

Rules Changes to Consider for 2018

These proposals are up for discussion at the Winter Meeting scheduled for January 28, 2018. Please review and prepare to discuss. If you have others, please prepare to explain, justify, and discuss.

1. Article 8.1: I propose that we change the minimum for at bats from 5000 to 5200.

This season in the NL there were 10 teams that reached this total, while there were two that didn't, but didn't even make 5000 either. Actually, 5400 is a viable requirement as 8 teams reached it.

Steve Parker

2. Article 8.2: Change the minimum for innings pitched to 1100 (currently it is 1000).

This year in the NL there were 8 teams which reached this threshold. There were 3 teams that didn't reach 1000, and 1 team that fell between 1000 and 1100. A minimum of 1200 probably is viable, but it would be stretching a few teams since only 7 reached this level this year. The philosophy in upping the limit is to force teams to use more starting pitching, which raises both the ERA and WHIP for every team, and reduces the penchant for loading up on relievers and squeaking by. It would make managing our line-ups tougher. Maybe more interesting, maybe more headaches.

Steve Parker

3. Article 6.2: Revise the order of the reserve draft to the following: 5th, 12th, 11th, 10th, 9th, 8th, 7th, 6th, 4th, 3rd, 2nd, 1st, in that order from the previous season's standings. (The current order is 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 4, 3, 2, 1.)

The rationale behind this is that we have been penalizing the bottom finishers and rewarding the middle finishers using the old order. Making the 5th place finisher first is a consolation prize for just missing the money awards, which is understandable. However, we don't need to favor the 6th thru 8th teams over the 12th thru 10th, which suffered thru a terrible season. It's a minor issue, but a reasonable correction to a flaw in our system.

Steve Parker

4. Articles 8.1 and 8.2: Change the way we penalize times that do not reach the IP and/or AB minimum requirements.

Continue the current rules assigning zero points to each team which does not make the minimum in each of the applicable categories - WHIP, ERA and BA. However, move any teams that were behind this team(s) up in the standings, so that they get credited for beating this team(s) which they obviously did.

Discussion: I believe we went to the current rule in 2000 when giving a team a point for beating each team which failed to meet the minimum affected the final standings (which happened to be my team which lost a place in the money because another team got points). I now think that this was a knee jerk reaction, since it was not the fault of that team that one or more other teams chose to punt one or more categories. When a team plays only its best

hitters or its relief pitchers, it is common for them to beat the teams which are using starters to try to get win points to stay in the hunt. When a team uses only its best hitters and uses DL players and Minor Leaguers, it may well have a better batting average than teams trying for points in HRs and RBIs because of a lot less at bats with good hitters. I feel that this makes some contending teams at a disadvantage in the race for the Yoohoo.

For example this year in the NL the following list gives the points lost by teams making the minimum because of being beaten by teams that weren't even playing for the year. Fortunately it didn't affect the final standings of the top 8 teams this year, but it really scrambled the bottom 4. It easily could have affected the 3 thru 6 place teams given just a run here or a win there.

Team	Make Minimum?	Pts Lost by Current Rule	Pts Lost Beating Min Current Rule	Pts Changed Under New Rule
Ramblers	YES	0	0	0
Cubano	YES	0	0	0
DMC	YES	0	1	1
Wonders	YES	0	2	2
Philly's	YES	0	2	2
Music	YES	0	1	1
Boys	YES	0	4	4
Revenge	YES	0	3	3
Smackers	No IP	12	1	-11
Ramjets	No BOTH	22	0	-22
Grays	Yes	0	7	7
Slammers	No BOTH	7	0	-7

The spread in the final standings was only one point between 4th and 5th, which is the money break point. A single hit or run or win could have switched the placement. Would you rather lose because someone punted a category and beat you by one place or because your pursuer got an extra point that he lost because someone didn't try instead of by fairly beating you. I think it is more fair to reward a positive than a negative. So move everyone up to the position that they fairly achieved.

Steve Parker

- Article 1.1.4.2: Change Auction Dates to precede Opening Day, rather than follow it. Dates weekends to be exactly inverse of what it is now, meaning auctions should take place the weekend BEFORE Opening day and the weekend after only if Easter conflicts.

Chris Leak

6. Several Articles: We all need to think about this as not an Ohtani question, but as a question for all future two-way players. I personally have a problem with anyone being able to use one player as two, unless we determine a way to give the rest of us the same break. Therefore, I propose the following rule to cover any two-way players:

If an owner chooses to buy/keep a two-way player, he shall have to choose one of the following options for using him during the season:

- 1) as a pitcher only at his applicable salary; if this option is chosen, the player may also be bid on as a hitter later.
- 2) as a hitter only at his applicable salary; if this option is chosen, the player may also be bid on later as a pitcher.
- 3) as two separate players each at his applicable salary, (Thus paying twice his salary towards the \$260 auction budget).

This does not effect Olin this year, since Ohtani is a rookie status, and his salary doesn't count against the budget (however, if he so opts for 3), he should occupy two rookie slots of the three allowed prior to the draft). I am assuming that Olin will opt for 3) this year, since it doesn't hurt his budget. Also note that future owners who spot a potential two-way player will get the same reward that Olin has this year for a players rookie status season.

In future auctions (and for Olin next year) this presents a real problem for the buyer/owner. While the player may be a \$20 hitter, he may be only a \$5 pitcher. If he has a \$20, the owner probably will not want to have \$20 more counted against his budget, hence he is likely to opt for a hitter only (or a pitcher only, if the values are reversed). Owners who want a player as only the best position will tend to bid high enough above the lesser position to generally designate him as a 1) or 2), leaving him available at the other position at a lesser salary, making him usually as two separate players.

This should be a fair way to handle this situation if it comes up in the future. It doesn't penalize Olin this year. Next year he will know if he wants to use Ohtani both ways, or if he has flopped at one of the positions.

Steve Parker

7. Article 8.0: This proposal is conditional on whether we adopt some version of the so-called "two-player" solution as suggested by some of our Owners in a number of emails. Specific verbiage will address the nature of the change if any is made. This would become necessary to address pitchers accruing hitting stats and, conversely, hitters accruing pitching stats, on some basis or other, depending on how we actually address Mr. Ohtani's situation.

Rhett Leak

8. Articles 9.3 and 9.4 (possibly others): We should consider letting Rotowire handle all FA bids and waiver claims. This can be done with virtually no need for human interface. I have studied it a good bit and know that there are some trade-offs. You should have noticed by now on the left-hand side of the league home page in Rotowire links to "Free Agent Claims"

and “Waiver Requests.” I have them setup now such that they do not work, but those settings can be changed.

Gains: Saves Yours Truly a good bit of time, since it is FA Bids and Waiver Claims that take up most of the time needed each week to process transactions and update. The process can be largely automated and thus save time, once we’ve all learned how to do it on our own (i.e., without my intervention).

Losses: We would not be able to make certain moves simultaneously with our bids and claims. And there will be a bit of a learning curve.

Rhett Leak