

Vagrant League

Fantasy Baseball

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July 2002

July Analysis

100 Down, 62 To Go (Hopefully)

Ed Feldman

Futurian

With about 62% of the regular season complete (barring a strike) there is finally some separation being made between our large market "competing" teams and our small market "next year" teams. It seems that there are 7 teams that will be fighting for the 5 money spots. The teams are the Master Blasters, Futurians, Shu's Crew, Double D, BarBarryans, Eight Men Out and the KrackerJacks. On the outside looking in you have the Mutts and Arm & Hammers who decisions to make in the next two weeks on whether to stay in it or dump. Tough call (well not really, but I though I would be nice).

The points separation seems to be about 70 points where there is a large drop off from there. It is very possible that a team post 70 points when the final bell rings and still be in 6th place. \$3 & the 1st pick is small consolation for not coming in the money after coming so close.

Despite a momentary blip the Master Blasters have maintained their lead fairly easily and is in no danger of losing it. The Vegas odds makers put the odds at 1-3 that

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The Century Mark

A Time for Trades

Ed Feldman

Futurians

The Over Performers

With many MLB teams having played 100 games it is time to see life imitate art and have MLB teams start dumping their over priced talent to competing teams for names we have never heard of and cash. It has already started in MLB but will the flood gates open? While the cash does not affect us these major league deals do. Here are some one the names bandied about on the professional level:

Bartolo Colon & Cliff Floyd - As hard as this is to believe it is rumored that if the Expos fall 10 games behind the wild card MLB will order them to dump salary. The Red Sox are interested in the pair

Brian Giles – Despite a no trade clause Giles could still wind up in Oakland. Doesn't seem likely though as the Pirates want back one of Oakland's 3 pitchers

Kelvim Escobar – With the former Futurian Luke Prokopec in the bullpen in Toronto Escobar seems poised to be moved. A likely destination is the Dodgers who are looking for an 8th innings specialist as well as insurance for Gagne.

Jose Hernandez – He is a potential free agent that is putting up respectable numbers despite all his strikeouts. Don't think the Brewers will get much for him although it should be more than the sack of BP balls John Ortiz thought the Mets should get for Payton. (With Payton's hot streak maybe he is now worth a sack of game balls).

Scott Rolen – Although the hapless Phillies GM Ed Wade says he sees Rolen finishing the year as a

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100 Down, 62 To Go

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the 'Blasters will win it. That means you have to bet \$3 on them coming in first just to win \$1. Insurmountable. Holding steady at 2nd place, although they are very catchable is the Futurians who bounce from 78-88 points and give their owner stomach problems. The real dog fight to date has been from 3rd - 7th that have seen many positions changed as illustrated below.

<u>7/9 Stats</u>	<u>7/16 Stats</u>	<u>7/22 Stats</u>
Eight Men Out	BarBarryans	Shu's Crew
BarBarryans	Eight Men Out	Double D
Shu's Crew	Double D	BarBarryans
KrackerJacks	Shu's Crew	Eight Men Out
Double D	KrackerJacks	KrackerJacks

Trends that can be gleaned from the above are Shu's Crew & Double D climbing the ladder, Eight Men Out falling consistently and the BarBarryans & KrackerJacks holding steady although the KrackerJacks are still on the outside looking in.

Changing the whole dynamic is the emerging effect that recent VLFB trades are having are on the standings as two teams have dumped already. With our August 13th trading deadline fast approaching the time will come for 3 or maybe even 4 teams to consider thinking of the next season (which may not be the 2003 season).

Overall, although the standings have a similar look as when the last June newsletter was published it appears that there is finally a separation of the upper and lower tier teams. Last month there were 10, if not 11 teams that were still in it. Now we are down to only 7 or possibly 8. The true positioning for the stretch run is underway and we will see next month who the Rotisserie Gods smile upon.



If a Strike Happens

What We Will Do

The Commissioner

If there is a strike this season the final regular season stats are our final stats used to determine final standings. If there is a 2003 season, full or abbreviated, then our season will proceed as usual. If there is no 2003 season then we will add 1 year to the contract of every player that would have been protection eligible for the 2003 season.



How to Run A League

From One Commissioner to Another

Ed Feldman

Commissioner

The current state of Major League Baseball, which is readily apparent to all, is an unmitigated mess. We basically have millionaires and billionaires fighting about how to carve up in the neighborhood of 3 billion dollars annually. That is a nice neighborhood to be in and only the morons on both sides of the table in MLB could screw it up. While it seems the players salaries are out of control and that the players are greedy, which they are, the owners greed is no less and ultimately neither side gives a rats ass about the fans.

In contrast to MLB, The Vagrant League Fantasy Baseball association is in it's 12th season and is run smoothly with unity amongst all the owners. That does mean that everyone agrees about every rule that is in effect but that we have worked through our different opinions without ever having our own work stoppage to form what is a very competitive league. The health of the VLFB has never been stronger thanks to a collection of fine owners.

Since our league is in much better shape than Major League Baseball, here are the ideas, as one Commissioner to another, I give to Commissioner Selig as well as the Players ASSociation.

1. Get rid of Jeffrey Loria as an owner. This guy was only able to field AAAA (read that quadruple A) team as farm system for the rest of baseball for years. The first thing he does as the Marlins owner is to trade Alfonseca and Clement for a bad of BP balls and Tavaréz. The he trades Floyd and Dempster for Encarnación how is a nice player but nothing special at this point. Since Loria's specialty is dumping salaries he should be dumped.
2. Each major league team should have to pay a flat entry fee every season based on some formula applied to team revenue generated by local television & radio contracts. The higher the contracts in place the more a team pays to "enter" the league that season. The money that is collected can then be dispersed as part of revenue sharing.

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WEBSITE LINKS

[Vagrant League Fantasy Baseball](#) (Our home page)

[USAStats](#) (Our stat service. League code and password are both vagrant).

[Major League Baseball](#)

[ESPN MLB](#)

[Rotoworld](#)

[Rototimes](#)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

TRADING DEADLINE

TIME: AUGUST 13TH, NOON

There is no trading after this deadline until the season is over

SEPTEMBER EXPANSION

TIME: SEPTEMBER 3RD

Beginning with the September 3rd moves you can expand your roster from 23 players to 24. The extra player can be either a hitter or pitcher.



A Time For Trades

Philly that must be just to try and keep the price up a bit. Rolen turned down a long term contract offer from the Phil's in spring training and obviously has no intention of staying. The Giants have expressed interest in Rolen.

Todd Hollandsworth – He is a free agent at the end of this year and his last name does not fit on the back of his uniform which as angered the clubhouse attendants that take care of such things. With the fine season he is having he is sure to be moved. This will also give the Rockies a chance play Jack Cust to find out just how bad he really is in the field.

There are other names to be sure that are mired in rumor to various degrees that can affect both the outcome of the standings this year as well as next season. Remember, anyone that comes over from the AL is only good for one more season and has a salary of \$10. Conversely, if you have a player traded to the AL you can either keep him or release him as long as you release him within 1 week of coming into the NL. Once this player is released from our roster he is NOT eligible to be picked up unless he comes back into the AL. If you keep the player you can DL him, bench him or trade him.



From One Commissioner To Another

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3. Contract two teams, the Expos & Marlins and move Pittsburgh to the NL east. The other option is contracting the Expos & Devil Rays & move Milwaukee back to the AL. Contracting two teams does not really help anything other than improving the overall quality of baseball a little as the 50 worst players would be removed from the game. It is better than nothing though.
4. Have the players and teams each pay an annual "entry fee" to MLB to go into a stadium fund. This would be a nominal 1% of the season payroll, for a total of 2%, given back to the sport to provide partial financing of new stadiums. Here's how it would work:

Assume that the average team payroll is \$60 million dollars. Multiply that by 30 teams and you get \$1.8 billion dollars. 2% of that is \$36 million per year. Now 36 million wont pay for a new stadium but over say a 3 year period, with modest 3% interest that would be about \$115 million dollars. That won't fully pay for a new stadium but it will help a lot. The next step would be to rank the current stadiums from oldest to newest and that is the order that teams can access the money for new stadiums, or renovations if that is the route they want to go. Obviously a payout cannot be made each year as that will only amount to about \$36 million but it is better than nothing. Also, as the average payroll goes up the annual contribution will go up as well.
5. No MLB team can have an annual profit paid to the owner of more than \$12 million dollars. All profit above this figure must be put back into the team for payroll, scouting, minor league signing bonus' etc.

That's it. If the formula's for the above are created correctly the poorer teams will have more money and the rich teams

All-Star Undervalued Team

The Over Performers

Ira Mandelbaum

Master Blasters

So we have come to close on the first half of the year, or $\frac{3}{4}$ of the year if you believe there will be strike. I tried to put together the best undervalued team. This was very difficult in that there were a lot of players that are having very nice years for very low contracts and, more importantly, I had to put this together quickly because my pain in the ass editor was screaming something about a deadline.

I included only one: first baseman, second baseman, third, baseman, and short stop / five outfielders / 2 catchers / 9 pitchers (7 starters & 2 relievers)

1B) Derek Lee – 18 HR, 52 RBI, 56 Runs, 6 SB, .262 – If Derek can improve on the batting average he may become one of the elite first basemen.

3B) Albert Pujols – 22 HR, 69 RBI, 69 Runs, 2 SB, .293 – and he is only 22...HA

2B) Junior Spivey - 10 HR, 50 RBI, 58 Runs, 9 SB, .322 – I knew it all along.

SS) Jose Hernandez – 17 HR, 46 RBI, 45 Runs, .286 – the only thing Jose does not have is respect – both in the majors & in roto.

OUTFIELD

1) Lance Berkman – 29 HR, 83 RBI, 60 Runs, 5 SB, .292 – Berkman has decided not sign with the Blasters – he has elected to play out his option year and test the free agent waters next year – The last player that did that and resigned with the Blasters died.

2) Adam Dunn – 17 HR, 54 RBI, 52 Runs, 12 SB, .292 – Thanks Ed.

3) Pat Burrell – 25 HR, 70 RBI, 64 Runs, .296 – This one pains me. I had to twist Frank's arm to trade Uribe for him. He also wanted me to throw in my rookie pick.

4) Juan Encarnacion – 17 HR, 52 RBI, 44 Runs, 10 SB, .273 – I can't spell his name but he can't speak english.

5) Dave Roberts – 2 HR, 21 RBI, 40 Runs, 23 SB, .287, he platoons with Grissom, if you combine their numbers, 12 HR, 54 RBI, 68 Runs, 26 SB, about .276 Avg., not too bad.

C1) Paul Loduca – 5 HR, 40 RBI, 41 Runs, 3 SB, .316 –

still the most undervalued catcher – what happened to the power?

C2) Benito Santiago – 10 HR, 44 RBI, 34 Runs, .268 – Could have listed Barrett, Miller, or Marrero – I figured I would throw the old man a bone.

PITCHING

1) Curt Schilling – 154.1 IP, 16 W, .894 WHIP, 197 K, 3.032 ERA – Still want to trade him Ron?

2) Odalis Perez – 139.1 IP, 10 W, .983 WHIP, 99 K, 3.23 ERA – Showing some signs of burning out but awesome first half.

3) Vincente Padilla – 134.1 IP, 10 W, 1.168 WHIP, 91 SO, .328 ERA – Lee somehow manages to find gold every year.

4) A.J. Burnett – 144 IP, 8 W, 1.25 WHIP, 138 SO, 3.75 ERA – Amazing what happens when you don't walk the ballpark

5) Roy Oswalt – 137.2 IP, 10 W, 1.27 WHIP, 126 SO, 3.59 ERA – Proving last year was no fluke

6) Brett Tomko – 132.2 IP, 5W, 1.22 WHIP, 87 SO, 3.52 ERA – Has found a home in San Diego.

7) Tomokazu Ohka – 114.1 IP, 8 W, 1.30 WHIP, 75 SO, 3.306 ERA – nice rebound from a bad year last year.

8) Eric Gagne – 47.1 IP, 34 Saves, .697 WHIP, 63 SO, 1.52 ERA – has a lower ERA than most pitchers WHIP. Best closer in the game. Are the Dodgers still trying to sign Jeff Shaw?

9) Smoltz or Kim? – I am going with Smoltz – 51.2 IP, 34 Saves, 1.122 WHIP, 4.181 ERA – ERA is a bit high but one bad outing killed Smoltz's ERA and besides I cant stand Kim – He should have committed Harry Carry after the world series last year. If he was so good he would have closed game 7 instead of Johnson. Arguments could have been made for Ishii, Dessens, and Lawrence.

Just a footnote on Kile's passing – When I first heard about his death, I felt like I lost someone I knew – he has been on my team for 6 or 7 of the years we have been doing roto and I have followed his career very closely. It is just another example of how we must approach each day as if it is our last - carpe something or other. Good luck the rest of the way.



RULES REFRESHER

TRADING

- Unrestricted trading with other teams until noon on the second Tuesday in August. No trading after this date.
- After the start of the auction until the trading deadline, any players traded with a salary of \$6 or less will have \$2 added to his contract each time he is traded.
- After every trade, both teams must have eligible players at all 23 positions. You cannot leave a position “empty”.

FARM SYSTEM CONTRACTS

- Farm system players called up will have a contract of \$1 his call up year, \$3 his second year and \$5 his third year.

WAIVER RULE

- Any player on your bench or DL that is released back into the free agent pool will be a waiver.
- A waived player can be claimed the following week and placed anywhere in your lineup as long as you maintain position eligibility.
- You do not need to have an open roster spot. You can make room for him by in turn waiving *any* player on your roster (as long as eligibility is maintained).

PLAYERS TRADED TO THE AL

If your player is traded to the AL you have two options:

1. Release him from your team within 1 week of his trade. This will place him permanently out of our league as he will be an AL free agent. You then pick up a player from the free agent pool or activate a player from your bench.
2. Keep him in your lineup. If you do, you can DL or bench him and then place him back in your lineup via a roster move. You are also free to trade him within our league.



will still have more, just not as much and there will no caps, maximum or minimum. Under this system big market teams will still have more money to spend as they will still receive large sums from their television & radio contracts and their gate receipts.

As for the “entry fee” concept I look at MLB like a country club where you get to play your favorite sport. All country clubs have annual dues so why shouldn't baseball. A 1% fee back to the game that made you a millionaire many times over would not be a hard ship. Even a player making \$150,000 would only pay \$1,500 in dues. Very reasonable. Also, as the average player salary increases so will the stadium fund.

I also like the concept of putting money aside for stadiums. Why should the fans, or more accurately the tax payers, pay money to build stadiums so owners & players can get rich? If MLB put up about 1/3 of the cost and the team owner put up a third then they could probably get private money for the last third, just name the stadium after the company putting up the most money.

Lastly, I like capping the profit that can be taken out of the franchise and put into the owners pocket if there is profit in excess of \$12 million. This way they have to put money back into the team. There are those that will say that is not fair to the owners, they should be able to make as much as they want. To that I say no, for the good of the league you will have to learn to live on a maximum of \$1 million per month. If you don't like it then sell the team. As THE national past time there are some sacrifices that must be made.

There are my proposals. Take them or leave them but if you don't like it then let me hear you come up with something better.

