

Benchwarmer Baseball

A Fantasy Baseball Game
www.benchwarmerbaseball.net

Official Rulebook – 2007 Season

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Table of Contents

Basics.....	1	Player Performance Awards	17
Timelines.....	1	Carry over.....	17
Entry Fees and Prizes	2	Maximum Cash Balances.....	17
Group Pricing	2	Exceptions for Expansion Teams.....	17
Prizes.....	2	Exceptions for First-year Leagues.....	17
Referral Bonus	2	Building a Team – The Startup Draft	18
Late Payment of Entry Fees.....	3	Phase One Draft.....	18
Terminology.....	3	Phase One - Submission	18
Season Schedule.....	3	Phase One - Resolution.....	19
Regular Season.....	3	Phase Two.....	20
Postseason	4	Late Season Drafts – Exceptions to Phase Two	21
Playoff Format.....	4	Free Agency	21
Game Selection.....	4	Notes.....	21
Selecting Starting Pitching Performances	5	Live Draft Option.....	21
Divisional Tiebreakers	6	League Package Drafts.....	22
First-place Ties.....	6	Minor Leagues	22
Ties for 2nd-4th place.....	6	Eligibility	22
Post-Season Playoffs - The BWB Championships..	6	Scoring.....	22
Runner-up Tournament - The Al Gore Cup	7	Season Schedule.....	23
Also-rans Tournament - The Bottom-Feeder Open	7	Special Scoring Notes.....	23
.....	7	Roster Changes	23
The Benchwarmer Bash	7	Salary rebates and assumptions	23
Rosters.....	8	Transaction guidelines	23
Roster Minimums.....	8	Trades	24
Roster Maximums.....	8	Trade Review	25
Injured Reserve	9	Free Agents	25
Lineups.....	9	Process	25
Hitters.....	9	Transaction Order.....	26
Substitutes	10	Alternate Picks and Contingent Releases.....	26
Bench Players.....	10	Off Season Procedures	26
Designated Hitter as Position Player.....	10	Salary Cap.....	26
The Benchwarmer Batter.....	10	Roster Clean-Up	27
Pitchers	10	Fall Trading Period.....	27
Starters	10	Roster Carryover	27
Spot Starters	11	League Merger/Contraction.....	27
Rotation.....	11	Expansion Draft	27
Rest Between Starts.....	11	Redistribution Draft	28
The Pinesitter Pitcher	12	Draft Order	28
Relief Pitchers.....	12	Draft Procedures	28
September Call Ups.....	12	Free Agency	29
The “Cut” Lineup Designation	12	Waiver Order - Off-season Free-agent signings	29
Mapping MLB Games to BWB Games	13	29
The 5-Game Gap.....	13	Waiver Order - First two weeks of the regular	29
Doubleheaders and Suspended Games.....	13	season – Returning Leagues	29
Correcting Mistakes.....	14	Waiver Order - First two weeks of the regular	29
Scoring.....	14	season – New Leagues	29
Finances.....	14	Complete Rosters	29
Currency.....	14	Salary Rebate Exceptions	30
Player Salaries	15	Inactive Owners	30
Preseason	15	Inactive Owners - Minimum Roster Size	30
Regular Season.....	15	Inactive Owners - Opening Day Lineups.....	32
Exceptions to prorated salary	15	Schedule and Deadlines	33
assumption/rebate	15	Player Salaries and Salary Cap.....	33
Team Revenue Sources	15	Salaries	33
Preseason	15	Salary Formulas.....	34
Regular Season.....	16	Derivation of the Salary Cap	34
Postseason	16		

Salary Caps.....	34
Multiyear Contracts.....	34
Master Player List and Positions	35
Player List	35
Regular Season – Adding Players	35
Regular Season – Removing Players.....	36
Note on First Round Draft Picks.....	36
Positions.....	36
Additional Positions During the Season	37
Starting Pitchers or Relief Pitchers?.....	37
Miscellaneous Rules and Special Situations.....	37
League Office: Rule Changes and Special	
Rulings	37
Financial Penalties and Compensation	37
Appendix A: BWB Calendar	38
Appendix B: BWB Scoring Formula.....	39
Score.....	39
Batting Score.....	39
RR	39
ATB.....	40
Pitching Score	40
BP	40
BI	40
BK.....	40
HBB	41
Determining the number of relievers	41
Benchwarmers	42
Benchwarmer Batters	42
Pinesitter Pitcher – Starting Pitcher.....	42
Pinesitter Pitcher - Bullpen.....	42
Examples	42
Appendix C: BWB Salary Calculation	43
Batters Salaries.....	43
Pitchers Salaries	43
Premium Player Salary Adjustments.....	44
The Island of Misfit Free Agents - Salary	
Reduction.....	45
Examples of Final Salary Calculation	45
Appendix D: BWB Salary Cap Calculation.....	46
Appendix E: Yearly Rule Changes	47
2002 Rule Changes	47
2003 Rule Changes	48
2004 Rule Changes	50
2005 Rule Changes	50
Scoring Formula Changes	51
Salary Formulas	52
Team Finances.....	52
2006 Rule Changes	53
Team Finances.....	53
Transaction Order	54
Rule Changes for Rosters.....	54
League Finances and Entry Fees	55
2007 Rule Changes	56
Scoring Changes.....	56
Rule Changes for Rosters and Player Lists...56	
Rule Changes for Playoffs	57
Transaction Changes	58
Index	60

Basics

Benchwarmer Baseball (abbreviated often as BWB) is a fantasy simulation of Major League Baseball. Owners create and run a team through a 150-game regular season and playoff rounds. Teams are organized into two conferences, and each conference is divided into two 4-team divisions. Division winners advance to Conference Championships, and those two winners move to the League Championship. In addition, the other teams in the league will play in other post-season tournaments.

Each roster has a minimum of 26 players (14 hitters and 12 pitchers). The maximum roster size is 40 players – the 26 mandatory spots plus 2 optional taxi squad players and up to 12 optional minor league players. Teams are built via a startup draft in their initial season. During the spring and summer, teams may trade players to and from other teams, plus cut players and sign free agents. At the end of the year, each team may elect to keep up to 28 players to roll into the next season. The league then holds a Redistribution Draft as the first method for dispersal of available players. Franchises, then, are perpetual. If an owner quits Benchwarmer Baseball, a new owner will inherit the same team.

The roots and many of the rules and scoring formulas go back to Robot Baseball and On-Paper Baseball, two commercial, play-by-mail fantasy baseball games that went out of business in approximately 1997 and 1991, respectively.

Benchwarmer Baseball began operation with a 12-team league in 2000 (The Founders League, later renamed as the Hall of Fame League). Four teams were added through expansion in 2001 to get the league to the proper size. In 2004, a second league was added. Entering 2007, BWB continues to grow with a total of 9 leagues.

Timelines

This is the basic breakdown of deadlines for each season, subject to change:

Date:	Action:
January	Off-season redistribution draft for returning leagues
January - March	Startup draft for new leagues as they fill
January - March	Off-season transactions
March	Signup for new leagues ends
April	Payment due
April	Regular season begins
September	Deadline for owners to indicate they are returning for the next season.
October	Playoffs
October - March	Find new owners for Orphan Teams in existing leagues.
November	Signup for new leagues begins
November	Salaries posted for next season
November	Two-week off season trading period.
December	Early-payment discount for next season ends
December	Returning teams submit carryover rosters
December	New players added for next season based on 40-man rosters.

Entry Fees and Prizes

The cost for a season of Benchwarmer Baseball is \$55. Entry fees go toward costs for the web site, stat services, and potentially post-season rewards. It also helps to cover the great amount of labor behind the game.

The charter league of Benchwarmer Baseball, the Hall of Fame League, has a lower entry fee.

Multi-team discounts are available. Each team beyond the first gets a \$10 discount.

In future seasons, a non-refundable deposit may be collected toward the end of summer from owners who intend to return for the following season.

Group Pricing

Benchwarmer Baseball also offers special pricing discounts for owners who want to join as a 4-team division, 8-team conference, or a full 16-team league. See the web site or contact BWB for more details on price and availability. A single owner will be responsible for paying the package price. The teams in the package must remain grouped together and in the same position within the league as they originally joined. No additional discounts will be provided for the group – including the free team for the league champion (although free extra teams in additional leagues will be available for post-season tournament winners).

Owners who join as a package may have some input on the league naming. Groups who join as a full league will also have the option of running their own drafts outside of the BWB process.

Prizes

There are no cash prizes for this league. Currently, the reward for division and playoff titles is a hearty "Well done!" and a virtual slap-on-the-back. Cash prizes would mean a higher entry fee, plus a higher level of scrutiny on transactions and other moves that doesn't exist today in a game played "for fun."

However, the league champion will get his/her team for free for the next season, plus the opportunity to play for free for one season with an Orphan team in another existing league or a team in a brand new league.

Teams that win the other postseason tournaments – the Gore Cup and the Bottom Feeder Open – will be allowed to pick up an Orphan/new team for the next season for free.

There is a final tournament in the post season that includes all the league champions – the Benchwarmer Bash. The winner of the tournament will get their team for free for two additional seasons and the runner up will get one free year.

Referral Bonus

Owners - new and returning - who refer additional new owners to Benchwarmer Baseball will receive a bonus for each paid new team (amount subject to change).

To avoid the hassles of refunds, if an owner has already paid, the bonus will generally be applied for the next season. If the team making the referral is already playing for free, the bonus will automatically be carried over to the next season.

The referral bonus is only provided for one season and is not applicable if the "new owner" is a previous member of Benchwarmer Baseball. The referral is applied only once per owner (or co-owners), regardless of how many teams they purchase.

Late Payment of Entry Fees

Currently, BWB requires owners of new teams to pay before drafting. On the other hand, returning teams may conduct off-season business before payment. We must, however, try to encourage payment by means other than the early payment discount. Thus, if you do not pay by certain times, there will be roster penalties:

If entry fee is not received by:	You may not...
Week One deadline	Make roster changes (signings, drops, trades, contract extensions).
Week Five deadline	Make roster changes or lineup changes (batting order, pitching rotation, etc.)
Week Ten deadline	Continue to own your team. Benchwarmer Baseball will take control of the team and find a replacement owner.

Once payment is received, full rights are restored.

At any time, if the league office considers the owner has abandoned the team, it reserves the right to take over the team before the Week 10 deadline and find a new owner. This will occur if repeated attempts to contact the team fail and/or it is evident that no actions are being taken on the team's behalf or the owner is not logging in to the web site.

Terminology

Throughout this rules manual the following terms will be used – hopefully on a consistent basis:

- Players: refers to Major League players, not participants in the BWB Game.
- Owners: refers to participants in Benchwarmer Baseball.
- Teams: may also be used interchangeably to refer to participants in the game.
- Week: 6 games in the Benchwarmer Baseball Season
- Series: All series during the regular season are 3 games.
- Opening Day: Unless otherwise noted, this refers to the Week 1 transaction deadline for Benchwarmer Baseball, not the first major league game of the season.

Season Schedule

Regular Season

Teams will play a regular season of 150 games. Teams are divided into two conferences. Each conference will have two divisions. Each division has four teams.

Schedule Breakdown

Play:

18 games against each of the other three teams in your division. (54 games)

12 games against each of the four teams in the other division of your conference. (48 games)

6 games against each of the eight teams in the opposing conference. (48 games)

=150 games total

Unlike Rotisserie baseball and other fantasy games, BWB does not deal with player performance based on calendar days or weeks. Instead, BWB games are scored on a game-by-game basis, no matter when they are played – allowing each player on the roster to appear in a BWB game if he plays in that particular major league game.

The performance of a player in a fantasy game is directly obtained from the real major league game. However, since teams play on different days the schedule deals with game numbers, not game dates. That is, in a team's first fantasy game of the season, the performances of the players are based upon the first real game that their major league teams play. Game 40 of the fantasy season is based upon game 40 of the major league season. *(Note: This mapping is not entirely accurate – there's one twist – but that's easier to explain in the Scoring section. This explanation should provide you with the basic idea).*

Example: A team owns both Ken Griffey and Derek Jeter. For fantasy game 100, those players would be scored depending upon how Griffey does in the 100th game for Cincinnati, while Jeter would be scored according to the Yankees' 100th game, despite the fact that those might be several days apart.

There can be a slight gap when a player is traded from one major league team to another. Let's assume that Oakland has played 95 games and Washington has played 100.

Example One: John Doe is traded from Oakland to Washington. The last game he played for Oakland was Game 95, but now the first game he plays for Washington is Game 101. Unfortunately, you're not going to get any stats for him for BWB Games 96-100.

Example Two: Sam Public is traded from Washington to Oakland, having already played through Game 100 with Washington. As long as there is any overlap/duplicate games (that is, until Oakland plays Game #101), the stats he earns **first** (with Washington) are the ones used for BWB games.

The regular season will cover major league games 1-150. If a position player does not play in a particular major league game, he will not "play" in the corresponding fantasy game. Pitchers work a little differently (see **Lineups** for more details).

Each week of the fantasy season will cover 6 games. That creates a regular season schedule of 25 weeks. Lineups and roster changes are submitted once per week.

Postseason

Playoff Format

Following the regular season, the division champions of each conference will meet in a best-of-seven conference championship series. The winners will meet in a best-of-seven league championship series. There are no wild cards that advance to the championship round.

Game Selection

Since the very end of the season can often be a time of resting for the playoffs and calling up the minor leaguers, the playoffs will use major league games a little differently. Instead of using games 151-162 for the playoffs, random games from the last portion of the season will be used.

This has been modified a few times over the years, but has always been some permutation of random games selected from the entire MLB season. Beginning in 2007, these random games will only be selected from the 2nd half of the season. The actual cut-off point is still to be finalized, but as of 5/1/07, consider that playoff performances will be selected from MLB games 81-162.

This allows for a couple of things: First, a team in BWB that makes a late-season run to get into the playoffs (or extend their lead) comes into the playoffs with momentum and may be - at that point, despite the overall record - the best team in the league. Picking some major league games from the early part of the season may effectively kill that momentum and may mean - for all playoff teams - that some key players in the late part of the season may not have even been in the majors early and can cause some big roster holes. Second, it may make the decision to hang on to an injured player or not an easier choice. Before, you might want to keep a player with a hot April-May-June because they could help you in the playoffs. Now, unless you just want to keep him for the next season anyway, there's no reason game-wise to do so.

There will no longer be any structure to force the random games to be spread out over the possible period. No game will be used more than once throughout the 2-week playoff season. During the Benchwarmer Bash, the game selection process will be reset every 2 weeks (and all pitching performances become open again).

The random game is different for each league. During the Bash, all brackets will use the same random game.

The post-season schedule will be conducted in this way:

- Game one hitting statistics will be from a random game drawn from major league games 81-162.
- Starting pitching performances will be selected from the available start nearest to the game used for hitting statistics (see below).
- Relief appearances will use the 6-game span ending with the same game used for hitters.

Note – the game used for hitters will be the **actual** game drawn. No 5-game gap is used in the playoffs.

Thus, the playoff schedule adheres to a season-long approach toward games, but allows for some variation in when those games are used. Keep in mind that even though you have an injured player, it might be worth keeping him on your roster for use in the playoffs. This isn't a perfect system, but does tend to favor a team that has more consistent players in the last half of the season rather than just streaking ones in the very last weeks. The only way to really fix this would be to shorten the regular season and feedback so far has favored the current regular season length (we've had many late-season comebacks that would have fallen short).

Selecting Starting Pitching Performances

For playoff games, we will use the starting pitching stats from the MLB game NEAREST to the randomly selected MLB game used for hitters. This is not unlimited, however. The game must be within 20 games of the hitters' game or the pitcher will have no starts available for the game.

A start can only be used once during the entire playoffs (for the Benchwarmer Bash, this will be reset after every two series). For standardization, if the pitcher has 2 starts equidistant from the hitters' game, the start that occurred first will be used.

Divisional Tiebreakers

First-place Ties

Any teams tied for 1st-place after the regular season will meet in a one-game, winner-take-all playoff game. This will be treated as Game 151 of the season. Teams will not be able to make lineup changes - the rosters for Week 25 will continue into the playoff as though there were 7 games, not 6, that week. The pitching rotation will continue, thus both teams will use their #1 starters. The tiebreaker system for places 2-4 will be used to determine which team is the home team.

Should there be a 3-way tie, the teams will play each other once in a round-robin format. The team with the best record will advance to the playoffs. They will use the following schedule:

Game #	Teams	Starting pitchers
151	A vs. B	A: S1 - B: S1
152	A vs. C	A: S2 - C: S1
153	B vs. C	B: S2 - C: S2

Home teams for each game will be determined the same way as in a 2-team tie. Team order will be determined through a random process.

Should all three teams end up tied again (1-1 in the round-robins), there will be a final set of divisional playoff games, this time single elimination. The standard tie breakers will be used to rank the teams 1-3 and determine which team gets a bye in the first game, with one change - the head-to-head records will be cumulative for all teams involved in the tie, not just between two individual teams, and will include the first set of playoff games. If we cannot get a definite 1-3 ranking, but can eliminate 1 team as either the top seed or bottom seed, we will attempt to sort the other two teams using the tie breakers in a head-to-head manner. This will be the schedule for the final two games:

Game #	Teams	Starting pitchers
154	Team #3 at Team #2	S3 for both teams
155	Winner of 154 at Team #1	Team #2/#3: S4 -- Team #1: S3

If by some cataclysmic event there is a 4-way tie, this process will be modified to include 4 teams instead of 3.

Ties for 2nd-4th place

This may seem academic, but is necessary for determining post-season cash, placement and seeding in the extra post-season tournaments, and draft order for the off-season.

Ties are broken using:

1. Head-to-head records
2. Division records
3. Conference records
4. Coin Flip or other criteria TBA

Post-Season Playoffs - The BWB Championships

Following the regular season, the division champions of each conference will meet in a best-of-seven conference championship series. The winners will then meet in a best-of-seven league championship series. Also, there will be two post-season tournaments that will include all teams in the league.

See **Season Schedule** above for details on which Major League Baseball games will be used for the playoffs.

The winner of the League Championship will receive that team free for the next season, plus an opportunity to grab an extra team for free in the next season – either an Orphan team in a returning league or a new team in a brand new league. This benefit is not transferable to any other existing team that they may already own.

Runner-up Tournament - The Al Gore Cup

Named for the patron saint of all people finishing second who feel they should have been the winner, the Gore Cup features all four second-place teams in a separate tournament. The four teams will be seeded from 1-4, regardless of conference. Each series will be best-of-seven games, which will correspond to the same random-game schedule as the championship series. Between rounds, the winning teams will have the opportunity to change their lineups. The higher seeds in each round will get home-field advantage.

The winner of the Gore Cup will have an opportunity to grab an extra team for free in the next season – either an Orphan team in a returning league or a new team in a brand new league. This benefit is not transferable to any other existing team that they may already own.

Also-rans Tournament - The Bottom-Feeder Open

The eight remaining teams will be seeded 1-8 by regular season record, regardless of division or conference, and compete in a separate tournament. The teams will be re-seeded between each round. The higher seed earns home-field advantage.

The first two rounds will correspond to the same random game selection as the Conference Championships. These series will be best-of-three and will follow a home-away-home format.

After the first round, no roster change will be permitted. The games for the second round will start with the FOURTH pitcher in the rotation, regardless of whether the teams played two or three games in the first series.

The championship round will be best-of-five (2-2-1) and will follow the same random game schedule as the League Championship. The two teams will be able to change their lineups before this set of games.

The winner of the Bottom-Feeder Open will have an opportunity to grab an extra team for free in the next season – either an Orphan team in a returning league or a new team in a brand new league. This benefit is not transferable to any other existing team that they may already own.

The Benchwarmer Bash

All league champions will advance to another tournament, to be run in October and November, which will crown a single champion for all of Benchwarmer Baseball. As BWB grows, the format of this tournament will vary slightly from year to year. In some seasons, to get an even number of teams, some wild cards may be added.

The eventual goal is that leagues will be grouped into Federations. Teams will advance to a Federation championship before moving to the BWB Championship Round. If the game continues to grow, each Federation will be subdivided into 4-league Associations, and an Association tournament will occur before the Federation round.

The winner of the Benchwarmer Bash will receive a free entry for the championship team for an extra two seasons. The runner up will get one free season.

Rosters

Players in Benchwarmer Baseball earn a salary in Benchwarmer Bucks. The salary is based primarily upon the stats for the previous season. Owners create teams through the Startup Draft, which is conducted only once in the lifetime of any league. Teams may add or remove players during weekly transactions. During the draft and transactions, a team must be mindful of its financial balance and will not be allowed to sign any player that will reduce the balance below zero. Teams get a distribution of cash at the beginning of their existence, during each off-season, and they have other ways to earn cash throughout the season.

Each team will have a roster of 26-40 players. The roster is broken down into these mandatory 26 positions:

- 9 starting hitters
- 5 reserve hitters
- 5 starting pitchers
- 5 relief pitchers
- 2 spot pitchers

See **Lineups** for more details on these positions. Each owner may also fill out his roster with optional positions. The team can utilize a taxi squad/disabled list, which can be used for up to two players (they do not have to be injured to be on it). Up to 12 other players may be signed to the minor league roster.

Any players may be put onto the taxi squad. However, the minor league roster is limited to players with salaries of 250 or less. Players on the minor league roster do not have to be in the minors in real life. Owners may use the minor leagues to store disabled players or major leaguers who are slumping or not playing much or don't fit into the current roster. The only stipulation is that they don't exceed the 250 salary limit. Note: Any player, regardless of salary, can be put on the team's major league roster.

In addition, each team's minor league roster will be competing for a separate award and additional funds. The only statistics that will count for the minor league standings are those actually obtained in real-life minor leagues. See **Minor Leagues** for more details.

Roster Minimums

Given the mandatory positions listed above, each team must fulfill these minimums:

- 14 hitters (9 starters, 5 bench)
- 12 pitchers (5 starters, 5 bullpen, 2 spot)

Roster Maximums

A team can have no more than 40 players, but since minor league players cannot make more than 250, there are some maximum limits placed on rosters based on salary.

- A team can have no more than 16 hitters making 250 or more (the 14 active spots plus 2 potential taxi squad players)
- A team can have no more than 14 pitchers making 250 or more (the 12 active spots plus 2 potential players on the taxi squad).
- Those numbers, however, are independent and cannot be added together, since both assume the use of the 2 available taxi squad slots. There are 26 active players and 2 taxi openings – anyone else needs to be in the minors. Thus, a team cannot have more than 28 players making over 250.

Injured Reserve

Owners often ask about adding a disabled list. Benchwarmer Baseball doesn't call it that, but that's essentially what the "Taxi Squad" is (borrowing old NFL terminology). But it's actually better than a disabled list, because you don't have to be hurt to be put on it.

Starting in 2006, we added a new roster designation - Injured Reserve (IR). And, like the taxi squad, the player does not have to be injured to be put on it. However, again borrowing from the NFL, when you put a player on IR, he is done for the season.

You may place one player on IR. There is no cost associated with this move, and once you do that, his roster spot becomes open for another player - so, in a sense, the maximum roster size goes from 40 to 41. But, the only option you have for that player the rest of the season is to keep him on IR or cut him. He cannot be placed back on your active roster - including for the playoffs.

If the player is cut and goes back into the free agent pool and another team signs him, he will be made active. If a player on IR is traded, the receiving team gets him as an active player.

This change allows you to hang on to a player who suffers a season-ending injury early in the season and maintain some roster flexibility with your taxi squad positions. Keep in mind, one of the "benefits" of cutting a player in this situation, particularly early in the season, is to get a pro-rated salary rebate. Putting a player on IR will not do that for you.

This is currently limited to one player. BWB still likes to see teams have to make some difficult choices on rosters which from time to time puts some premium players back into the free agent pool (where another team might be in a better position to hold on to an injured player and build for the future). If you already have a player on IR, and want to put another player there, you're going to have to decide to cut one of them.

Lineups

Team lineups are submitted for a week of games at a time. The league office will set a deadline for each week's lineup changes. If no lineup is submitted, or is submitted late, the team will retain the same lineup from the previous week. See **Season Schedule** for more details on how the lineup is used and **Schedules and Deadlines** for information on the submission deadlines. In Benchwarmer Baseball, a week is six games.

There is a week delay between transactions and roster/lineup implications.

Hitters

The first part of the lineup is the starting batting order. A team must name nine players to start and list the order in which they will hit. This includes eight position players and a designated hitter. In addition to the order, lineups will include the position that the player occupies. Only hitters identified by their primary or secondary position can be used in that position. As an example, only a player listed with a primary or secondary position of third base may be used as a starting third baseman. His place may be filled by a reserve if he does not actually play in that day's game (see below).

Any player may be used as a designated hitter. Players who are identified only as designated hitters in the master player list may not be used in any other position unless they later meet the criteria listed in the **Master Player List and Positions** section.

Substitutes

As described in **Season Schedule**, a player's statistics for major league game X will be used for fantasy game X*. If he does not play in that game, two things can happen. First, a reserve off the bench may be used to fill his place. Reserves enter the game in the order that they are listed on the lineup submission.

**See The Big Twist – The Five-Game Gap below for how this actually differs a little bit in practice.*

Bench Players

Bench players are submitted in the lineup ranked 1-5. Starting with the first reserve, each sub is checked to see if he played in game X and if his primary or secondary position makes him eligible to fill the lineup spot in question. If so, that player is inserted into the lineup for that game. This is at the same position in the order as the listed starter.

If there are more open spots in the batting order, the bench is checked again for eligible subs, until all the starting lineup slots are filled, or there are no more bench players. If a team's starting SS does not play in a game, but there are two available subs on the bench to play SS, the sub ranked higher on the lineup fills the hole.

Designated Hitter as Position Player

Actually, the DH is always the first position substitute. If the team's starting position player is out, and the listed DH is eligible to play at that position (primary or secondary position), then the DH will fill that role. However, the batting order will not change. Once all the field position players are filled, the highest remaining reserve will fill the DH spot, if necessary.

If the DH was changed to become a position player, the new DH from the bench will fill the batting order slot of the position player replaced by the DH.

If a DH can play multiple positions, several combinations may be checked in order to use the bench most efficiently to attempt to avoid using a *Benchwarmer Batter*. If a player can be used in multiple spots as a backup or DH, the overriding tiebreaker is to place from the top of the order down. Thus, if you have only one player that can fill in for two open spots – say leadoff and cleanup – he gets put in the leadoff position, and the *Benchwarmer* goes in the cleanup spot.

The Benchwarmer Batter

Should there be no valid substitutions for a slot in the starting lineup, the spot is filled by the *Benchwarmer Batter* with the following statistics: 0 for 5, no RBI, no walks, no SB, 2 errors. If the *Benchwarmer* fills the DH role, there will be no errors. The *Benchwarmer* will be used as many times as necessary to get the batting order up to nine active players for the game.

Pitchers

Starters

Pitchers are handled differently, since it is very unlikely that they will pitch in the actual corresponding games between the major league and the fantasy seasons. As soon as the starter is placed in the rotation, he begins to accumulate starts in a pool or, rather, a queue. When his turn in the rotation comes up, the oldest start in the queue will be used for that fantasy game and will be removed from the queue. Starts will accumulate as long as the pitcher is in the starting rotation up to a maximum of three - at which time the oldest one is discarded and never used. If the starter is removed from the BWB rotation, the queue is emptied until he is placed back in the rotation.

Only starts will be used while a pitcher is in the rotation. No relief appearances will be used for the queue.

Starting Pitchers will begin accumulating starts beginning with Major League Game 1.

In practice, pitchers that begin the BWB season in the main 5-man rotation and are not moved out will easily queue up an additional 1 or 2 starts, since many major league teams do not use 5 pitchers right away. If you have a pitcher who ends up in a 4-man MLB rotation, you may end up losing some starts that fall out of the queue before they can be used in BWB. Also, many teams skip a pitcher or two or rearrange their rotation at the All Star Break, so you may see starters queue up too many starts and lose their oldest one before using it in a BWB game.

The use of these extra queued starts will often allow your pitcher to not miss a BWB start if he misses a start in real life. Minor injuries, then, should not be a huge problem.

Starters placed into the rotation after the season begins, however, will probably not have the chance to queue up extra starts and you may be more affected by injuries to them.

Spot Starters

Teams designate five starting pitchers as their primary rotation. They also list two pitchers to serve as spot starters, who will fill in for a game if the scheduled starter does not have an available start in the queue to use.

Spot starters will only accumulate one start. Thus, their latest available start will always be the one used. If a pitcher is moved from the normal rotation to spot position, his latest start will be retained and any earlier starts in his queue will be discarded. If a pitcher is moved from a spot position to the normal rotation, his queued start (if it exists) will be moved along with him and he will immediately begin to queue up additional starts as they occur up to the three-start limit.

Note: A rule change in 2005 allowed the “Spot Starter” to actually become a more versatile “Spot Pitcher.” Thus, relievers can also be used in the spot positions and they can fill in for the regular bullpen if needed. Keep in mind – only MLB starting pitching performances can be used for a BWB start. And only MLB relief appearances can be used in the BWB bullpen.

Rotation

Owners specify a starting rotation of five pitchers. A pitcher is used in a game if a) it is his turn in the rotation and b) he has a game in the queue to use. In the situation where at the start of the season or if he is placed into the rotation mid-season, and does not have a qualifying game, then the spot starters are checked, in order. If one has a qualifying start and at least 4 games rest (see below), he takes the start. If neither of the spot pitchers can be used, the next pitcher in the rotation with a qualifying game will pitch, again contingent on the fact that he has not pitched in the previous 4 games.

The spot starters are not rotated. For example, a spot starter is needed in game 32. The first spot starter qualifies and is used. Assume that the spot starters do not change and the next spot start is needed in game 63. Again, the top spot starter in the order is checked first, despite the fact that he was the last spot starter to be used.

Rest Between Starts

Starting pitchers must rest for four fantasy games between starts. If a pitcher's turn in the rotation comes due, but he has pitched in any of the preceding four games, he is skipped until his normal turn in the rotation comes up again (or unless he is needed to move up in the rotation before that occurs).

This makes changing a pitcher's position in the rotation a tricky process. It's almost certain that if you move a pitcher UP in the rotation, he will need to sit out a start. And in some weeks, moving a pitcher DOWN in the rotation could cause a problem (you need to be aware of which rotation spot will have two starts in the given BWB week).

The Pinesitter Pitcher

If the normally scheduled starter cannot pitch in the BWB game (whether because there are no starts in the queue or he has not had the proper rest), and no spot starter can fill in, and no other pitcher in the rotation can move up to pitch early, then a substitute is needed to start the game. If no starters qualify for the game, a *Pinesitter Pitcher* fills in with the following line score: 3 IP, 5 H, 5 BB, 0 K, and 5 ER.

Relief Pitchers

This is significantly more complicated, if that's possible, than the starting pitching. Again, this is largely due to the fact that the need for relief pitching will generally not correspond with real major league game appearances.

Rather than maintain a queue of games for relief pitchers, their performance will be collected on a sliding scale of six games. That is, games #1-6 will be compiled for fantasy game #1. Games #2-7 will be compiled for fantasy game #2, and so on.

Only actual relief appearances will count. No starts will be included in a relief pitcher's pool of games. The actual use of these games will be described in more detail below in **Scoring** and **Appendix B: BWB Scoring Formula**.

September Call Ups

During the final three weeks of the season, Benchwarmer weeks 23-25, taxi squad players and minor league players will become eligible to fill holes in game lineups - whether as players in the field or an emergency starting pitcher or coming out of the bullpen.

Following the normal lineup process, if there are any holes in a team's lineup, the taxi squad will be checked to see if there are any eligible game performances to fill in. Following that, if any spots are still open, the minor league roster will be checked.

Since the last three weeks are 18 games played within your division, this should help reduce the number of Benchwarmers and Pinesitters that appear in crucial games (and we've had several pennant races come down to the last game - and even beyond), giving you a chance to settle it "on the field."

The "Cut" Lineup Designation

There has always been a not-so-secret loophole in the roster process that you could actually put more than two players on the taxi squad in a given week, provided that you were actually cutting them in your transactions that week to get back down to two. Remember, players cut don't actually leave your roster until the following week.

Once the roster expansion process was added for Weeks 23-25, the taxi squad became part of an expanded bench, and that loophole actually became a problem. To rectify that, a new designation was made in the lineup-setting process. Use the Slot designation to mark a player as "Cut" and you can use someone else in the active roster spot he was going to have to fill.

Note: This DOES NOT serve as the means to cut the player - you still must use the transaction process to release him (or trade). If the cut does not go through - for example, had you listed the player as a "contingent release" but that was not needed, the BWB Office will put the player back onto your active

roster and make the necessary adjustments - attempting to make the change transparent to your lineup (but that's not usually possible...since that's most likely why you were using the cut designation).

Example: You submit a release of Scott Baker in Week 2 since he was sent down to the real-life minors and you can't put him into the BWB minors because of his salary. He will still occupy that second spot starter slot where you've got him in the Week 2 lineups...and will be gone by Week 3. However, you can designate him in the Week 2 lineup as "cut" and put someone else in as the S2.

Mapping MLB Games to BWB Games

The 5-Game Gap

Here's the complicating factor in matching the stats players earn in MLB games to Benchwarmer games: we need to allow pitchers to accumulate 6 games worth of statistics before they can be used for our game. As mentioned above with the bullpen, we need to use MLB games #1-6 to gather the stats necessary for BWB game #1. In addition, we need to allow starting pitchers at least one turn through a five-man rotation to get a start queued and ready for a BWB game (otherwise, you'd have to make sure your number one pitcher starts his team's opener).

So, for BWB Game #1 we use:

- Relief appearances in MLB games #1-6
- Starting pitching performances queued up through MLB game #6
- All hitting performances from MLB game #6. (We could use game #1, but it just makes things easier to have each range end on the same game).

So, for BWB Game #2 we use:

- Relief appearances in MLB games #2-7
- Starting pitching performances queued up through MLB game #7
- All hitting performances from MLB game #7.

Etc.

Through BWB Game #150, where we use:

- Relief appearances in MLB games #150-155
- Starting pitching performances queued up through MLB game #155
- All hitting performances from MLB game #155.

Thus, to attempt to match when your players' hitting stats will be used, subtract 5. If you've got Jim Thome on your team and he hits three homers in Philadelphia's 105th game, those 3 HRs will show up for your team in BWB Game 100. This also means that we disregard any hitting stats earned in MLB games #1-5.

As mentioned previously, when playoff game numbers are picked randomly, the actual game chosen is used for stats – there is no 5-game gap.

Doubleheaders and Suspended Games

BWB Game management will attempt to make note of suspended and tied games. We process stats using a service that will list those stats on the date played, regardless of when the game is completed. Our intention is that tie games will not count for BWB games and statistics. Additionally, suspended games will count for statistics on the date the game is complete and recorded in the standings. This allows team owners to accurately keep track of when their players' performances will hit BWB games.

If you have Brian Giles and look at the standings one morning and you see that San Diego is 49-49, then you should be able to tell that the game that night is San Diego's 99th game of the season and that Giles' stats for that game will be used in BWB game 94.

MLB statistics are sent to BWB as daily statistics. Thus, if a team plays a doubleheader, the players appearing in both games are reported with both games combined. BWB consults the printed box score (or web version), and breaks out the single line into 2 individual games. This is a manual process and may be subject to some error.

Correcting Mistakes

If BWB makes a mistake in accidentally counting a tie or suspended game, it will attempt to fix the mistake within reason. Additionally, when BWB breaks up the 2 games of a doubleheader, it is possible that it will make arithmetic errors or put the games in the wrong order. Again, if this mistake is noticed immediately, it may be corrected. Generally, however, once BWB games are in the books, they will not be changed.

BWB receives daily MLB stats overnight and only gets one mailing for each day. Occasionally, MLB will issue stat corrections. BWB will not make those corrections after the fact and will use the stat files sent to it as the official stats for the day.

BWB processes daily stats with great care and no cause to intentionally skew statistical performances. If it helps, think of a stat mistake as a "bad bounce" on a crappy infield that gets by the shortstop or fan interference that changes the outcome of a play, and just write it off as fate.

Scoring

This game is an attempt to statistically simulate a real game. It averages the scoring of the hitters with the pitching of the opposition. Batting order is important. Players at the top of the order score higher for hits, runs, and stolen bases. Those in the middle are rewarded more for RBIs. Players at the bottom of the order do not score as high in any category.

Starting pitchers who pitch more innings are more valuable than those who struggle to finish 5 or 6, since the bullpens for those teams will not be used as much. The pitching score for a team will be largely dependent upon how many earned runs its pitchers allow. Although strikeouts and hits and walks come into play, earned runs are the most critical stats.

For bullpens, a healthy mix of long and short relievers is essential. There is no point for a team to load up on closers for two reasons. First, saves are only counted for the top two relievers in the bullpen. Second, the BWB scoring formulas require that as bullpens need to use more pitchers in a game (if the starter doesn't last long enough), they must log more total innings. Thus, the pitchers in the lower spots of the bullpen should be capable of pitching more than one inning at a time.

For the full scoring formula, see **Appendix B: BWB Scoring Formula**.

Finances

Currency

All money earned and spent is in the form of *Benchwarmer Bucks*.

Player Salaries

Preseason

For first-year leagues, all owners will begin the season with a balance of fantasy dollars equal to the salary cap for that season. Legacy leagues will be slightly different. They will begin the season with a balance including the balance at the end of the previous season plus the salary cap figure (see **Off Season Procedures** for more details).

For first-year leagues, player salaries will be deducted from the balance at the time they are drafted. For returning leagues, player salaries will be paid for when a) players are picked to carry over to the next season and b) as players are selected in the Redistribution Draft. In addition, as players are signed or cut during a league's free agency period in the preseason, salaries will be deducted as players are signed. If a player is cut in the preseason, that team will receive a 50% rebate of the player's salary, with the same exceptions as noted below.

Regular Season

Owners will be able to make roster changes that will affect the team's finances as players are added or cut from the roster. The Commissioner's Office will publish a season schedule, which will also list the pro-rating deadlines for the season. Owners cutting or trading away a player will be credited with a prorated portion of that player's salary (with exceptions noted below). In addition, owners signing or obtaining a player in a trade will need to pay only a prorated amount of the salary. Although there will be some minor modifications, the general rule is that one week of games (6 games) is 4% of the season schedule of 150 games. Therefore, the prorated amount will decrease by 4% each week.

Exceptions to prorated salary assumption/rebate

Exceptions occur at the beginning and end of the season. Owners will receive no more than an 80% refund of the player's salary for roster cuts, and will pay no less than 30% of the player's salary for roster acquisitions.

Owners will not receive a salary rebate for a player they release for these situations:

- Contracts at 200 or less are fully guaranteed. Owners cutting these players at any time during the season will not receive a rebate.
- Players under multiyear contracts do not get any salary rebate.
- All salary rebates end after Week 15.

Note: In trades, player salaries will be fully prorated, without the 80% cap on rebates or 30% floor on salaries. Also, traded players making less than 200 will generate a salary rebate and rebates continue as long as trades are allowed, rather than ending at Week 15.

Team Revenue Sources

Preseason

As mentioned, all teams will receive a cash distribution from the League Office during the winter or, in the case of new leagues, at the time the league is formed.

On Opening Day, all teams receive an extra 2 million Benchwarmer Bucks. This award is actually made at the conclusion of the Week Zero transactions.

Regular Season

Team Performance

During the season, teams will earn additional revenue depending upon weekly performance and position in the standings.

Wins: Teams will receive \$30,000 per win in a week.

Position: Teams will receive funds based upon their position in the division standings at the end of the week. Here's where we help keep teams alive - as the money is allocated in reverse order:

- 4th place - \$105,000
- 3rd place - \$70,000
- 2nd place - \$35,000
- 1st place - \$0

If there is a tie for any of these positions, it will be broken with the same criteria as free agent signings. For example, if two teams are tied for first, the team that is determined to get the earlier pick during that week's transactions is considered the second place team here and the other team considered the first place team.

Extra Cash Disbursements

Benchwarmer Baseball will provide an additional 3 million dollars in cash to teams over the course of the season. Each team will receive an extra distribution of 1 million BW Bucks during the last transaction weeks in May, June, and July.

Postseason

Teams receive financial incentives based on how they finished in their division, as well as playoff performance. This helps to give teams something to play for even in a season where the division title is wrapped up early.

Division Position or Playoff Finish	Award
1st	\$2 million
2nd	\$1 million
3rd	\$500,000
4th	0
League Champion*	\$4 million
League Runner-up	\$2 million
Second-Place Tourney Winner	\$1 million
Second-Place Tourney Runner-up	\$500,000
Also-ran Tourney Winner	\$500,000
Also-ran Tourney Runner-up	\$250,000

Note - Financial awards for division finish will be awarded as part of the current season's financial balance. It will count in the derivation of the salary cap. Following the distribution of the annual cap money, post-season prizes will be awarded.

Player Performance Awards

Teams that have the top hitters and pitchers will earn *Benchwarmer Bucks* on a weekly and seasonal basis.

Player of the Week - Winners receive a \$25,000 bonus for their team. There are three weekly awards - one each for hitters, pitchers, and relievers.

Players of the Year - Players finishing in high standing for Player of the Year will earn financial benefits for their teams. These are awarded separately for position players, starting pitchers, and relievers. POY money is distributed to teams AFTER the off-season salary cap distribution.

1st place - \$500,000

2nd place - \$250,000

3rd place - \$100,000

Benchwarmer All-Stars - Each team will receive \$25,000 for each player on the Benchwarmer All-Star Teams.

Major League All-Stars - Each team will receive \$10,000 for each player on the Major League All-Star Teams.

NOTE - All-star teams and bonuses will be selected and awarded based on Week 13 rosters.

Carry over

Funds remaining in the team's account after the season will remain with the team for the following season. See **Off Season Procedures** to explain how this works.

Maximum Cash Balances

Intentionally or unintentionally, it is possible for owners to carry over large sums of cash into the next season. Over the course of a few years, that could lead to a huge imbalance and allow an owner in a given year to assemble a "super team". One week before the beginning of a new season (during the financial adjustments for Transaction Week Zero), all teams that have cash balances over \$5 million will have those balances reduced to that \$5 million mark.

Owners can still accumulate cash after that time - with the \$2 million Opening Day cash distribution, salary rebates, and financial gains through wins and position in their division.

The spirit of this rule is to attempt to maintain competitive balance.

Exceptions for Expansion Teams

If leagues undergo expansion, those new teams will not be subject to the limit before their second season and will have a \$10 million limit before their third season. After that time, they will be subject to the same cash ceiling.

Exceptions for First-year Leagues

The maximum cash balance limit will not be enforced in the initial season of any league.

Building a Team – The Startup Draft

All first-year leagues will initially fill their rosters through a draft, which will occur in two phases. Currently, Benchwarmer Baseball does not utilize a live draft system. The process is similar to the "multi-list" system that many leagues use. However, rather than ranking players in the order desired, you pick a full team that fits under the salary cap and the draft process is used to resolve situations where players are chosen by more than one team.

***** The extremely short version** of this is that you pick a full team to fit under a given salary cap. Since everyone is picking a team independently, there will be some conflicts and you won't get everyone you want. The rules below indicate in depth how those conflicts will be resolved. **Your mission** - pick a team, that's it - don't worry about the complexity below if you don't want to. *******

Phase One Draft

Phase One - Submission

Each owner will submit a list of players. This list must meet the following criteria:

- Only those players on the master roster may be included at this time.
- All mandatory positions must be filled - 14 position players, 5 starting pitchers, 5 relief pitchers, and 2 spot pitchers.
- The list must also have at least one player in each field position. This is determined by the **primary position** of players on the master roster. Once the season begins, you can use a player at any primary or secondary position for which he is listed. For the purposes of the draft, however, you must adhere to the primary positions.
- Pitchers, regardless of position designation, can fill either a starting or reliever role.
- The list can include up to the roster limit of 40 players.
- Owners may optionally rank players in order of importance (see Resolution below).
- The salaries of the players must fit within the salary cap.

The idea here is to pick a team as though you were going to get every player. The problem is that several teams will choose the same players. There may be some strategy in not selecting certain popular/expensive players.

If a team submits an improper draft list

- ***Not enough players - or missing positions***
The League Office will pick the player making the most money to fill the missing position and still keep the list under the salary cap.
If multiple positions are missing, see the guidelines used for Inactive Owners to fill the draft list.
- ***Too many players - Too many players above 250 salary - Over the salary cap***
If more than 40 players are submitted, the League Office will randomly remove players from the list until it is at 40. If a player selected to be removed is the only one eligible to fill a given fielding position, or if he is a pitcher and his removal would leave the team with fewer than 12 pitchers, he will be retained.
If the team is above the salary cap or has too many players making more than 250 on the list (you can have a maximum of 28 on your "major league" roster), then the League Office will begin removing players **starting with the players making the highest salaries**, until the draft list is legal.

Phase One - Resolution

Players who are selected by only one team are awarded to that team. For example, if an owner is the only person to draft Pedro Martinez, he's on the team. More likely, however, is that several teams will draft Pedro, so he is not put on a roster. It's highly improbable that an owner will have exclusive claim to all 40 roster spots, which leads us to the Phase One Resolution Process.

During this phase, owners sit back and wait for their rosters to be filled - usually within about a week. All the "exclusive" draft choices will be awarded to their respective teams, although for the time being they will not be officially added to the roster. Then, the remaining players that have been drafted by more than one team will be compiled into a list sorted in this order:

1. Players drafted by the most teams.
2. Players with the highest salaries.
3. Numerically, by position number in baseball scoring (OF = 7, DH = 8 in this case)
4. Alphabetical by player's last name.

After the above list has been completed, the League Office will begin placing these players, one-by-one, onto the teams. The player currently at the top of the list is eligible to be placed on any of the teams that initially drafted him. The team that gets him will be chosen using the following criteria, in order:

1. The team with the most room under the salary cap. Another way to put this is the lowest total salary of all awarded players. (Total team salary is an initial rough guide to team strength).
2. The team with the fewest signed players in that category (position player, starting pitcher, or relief pitcher), based upon the primary position designated for that player.
3. The team with the fewest total number of signed players.
4. The team without a qualifying starter at that position (based on the player's primary position on the master roster).
5. Player ranking (see below).
6. Random drawing

Thus, at the beginning of the draft, many of the player awards will be done via the ranking and/or random drawing, since most teams will have zero players.

Player Ranking

As teams pick players for the draft, they may optionally give each player a rank of importance, entered via the web interface for selecting players in the draft.

Details:

- "1" = the highest rank; "40" is the lowest rank; An unranked player is shown as "0"
- Ranking players is optional
- If you give 2 players the same rank, both will automatically be changed to the lowest of your ranked players, with the higher salary getting the higher rank.
- In this tiebreaker, the team that gives the player the highest rank gets him. If multiple teams give the same rank, they advance to the random draw.

Typically, about the first 8-14 players are placed on teams that have no one on the roster yet. Because we start with the players picked most often, you'll want to make sure you give ranks to the players you think other teams will pick. It might be a waste of your effort to rank your entire draft list -- but it doesn't hurt anything (and in the end, you really don't know which players will be the ones selected most often).

Note: if you are participating in a LIVE draft and don't show up for the draft, the league will use your ranks to determine the order of drafting players for you.

Resolution Examples

Example A: At the start of the draft, Albert Pujols, Alex Rodriguez, "Rookie Phenom", and "Japanese Import" are the most-chosen players - by 14 teams. ARod has the highest salary, so he is considered first. Since all teams have 0 players and 0 salary, ARod is awarded via random drawing, let's say to "Team X". Now we consider Pujols. If Team X has listed Pujols, it is now eliminated in tiebreaker 1, because everyone else has total salary = 0. Again, we will have to go all the way to the random drawing, and "Team Y" wins. Now, between Rookie Phenom and Japanese Import, both have a salary of 100, but Phenom is a catcher (2) and Import is a shortstop (6), so we award Phenom first in the same manner - with Team X and Team Y out of the running. If Phenom and Import both played shortstop, then Import would be awarded first (tiebreaker #4 - last name).

Example B: Further on in the draft, we're awarding players chosen by three teams. Grizzled Veteran has been chosen by Team X (3400 under the cap), Team Y (5675), and Team Z (1345). Since Team Y is the furthest from reaching the salary cap, it gets the player.

Exception for Commissioner Teams

If the Commissioner/League Office has a team in the league and it is involved in step 6, it is not considered for the random drawing until at least 8 players have already been awarded.

Uniquely Drafted Players

After all contested players are awarded, players drafted only by one team will be added to the proper team. *This is the big change from our initial league in 2000, because adding these players first unintentionally penalized the teams who attempted to sign a lot of players or might have been taking a gamble on a few rookies or relatively unknown players.*

Phase Two

After Phase One, most teams will not meet the roster minimum of 26 players. At this time, all teams will go through a special free agent signing period. In a manner of speaking, this is more like a traditional list draft, and is similar to the weekly transactions throughout the season, with these exceptions:

- Before this phase begins, all teams in the league will get an extra 10 million Benchwarmer Bucks.
- Teams submit an eight-round draft sheet, while the weekly transactions are only four rounds.
- **At the beginning of each round, the selection order is changed. Teams with the most room under the cap draft first.**
- There are no cuts in this phase.
- Players will only be awarded to a team if he fits under their salary cap AND the team has enough cash to pay for any remaining unfilled positions / roster slots.
- Teams may list an alternate selection for each round - if the primary player is already taken, or cannot be awarded for reasons mentioned above, then the alternate is checked.
- If the alternate can also not be placed on the team, then the team's next round selection (and alternate) will be moved up to the current round.
- If, after this 8-round submission, there are still teams that do not meet roster minimums, then this phase will be repeated. All teams are eligible to participate in any phase.

If a team misses the posted deadline for selection or does not submit a list for Phase Two, then they will receive no players in the first eight-round selection. They will have a chance to submit a list for a

second or any subsequent run-throughs. Typically, this deadline will be at least three days after the draft results are posted - sometimes as long as a week.

If a team misses several deadlines in the follow-up signing periods, then the League Office may fill their team for them - using the methods described in the Inactive Owners section of the rules. For returning leagues, this policy is used only at Opening Day, but in startup leagues, it is important for all teams to meet minimum levels so that free-agency and trading can begin. Another option may be to call an end to Phase Two and the team will fill the final spots during the Free Agency period.

Late Season Drafts – Exceptions to Phase Two

Additional Rounds

For leagues drafting later in the pre-season, the League Office might increase the number of rounds in a Phase Two submission to more than 8 in order to allow the teams to reach a legal roster more quickly.

Calling an Early End to Phase Two

If only a few teams are slightly short of a legal roster and the beginning of the season is drawing near, the Office may call an end to Phase Two and allow the league to go into Free Agency. If the teams without a legal roster missed a Phase Two deadline, it is almost certain that Phase Two will end early. (So, in mid-to-late March don't skip the second submission of Phase Two thinking you'll have the third submission all to yourself).

Free Agency

At this point, the league will enter a Free Agent signing period to allow the teams to fill out their rosters. Actual dates will be communicated from the Commissioner's Office. See **Roster Changes** for selection details. Selection order will be based initially on room left under the salary cap, and will continue as a normal league in the off-season (as teams select a player, that team goes to the bottom of the order, which is maintained from week to week). Trades will also be allowed at that time.

Transaction Order exception: If Phase Two was stopped by BWB before all teams had a legal roster, those teams missing roster spots will be at the top of the transaction order.

Typically at this point, new leagues will follow the same once-per-week transaction schedule. However, if the draft rounds were completed late in the pre-season, it is possible that the selections will occur more frequently and/or teams may be allowed to pick more than four players per transaction period.

Notes

Until the season begins, there is only a 50% salary rebate for players cut from rosters. Teams get no rebate when cutting a player making a salary of 200 or below.

Returning teams are limited to just 5 million bucks that they can bring into a season. Anything above that is removed before the start of the season. **First-year teams do not have that limitation.** If they have 15 million left on Opening Day, they get to keep it.

All teams get an extra 2 million to spend on Opening Day.

Live Draft Option

As new leagues join the BWB Universe, owners will have a choice of entering either the standard, list draft process, or participate in a new, experimental live draft. Why "experimental" when all sorts of

leagues on the Internet do this now? Starting a league in BWB with a draft brings a few interesting problems, including: Salary cap, 16 teams per league, and 40-man rosters.

If we draft an entire team, it will take a full day, maybe two! So, the draft will most likely allow teams to draft in a live manner the first ten players for their rosters. At a minute a pick, that's still over 2.5 hours. The final number will be determined in late 2007, along with the process for signing up and getting teams ready for the draft. Once the live draft is over, teams will then enter the normal Phase 2 process of the draft.

BWB does not expect to build its own draft interface for the 2008 season (and probably not in 2009, either). Instead, we'll use some kind of pre-existing Internet chat interface. There will be limited draft sessions available, but in the heart of the drafting season (late Feb. and early March), we'll try to present a wide array of days/times. Starting in January, 1 or 2 draft sessions should be available each weekend.

League Package Drafts

New BWB leagues that join as a full 16-team league are welcome to conduct their own drafts upon joining and devise their own methods for how many players to select and other draft rules. They'll just need to fit into certain guidelines and then report the results to the BWB office.

Minor Leagues

Eligibility

In addition to the active roster and taxi squad, a team may field a minor league roster of up to 12 players. These players may be either hitters or pitchers in any combination. Players may be either in the "real" major or minor leagues. However, the BWB minor league roster is limited to players whose salary is 250 or less.

Players can be transferred between the active roster and the minor leagues an unlimited number of times. Changes are made during the normal roster change procedure.

The minor league teams will compete against each other throughout the season. The only statistics that will count for the minor league season will be those actually played in the minors. Players who are on the fantasy minor league roster, but currently on a major league team will not be included.

Note: Players on taxi squads earn no minor league points.

Scoring

Scoring uses one of the traditional Rotisserie formats - a 5x5 approach in the following areas:

Hitters	Pitchers
Batting Average	ERA
Runs	Wins
HR	Saves
RBI	K
SB	WHIP (Walks & Hits per IP)

Teams are ranked by each category. The top team in a category will receive 16 points, the 2nd place will get 15, etc. After totaling up the 10 categories, the teams are ranked by total points. Winning each category would earn you a perfect score of 160.

Season Schedule

Statistics will be collected based upon your minor league roster and the current minor league stats in these fantasy weeks:

4 7 10 13 16 19 22

Only those stats earned in between weeks will be added to the team's total. That is, if you've got a player with 8 HR by Week 10, and on week 13 he's got 14, only the six additional HR are added to your totals. That way, players called up to the majors earn points for their initial stats, but you get no further credit for keeping them in the minors. When players appear for the first time on a minor league roster, their baseline value for all stats is calculated at the previous scoring week.

Special Scoring Notes

Since some of the scoring categories involve averages, and not all BWB teams carry a full minor league roster, there is a need to define a minimum number of at bats and innings pitched to score well. Additionally, those teams that have some statistics for batting or pitching in minor leagues, but don't qualify for minimums should score better than teams with no minor league players at all. Thus the following adjustments will be made.

Teams with 0 AB: Adjusted Team Batting Average = .000

Teams with < minimum AB: Adjusted Team Batting Average = .001

Teams with 0 IP: Adjusted ERA = 100.00 Adjusted WHIP = 100.00

Teams with < minimum IP: Adjusted ERA = 50.00 Adjusted WHIP = 50.00

Minimum AB = 20 * (week #). Example: in Week 5, the minimum AB = 100. In Week 21, the minimum AB = 420. One or two full-time minor league hitters will fulfill this minimum.

Minimum IP = 5 * (week #). Example: in Week 5, the minimum IP = 25. In Week 21, the minimum IP = 105. One full-time minor league starter will fulfill this minimum.

Roster Changes

Roster changes are additions and subtractions to the team's master roster. Movement of players between different areas of the roster (for example, from the active roster to the minor leagues) is not covered in this section. Those types of transactions may be done at any time throughout the season.

Salary rebates and assumptions.

Players released, traded, or signed throughout the season will have their salaries rebated on a prorated basis depending on the time of the season. In the same way, a player that is acquired either off the waiver wire or through a trade will cost the acquiring team only a portion of his original salary. See Player Salaries under **Team Finances** for more details. The League Office will publish a calendar each season with the transaction deadlines and salary assumption/rebate schedule posted.

Transaction guidelines

In general, trades and free agent acquisitions follow similar guidelines. Transactions in Benchwarmer Baseball take place once per 6-game week. In order to better match the BWB Schedule to the MLB Schedule, the actual deadline day will switch slightly throughout the season. See the BWB web site for more details.

Unless otherwise notified, transactions are submitted at the same time and follow the same deadlines as lineup changes.

Only one submission is allowed per week.

Transactions are effective at the END of the fantasy week. Thus, if you are releasing or trading David Wright on the transaction/lineup submission deadline for Week 12, you still use him for your lineup in Week 12, but not on Week 13 (unless for some reason the transaction was rejected and you instead retain him). In the same way, if you pick up a player in Week 12, he is not available to your lineup until Week 13.

Transactions will be processed in the following order and salary rebates and assumptions will take place concurrently:

1. Moves to Injured Reserve
2. Releases without contingency
3. Trades and sales
4. Free agent signings and contingent releases and contingent IR moves.
5. Contract Extensions (described elsewhere)

Usually, at the time transactions are processed, the league is also awarding cash to teams for the wins they had in the most recently scored week and their position in the division after that week. That cash will be figured into a team's balance to help it pay for transactions. At the end of the transaction phase, all teams must adhere to the roster minimums and maximums and keep their cash balance at or above zero. Intermediate transactions may temporarily put the team out of these bounds, but the key values are checked after all transactions. Should a team not meet the requirements, transactions will be cancelled, in reverse order, until the guidelines are met. (Example - If a team is out of cash and signed three players – signing #3 is cancelled, then #2 is cancelled if necessary, then #1. If it turns out that after removing #1, #2 and 3 could still be signed, they will be reinstated).

There are no limits to the number of trades/sales or releases that a team makes in a week. Free agent signings are limited to four per week.

Trades

Players may be traded or sold to other teams. Owners who reach such an agreement should decide which owner should report the transaction. Only one submission is required, as separate reporting may prove confusing. All trades/sales must be done at the present time - there will be no future considerations allowed - draft picks, players named later, deferred cash, etc. Owners may reach an understanding that future deals are part of the process, but such agreements are considered unofficial and they should be reported at the time that they take effect. The League Office will not enforce such agreements if one of the parties weasels out.

Trades involving more than 2 teams will not be allowed in the same week. (No 3-team trades, for example)

Any cash must be in even thousand-dollar increments.

The League Office will assume that teams mean for trades to go through. These actions will be taken to help ensure successful trades:

- A team that ends up with a cash balance below zero or some sort of illegal roster after all the transactions are processed may have other transactions (signings, releases, or contract extensions) disallowed in order to let the trade proceed.

- If one of the teams still lacks sufficient cash for the trade, the Commissioner will automatically and perhaps without notice, transfer cash from one team to the other to allow the deal to go through if it appears that there was some miscalculation or other mistake. This is a subjective decision and if the balances are off by a great deal, it is likely that the trade will be blocked.
- If one of the teams ends up with an illegal roster and there are no other transactions from that team for the week that could be adjusted to allow for a legal trade, BWB will have no option but to cancel the trade. BWB will not attempt to adjust the offending roster with automatic releases or pick ups.

Thus, it's important for both teams to understand what the trade will do to their rosters. They may have to sign or cut players as a result. Needless to say, the other team may be making other transactions that week under the assumption that the trade will occur...and those transactions may in fact need to be stopped by the league office.

Trade Review

The League Office will make all rulings regarding whether or not trades are allowed. There is no system set up for protests.

The League Office has the right to consider any transaction a "Travesty" and void it, should it determine that it will be detrimental to the integrity of the league as a whole or that either team will be severely limited or damaged in this season or the next. The general principle is that a trade should benefit both sides. It is quite valid to "trade for the future," but the league will watch for teams that appear to be dumping players with little or no return. Trades will not generally be overruled simply because one player seems to benefit more than the other.

While occasionally there may be some disagreements with rulings, please keep these considerations in mind if you wonder why a trade was allowed:

- There are no huge prizes or cash rewards for winning this league, so typically there's no incentive for collusion.
- Salary levels may be seen as a general basis of equity, but might not be the only measure.
- Some trades may be seen as unbalanced, but allows a team to free up salary dollars this season or next.
- Players on multiyear contracts need to be considered a little differently.
- There are long-term implications in this league, so a team may appear in the short term to be giving up too much, but there may be future benefits.

This is a situation where almost anything goes, as in the major leagues. Only in cases where the office feels there is collusion or a strong appearance that collusion may be occurring - or if there is a case where one player seems to take advantage of another, will trades be overturned.

Free Agents

As mentioned, up to four players may be signed off the free agent list in any week. All requested players must appear on the master player list.

Process

Owners submit requests once per week, listing:

1. the player that they would like to pick up
2. a backup choice in case the first player is gone (**optional**); and
3. a player to release contingent upon the successful signing of either player a or b. (**also optional**)

Transaction Order

Players will be awarded in a reverse-order manner each week. A team gets one of its picks, and then goes to the bottom of the list, until all picks are chosen. The order is determined in this manner:

1. Team with the lowest winning percentage at the end of the previous week
2. Team with the lowest place standing in its division at the end of the previous week
3. Team the most games behind the leader of its division at the end of the previous week
4. Team the fewest games ahead of the team directly behind it in the division standings*
5. Team the most games behind the team directly in front of it in the division standings*
6. Team with the worse head-to-head record (2-way ties only)
7. Team with the worse division record. (Only when the teams are in the same division).
8. Team with the worse conference record (Only when the teams are in the same conference).
9. Team with the worse record in the last 10 games.
10. Team with the most money remaining at the end of the previous week
11. Coin flip

* Note: If tied with another team, the value of this is "0"

If more than two teams are tied, as we go down the list and are able to pull out a team as the first team to pick, we then go back to the beginning to see about the other teams. For example, if we need to go to Conference record to pull out the first team among a three-way tie, then it's still possible for head-to-head records to determine the remaining two teams' positions.

Alternate Picks and Contingent Releases

Should the player and the alternate that the owner listed not be available during his turn, the next choice will be used. Example: You list as your first choice to pick up Albert Pujols, or an alternate pick of Alex Rodriguez, and a contingent release of Richie Sexson. For your second pick, you list Jason Bay. Your pick comes around the first time and Pujols and Rodriguez are both gone. That pick, including the contingent release, is then ignored, and your second pick, Bay, will be used. Sexson remains on your team.

Note: You can list the same players in multiple picks. That is you could have your primary second pick be your alternate first pick, list the same player as a contingent release more than once, etc.

Off Season Procedures

Salary Cap

Following the championship series, the league will publish salaries for the next season and determine player positions for the next season based on the statistics for the season just completed.

Once the salaries are finished, the league will calculate the new salary cap and distribute money to all the teams, followed by the disbursement of the fantasy cash rewards for post-season finish and player performance.

Actually, instead of a hard salary cap, the new calculation of the cap will determine the amount that each team receives in the off-season. Each team will receive an equal amount of off-season money. This amount will be enough to get the team with the smallest balance up to the salary cap. The overall cap is determined system-wide for all of BWB. Each league will get a different amount based on its teams.

For example, the BWB Salary Cap is calculated at 47500 (47.5 million). In League A, Detroit has the smallest remaining balance at the end of the season – 1000. Since it takes 46500 to get Detroit up to the

cap value, all teams in League A receive 46500 in cash. In League B, Fort Worth has the smallest remaining cash balance – 2500 – so all teams in League B get 45000.

All teams on new leagues for the coming year will get the BWB Salary Cap rounded up to the next even million. In the example above, startup leagues would get an initial distribution of 48000 Benchwarmer Bucks.

Roster Clean-Up

All players on IR will be put back on active status. This may put rosters temporarily over the 40-man limit. Lineup slots, positions, and rotation spots will be cleared.

Fall Trading Period

Prior to the final selection of the 28 players to be carried over into the new season, teams will have the opportunity to trade players. The trading period will begin after the new salaries and positions are final for the coming season and after the salary cap distribution has been made.

There will be two weeks of trading, with deadline dates to be named each year, as appropriate. There is no cash assumption/rebate of salaries at this time, since no salaries have yet been paid for the new season. Teams may include cash payments, as they do during the regular season, in the trade conditions.

Special Roster Exemption: Since teams may already be at the 40-man roster limit (41 including injured reserve), and there is no mechanism for cuts at this time, teams will be allowed to exceed the 40-man limit during these 2 weeks if they participate in trades such as 2-for-1 and 3-for-2. They're going to have to cut down to 28 players within a week or two anyway.

Roster Carryover

After the salaries and cap are calculated, teams choose which players that they want to keep for the coming season. They must follow these guidelines:

- Teams are not obligated to keep a single player. They could release the whole roster.
- Teams may keep a maximum of 28 players.
- They must have enough money to pay for all their players at this time. Players on multiyear contracts have already been paid for, so those salaries are not calculated into this total.
- Players on multiyear contracts **must** be retained. That is one of the risks of signing players to long-term contracts.
- Teams do not have to conform to roster minimums but cannot exceed roster maximums (for example, you cannot exceed the number of allowable players making over 250 in salary).
- Teams do not have to be able to fill every position at this time.
- Once the selection process is complete, the salaries for the next season will be subtracted from the teams' cash balances.

The remaining players on the rosters will be returned to the free agent pool.

League Merger/Contraction

If needed, any league mergers will occur now. Details will be provided at that time.

Expansion Draft

If there is need to expand a league to a full 16 teams, an expansion draft will take place at this point.

- After choosing 28 players to keep, each team must identify 20 to protect during the expansion draft. Teams with fewer than 28 signed players must make 8 players available.
- **All players on multiyear contracts MUST be protected.**
- Teams will arrange the exposed players in order from 1-8 in importance (only the league office will know this order).
- The expansion draft will last 4 rounds. In each round, each expansion team will draft 3 players.
- Once a player is picked from a returning team, the highest-ranked player remaining on that team's list is removed from the draft. In addition, no one else may be picked from that team in that same round.

The net effect is that each returning team will lose 4 players. Each expansion team will have a roster of 12 players at that time.

Further procedural details will be stated at the time of the draft.

All expansion teams start with the salary cap in cash PLUS \$10 million.

Redistribution Draft

In reverse order of finish, the league will hold a draft of unsigned players. Expansion teams will be at the top of the order.

Draft Order

Teams will be ranked in reverse order of their winning percentage in the previous regular season following the redistribution draft, with these exceptions:

- The league champion will be at the bottom of the list
- The runner-up will be in the 15th spot.
- The other two division winners will be 13th and 14th, based on regular-season record.
- If the league is going through expansion, expansion teams will be at the top of the order.
- Any ties will be broken by the same process used to determine free-agent signing order.

Draft Procedures

- Each team will submit a list of up to 15 draft picks - 5 rounds of 3 players each – chosen from the free agent lists.
- In the draft order listed above, the league office will look at the first group of 3 players from each team.
- Any players in the team's group of 3 that are at that time still available will be awarded to that team. Thus, the first team in the order is guaranteed to get the first three players that he/she has listed.
- After going through the first group of three from all teams, the league office will go through the second group, and so on for all five rounds. Each round will be done in the same order as the first.
- If, in any round, one or more of team's selections have already been taken, picks that they submitted for later rounds (in order) will be brought up to the current round until the team can draft three players or the team runs out of picks.
- An owner may optionally designate an alternate pick for any or all of the draft choices. The alternate works the same way as free agency during the regular season – if the primary pick is gone, the alternate is checked. If the primary pick is moved to an earlier round, the alternate goes along. If the primary pick is awarded, the alternate is discarded.
- If the selection of a player violates roster maximums, minor league maximums, or causes the cash balance of the team to go below zero, that player will not be awarded to that team.

Obviously, the lower you pick, the more speculation you need to make about which players will still be around when it's your turn. Teams at the bottom of the order may need to go for prospects rather than established veterans.

Free Agency

On approximately Jan 1, whenever the Redistribution Draft is complete, the league will enter a period in which teams may sign/release players. The exact schedule will be set in December or January. Teams may also trade with other teams at this time.

Waiver Order - Off-season Free-agent signings

Off-season signings will utilize a waiver list slightly different than the regular season.

- Teams will be ranked in reverse order of their winning percentage in the previous regular season following the redistribution draft, with these exceptions:
 - The league champion will be at the bottom of the list
 - The runner-up will be in the 15th spot.
 - The other two division winners will be 13th and 14th, based on regular-season record.
 - If there was league expansion, the expansion teams will start at the top of the list.
 - Note: This is the same order used for the Redistribution Draft.
- The team at the top of the list will get the first pick of that week, and so on.
- Each time the team selects a player, it moves to the bottom of the list.
- Rather than reset the order each week, as in the regular season, the order of the waiver list at the end of the transaction period is carried over into the following week (through the final transaction date before Opening Day – Week 0).

Waiver Order - First two weeks of the regular season – Returning Leagues

Typically, teams are ranked in reverse order of record for each week's transactions. However, at the start of the season, there have not been enough games played to get a true feel for team strength. Also, in some seasons there may be a delay in playing early games due to weather problems around the country. The transaction order for Weeks 1 and 2 will be set to the same order used in the Redistribution Draft.

Waiver Order - First two weeks of the regular season – New Leagues

For Week 1, the Transaction Order will be set in reverse order of total team salary (teams with the lowest team salary will draft at the top of the list). Because teams may have cut players during pre-season free agency and received a 50% salary rebate, this may or may not match the actual remaining cash balances. The transaction order will not change between Weeks 1 and 2.

Complete Rosters

There are no position requirements during the off-season; you do not have to be able to field a complete lineup yet. However, you cannot exceed the roster/salary maximums: 40 total players, 28 total players making 250 or more, 16 batters making 250 or more, and 14 pitchers making 250 or more.

On Opening Day, each roster must include one eligible player for each field position, to fill the starting lineup. Other than during first-year league drafts, the "Prim" and "Sec" positions listed for a player are not important. If a player has a position listed in either column, he is eligible to play there. In addition:

- Each roster must have 5 bench players.

- Each roster must have 5 pitchers designated as starters.
- Each roster must have 2 pitchers designated as spot starters.
- Each roster must have 5 pitchers designated for the bullpen.
- This makes a total of 26 players to fulfill roster minimums.

Salaries for all signings will be deducted immediately. From the end of one season until the beginning of the next season, there are no salary rebates for releases. **NOTE – in 2005 we are experimenting with a 50% salary rebate.**

Salary Rebate Exceptions

RETIREMENT EXCEPTION: If a player officially retires *during the off-season*, the player's owner may cut that player from the team and receive a rebate of the coming season's salary. If the player is on a multiyear contract, there will be no rebate. The owner may be asked to provide documented proof of a retirement announcement. Players who talk about retirement, but do not officially announce it or do not announce until after Opening Day, or just don't find a new team during Spring Training, do not qualify for this rebate.

PATRIOTISM EXCEPTION (The Ted Williams Rule): Should this country ever return to mandated military service and a player must leave his team (hey, this still happened in the early 70s and seems more realistic than when this rule was first written in 2000), the owner will receive a full rebate. There is still no rebate for a multiyear contract.

ACT OF GOD EXCEPTION (The Roberto Clemente Rule): If a player dies in the off-season, the owner will receive a 100% rebate for the season salary. Again, if the player is on a multiyear contract, there will be no rebate.

The following are *not* exceptions and will not result in a salary rebate (unless accompanied by one of the above): Injury; Cut by his major league team and not signed by another; Holdout; Leaving to play in Japan or Mexico; Being sent to the minors; Playing for the St. Paul Saints; Playing for the Arizona Diamondbacks; Election to public office; Drug rehab; Booze rehab; Rehab from hiring prostitutes; Any other 12-step program; Banned by baseball for gambling; Suspension for any reason; Jail time. In no particular order, these are The Pete Rose Rule, The Steve Howe Rule, The Denny McClain Rule, The Curt Flood Rule, The Daryl Strawberry Rule (you pick which one fits for him).

Once the first Major League regular-season pitch is thrown, these exceptions are no longer valid. Beginning with Week 1 Transactions, you start receiving salary rebates (starting at 80% maximum).

Inactive Owners

From time to time, a league may have an inactive owner. There may be several legitimate “real-life” reasons for someone not to pay attention to their team, and typically no action will be taken on their behalf. However, in order to guarantee that the team is ready for a new season, some actions may need to be done for them to ensure the proper start including roster size and lineups. These steps may be more appropriate for teams that have already paid their season entry fee. If a team has not paid and is unresponsive to League attempts to contact the owner, the League Office may instead take control of the team and attempt to find a new owner.

Inactive Owners - Minimum Roster Size

If a team is not able to field a complete roster after the final transaction period of the off-season, the League Office will take these steps to fill the roster. (Remember, minimum roster size is 26 players - 14

hitters, 12 pitchers - PLUS, a team must have a valid player for every field position). The League will operate with these guidelines:

- As long as the team has 12 pitchers, the pitching staff is complete. Relievers might fill starting roles and starters may appear in the bullpen.
- If the roster is missing 1 player, the Office will calculate the remaining salary cap money and buy the highest price free agent that the team can afford to fill that position - regardless of whether or not that player is injured or will be in the minors.
- If 2 or more players are missing, the remaining cash balance will be divided by the number of players needed to determine a maximum signing salary. At that time, the Office will assign players that are the highest price free agents BELOW the maximum signing salary. The first priority will be to make sure all field positions are manned.
- If several players are at the same cash level (for example, if a team must sign a player at the minimum salary) a random draw will determine which player(s) they get.
- For purposes of filling the roster, pitchers will be assumed to be playing at their published role (SP or RP) and will be selected based on the need of the team.
- If a team does not have enough money to complete the roster, the team will FORFEIT all games until they can complete the roster. This will guarantee a 0-6 start to the season.
- Money used for all the above steps is prior to the distribution of 2 million Benchwarmer Bucks to all teams on Opening Day.
- If a team is not able to have a complete team on Opening Day and, after receiving the extra cash, still does not participate in Week 1, the League Office will again attempt to perform the above steps to fill the team.

Note: If more than one team needs to have their roster filled and are competing for free agents at the same salary level, the transaction order for the most recent signing period will be used to alternate the signings.

Examples

Using the two sample free agent lists (from a few years ago) below...

Example 1: Team has only 13 hitters, but has a player for every field position. They have a cash balance of 1423. In this situation, they would sign Herbert Perry for 1408.

Example 2: Same situation as above except they are missing a shortstop. Now, in order to fill the SS spot, they sign Deivi Cruz for 1367.

Example 3: Team has a balance of 1640. They have only 11 batters and 11 pitchers, and need someone to play catcher. Dividing 1640 by 4 yields a maximum signing salary of 410. The team is completed this way:

- Henry Blanco, to fill the catcher role.
- Abraham Nunez and Orlando Merced (highest FA hitters under 410)
- Chris Holt to fill the remaining pitching spot.

Example 4: Team has only 11 pitchers, but has only a cash balance of 40. Since the minimum salary is 100, no players can be signed. The team will forfeit all games in the first week of the season.

Example 5: Team has only 8 pitchers but just a cash balance of 320. Needing 4 pitchers, this yields a maximum signing salary of 80. Since this is below the minimum salary, no players can be signed, and the team forfeits all games in Week 1. (Although it would be possible to sign 3 pitchers for that amount of cash, the team would still fall short of the 12 minimum pitchers, so there is little point in signing them at this time).

Sample - Free agent batters list:

Young	Kevin	Pit	1477	1B	
Perry	Herbert	Tex	1408	3B, 1B	
Tucker	Michael	KC	1405	OF	DL
Singleton	Chris	Phi	1381	OF	
Cruz	Deivi	Bal	1367	SS	
Glanville	Doug	Tex	1336	OF	
Simon	Randall	Pit	1336	1B	
Uribe	Juan	Col	1287	SS	
Bennett	Gary	SD	434	C	
Shumpert	Terry	LA	427	2B, OF	m
Goodwin	Tom	ChN	421	OF	m
Cordero	Wil	Mon	415	OF, 1B	
Palmer	Dean	Det	412	DH	
Nunez	Abraham O.	Pit	394	2B, SS	
Merced	Orlando	Hou	392	OF, 1B	
Buchanan	Brian	SD	387	OF, 1B	
Liefer	Jeff	Mon	384	1B, OF	
Blanco	Henry	Atl	383	C	
Williams	Gerald	Fla	382	OF	m

Sample - Free agent pitchers list:

Puffer	Brandon	Hou	433	RP	
Smith	Dan	Mon	433	RP	
Patterson	Danny	Det	432	RP	
Sosa	Jorge	TB	428	RP	
Roa	Joe	Phi	418	SP	
File	Bob	Tor	412	RP	m
Holt	Chris	Col	410	SP	m
Magnante	Mike	FA	404	RP	
Mercado	Hector	Phi	403	RP	
Maduro	Calvin	LA	401	SP	DL
Kinney	Matt	Mil	400	SP	
Walker	Jamie	Det	397	RP	m
Williams	David	Pit	395	SP	
Elarton	Scott	Col	389	SP	m

Inactive Owners - Opening Day Lineups

Should a team not fill out a lineup form for Week 1, the League Office will automatically generate a lineup in this manner:

- Players known by the Commissioner to be on a major league disabled list will be placed on the team's taxi squad, providing that they are otherwise able to fill the other roster spots. If more than 2 players are injured, a random draw will determine which ones to place on the taxi squad. Any remaining injured players will be placed in the lineup as outlined below, as though they were not injured.
- **Starting rotation.** The five pitchers with SP position designation with the highest salary will fill the top 5 rotation spots (in descending order of salary). SPs #6 and #7 in salary will be the spot starters.
- **Bullpen.** The five pitchers with RP position designation with the highest salary will fill the 5 bullpen slots (in descending order of salary).
- **Open pitching roles** - leftover SPs may be used to fill the bullpen or leftover RPs may be placed in the rotation or spot roles.
- **Fielders** - the player with the top salary at a position will play that position in the starting lineup. Of the remaining hitters, the one with the top salary will be the DH.

- **Bench** - the remaining batters with the five highest salaries will be placed, in descending order of salary, on the bench. This will be done without regard to position.
- **Taxi squad.** All unplaced players at a salary of 250 or below will be put in the minors. Any leftover players will be put on the taxi squad. If there are too many minor leaguers, the ones with the highest salaries will go to the taxi squad (or randomly, if all salaries are equal).
- **Batting order** - a random draw will produce the batting order.

Note: Pitching designations will use the player's published position, which may not necessarily be how they will be used in the new season.

Schedule and Deadlines

There's a double bind in setting the transaction dates. By conducting the transactions at the beginning of each Major League week (starting with Opening Day), early-season off dates and rainouts cause the Benchwarmer season to be delayed at times. The effect is that the gap between when lineups are issued and when they actually count grows pretty large.

On the reverse side, to start transactions a week later would mean that at the end of the season, by the time the Major League games catch up, Benchwarmer lineups would be due after the actual games that they use are already played.

To try to be fairer to owners at both ends of the season, **Benchwarmer Baseball changes the deadline day throughout the season.** The first week's deadline will be on the Friday of the first full week of the Major League season. Some pitching performances will already be known, but that shouldn't have too much of an effect. The deadline will remain on Friday for the next four weeks. Then, for weeks 6-10, the deadline will be on Thursday. For each fifth of the season, the deadline will move one day earlier until, by the final five weeks of the season, Monday will be used for the deadline day.

Each season, the schedule will be posted both for all the games and for the transaction and lineup deadlines that occur throughout the summer. See the Transaction Deadlines page on the web site for more details.

Player Salaries and Salary Cap

Salaries

Salaries for each player are determined by their Major League statistics for the previous two seasons. Two-thirds of the salary is based on last season completed, and the remaining third will be based upon the previous season. This prevents a star player from becoming an outright steal following a season spent on the disabled list or having an off year. Additionally, this prevents young or improving players from skyrocketing to the highest salary levels after only one year.

All salaries are rounded to the nearest 1000. Thus, for simplicity, all salaries and most financial figures will be displayed in thousands. For example, 250,000 = 250 and one million = 1000. Sometimes, financial values will be shown normally, for effect.

The salary is computed from various statistical categories. If L is the raw salary computation of a player's stats from last year, and P is the computation from the previous year, the player's new salary, S, is $S = 2/3(L) + 1/3(P)$.

Players will have a minimum salary of 100 (\$100,000). If, in the previous equation, S is less than 100 then the salary is bumped up to that level.

In the calculations for salary from a given season, if a player does not have the statistics to qualify as a rookie - 130 AB or 50 IP or 45 days on a ML Roster (which might be harder to come by) - his maximum salary will be 250. Keep in mind, that the final salary level is still an average of the results of the current season plus the previous salary.

Salary Formulas

See **Appendix C: BWB Salary Calculation.**

Derivation of the Salary Cap

See **Appendix D: BWB Salary Cap Calculation.**

Salary Caps

The salary cap in itself is only important for first-year leagues. Teams must create their original roster within the limit of the cap.

For returning leagues, the cap will represent a target cash distribution. All teams will receive an identical amount of cash. Once the salary cap is determined, the league will give each team the amount necessary to get the *team with the smallest remaining cash balance* up to the salary cap level. Thus, teams with an advantage in cash balances will retain that edge.

Once the cash is distributed, teams may spend it as they wish. There is no ceiling for total team salary - each team is limited merely by the amount of money in the bank.

Multiyear Contracts

Owners have the option to lock players onto their teams for additional years at current salary rates. This is highly beneficial for younger players whose salaries will most likely increase after a great year early in their careers or for one of those journeymen veterans who have a career year. There are, however, a few risks involved.

Players may be signed for the following year by August 1 (*actually the final transaction deadline on or before August 1*). The team must have the funds available for the entire salary, as it will be deducted immediately. The salary does not get deducted again in the following year. However, the player's contract will be counted toward the salary cap for remaining years (at the contracted salary, not the published salary for that season).

Players may be signed for another year at their current salary rate. They may be signed for a second or more years given the following formula: each successive year is at a 33% increase or at a minimum indicated below, whichever is higher.

A player may be signed for 2006 and beyond. The salary for each year beyond 2005 will be calculated with a 33% raise, given the following minimums:

Player signed for:	Cost:	Minimum Salary (season)	Minimum Contract Total (contract lifetime)
2008	2007 Salary	\$250,000	\$250,000
2009	2008 + 33%	\$1,250,000	\$1,500,000
2010	2009 + 33%	\$2,500,000	\$4,000,000
2011	2010 + 33%	\$4,000,000	\$8,000,000

2012	2011 + 33%	\$6,000,000	\$14,000,000
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Players on multiyear contracts that are traded keep their contracts and the receiving team enjoys the benefit of the contract (teams should take that into consideration when trading). The receiving team does not have to pay for the remaining years on the contract. The team trading the player will not receive any rebate of future salary, but will still receive a rebate for the prorated portion of the current season's salary if he originally paid for the current season (that is, the multiyear contract was just created this season). If a player on a multiyear contract is released, there is no salary rebate. These are, in effect, guaranteed contracts. However, at that point the contract is void, and any team wishing to claim the player will do so using normal procedures and the player's published salary for the season.

Any other stipulation based upon salary, such as whether or not the player may be put on the minor league roster, are dependent upon his *published salary* for that particular season, not the salary he was signed for.

One final provision is that **no player on a multiyear contract may ever be left unprotected in any expansion, redistribution, or other off-season draft**. This applies even if his current team was not the one to originally sign him to the multiyear deal.

Thus, the risks you take on by signing a long-term contract include:

- You receive no rebate for any unused time on the contract if you cut or trade the player.
- A player that misses significant time due to injury will almost always see a real-life salary reduction and you're signing the contract based on the assumption that the salary will increase.
- You must carry over a player under contract during the Redistribution Draft.

Note: Should a season be interrupted or cancelled due to players' strike or a lockout by the owners or other work stoppage, there will be no adjustment to contracts.

Master Player List and Positions

Player List

Prior to the start of the season, all players on Major League 40-man rosters as of mid-December (approximately) will be placed on the BWB master player list. All players from the master list the previous season will also remain on the list except for those players who did not appear in any games in the Major Leagues or the U.S. minor leagues (unless the League Office specifically knows of injuries that kept the player out all season). The 40-man rosters will be checked in December shortly after the Rule V Draft and the Winter GM meetings.

During the off-season any players who retire or are traded/sold to teams in Japan or Mexico will be immediately de-listed.

The master list will include the salaries for the upcoming season and the published primary and secondary positions for the player for that season.

Regular Season – Adding Players

After the initial load of the master list in December, players will be added to the master list only for these reasons:

- They are promoted to a major league roster AND earn major league statistics.

- They are a number one draft pick in the amateur draft. This is only for one of the top 30 picks and does not include any of the supplemental picks.

Putting this another way, no players will be added to the list between January and April – despite signings of players from Japan, Korea, Cuba, etc. and despite any expectations that a minor leaguer not currently on the BWB list will make a major league roster. These players must play in a regular season game before they make our list.

Regular Season – Removing Players

A player is de-listed immediately if during the season he:

- Dies
- Retires
- Plays in Japan, Mexican, or other foreign leagues.
- Plays in the Northern League or other independent, non-affiliated minor leagues.

In a league where any of these players are on the free agent list, they are immediately removed, without notice or announcement to the league. If one of these players is on a roster, he will remain on that roster until the team owner releases him. The team has the option to retain the player throughout the season – particularly since the BWB playoffs use statistical performances throughout the entire second half of the regular season. Once that player is released, he will be removed from BWB and not returned to the free agent list. A player in this situation can neither be traded nor signed to a long-term contract.

Exception for deceased players: If a player dies during the season, he will also be removed from any BWB rosters (provided that it doesn't make the roster illegal, and in that case the player will be removed at the first opportunity later in the season). It's kind of arbitrary, but it just seems a little macabre to keep a player in that situation.

Note on First Round Draft Picks

A player added to the master list as a top draft pick does not have to play that season to maintain a spot on the BWB player list. However, he must sign a contract by the time of the Rule V Draft in December or he will be removed immediately from all rosters and free agent lists. There is no salary rebate for players lost in this way – teams that carry them over do so at that risk.

Positions

Players are eligible to play in BWB at positions depending on what they did the previous season. There are two categories of positions - Primary and Secondary. NOTE: Primary and secondary positions are only important during start-up drafts. Once the season starts, a player can be placed in the lineup at any position he's listed for - primary OR secondary.

Players are listed based on their stats in the previous year. Players who appear in 20 games or more at a given position have that position listed as a primary position. Players who are at a position for fewer than 20 games, but appear at that position in more than 5.5% of his total games will have that position listed as a secondary position. If a player does not have a primary position, then the secondary position used the most will become his primary position. If a player doesn't have enough games to qualify at any position, for either primary or secondary uses, then he is eligible only as a DH. Minor leaguers with no major league experience the previous year will be listed at known positions based on some documented source.

Additional Positions During the Season

During the season, a player can have a position added to his qualifications using the following criteria: Starts at the position in 5 consecutive appearances OR 10 games total. While the Commissioner's Office will attempt to keep on top of this, please notify it when you think your player is eligible, giving the proper dates to document the claim. As of 2004, BWB Management has a fairly reliable way to check the 5-consecutive game rule. To simplify the process, only appearances in the field are used to determine the 5-game streak. If a player is used as a pinch hitter, pinch runner, or as a DH, those games will not break up a streak.

Starting Pitchers or Relief Pitchers?

Pitchers are listed as starters or relievers only as a guide. You may place a pitcher in either position, but only starts will count for starters, and only relief appearances will count for relievers.

Miscellaneous Rules and Special Situations

League Office: Rule Changes and Special Rulings

The management of Benchwarmer Baseball reserves the right to make rule changes, clarifications, or rulings at any time. In practice, all changes will be in place by the start of the regular season. However, occasionally there will be loopholes or conflicts between different rules that require an immediate ruling. Also, it is possible that situations will come up or questions will be raised that were never considered.

It is possible that some rule changes for the playoffs will be instituted before the start of the playoffs and for off-season procedure changes to be announced at the beginning of the off-season.

Financial Penalties and Compensation

Benchwarmer Baseball reserves the right to fine teams in Benchwarmer Bucks for actions not in the interest or spirit of the game. In addition BWB may set up, in advance, team penalties for rules infractions, such as roster problems or missing deadlines. At this time, there is no intention to use either of these options, but simply to code the possibility into the rules.

More likely, however, the league may provide teams with financial compensation in certain situations. From time to time, the league office will make mistakes and, if caught soon enough, will reverse the mistake. However, it may occur that too many subsequent actions have taken place for reversals to be handled easily or without disrupting other teams (for example, a mistake in transaction order that is not caught until many later selections are affected). In that case, the league may provide Benchwarmer Bucks back to the team in an effort to provide a good-faith effort at compensation.

Appendix A: BWB Calendar

This basic schedule will be used for each season; the dates will be finalized in December or January. Deadline dates are subject to change for various reasons. Consult the Benchwarmer Baseball web site for the most current version.

Week	Deadline	Fantasy Games	Major League Games (Hitters)	Transactions?	Contract Extensions?	Signing Pct	Cut Pct	Trade Pct
-11	Fri, 1/14/05	N/A	N/A	Yes	No	100%	50%	100%
-10	Fri, 1/21/05	N/A	N/A	Yes	No	100%	50%	100%
-9	Fri, 1/28/05	N/A	N/A	Yes	No	100%	50%	100%
-8	Fri, 2/4/05	N/A	N/A	Yes	No	100%	50%	100%
-7	Fri, 2/11/05	N/A	N/A	Yes	No	100%	50%	100%
-6	Fri, 2/18/05	N/A	N/A	Yes	No	100%	50%	100%
-5	Fri, 2/25/05	N/A	N/A	Yes	No	100%	50%	100%
-4	Fri, 3/4/05	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	100%	50%	100%
-3	Fri, 3/11/05	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	100%	50%	100%
-2	Fri, 3/18/05	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	100%	50%	100%
-1	Fri, 3/25/05	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	100%	50%	100%
0	Fri, 4/1/05	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	100%	80%	100%
1	Fri, 4/8/05	1 - 6	6 - 11	Yes	Yes	96%	80%	96%
2	Fri, 4/15/05	7 - 12	12 - 17	Yes	Yes	92%	80%	92%
3	Fri, 4/22/05	13 - 18	18 - 23	Yes	Yes	88%	80%	88%
4	Fri, 4/29/05	19 - 24	24 - 29	Yes	Yes	84%	80%	84%
5	Fri, 5/6/05	25 - 30	30 - 35	Yes	Yes	80%	80%	80%
6	Thu, 5/12/05	31 - 36	36 - 41	Yes	Yes	76%	76%	76%
7	Thu, 5/19/05	37 - 42	42 - 47	Yes	Yes	72%	72%	72%
8	Thu, 5/26/05	43 - 48	48 - 53	Yes	Yes	68%	68%	68%
9	Thu, 6/2/05	49 - 54	54 - 59	Yes	Yes	64%	64%	64%
10	Thu, 6/9/05	55 - 60	60 - 65	Yes	Yes	60%	60%	60%
11	Wed, 6/15/05	61 - 66	66 - 71	Yes	Yes	56%	56%	56%
12	Wed, 6/22/05	67 - 72	72 - 77	Yes	Yes	52%	52%	52%
13	Wed, 6/29/05	73 - 78	78 - 83	Yes	Yes	48%	48%	48%
14	Wed, 7/6/05	79 - 84	84 - 89	Yes	Yes	44%	44%	44%
15	Wed, 7/13/05	85 - 90	90 - 95	Yes	Yes	40%	40%	40%
16	Tue, 7/19/05	91 - 96	96 - 101	Yes	Yes	40%	0%	36%
17	Tue, 7/26/05	97 - 102	102 - 107	Yes	Yes	40%	0%	32%
18	Tue, 8/2/05	103 - 108	108 - 113	Yes	No	40%	0%	28%
19	Tue, 8/9/05	109 - 114	114 - 119	Yes	No	40%	0%	24%
20	Tue, 8/16/05	115 - 120	120 - 125	Yes	No	40%	0%	20%
21	Mon, 8/22/05	121 - 126	126 - 131	Yes	No	40%	0%	16%
22	Mon, 8/29/05	127 - 132	132 - 137	Yes	No	40%	0%	12%
23	Mon, 9/5/05	133 - 138	138 - 143	Yes	No	40%	0%	N/A
24	Mon, 9/12/05	139 - 144	144 - 149	Yes	No	40%	0%	N/A
25	Mon, 9/19/05	145 - 150	150 - 155	No	No	N/A	N/A	N/A

Appendix B: BWB Scoring Formula

Score

Runs Scored = .5 (B + P) + HT – SP rounded to the nearest integer

Where:

- B = Batting score – defined below
- P = Pitching score – defined below
- HT = .33 run added for home team
- SP = Superior pitching performance.
 - -4 for a complete game perfect game.
 - -3 for no hitter (including multiple pitchers combining for a perfect game).
 - -2 for complete game shutout
 - -1 if multiple pitchers used and give up 0 runs combined
 - -.25 for other complete games. (New for 2005)

TIES – Because “Runs Scored” will always be an integer, there exists the possibility that some games will end in a tie. **The real winner of any game is the one with the higher raw score** – regardless of how many decimal places are required to determine that. In order to make the game result appear normal, one run will be added to the winning team OR one run will be subtracted from the loser in order to create a 1-run margin (the adjustment that produces the displayed total runs for both teams closer to the actual raw total will be used). In order to signify how close this game really was, the game will be flagged as an “extra inning game.”

Batting Score

B = .5(RR + ATB) + .5(HR)

Where:

- RR = Runs/RBI factor – defined below
- ATB = Adjusted Total Bases – defined below
- HR = Total Home Runs for team

RR

This is essentially the number of runs a player scores multiplied by the RBIs of the next three batters after him.

RR = $(\sum xRi (yBi+1 + yBi+2 + yBi+3))/3$ i=1-9

Where:

- R = Runs Scored by a Player
- B = RBI (for the next three players in the order)
- x = Runs multiplier – based on batting order
= 1 except for batters in positions:
1 = 1.3; 2 & 3 = 1.2; 8 & 9 = .9
- y = RBI multiplier – based on batting order
= 1 except for batters in positions:
3 = 1.3; 4 = 1.4; 5 = 1.1; 8 & 9 = .9

NOTE: This formula “rolls over.” Although it’s listed as i = 1-9, as i+1, i+2, and i+3 go above 9, the formula actually rolls over to the #1 position again.

ATB

This value takes into account a player's hits, extra base hits, and other methods of reaching base or advancing (BB, HBP, and SB).

$$ATB = (\sum zTB_i) / 3 \quad i=1-9$$

Where:

- TB = Adjusted total bases for a player – TB + BB + HBP + SB
- Z = Total bases multiplier – based on batting order
= 1 except for batters in positions:
1 & 2 = 1.3; 3 = 1.1; 8 & 9 = .9

Pitching Score

$$P = ER + (BP * BI) - a (K + BK) - b (S) + c (E) + HBB$$

Where:

- ER = number of earned runs allowed by starting pitcher
- BP = Derived Bullpen earned runs - defined below
- BI = Number of innings pitched by the bullpen – defined below
- K = Strikeouts by starting pitcher
- BK = Derived bullpen strikeouts – defined below
- S = Accumulated saves by 1st and 2nd relievers (counted only if they are used in a game)
- E = Total errors by position players, other than the DH. (Benchwarmer Batters make 2 errors).
- HBB = Hits/Walks adjustment - defined below
- a = strikeout multiplier = .1
- b = saves multiplier = .25
- c = errors multiplier = .5

BP

BP = (Sum of the needed relievers' ER over the last six games / Sum of the needed relievers' IP in those games) / Number of needed relievers. ("needed relievers" is defined below)

BI

BI = Bullpen innings = 9 – Starter's IP.

BK

BK = Bullpen strikeouts = Accumulated K/IP for the number of relievers needed, divided by the number of relievers needed, times BI.

HBB

HBB is an adjustment based on the total number of hits and walks allowed by the team. For the starting pitcher, that is simply the number he allows in his start. For the bullpen, the number of hits and walks per inning is calculated for the relievers that are used in the scoring formula. This value is then multiplied by the number of bullpen innings (BI) and rounded to the nearest integer.

Total Hits + Walks allowed	HBB
8 or fewer	-.33
9	-.25
10	-.1
11 to 13	0
14	.25
15	.50
16 or more	.75

Determining the number of relievers

Relief pitching is determined by the number of innings the starter pitches.

Relievers are defined in the roster as:

- R1 – Closer
- R2 – Set up man / Backup closer
- R3 – Set up / Middle relief
- R4 – Middle reliever
- R5 – Mop up / Long relief

If the starter goes 9 innings, no relief stats are used.

If the starter pitches less than 9 innings, the bullpen use is as follows:

Starter Pitches:	Relievers Used*	Minimum IP**	Eligible Saves***
8 to 8 2/3	1	2	R1
7 to 7 2/3	2	5	R1 & R2
6 to 6 2/3	3	8 2/3	R1 & R2
5 to 5 2/3	4	11 2/3	R1 & R2
Less than 5	All 5	14	R1 & R2

*Relievers used always starts from the top. If a listed reliever does not pitch in the six previous games, all others move up a spot to fill his place. For example, if 3 relievers are needed for the game, and R2 does not have any qualifying appearances, then R3 will move up to the R2 spot and the listed R4 will move up to R3.

** If the reliever, or group of relievers, does not reach the IP minimum, 1 ER is added to ER total for each inning or part of an inning less than the minimum. The minimum is then used as the denominator in the BP function. This number is tallied up for all six games used in the formula for relief pitching. (Minimums last modified for 2005 season).

*** For use in the main pitching equation. Only the saves for the top two relievers used in a game are ever counted in the scoring formula.

Spot pitchers with eligible relief appearances will fill in for a reliever with no qualifying games, starting at the bottom of the bullpen.

Benchwarmers

Benchwarmer Batters

For each spot in the starting lineup that is not filled, a Benchwarmer Batter becomes the substitute. The Benchwarmer's statistical performance for the game is: 0 for 5, no RBI, no walks, no SB, 2 errors.

Pinesitter Pitcher – Starting Pitcher

If the normally scheduled starter cannot pitch in the BWB game (whether because there are no starts in the queue or he has not had the proper rest), and no spot starter can fill in, and no other pitcher in the rotation can move up to pitch early, then a substitute is needed to start the game. If no starters qualify for the game, a Pinesitter Pitcher fills in with the following line score: 3 IP, 5 H, 5 BB, 0 K, and 5 ER.

Pinesitter Pitcher - Bullpen

For each reliever a team is short of the relief pitchers needed, (that is, no appearances eligible for the current fantasy game), a Pinesitter Pitcher will come in from the bullpen. The performance of this extra pitcher will depend on how many Pinesitters are necessary to fill the entire complement of relievers needed for the game. The first Pinesitter used will be mediocre/below average, while additional extra relievers will get progressively worse.

The stats "earned" by each Pinesitter:

Pinesitter #	IP	H	BB	ER	ERA
1	3	4	2	2	6.00
2 & 3	5	5	5	5	9.00
4	3	4	4	4	12.00
5	5	10	10	10	18.00

Keep in mind, that the bullpen score is a derived average. So the earned runs given up by Pinesitters don't go straight to the bullpen line, but instead work to increase the runs per inning average (the "BP" portion of the pitching score).

Examples

Benchwarmer Baseball will try to put some examples on the BWB web site over the course of 2007 to show the calculation of the score and what lineup modifications can do to the score.

Appendix C: BWB Salary Calculation

The following formulas describe how player salaries are calculated for Benchwarmer Baseball. The formulas can be tweaked from year to year, but this generally describes the process for 2005 salaries.

Overall, player salaries are calculated using statistics earned in the previous season. The most important statistics are those counted in the game – thus, we don't work with pitchers' wins and losses, for example. Following the initial calculation, the player's salary for the new season is determined by this formula:

New Salary = (2/3 * Salary calculation on this year's stats) + (1/3 * Current season's salary)

This helps prevent incredibly humongous jumps for young players in their breakout seasons, plus it ensures that a veteran losing a season to injury doesn't come back the following year at the minimum salary.

Finally, after the salaries are calculated, league leaders in many statistical categories and post-season awards have their salaries adjusted upward as these are premium players (described below).

Batters Salaries

OM = Offense Multiplier

If Plate Appearances (PA) \geq 600, OM = 15; else if PA \geq 300, OM = 13; else OM = 10

THM = Total Bases/Hits Multiplier

If PA \geq 600, THM = 2; else if PA \geq 300, THM = 1.75; else THM = 1.5

RRM = Runs/RBI Multiplier

If PA \geq 600, RRM = 15; else if PA \geq 300, RRM = 10; else RRM = 8

The Batters Formula

Sal = (OM * (RBI * R * RRM) + (TB * H * THM)) – (K * 100) – (E * 150) + (SB * SB Pct. * 100) + (HR * 1000) + (PA * 1000)) / 1000

(Rounded to the nearest integer)

Any salaries lower than 100 are rounded up to 100 (League minimum)

Any batters not reaching the rookie minimums (130 PA or 45 days on the roster, interpreted to be 35 games played) will have a maximum salary of 250. This 250 is only for the current season calculation – it still needs to be combined with the current season's salary to set the final value.

One of the largest components of the salary, including the multipliers, for hitters is plate appearances, reflecting the importance of having players that are in the lineup a lot.

Pitchers Salaries

Pitching multipliers for ERA, Innings Pitched, Games, and WHIP are based on the number of games pitched in the previous season and are checked both for starts and total games pitched.

EM = ERA Multiplier

If (GS \geq 25 or G \geq 60), EM = 1,500,000; else if (GS \geq 10 or G \geq 32) EM = 1,000,000; else EM = 750,000

WM = WHIP Multiplier

If (GS >= 25 or G >= 60), WM = 150,000; else if (GS >= 10 or G >= 32) WM = 75,000; else WM = 50,000

IPM = Innings Pitched Multiplier

If (GS >= 25 or G >= 60), IPM = 1.5; else IPM = 1

GPM = Games Pitched Multiplier

If (GS >= 25 or G >= 60), GPM = 1,000; else if (GS >= 10 or G >= 32) GPM = 500; else GPM = 0

ERAScore = (Average ERA for all major league pitchers) / (Player's ERA)

WHIPScore = (Average WHIP for all major league pitchers) – (Player's WHIP)

The Pitchers Formula

If IP <= 18 Salary = 100, otherwise:

Salary = (ERAScore * EM * ((IP * IPM) + (5 * Sv – (2.5 * BS)) + K) / 250) + (G * GPM)) + (WHIPScore * WM)

(Rounded to the nearest integer)

Any salaries lower than 100 are rounded up to 100 (League minimum)

Any pitchers not reaching the rookie minimums (50 IP or 45 days on the roster, interpreted to be 25 games played) will have a maximum salary of 250. This 250 is only for the current season calculation – it still needs to be combined with the current season's salary to set the final value.

Premium Player Salary Adjustments

Following the initial salary calculations above, leaders in various statistical categories will have their salaries adjusted upward. This takes place AFTER the calculation of the BWB salary cap.

Final Salary = New Salary + (New Salary * Adjustment)

Adjustment = the sum of the following:

- Gold Glove Winner = .05
- Silver Slugger Winner = .03
- Top 20 in these statistical categories will have adjustments from .020 down to .001 (First place = .020, 20th place = .001)
 - Hitters: Plate Appearances, R, H, 2B, 3B, HR, RBI, BB, SB, BA*, OBP*, Slg* (*using only batters qualifying for the batting title)
 - Pitchers: G*, GS, IP, K, Sv*, ERA**, CG, ShO, QS, Ho*, WHIP**, Opp. Avg** (* since relievers will generally be only in these categories, the results are multiplied by 5 ** using only pitchers qualifying for the ERA Title)
- Fireman of the Year – adjustments from .10 down to .01 for the top 10 finishers in each league
- Cy Young – adjustments from .10 down to .01 for the top 10 finishers in each league
- MVP – adjustments from .20 down to .01 for the top 20 finishers in each league

So, adjustments for players could rank from .1 % up to 25 % or more.

Note: Pitchers in MVP voting will have their Cy Young adjustments subtracted from the MVP amount. Additionally, Relief pitchers who have Cy Young or MVP adjustments will have any adjustment from

Fireman of the Year subtracted out. This prevents pitchers (particularly closers) from being priced too highly.

The Island of Misfit Free Agents - Salary Reduction

All players within the system (on the BWB Player List at the end of the season) that did not appear on a single BWB roster for even a single week of the regular season will have a 10% reduction in salary. At no point can a player's salary fall below the BWB minimum (currently 100). This applies to players who were not signed to ANY league, not just the league in which you happen to have a team.

Examples of Final Salary Calculation

Keep in mind the following formulas:

New Salary = (2/3 * Salary calculation on this year's stats) + (1/3 * Current season's salary)
Final Salary = New Salary + (New Salary * Adjustment)

Current Salary	Salary Calculation (from this year's stats)	New Salary	Premium Adjustment	Final Salary
825	1200	1076	0	1076
3521	6481	5504	0	5504
3521	6481	5504	14%	6275
100	7812	5267	20%	6320
100	4562	3090	0	3090
100	4562	3090	5%	3245
0 (Not on list)	n/a – No MLB Stats	100 (Minimum)	0	100
6713	3000	4225	0	4225
6713	750	2718	0	2718
6713	100 (Minimum: Missed all season due to injury)	2282	0	2282
6713	100	0	-10% (Never on any rosters)	2054
100	100 (no MLB stats)	100	0	100
100	1500	1038	0	1038
100	450	335	0	335
100	250	201	0	201

Appendix D: BWB Salary Cap Calculation

The following formula describes how the yearly salary caps are calculated for Benchwarmer Baseball. This can be tweaked from year to year, but this generally describes the process of determining the 2004 cap.

First, players are ranked in descending order according to salary.

The computation is as follows (with *targeted* use indicated and values for 2004):

	Sum of the top 234 position players divided by 26 – for 9 starting batters	21536.54
+	Sum of the top 260 pitchers divided by 26 – for 10 pitchers (P1-P5, R1-R5)	26659.04
+	Sum of position players 235-364 divided by 26 – for 5 bench players	2253.42
+	Sum of pitchers 183-208 divided by 13 – for 2 spot starters	2351.62
+	Sum of pitchers 209-260 divided by 13 – for 2 optional roster pitchers	1758.96
+	Sum of position players 313-364 divided by 13 – for 2 optional hitters	566.27
+	Current BWB minimum multiplied by 15 – for 10 optional low-priced players	1500.00
+	\$1,000,000	1000.00
-	10% of the sum of the previous lines	5762.58
-	Average cash balance for all BWB teams at the end of the season	3435.00
	Salary Cap	48428.26

Values shown in thousands

2003 Cap: 47104.23

The amount distributed to all teams in the league will be enough to get all teams to at least the salary cap figure. Put another way, the cash distribution = salary cap minus the cash balance of the team with the least money.

In 2004, that is $48428.26 - 1218$ (Denver) = 47210 (rounded to nearest integer).

Note – the salary cap figures are based on the initial salary calculations for the season. **After** the cap calculation, the salary adjustments for premium players are applied. This is done to help encourage competitive balance.

After the salary cap distribution, additional cash allotments are given for post-season results and BWB Player of the Year Awards.

Appendix E: Yearly Rule Changes

2002 Rule Changes

Relief Pitcher minimums

Based on 2 years of play, it was apparent that relief pitchers are used a little differently than they were about 5 years earlier when the original Robot Baseball rules were used. (probably more change with the set-up men rather than the closers). These changes were made to the scoring minimums.

Relief Pitchers Used	Current Minimum IP	New Minimum IP	Reduction
R1	3.3	2.7	-0.6
R1-R2	7.0	5.7	-1.3
R1-R3	11.3	10.0	-1.3
R1-R4	14.3	13.0	-1.3
All 5	17.0	16.0	-1.0

Maximum Cash Balances

This put a \$10 million cap to Opening Day cash.

Multiyear Contracts

Minimum salaries for each season increased:

Player signed for:	Cost:	Old Minimum Salary	New Minimum Salary	Contract Total (minimum)
2003	2002 Salary	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$250,000
2004	2003 + 25%	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,250,000
2005	2004 + 25%	\$1,000,000	\$1,750,000	\$3,000,000
2006	2005 + 25%	\$1,500,000	\$3,000,000	\$6,000,000
2007	2006 + 25%	\$2,500,000	\$4,000,000	\$10,000,000

Entry Fees

Entry fee changed from \$25 to \$35, but added an early payment discount.

Late Payment of Entry Fees

Current rule instituted.

Contract Deadline

Clarified that the extension deadline, though August 1, is actually the final transaction date in July.

Divisional Tie Breakers

Put in the current system of tie breakers.

2003 Rule Changes

Inactive Owners

Added the current rules for handling inactive owners at the beginning of the season – for minimum roster size and Opening Day lineups.

Playoff Games - 2003 Season

Previously, the first round of playoff games used random games from each 10-game span from games 1-70. The second round of playoffs used a similar pattern from games 80-150. While this provided a very clear picture of when players will be available, many people commented that a hot player in the second half of the season does that team absolutely no good in the first playoff round. The current process of choosing games from the entire season instead of splitting them up was instituted at this time.

Transaction Deadlines

Instituted the current system of sliding deadlines as an experiment that was retained after the season.

Trade Review

In 2001 and 2002, the teams that finished last in their division the previous season provided input to allowing or disallowing trades. In 2003 we opened this up to the entire league.

Salary Formula

In 2002 we modified the higher-end salaries to bump them higher. Now in 2003, we attempted to increase the number of middle-class players available and to prevent late-season call ups from ranking too high to be in the minor leagues next year. This rule change put the current maximum calculation for a given season to be 250 if a player appears in fewer games than the MLB Rookie levels.

Post-Season Playoff Expansion

We added the Gore Cup and Bottom-Feeder Open

Financial Rewards for League Performance

Something I missed in the written version of the rules is that teams would receive financial incentives based on how they finished in their division. I also want to give teams something to play for even in a season where the division title is wrapped up early. These changes took place immediately in late 2002 and increased permanently in 2003.

Division Position or Playoff Finish	2000 - 2001	2002	2003
1st	\$1 million	\$1 million	\$2 million
2nd	0	\$500,000	\$1 million
3rd	0	\$250,000	\$500,000
4th	0	0	0
League Champion*	\$4 million	\$4 million	\$4 million
League Runner-up	\$1.5 million	\$1.5 million	\$2 million
Second-Place Tourney Winner	N/A	\$500,000	\$1 million
Second-Place Tourney Runner-up	N/A	\$250,000	\$500,000
Also-ran Tourney Winner	N/A	\$250,000	\$500,000
Also-ran Tourney Runner-up	N/A	\$100,000	\$250,000

Financial Rewards for Player Performance

Player of the Week - Bonus increased from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

Benchwarmer All-Stars - Teams receive \$10,000 for each player on the Benchwarmer All-Star Teams.

Major League All-Stars – Teams receive \$10,000 for each player on the Major League All-Star Teams.

Available cash for Transactions

Originally, a team can technically use cash earned through the week prior to the current transaction period. For example, in Week 14 Transactions, it may appear that a team is short of cash to sign a free agent or extend a contract. However, the current financial balances usually are a week or two behind in adding cash earned for wins and position. So perhaps a team's current financial position only reflects games played through Week 11. The rules allowed for the transaction to occur pending the money added for Week 12 and Week 13 games.

Rule change: The available money for a team to conduct transactions is the balance displayed on the web site on the deadline date of the transactions. This is for game finances only. If a previous week's salaries and rebates have not yet been processed, those must be figured into the team's financial balance. There may be some weeks during the season where the previous balance is not updated on the web in time for the next transaction period.

Tiebreakers for Waiver List Order - Changes

New #4 - Team the fewest games ahead of the team directly behind it in the standings

New #5 - Team with the worse head-to-head record (2-way ties only)

Off-Season Redistribution Draft

Changed the draft order to the current process of putting division winners in positions 13-16.

Off-Season Transactions

Off-season transactions had been handled first-come, first-served. We now added the transaction order and waiver list idea currently in place.

Transactions - First 2 weeks of the season

This just formalized how it had been handled before and is the current process of basing the first two weeks on the previous season's standings.

Relief Pitcher minimums

Just some minor tweaking for the next season after some major changes in 2002: Essentially we're dropping a third of an inning at the #1, #3, and #5 positions.

Relief Pitchers Used	Current Minimum IP	New Minimum IP	Reduction
R1	2.7	2.3	-0.4
R1-R2	5.7	5.3	-0.4
R1-R3	10.0	9.3	-0.7
R1-R4	13.0	12.3	-0.7
All 5	16.0	15.0	-1.0

Maximum Cash Balances

This reduced the Opening Day cap from \$10 million to the current \$5 million.

2004 Rule Changes

Trade Review

The League Office will make all rulings regarding whether or not trades are allowed, instead of opening up all trades to league input. Since BWB uses an “almost anything goes” process, the owner review was more cumbersome than useful.

All-Star Teams and Financial Rewards for Major League All-Star status

All-star teams and bonuses will be selected and awarded based on Week 13 rosters, not Week 15.

Tiebreakers for Waiver List Order: Change

NEW #5 - Team the most games behind the team directly in front of it in the division standings

Relief Pitcher - Missing Relievers

After changing minimum innings needed for relief pitchers, this change was a major switch in how bullpens are used. The bullpen had, for some teams, become a parking lot of injured or minor league players - often, it appears, simply out of neglect.

If a team was short of a reliever or two, there was no penalty as long as they reached the minimum number of bullpen innings. Starting in 2004, for each pitcher short in the bullpen (for example, the scoring formula says they four relievers, but only have three with eligible appearances), a Pinesitter Pitcher will be used in the bullpen. The line for that pitcher will be 1 IP, 3 H, 3 BB, 0 K, and 3 ER.

Minimum innings pitched values remained the same.

Multiyear Contracts

Yearly increase (33% instead of 25%) and yearly minimums changed to the present values.

2005 Rule Changes

Spot Starters become Spot Pitchers

In a major variation for how spot starters are viewed, the 2 spot positions now become spot pitchers - for both starting and relief work. Spot pitchers will fill in for open starts as they have done before, but now, if a team is missing a reliever and needs his stats, the spot pitchers are eligible to fill in from the bullpen - perhaps allowing the team to avoid the Pinesitter Pitcher.

Should there be an open slot, a spot pitcher with eligible relief appearances (no starts will count for this), will move into the bullpen formula for that game. If that pitcher is needed as a starter for that game, he cannot be included for the bullpen. He still must rest 4 games between starts, but there will be no rest requirement between appearances as a starter or reliever.

Note - This does not mean that 6 or 7 pitchers can be used to fulfill relief minimums. It provides an opportunity to have a pitcher replace another pitcher in the bullpen formula who has no **appearances** in the 6-game stretch of games used for relief stats. Also note the emphasis on appearances. If a reliever is credited for a game, yet still has 0 IP, he is not eligible to be replaced in the bullpen.

There will be no increase in roster size to account for this. It is the opinion of BWB that you are better off making sure you have sufficient backup for starting pitchers, but this provision does allow you some roster flexibility and the chance to replace a reliever who has questionable status.

Pitchers Move up in Rotation

If a starting pitcher has no available starts, and a spot starter is not available to fill in, pitchers lower in the rotation may move up to take the start, provided they also have four games rest. This may have a ripple effect in the rotation until the scheduled starter returns to the lineup or is replaced. However, pitchers already in the rotation will not have sufficient rest to move up, so this will likely only occur at the start of the season or when the rotation is juggled.

Additional Post-Season Tournaments

All BWB League Champions (and perhaps some wild card teams, though maybe not in 2004) will play in a final tournament for the season to determine a Benchwarmer Grand Champion. These games will be scored in November as teams gear up to make their player carry-over decisions for the coming season. Teams will submit one lineup to last throughout all rounds - no changes will be allowed. Games will be drawn from random games throughout the entire season.

As BWB continues to grow, leagues will be organized into Associations and Federations, which in future years will provide the structure for the early rounds of this tournament.

Scoring Formula Changes

Pitching Formula - Raw Score

HBB

HBB is an adjustment based on the total number of hits and walks allowed by the team. For the starting pitcher, that is simply the number he allows in his start. For the bullpen, the number of hits and walks per inning is calculated for the relievers that are used in the scoring formula. This value is then multiplied by the number of bullpen innings (BI) and rounded to the nearest integer.

Total Hits + Walks allowed	HBB
8 or fewer	-.33
9	-.25
10	-.1
11 to 13	0
14	.25
15	.50
16 or more	.75

The HBB score is then added to the current raw pitching score (see **Appendix B** for more details).

Pitching Formula - Perfect Games

Currently, 3 runs are deducted from a team's total score if the opposing pitcher throws a complete game no hitter. Both teams with Randy Johnson nearly lost in 2004 during his perfect game. It shouldn't be automatic, but nearly a sure thing if your pitcher does that - thus the reduction for a perfect game will be changed to 4 runs in 2005.

Pitching Formula - Complete Games

Although a team gets a definite benefit from having a pitcher throw a complete game in not bringing in potential problems from the bullpen, they may face a decided disadvantage from not being able to include their closer(s)' saves into the pitching formula. The raw pitching score for that team will be reduced by .25 (the value of one save). Note - this refers to BWB complete games - 9 innings pitched - not the MLB stat which could include less than 9 innings.

Relief Pitcher minimums

This was last changed in 2003. Again, owing to how differently bullpens are used, we're reducing the minimum innings pitched for relievers. At the halfway point, the median value of average innings short was just under 1 inning (the average was much higher, but we're not trying to bail out teams that consistently fall 2-3 innings short or more). Essentially we're dropping a third of an inning at the #1, #3, and #5 positions. See the **Scoring Formula** for more details on how this is used.

Relief Pitchers Used	Current Minimum IP	New Minimum IP	Total Reduction
R1	2.3	2.0	-0.3
R1-R2	5.3	5.0	-0.3
R1-R3	9.3	8.7	-0.6
R1-R4	12.3	11.7	-0.6
All 5	15.0	14.0	-1.0

Relief Pitcher - Missing Relievers

The line for each missing relief pitcher was originally set at 1 IP, 3 H, 3 BB, 0 K, 3 ER, and 0 Sv. **The new line: 5 IP, 10 H, 10 BB, 0 K, 10 ER, 0 Sv**

Salary Formulas

Changes to Pitching Salary Calculation

WHIP and Blown Saves are now considered in pitchers salaries. Since hits and walks are now part of the pitching score, WHIP was added to reflect that. We added blown saves to help keep the salaries of closers in a more reasonable range.

Closer Salary Premiums

A couple years ago, we added premium additions to salaries for players placing in the top 20 in many statistical categories, and in voting for the MVP and Cy Young and results of the Fireman of the Year. Although we made provisions for pitchers not getting double-bumped for MVP and Cy Young, the same rule was not applied for relievers and their Fireman scores. That was fixed and **some additional reductions were made to closer salaries to help get those values back in line for 2005.**

The Island of Misfit Free Agents - Salary Reduction

This is directly from an owner suggestion to address the laws of supply and demand. All players within the system that did not appear on a single BWB roster for even a single week of the regular season will have a 10% reduction in salary. At no point can a player's salary fall below the BWB minimum (currently 100). This applies to players who were not signed to ANY league, not just the league in which you happen to have a team. In future years, this may be modified to include players who are only signed in a very small percentage of leagues.

Team Finances

Salary Rebates for players cut in the off-season

Previously, all contracts were guaranteed in the off-season - meaning that if you cut a player between the time you sign him (whether you carried him over, drafted him in the Redistribution Draft, or got him as a free agent) and Opening Day, you got none of that money back. Part of the idea in this is to reduce the transaction volume by cutting out speculative transactions such as sign one week, cut the next.

However, this can put a team in a bind that needs to free up salary room or has a player go down in Spring Training.

Starting with the 2004-05 off-season, **teams that cut a player before Opening Day will get a 50% salary rebate**. Again, players already under multiyear contracts and players making less than 250 will not be eligible for salary rebate. If you can hold out, that rebate goes back up to 80% when the season begins. Trades in the off-season will continue to be done at 100% salary assumption/rebate for the teams involved.

Startup Cash for New Leagues

Over the first few years of BWB, the salary formulas were adjusted to make premium players cost premium dollars. The first-year league in 2004 ran into cash flow problems for most of the teams right after the startup draft (thus, many star players sat on the free agent lists all season).

Starting in 2005, the initial phase of the draft - the first full submission of a team - must still fall within the salary cap guidelines for all of BWB. However, before Phase 2 begins, each team will receive an additional \$10 million. No other distribution will be provided except for the 2 million all teams receive on Opening Day.

Weekly Cash Earnings for Teams

Some modification will be made to increase the cash disbursement each week based on wins in a given week and position in the division at the end of the week. This will be determined later this fall.

Financial Rewards for Player Performance

Some minor adjustments to provide a little extra in-season cash:

Player of the Week - Bonus increased to \$25,000.

Benchwarmer All-Stars – Bonus increased to \$25,000 per player.

2006 Rule Changes

Team Finances

Extra Cash for Teams

Benchwarmer Baseball will provide an additional 3 million dollars in cash to teams over the course of the 2006 season. Each team will continue to receive 2 million Benchwarmer Bucks just before Week 1. The new distribution will not mess up strategies or "bail out" teams with low cash balances. Instead, each team will receive an extra distribution of 1 million BW Bucks during the last transaction weeks in May, June, and July.

Financial Penalties and Compensation

Benchwarmer Baseball reserves the right to fine teams in Benchwarmer Bucks for actions not in the interest or spirit of the game. In addition BWB may set up, in advance, team penalties for rules infractions, such as roster problems or missing deadlines. At this time, there is no intention to use either of these options, but simply to code it into the rules.

More likely, however, the league may provide teams with financial compensation in certain situations. From time to time, the league office will make mistakes and, if caught soon enough, will reverse the mistake. However, it may occur that too many subsequent actions have taken place for reversals to be handled easily or without disrupting other teams (for example, a mistake in transaction order that is not

caught until many later selections are affected). In that case, the league may provide Benchwarmer Bucks back to the team in an effort to provide a good-faith effort at compensation.

Transaction Order

Weekly Order

NEW #7 - Team with the worse division record. (Only when the teams are in the same division).

NEW #8 - Team with the worse conference record (Only when the teams are in the same conference).

NEW #9- Team with the worse record in the last 10 games.

Basically, we're trying to reduce the use of cash balances to figure out the transaction order.

Point of Clarification

(This is the way it's always been done) If more than two teams are tied, as we go down the list and are able to pull out a team as the first team to pick, we then go back to the beginning to see about the other teams. For example, if we need to go to Conference record to pull out the first team among a three-way tie, then it's still possible for head-to-head records to determine the remaining two teams' positions.

Transaction Order for New Leagues - First 2 Weeks

In returning leagues, for the first two weeks of the season, teams pick in the same order as they did for the Redistribution Draft, based on their finish in the previous season. For new leagues, there is no such history, so teams will pick in order of total team salary, using it as a basic mark of initial team strength.

Note: in a clarification from 2005, now that there are off-season rebates for player cuts that new teams might already have conducted, this is based on total team salary, not total cash available. (There's a slight distinction)

Rule Changes for Rosters

Injured Reserve

Through the years, I've often been asked about having a disabled list. Well, we don't call it that, but that's essentially what the "Taxi Squad" is (borrowing terminology from the NFL though that's probably 20 years old and they don't call it that anymore). But it's actually better than a disabled list, because you don't have to be hurt to be put on it.

Anyway, beginning in 2006, we add a new roster designation - Injured Reserve (IR). And, like the taxi squad, the player does not have to be injured to be put on it. However, again borrowing from the NFL, when you put a player on IR, he is done for the season.

Beginning with Week One transactions (in this year, at least, it will not be available during Spring Training), you may place one player on IR. There is no cost associated with this move, and once you do that, his roster spot becomes open for another player - so, in a sense, the maximum roster size goes from 40 to 41. But, the only option you have for that player the rest of the season is to keep him on IR or cut him. He cannot be placed back on your active roster - including for the playoffs.

If the player is cut and goes back into the free agent pool, and another team signs him, he can be made active - we're not going to track it that far.

This change allows you to hang on to a player who suffers a season-ending injury early in the season and maintain some roster flexibility with your taxi squad positions. Keep in mind, one of the "benefits"

of cutting a player in this situation, particularly early in the season, is to get a pro-rated salary rebate. Putting a player on IR will not do that for you.

In 2006, this will be limited to one player, as the rule is in kind of an experimental phase. BWB still likes to see teams have to make some difficult choices on rosters which from time to time puts some premium players back into the free agent pool (where another team might be in a better position to hold on to an injured player and build for the future). If you already have a player on IR, and want to put another player there, you're going to have to decide to cut one of them.

September Call Ups

Through the years, this is another request that has come in several times. During the final three weeks of the season, Benchwarmer weeks 23-25, taxi squad players and minor league players will become eligible to fill holes in game lineups - whether as players in the field or an emergency starting pitcher or coming out of the bullpen.

Following the normal lineup process, if there are any holes in a team's lineup, the taxi squad will be checked to see if there are any eligible game performances to fill in. Following that, if any spots are still open, the minor league roster will be checked.

Since the last three weeks are 18 games played within your division, this should help reduce the number of Benchwarmers and Pinesitters that appear in crucial games (and we've had several pennant races come down to the last game - and even beyond), giving you a chance to settle it "on the field."

League Finances and Entry Fees

Early Payment Discount

This has been modified from \$10 to \$5, at least for 2006 (primarily because BWB is opening the payment process much later than normal and the benefit for getting the cash sooner has been reduced). This may revert back in 2007.

League Placement for New Teams made after payment

There is no change to the payment deadline for returning teams. You must have paid your BWB fee by Opening Day or you face some restrictions on your lineup and roster moves. However, as we continue to grow, I want to head off a potential problem before it grows out of hand: Someone signs up at BWB and I assign him or her to a league. Perhaps the new owner drafts a team and then vanishes during Phase Two, or during Spring Training, or right after the season starts, or maybe doesn't come back to the web site ever again. We're kind of stuck when we have to track down this person - particularly if we're still trying to get draft lists or Opening Day lineups done.

It's been our policy before to hold new owners to the same standard - pay by Opening Day. However, beginning in 2006, we will no longer place a new team in a league until it is paid in full. Changes to the signup mechanism will now allow new players to set up their team information and begin assembling a draft list, but they won't actually draft until paid. This will prevent situations as in Spring 2005 where I'm trying to track down payment or even involvement from some new people by April. It will hopefully weed out people early who aren't committed at least to the first few months in getting a team going. And, ideally, it will make the process much more satisfying for other owners in the league as we hope to cut down on situations where we're waiting for one or two people during the draft process.

Exceptions:

- Existing owners establishing new teams will be placed immediately. However, any lineup/roster restrictions for non-payment will apply to all the owner's teams until the account is current.

- When people are joining Benchwarmer Baseball at the recommendation of others - to be in the same league - they will be placed immediately.

2007 Rule Changes

Scoring Changes

Modification of Pinesitter Pitchers' Bullpen Lines

When your team does not have enough relief pitchers with active appearances to add to your bullpen score (for example, if your starter pitches 6 innings, you must have 3 relievers with appearances in the previous 6 MLB games), a Pinesitter Pitcher is added to your bullpen score, until you reach the correct number of pitchers.

That player's "contribution" is 5 IP, 10 H, 10 BB, 10 ER. Remember, that doesn't mean an additional 10 runs that your bullpen gives up, but instead it increases the Earned Runs per Inning Pitched part of the scoring equation. Still, it's a pretty drastic penalty and often is a clear factor in changing the outcome of a game.

Beginning in 2007, the Pinesitters in the bullpen will start off as mediocre and get progressively worse. This way, we don't penalize a team missing one reliever due to injuries or MLB roster moves too harshly, but can still mete out some punishment for teams that fail to keep up a legitimate bullpen.

The new values, to be added into the total bullpen score for a game:

Pinesitter #	IP	H	BB	ER	ERA
1	3	4	2	2	6.00
2 & 3	5	5	5	5	9.00
4	3	4	4	4	12.00
5	5	10	10	10	18.00

Rule Changes for Rosters and Player Lists

Traded IR Players Eligible for Active Roster

This clarifies last year's rule. When you place a player on Injured Reserve (one available slot), you cannot put him back on the active roster for the rest of the season. If that player is traded to another team, the receiving team gets him as a normal player with no restrictions, and is able to put him on their active list.

"Cut" lineup designation*

This was added last season, but this is a chance to expand the explanation. There has always been a not-so-secret loophole in the roster process that you could actually put more than two players on the taxi squad in a given week, provided that you were actually cutting them in your transactions that week to get back down to two. Remember, players cut don't actually leave your roster until the following week.

Once the roster expansion process was added for Weeks 23-25, the taxi squad became part of an expanded bench, and that loophole actually became a problem. To rectify that, a new designation was made in the lineup-setting process. Use the Slot designation to mark a player as "Cut" and you can use someone else in the active roster spot he was going to have to fill.

Note: This DOES NOT serve as the means to cut the player - you still must use the transaction process to release him (or trade). If the cut does not go through - for example, had you listed the player as a

"contingent release" but that was not needed, the BWB Office will put the player back onto your active roster and make the necessary adjustments - attempting to make the change transparent to your lineup (but that's not usually possible...since that's most likely why you were using the cut designation).

Example: You submit a release of Scott Baker in Week 2 since he was sent down to the real-life minors and you can't put him into the BWB minors because of his salary. He will still occupy that second spot starter slot where you've got him in the Week 2 lineups...and will be gone by Week 3. However, you can designate him in the lineup as "cut" and put someone else in as S2.

Removal of Players from the Player List - Deceased, Retired, etc.

During the season, if a player: a) dies b) retires c) goes to an independent minor league or d) goes to a foreign league he is removed from the player list - but can remain on any BWB roster if already a member of the team. For example, if a player retires late in the season, he still could help a team in the BWB playoffs. (Note, this means retire immediately, not an announcement of an off-season retirement). Otherwise, there's probably no real reason to retain the player.

However, beginning in 2007, a slight change. If a player dies during the season, he will also be removed from any BWB rosters (provided that it doesn't make the roster illegal, and then the player will be removed at the first opportunity later in the season). It's kind of arbitrary, but it just seems a little macabre to keep a player in that situation.

Rule Changes for Playoffs

MLB Games used for BWB Playoffs

This has been modified a few times over the years, but has always been some permutation of random games selected from the entire MLB season. Beginning in 2007, these random games will only be selected from the 2nd half of the season. The actual cut-off point is still to be finalized, but for now, consider that playoff performances will be selected from MLB games 81-162.

This allows for a couple of things: First, a team in BWB that makes a late-season run to get into the playoffs (or extend their lead) comes into the playoffs with momentum and may be - at that point, despite the overall record - the best team in the league. Picking some major league games from the early part of the season may effectively kill that momentum and may mean - for all playoff teams - that some key players in the late part of the season may not have even been in the majors early and can cause some big roster holes. Second, it may make the decision to hang on to an injured player or not an easier choice. Before, you might want to keep a player with a hot April-May-June because they could help you in the playoffs. Now, unless you just want to keep him for the next season anyway, there's no reason game-wise to do so.

There will no longer be any structure to force the random games to be spread out over the possible period. No game will be used more than once throughout the 2-week playoff season. During the Benchwarmer Bash, the game selection process will be reset every 2 weeks (and all pitching performances become open again).

The random game is different for each league. During the Bash, all brackets will use the same random game.

Playoff Pitching Selection (Began in 2006 Playoffs)

Rather than forcing pitching performances to appear in the same base 10-game span as the randomly selected MLB game for playoffs, and then a rather cumbersome process to pick which game from that span, the criteria for selection of starting pitching performance has changed. Instead, we will use the starting pitching stats from the MLB game NEAREST to the randomly selected MLB game used for

hitters. This is not unlimited, however. The game must be within 20 games of the hitters' game or the pitcher will have no starts available for the game.

A start can only be used once during the entire playoffs (for the Benchwarmer Bash, this will be reset after every two series). For standardization, if the pitcher has 2 starts equidistant from the hitters' game, the start that occurred first will be used.

Transaction Changes

New Fall Trading Period - for 2006/2007 Offseason

After years of requests, here it is. Prior to the final selection of the 28 players to be carried over into the new season, teams will have the opportunity to trade players. The trading period will begin after the new salaries and positions are final for the coming season and after the salary cap distribution has been made.

There will be two weeks of trading, with deadline dates to be named each year, as appropriate. There is no cash assumption/rebate of salaries at this time, since no salaries have yet been paid for the new season. Teams may include cash payments, as they do during the regular season, in the trade conditions.

Special Roster Exemption: Since teams may already be at the 40-man roster limit (41 including injured reserve), and there is no mechanism for cuts at this time, teams will be allowed to exceed the 40-man limit during these 2 weeks if they participate in trades such as 2-for-1 and 3-for-2. They're going to have to cut down to 28 players within a week or two anyway.

Live Draft Option*

As new leagues join the BWB Universe, owners will have a choice of entering either the standard, list draft process, or participate in a new, experimental live draft. Why "experimental" when all sorts of leagues on the Internet do this now? Starting a league in BWB with a draft brings a few interesting problems, including: Salary cap, 16 teams per league, and 40-man rosters.

If we draft an entire team, it will take a full day, maybe two! So, the draft will most likely allow teams to draft in a live manner the first ten players for their rosters. At a minute a pick, that's still over 2.5 hours. The final number will be determined in December, along with the process for signing up and getting teams ready for the draft. Once the live draft is over, teams will then enter the normal Phase 2 process of the draft.

BWB does not expect to build its own draft interface for the 2007 season (and probably not in 2008, either). Instead, we'll use some kind of pre-existing Internet chat interface. There will be limited draft sessions available, but in the heart of the drafting season (late Feb. and early March), we'll try to present a wide array of days/times. Starting in January, 1 or 2 draft sessions should be available each weekend.

New BWB leagues that join as a full 16-team league are welcome to conduct their own drafts upon joining and devise their own methods for how many players to select and other draft rules. They'll just need to fit into certain guidelines and then report the results to the BWB office.

If this turns out OK, we'll continue the process for the 2008. At some point in the distant future, the live draft may also be extended to the Redistribution Draft process.

Ranking Players in the Startup Draft

When a player is picked by multiple teams in the draft, the final tiebreaker in the resolution of the player's team is "Random Draw." Beginning in 2007, before a random draw occurs, BWB will check the "Rank" you've given a player, which is entered via the web interface for selecting players in the draft.

Details:

- "1" = the highest rank; "40" is the lowest rank; An unranked player is shown as "0"
- Ranking players is optional
- If you give 2 players the same rank, both will automatically be changed to the lowest of your ranked players, with the higher salary getting the higher rank.
- In this tiebreaker, the team that gives the player the highest rank gets him. If multiple teams give the same rank, they advance to the random draw.

Typically, about the first 8-14 players are placed via random draw. Because we start with the players picked most often, you'll want to make sure you give ranks to the players you think other teams will pick. It's probably a waste of your effort to rank your entire draft list -- but it doesn't hurt anything.

Note: if you are participating in a LIVE draft and don't show up for the draft, the league will use your ranks to determine the order of drafting players for you.

Index

- abandoned team. *See* orphan teams
- BWB drafts
 - expansion draft, 31
 - redistribution draft, 5, 18, 31, 32, 51, 54
 - startup draft, 5, 12, 21
- cash prizes, 6
- discounts
 - multi-team, 6
 - referral bonus, 6
- division champion, 8, 10
- entry fee, 6, 7, 34
- inactive owner, 33
- lineups
 - Benchwarmer Batter, 14
 - DH, 13, 14, 22, 36, 40, 43
 - Pinesitter Pitcher, 15, 44, 52
 - spot pitchers, 15, 33, 36, 48, 52
 - starting rotation, 14
- master player list, 13, 28, 38, 39
 - adding players, 39
 - first round draft pick, 39
 - removing players, 38, 39
 - death, 33, 39
 - other leagues, 39
 - retirement, 33, 39
- minimum innings, 52, 54
- multiyear contracts, 18, 28, 30, 31, 38, 55
- On-Paper Baseball, 5
- Opening Day, 7, 19, 20, 24, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 49, 50, 51, 54, 55
- orphan teams, 5, 7
- Player of the Year, 48
- player salaries, 18, 36, 45
 - adjustments
 - Cy Young, 46, 54
 - Fireman of the Year, 46, 47, 54
 - Gold Glove, 46
 - MVP, 46, 54
 - rookie minimums, 37, 45, 46
 - Silver Slugger, 46
 - BWB minimum salary, 37, 45, 46
 - formula, 37
 - prorated, 26
 - salary rebate, 18, 24, 26, 33, 38, 39, 55
 - trades, 28
- playoffs
 - Bottom-Feeder Open, 11, 50
 - conference championship series, 10
 - divisional playoff games, 10
 - Gore Cup, 11, 50
 - league championship series, 10
- positions
 - pitchers, 40
 - primary position, 13, 14, 21, 22, 39, 40
 - secondary position, 13, 14, 21, 40
- queued starts, 14
- Robot Baseball, 5, 49
- roster
 - major league, 12
 - mandatory positions, 12, 21
 - minor league, 12, 25, 26, 38
 - roster size, 5, 34, 50, 52
 - taxi squad, 5, 12, 25, 35, 36
- Rule V Draft, 38, 39
- schedule
 - post season, 9, 10
 - regular season, 7
- team finances
 - Benchwarmer All-Star, 20, 51
 - financial balance, 12, 51
 - Major League All-Star, 20, 51, 52
 - maximum cash balance, 20, 21, 24
 - Player of the Week, 20, 51, 55
 - Player of the Year, 20
 - salary cap, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 29, 30, 31, 34, 37, 46, 48, 55
- transactions
 - alternate, 29
 - contingent release, 29
 - deadline, 36
 - free agents, 24, 28
 - trades, 27
 - transaction period, 24, 32, 34, 51
 - waiver list, 32, 51

Note: This index is in progress and will be improved for 2008