitcher who was the "pitcher of record" when the winning run was scored (the last pitcher to have actually played at the time the run is scored).

Example 1: a starter pitches six innings and leaves with a 3-1 lead. His team extend the lead to 5-1 in the eighth but the opposition score two runs in the ninth so the game finishes 5-3. The starter is awarded the win because his team always led once he left the game.

Example 2: a team wins 7-3 but the starter isn't eligible for a win. The win is credited to the "current" pitcher when the fourth run was scored, as this is considered as being the run that won the game.

A win can be credited either to a starter or a relieving pitcher. A loss is credited to any pitcher who allows the opposing team to score enough runs to win the game. A starter must pitch at least five innings to be credited with a win. If the starter would normally have been credited with a win, but has not pitched five complete innings then the win is awarded to the "most effective" relief pitcher in the opinion of the scorer (a judgement made in Gameplan Baseball by the computer using a complex formula, including factors for how well each pitcher performed during the game and also how many batters he retired during the game).

Note: If a pitcher completes an inning then he remains the "pitcher of record" until he is actually benched at the start of the next inning, which may give him a significantly higher chance of recording a win (example: Joe Bloggs pitches the bottom of the seventh innings, so any runs scored by his team in the top half of the eighth are "credited" to him as far as recording a win is concerned, even if he is then benched at the start of the opposition's eighth inning, so Joe Bloggs has pitched seven innings but gets "credit" for the runs scored by his team for eight innings!).

12.3.13 SAVES (SV) Any time a closing pitcher (the last pitcher to play in the game for his team) enters a game in which his team leads by three or fewer runs and finishes the game without giving up the lead he is credited with a "save".

Note: wins, losses and saves are meaningless statistics, invented to be able to give credit to individual pitchers for what is essentially a team game. If they seem rather illogical then the only justification is that they're regularly quoted in real-life, and have been included in Gameplan Baseball for that reason.

12.3.14 EARNED RUN AVERAGE (ERA) The pitching equivalent of the batting average is Earned Run Average. By tradition this is expressed as an average per nine innings, the standard length of a game (so a pitcher's ERA is the number of runs he would give up in an average game). The ERA is calculated by dividing the number of Earned Runs given up by the pitcher by the total number of Innings pitched and then multiplying by nine.

12.3.15 HITTING AVERAGE (HAvg) Hitting Average is the combined Batting Averages of the batters facing a particular pitcher.

12.3.16 WINS AND LOSSES STARTING (WS-LS) The record (wins and losses) of a pitcher's team in games he started.

12.3.17 RUN SUPPORT Runs scored by a pitcher's team per nine innings during the time the pitcher was pitching.

13 ALL STAR GAME

13.1 INTRODUCTION Each game may have an Allstar Game run during the second half of the regular season (between weeks 10 and 17). It cannot be run after week 17. To run an Allstar game you'll need to find four coaches who are willing to donate a credit and someone to co-ordinate the selection of players. Once you have the credits "promised" then ask your GM for the selection forms to setup the Allstar game for play.

13.2 ALLSTAR SQUADS Allstar squads are comprised of 14 batters and 11 pitchers. Nine batters form the starting lineups and one utility infielder and one utility outfielder are selected to occupy the two pinch hitter slots. In addition a reserve catcher and two other reserve fielders are selected (from any position), none of whom actually play in the game. The batting order for the nine starters should also be given. One starting pitcher is selected, along with four pitchers for the bullpen and a specialist closer. Five reserve pitchers are selected who do not play in the game.

13.3 ALLSTAR GAME The Allstar game is played and reported, using normal rules, as soon as both squads have been submitted to the GM. The report of the Allstar game is sent to all players in the league and is reported in extended, play-by-play format (see section 14). Player form, injuries and fatigue are ignored. Default game parameters are used to ensure maximum player participation:- PINCHDEF is set to -99, PINCHINN to 6, MINLEAD to -2, MAXLEAD to 9 and OPPHAND to NO. For starting pitchers MAXBATS is set to 18, MAXHITS to 3, MAXEXTRA to 1 and FIRSTINN to 1. For relief pitchers the parameters are 9, 3, 1 and 1.

14 EXTENDED GAME REPORTS

14.1 INTRODUCTION The standard game reports in Gameplan Baseball give you full line and boxscore details for every game, and give you all of the information necessary to judge how your team is performing. However, you may choose to have your game reports sent in extended form, which in addition to line and boxscores also give a play-by-play report of each game played that turn (you have to take all games that turn, or none at all).

Note: These reports will not give you any extra information which would give you any advantage when planning future orders. Baseball is by nature far too random a game for any one game to be considered in isolation. However, you may well feel that the extended reports add to your enjoyment of the game, as they mean you have more information to read through with your game report. It is very important that these listings should be optional. Those who are willing to pay the extra cost to receive them should be able to do so, whilst those who prefer not to should also have this option (and doubtless some coaches will swap between the two options).

14.2 EXTENDED REPORTS If you choose to receive extended (play by play) game reports (see 6.31) then you will be charged an extra 0.2 credit to pay for the cost of receiving ALL games played that turn in the extended format (this covers the extra cost of postage, paper and ink). Once you set this option you will continue to receive extended game reports (and pay the extra cost) until you cancel this option (see 6.32).

14.3 EXTENDED GAME REPORTS The extended game reports simply report the key events, play by play throughout the game as they would be reported by a game commentator. Changes to lineups (new pitchers on the mound, pinch hitters entering the game) are reported, along with details of each at bat. A batter getting on base is reported as a **walk, single, double, triple** or **home run**, along with base runners advancing and/or scoring. If a batter is out, then he will either be out **sacrificed, struck out, flied out** (the fielder catching him is shown by his fielding position), **ground out** (the fielder completing the putout shown by position, usually with the fielder assisting shown in brackets) or may be **forced out** (see 14.4).

14.4 FORCE OUTS A force out occurs when a batter would normally have been ground out at first base, but makes the base because the fielding side opt to force out another base runner who has been forced to try to advance because of the hit. If this occurs then the batter is NOT credited with a base hit, even though he has got on base and in the listings the batter is reported as having **reached 1st**, along with the reporting of the force out.

Example: Smith has a runner on first base and hits the ball to the shortstop. The runner at first is forced to try to make second because Smith is running to first. The defence elect to throw out the runner at second,

allowing Smith to reach first (this is known as a "fielder's choice"). Smith is credited with an at bat, but no hit, as effectively he has simply ground into a routine out.

Note: This may complicate the reading of boxscores slightly. If in the above example the next batter up hits a home-run Bloggs will score a run, and therefore might actually complete the game with no hits, no base-on-balls, but having scored a run.

In some cases the defence may decide not to go for the force out, and may simply ground out the baserunner instead (eg if the base runner has time to reach second, but the batter won't reach first), so you may see the base runner successfully forced to second, whilst the batter is ground out at first (or often they'll succeed in grounding out BOTH batters, a **double play**). Additionally if a base runner is not automatically forced (such as in the above example if the base runner were on second) then the runner may simply hold on his base, and watch the routine out at first.

14.5 KEEPING IT SIMPLE To try and keep boxscores simple, runners being caught stealing and runners failing to make base when attempting extra bases are not included in Gameplan Baseball. With the current system, stealing bases is simply something good that can happen, without any negative side-effects. If these were to be introduced then managers would want to have control over it, and this would add a high degree of complexity and strategy to the game which isn't really appropriate to the design nature of Gameplan Baseball. Also, to keep things simple, some very uncommon plays are not included in the game, such as triple plays (like a double play, but three runners are ground out on the same play).

GENERAL DESIGNERS NOTES Gameplan Baseball is by its nature a compromise between a coaching strategy game and a purely management game. A purely coaching strategy game, where you played one game per turn, wouldn't work, simply because of the nature of Baseball, namely that the best team doesn't always win a given game (the World Series is a perfect example, taking seven games to determine the best team). Similarly a purely management game, where you simply send out the lineup and don't affect the game's progression at all would be just as unfulfilling, hence the compromise which has proved to be popular. You have a high degree of control over what happens to your squad and how the players will perform during the game, but still have to consider your results in the light of a number of games, and not just a few isolated performances.