



# STRAT-O-MATIC REVIEW

Devoted exclusively to the Strat-O-Matic Game fan. The Review is printed with the consent of the Strat-O-Matic Game Company

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## Some of new rules are clarified Over 15 optional changes available for baseball

Well, what's new?

If you've received your new 1990 baseball card set you've certainly found out that there's been a myriad of changes as far as optional playing rules and that 'new' is Strat-O-Matic's buzz word.

We counted 'em up and found 15 changes that could be incorporated into the game now, including the new super-advanced fielding chart. And some of the new options had options off the options.

Let us know what you think of the changes, or any questions you may have about them. The game company wants to know your reaction and so do we and the Review's readership.

The game company has contacted the Review and already clarified a couple of the new playing rules:

\* Delayed steal with two outs - If the defense throws through and gets the runner going to second base, the runner on third does not score.

\* Cutoff rule - If the throw from the outfield is cut off and an attempt made to throw out the trail runner, then a runner going home would score and the run would count, regardless of what happens to the trail runner, even if there are two outs.

\* Pitchers range - All pitchers are considered to be "2s" in the range fielding ratings (1-4).

\* Groundballs A, B and C - Follow original rules if the infield is in. But if the infield is in and it's a gbx situation, obtain all results from super-advanced fielding chart.

DON'T ORDER COMPUTER VERSION II NOW

The Strat-O-Matic Game Company also passes on word to the Review that the new IBM super-deluxe computer baseball game (Version II), which is expected to be ready late this summer, shouldn't be ordered at this time.

"A lot of people are sending in orders for the new cards and the  
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# David Atkinson reigns as TBA king

## Wynne is championship-game hero at 'World'

Marvell Wynne was marvelous when it counted and because of it David Atkinson today reigns as king of the Table Baseball Association world.

Atkinson, who flew from San Francisco, his home town, to Chicago to play in John Kreuz's World Championship the weekend of Jan. 19-21, came away the biggest winner from a lineup of 50 of S-O-M's best baseball table-gamers.

Thanks to Wynne, that is, as far as Atkinson winning it all.

With the championship hanging in the balance, Wynne connected for a three-run ball park (1-11 chance) home run shot off Ron Dibble in the bottom of the ninth inning to break up a scoreless duel in the deciding game.

The big victory gave Atkinson a 16-6 final-day record, two games ahead of second-place finisher Bert Schoose of Palatine, IL, who came in second with a 14-8 mark.

"It came down to the final game," says Kreuz of the conclusion of a long weekend. "Earlier, in the seventh inning, Damon Berryhill just missed a ball park home run for Schoose."

### 'DESIGNATED DRAFTERS'

The field for the final day consisted of winners and runnersup in the Tournament of Champions that was held Thursday, five division winners from the World Tournament and two teams that had the best second-place records.

Kreuz, Schoose and Bill Meinhardt, the 1989 TBA point champion from Allston, MA, all won Tournament of Champion honors, with Atkinson, Will Roberts, the winner of the 'World' a year ago who hails from New Haven, CT, and Scott Kuklinski of Palatine finishing second and also qualifying.

Division winners who earned a trip into Sunday's final round were Lex Rozin, Berkeley, CA; Jon Nydahl, Minneapolis, MN; Steve Jensen, Maple Grove, MN, and Don Arnold, Houston, TX. Bill Fenlon of Chicago and Jeff Schwarze were runnersup and also qualified.

One of the more unusual developments at this year's World, which was held at the Radisson Suite Hotel in Glenview, IL, not far from Chicago's O'Hare Airport, occurred when Arnold arrived late for the start of the draft.

"It was a mixup in communication," explained Kreuz. Two high school students, David Janssen and Isaac Rowan, whose older brothers were competing in the tournament, volunteered to draft for Arnold.

They drafted his first eight players and then he arrived and completed the draft. "He wasn't too happy about it in the beginning, but after he started winning he decided it wasn't so bad," laughed Kreuz.

"Those two are going to be excellent tournament players some day. They were just there as spectators." Janssen's older brother is Joe and Rowan's sibling is Terry.

### TWO CHANGES ON SCHEDULE

Kreuz, who's busily preparing for the 1990 TBA tournament schedule which includes 26 weekends of dice-rolling action at sites ranging from New York to Los Angeles, has two changes on his calendar of events.

The TBA tourney originally scheduled for April 13-15 in Chicago has been moved to the next weekend, April 20-22, because of Easter. And the San Francisco tournament, listed for May 25-27, will go the following weekend, June 1-3. Memorial Day weekend is the reason for the San

(continued on next page)

Francisco change.

#### MOST OF NEW RULES WILL BE USED

Kreuz also passes on word that the TBA will be using almost all the new optional rules installed by S-O-M recently.

"We (TBA) are sort of a testing ground, or proving lab, for the game company," says Kreuz. "(S-O-M creator Harold) Richman wants us to test all the new rules. These are now the state of the art rules when it comes to S-O-M. I will cheerfully test them.

"We will use most of the rules as printed, except for the relief pitcher warming up rule."

Kreuz, in particular, likes the cutoff throwing rule. "It really enhances the value of an outfielder's arm."

The TBA will be putting in a rule limiting No. 1 hitting pitchers, who, according to Kreuz, are getting on base more than they should. "I call it the 'Jim Abbott' rule, because a one-armed pitcher that has to bat, or if the pitcher is just a bad hitter, shouldn't have chances to get on base off the pitcher's card."

What Kreuz and the TBA have done is when a hit is rolled for a No. 1 hitting pitcher off the pitcher's card, then reroll until a ball park effect or a result generated by the x-chart is rolled.

"It has to hit on the pitcher's card, and be a hit, otherwise the result stands as is. Anything off the pitcher's batting card stands as rolled. Remember, this only applies to 1-hitting pitchers."

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## GKSML adopts some of new rules

The Greater Kalamazoo Strat-O-Matic League, which includes Review co-editors Warren and Del Newell, has always been a model of conservatism when it comes to adopting new baseball options.

And this year is no exception.

Although the usual procedure is for the GKSML "to wait a year" before seriously considering anything new, the 10-member league did find a couple of optional playing rules that were voted in for the newest National League season (the 39th 154-game replay embarked on).

The new options that were adopted included:

- (1) Sacrifice bunt with runners on 1st and 3rd bases.
- (2) Throwing to third base from right and left field.
- (3) Limiting a starting pitcher to 11 innings and then reaching his endurance factor.
- (4) A relief pitcher can only relieve two consecutive days and then must rest a day.

The GKSML voted for both the pitching limitation rules. The old rules didn't prohibit a starter from pitching 25 innings in an extra inning game. And neither did they prevent a reliever, especially those with over 100 innings, from pitching game after game after game.

Both make the game more realistic. No longer can a manager bring in a starter/reliever (who had 180-200 innings) and use him in 120 games, as some have done.

"I've always taken advantage of rules that we don't have," admits Jeff Green, one of the GKSML's most successful managers. Last year Green used David Cone, who was primarily a starter, almost exclusively in relief. Cone, in fact, started only once, yet appeared in 111 games and hurled 229 innings.

Incidentally, it was Green who was the first to suggest the GKSML adopt the new limitation rule for relievers.

## Jeff Green again rates new player cards

# Who are baseball's best at each position?

Who's the best left fielder in the National League? How about the best shortstop? Or who would you like on your team if you could take your pick of second basemen and shortstops in the American League?

What about the rookies, players with Strat-O-Matic cards for the first time, who would you take if you had your pick of all the best young talent?

And what about pitching? No team wins consistently without pitching. Who are the best starters in both leagues? The best relief pitchers? And again what about rookies?

Jeff Green, a highly successful play-by-mail manager and longtime member of the face-to-face Greater Kalamazoo Strat-O-Matic League (which includes Review co-editors Warren and Del Newell), has his 1990 player ratings that will answer many of those questions.

Of course, the ratings are entirely Green's, and some gamers, feeling certain players have been shortchanged, may see red while poring over them.

Green's success in his S-O-M gaming endeavors - and the fact that he seems to be a genuine "student" of the cards - in our opinion make his ratings interesting reading and realistic.

### MITCHELL'S THE BEST IN LEFT

Green, not so surprisingly, picked National League MVP Kevin Mitchell as the best left fielder. Mitchell's slugging and power overcame fielding deficiencies (4 e28). Tim Raines was No. 2 and Lonnie Smith No. 3 in the left field ratings for the NL.

Despite missing most of the latter part of the season because of injury, Barry Larkin was rated the best shortstop, primarily because of his hitting. Larkin was more than adequate in the field, too, being rated by S-O-M as a 2 e21.

In the American League, Green rated Julio Franco ahead of Steve Sax at second base and Tony Fernandez over Cal Ripken at shortstop. Fernandez is a "1" and Ripken a "2". And both have super "e" ratings (Fernandez - e7; Ripken - e8).

As far as starters, Green's picks were Sid Fernandez in the National and Cy Young winner Bret Saberhagen in the American.

The top rookies? Jerome Walton of the Cubs in the NL and Ken Griffey Jr. in the AL.

The ratings on the following pages are for each position and include, in order, a listing of fielding (or range, 1-4), "e" number, throwing arm and on-base chances (hits, walks, hit-by-pitch, etc.) against left- and right-handed pitchers.

For pitchers the ratings include their holding-on rating and on-base chances given up to left- and right-handed batters.

### ROOKIES RATED FOR FUTURE

Rookies are also listed in both leagues, although, as Green points out, "Rookies are rated just on their future potential, not by strength of this year's card. Also, only first-ever cards are considered rookies."

Also, only players with 300 or more at-bats are considered in the ratings. "The exception," says Green, "is at catcher where sometimes the pickings were pretty slim."

On the following pages are Green's player ratings for the 1990 baseball card set, based on the 1989 real-life season (remember the first on-base number is against LHP/second against RHP).

(continued on next page)

## NATIONAL LEAGUE

## AMERICAN LEAGUE

First Base

1. Will Clark 1e11	41/50
2. Mark Grace 2e7	36/51
3. Pedro Guerrero 4e17	44/47
4. Jack Clark 4e20	61/43
5. Glenn Davis 3e13	43/36
6. Andres Galarraga 1e13	55/24
7. Eddie Murray 4e6	27/32
8. Dave Magadan 4e13	35/44
9. Ricky Jordan 4e11	44/27
10. Todd Benzinger 3e7	23/24

Second Base

1. Ryne Sandberg 1e6	48/35
2. Willie Randolph 2e11	47/45
3. Jose Oquendo 2e5	38/50
4. Rob Thompson 2e10	47/31
5. Bill Doran 2e15	30/25
6. Roberto Alomar 3e29	33/43
7. Tom Herr 3e8	41/40
8. Jose Lind 3e21	33/23
9. Jeff Treadway 3e17	19/35
10. Greg Jefferies 4e17	25/32

Shortstop

1. Barry Larkin 2e21	51/45
2. Ozzie Smith 1e19	40/34
3. Shawn Dunston 2e21	44/26
4. Dickie Thon 3e22	33/33
5. Kevin Elster 2e18	29/22
6. Alfredo Griffin 2e18	35/21
7. Garry Templeton 2e24	40/21
8. Jose Uribe 2e22	20/20
9. Spike Owen 3e16	37/29
10. Andres Thomas 3e34	14/17

Third Base

1. Howard Johnson 3e31	43/38
2. Tim Wallach 1e19	36/38
3. Terry Pendleton 1e16	30/29
4. Bip Roberts 4e12	49/50
5. Bobby Bonilla 4e37	24/40
6. Ken Caminiti 2e23	41/24
7. Jeff Blauser 3e32	36/33
8. Jeff Hamilton 2e22	17/30
9. Chris Sabo 3e24	41/30
10. Luis Salazar 3e37	35/34

Left Field

1. Kevin Mitchell 4e8 (0)	40/40
2. Tim Lincecum 2e1 (+1)	44/43
3. Lonnie Smith 4e3 (+3)	53/53
4. Barry Bonds 2e7 (+1)	45/28
5. Ke. McReynolds 1e12 (-1)	36/32
6. Dwight Smith 4e10 (+1)	36/45
7. John Kruk 4e7 (+1)	34/49
8. Terry Puhl 2e0 (0)	37/41
9. Vince Coleman 3e12 (0)	26/39
10. Billy Hatcher 3e3 (-1)	28/24

First Base

1. Fred McGriff 3e18	42/46
2. Alvin Davis 4e13	48/47
3. Kent Hrbek 2e8	40/31
4. Mark McGwire 3e7	33/34
5. Randy Milligan 3e8	37/56
6. Don Mattingly 1e8	43/26
7. Nick Esasky 2e7	28/36
8. George Brett 3e3	26/42
9. Wally Joyner 1e4	30/36
10. Pete O'Brien 2e10	42/35

Second Base

1. Julio Franco 3e16	34/46
2. Steve Sax 3e10	56/38
3. Harold Reynolds 1e19	45/38
4. Lou Whitaker 2e13	30/41
5. Jerry Browne 3e16	38/43
6. Billy Ripken 1e14	33/24
7. Tony Phillips 2e13	41/35
8. Scott Fletcher 3e4	39/34
9. Johnny Ray 3e14	27/35
10. Jim Gantner 2e12	34/32

Shortstop

1. Tony Fernandez 1e7	30/22
2. Cal Ripken 2e8	28/32
3. Jody Reed 3e25	52/44
4. Ozzie Guillen 1e23	26/24
5. Alan Trammell 2e12	37/30
6. Alvaro Espinoza 2e25	52/21
7. Dick Schofield 2e14	28/28
8. Greg Gagne 2e22	31/28
9. Mike Gallego 2e28	38/34
10. Kurt Stillwell 3e21	32/30

Third Base

1. Carney Lansford 2e17	65/46
2. Wade Boggs 3e19	45/57
3. Paul Molitor 3e25	52/43
4. Kevin Seitzer 4e21	44/48
5. Cra. Worthington 2e23	38/32
6. Brook Jacoby 3e19	38/37
7. Kelly Gruber 2e31	38/31
8. Gary Gaetti 1e14	17/24
9. Steve Buechele 2e15	30/22
10. Jack Howell 2e13	12/30

Left Field

1. Rickey Henderson 2e5 (+1)	51/52
2. Bo Jackson 1e12 (-4)	30/22
3. Phil Bradley 2e4 (0)	43/41
4. Mike Greenwell 4e10 (0)	28/43
5. Chili Davis 3e7 (-1)	21/36
6. Joe Carter 2e9 (0)	14/24
7. George Bell 4e12 (+1)	28/34
8. Dan Gladden 2e13 (0)	37/34
9. Greg Briley 3e15 (0)	37/35
10. Glenn Braggs 3e10 (-1)	37/24

Center Field

1. Eric Davis 1e7 (-3)	33/40
2. Tony Gwynn 2e6 (-2)	43/49
3. Jerome Walton 1e4 (+1)	44/37
4. Brett Butler 1e7 (0)	44/40
5. Gerald Young 2e1 (-1)	34/33
6. Andy VanSlyke 1e6 (-3)	39/22
7. Milt Thompson 2e10 (0)	31/40
8. Len Dykstra 2e5 (+1)	32/34
9. Dave Martinez 2e12 (-2)	23/36
10. Juan Samuel 4e5 (0)	37/30

Right Field

1. Von Hayes 3e7 (0)	40/41
2. Andre Dawson 2e5 (-4)	32/21
3. Paul O'Neill 3e6 (-2)	14/42
4. Dale Murphy 2e5 (-3)	39/23
5. Tom Brunansky 2e8 (-2)	30/32
6. Glenn Wilson 2e10 (-3)	41/30
7. Da. Strawberry 4e11 (-1)	23/26
8. Mike Marshall 3e7 (-2)	34/37
9. Chris James 3e5 (0)	36/22
10. RJ Reynolds 3e4 (-1)	35/31

Catcher

1. Mike Scioscia 1e8 (-2)	30/32
2. Benito Santiago 1e16 (-4)	20/25
3. Nel. Santovenia 3e10 (-2)	37/31
4. Damon Berryhill 2e2 (-3)	35/22
5. Tony Pena 2e1 (-1)	36/25
6. Craig Biggio 3e3 (+2)	37/37
7. Darren Daulton 3e1 (0)	32/23
8. Terry Kennedy 4e1 (+1)	17/28
9. Barry Lyons 3e8 (0)	37/22
10. Jeff Reed 2e2 (+1)	22/30

Starting Pitcher

1. Sid Fernandez (0)	14/16
2. John Smoltz (-3)	19/18
3. Mike Scott (+4)	19/11
4. Bryn Smith (+2)	14/23
5. Pascual Perez (+1)	16/21
6. Scott Garrelts (-1)	23/11
7. Orel Hershiser (-1)	26/18
8. Tim Lincecum (+2)	21/20
9. Jose DeLeon (-1)	26/9
10. Tom Glavine (-1)	13/17

Relief Pitcher

1. Jay Howell (-2)	15/15
2. Larry Andersen (-2)	21/7
3. Rob Dibble (+8)	14/10
4. Randy Myers (-1)	13/23
5. Norm Charlton (-1)	17/17
6. Bill Landrum (-6)	7/26
7. Bob Kipper (0)	18/14
8. Tim Burke (+2)	15/18
9. Dave Smith (-6)	17/23
10. Mark Davis (-1)	22/16

(continued on next page)

Center Field

1. Kirby Puckett 1e4 (-4)	35/47
2. Roberto Kelly 2e7 (-1)	53/38
3. Robin Yount 2e8 (+1)	41/43
4. Ellis Burks 2e10 (-1)	38/41
5. Gary Pettis 1e6 (+1)	45/45
6. Dave Henderson 3e10 (-2)	35/28
7. Mike Devereaux 2e8 (+1)	38/31
8. Devon White 1e5 (-3)	25/22
9. Dave Gallagher 2e3 (0)	35/33
10. Ken Griffey Jr. 2e14 (-2)	21/32

Right Field

1. Ruben Sierra 2e9 (-3)	40/29
2. Dwight Evans 3e7 (-2)	47/46
3. Jesse Barfield 1e11 (-5)	44/31
4. Rob Deer 2e11 (-1)	31/25
5. Jim Eisenreich 2e4 (0)	41/30
6. Clau. Washington 2e9 (-1)	39/28
7. Joe Orsulak 3e7 (-1)	18/41
8. Chet Lemon 3e5 (0)	41/28
9. Cory Snyder 2e1 (-4)	25/12
10. Ivan Calderon 4e8 (0)	42/29

Catcher

1. Mickey Tettleton 3e1 (+1)	35/40
2. Terry Steinbach 3e11 (-2)	27/37
3. Carlton Fisk 3e3 (0)	36/35
4. Bob Boone 1e4 (-2)	47/35
5. Brian Harper 3e11 (0)	36/42
6. Lance Parrish 2e2 (-1)	25/28
7. Mike Heath 2e7 (-1)	38/24
8. Don Slaught 3e1 (0)	30/32
9. Dave Valle 2e2 (-2)	30/32
10. B.J. Surhoff 3e4 (+1)	28/22

Starting Pitcher

1. Bret Saberhagen (-4)	7/18
2. Mike Moore (-3)	21/20
3. Chris Bosio (-2)	20/20
4. Bert Blyleven (+1)	21/20
5. Bud Black (-1)	8/23
6. Kevin Brown (-5)	20/24
7. Dave Stieb (-2)	25/19
8. Mark Gubicza (-1)	19/26
9. Tom Candiotti (+1)	23/19
10. Scott Bankhead (+1)	17/25

Relief Pitcher

1. Todd Burns (-3)	10/17
2. Jeff Montgomery (+3)	12/11
3. Dennis Eckersley (-2)	8/0
4. Tom Henke (-1)	14/14
5. Jeff Russell (-4)	15/8
6. Rick Honeycutt (-5)	14/20
7. Doug Jones (-5)	16/21
8. Lee Guetterman (-4)	22/21
9. Dan Plesac (-5)	14/15
10. Gregg Olson (+8)	6/34

Rookies

1. Jerome Walton (Chicago)
2. Dwight Smith (Chicago)
3. Todd Zeile (St. Louis)
4. Ramon Martinez (Los Angeles)
5. Andy Benes (San Diego)
6. Eric Anthony (Houston)
7. Greg Harris (San Diego)
8. John Wetteland (Los Angeles)
9. Marquis Grissom (Montreal)
10. Dennis Cook (San Francisco)

Rookies

1. Ken Griffey Jr. (Seattle)
2. Tom Gordon (Kansas City)
3. Kevin Brown (Texas)
4. Gregg Olson (Baltimore)
5. Bob Milacki (Baltimore)
6. Greg Vaughn (Milwaukee)
7. Bob Geren (New York)
8. Junior Felix (Toronto)
9. Sammy Sosa (Chicago)
10. Greg Hibbard (Chicago)

How were the rookies selected in the GKSM's National League draft that was held in late January?

Well, Walton, the Cubs' do-everything center fielder, was the second player taken in the draft (each team can protect 15 players from the previous year's roster). Bruce Hurst, who came over to the N.L. from the AL, was the No. 1 draft choice.

Dwight Smith, No. 2 on Green's pick list, was the third player taken in the draft. Pitcher Greg Harris was No. 6. Todd Zeile lasted until the third round of the draft, being selected 21st. Ramon Martinez was picked No. 35 and Andy Benes No. 19.

Eric Anthony was the 25th player drafted, John Wetteland No. 14, Marquis Grissom No. 31 and, rounding out Green's top 10, Dennis Cook was No. 47.

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## A prescription for S-O-M Baseball

Gary Wnek literally has a prescription to play Strat-O-Matic Baseball.

Wnek, who resides in Cromwell, CT, replayed the 1988 American League playoffs at his place of employment - a drug store. His 'stadium' is the computer the store uses to type out prescription orders.

"The only time I get to use computer for the Strat game is very early in the day when no one comes in." Wnek adds that there's no way to save his games so lengthy games or a sudden influx of customers can be a concern.

In the replay of the Boston-Oakland series, Wnek watched with some anxiety as Mike Greenwall of the Red Sox nailed a two-run, two-out homer in the ninth inning off Dennis Eckersley to tie the game at 5-5.

Twenty innings later, the Sox finally pulled out a 9-5 victory. "In the 29th inning I saw someone come in the door and I did not want to dump this game, so I kept hitting the space bar with no idea of what was happening, or who was hitting, etc.," recalls Wnek.

"After the Sox scored, the A's went out quickly, I got the print-out...and then proceeded to fill the order."

Wnek, who was using the IBM computer disk, reports that Oakland won the series, 4-3, Los Angeles defeated the New York Mets, 4-1, and Oakland swept L.A. in the World Series, 4-0.

### MCLISH IS 'MCPERFECT'

Cal McLish of the 1962 Philadelphia Phillies was perfect against the hard-hitting Minnesota Twins in a game played by Willard Johnson, Lumberton, NJ. Twenty-seven batters up against McLish...and 27 down!

Another no-hitter, this one not a perfecto, however, was reported by Ralph Llamas. It was Chicago Cubs' TV announcer Steve Stone and Mike (continued on page 16)

# New ball park charts have minimal changes compared to past seasons

Strat-O-Matic's 'effect' on ball park effects was minimal when the newest charts came out with the 1990 set of baseball cards.

Whereas between 1987 - the year of the slugger, with home runs sailing out like falling raindrops - and 1988, the changes were dramatic, the 1989 season saw little change from the year before.

S-O-M's ball park effects for singles and home runs did not have a change higher or lower than 3. Six of the ball parks in both leagues had the same singles ratings and 11 (out of 26 teams) had the same home run.

In the National League, Philadelphia and Los Angeles had the biggest reduction in singles, with Philadelphia going from 1-10 in 1988 (real-life season) to 1-7 and L.A. from 1-12 to 1-9. As far as singles, there was nary an increase in the N.L. Houston (1-10) and San Diego (1-20 lineout) remained the same.

Conversely, singles chances are up in the American League as Baltimore (1-4 to 1-7), Oakland (1 to 1-4) and Seattle (1-5 to 1-8) all were +3 from the previous season. Half of the teams remained the same or improved their hit chances.

On the power side, Montreal made the biggest jump in the N.L., going from 1-6 to 1-9 on the newest chart. San Diego, which was already a 1-14, jacked up to 1-16.

Chicago's Wrigley Field, where the home run chances were 1-15 for both right- and left-handed batters a year ago, remained the same.

Atlanta took the biggest plunge in power, going from 1-15 last year to 1-12.

Six of the American League parks experienced no change in home run chances. Baltimore, which went from 1-13 to 1-10, dropped the most (-3) and Texas (1-9 to its current 1-12) improved the most.

Boston, with its Green Monster in left, went from 1-8 to 1-9 for right-handed batters. Lefty swingers now have a 1-5 chance (1-4 last year).

Seattle remains a slugger's dream and a pitcher's nightmare. The singles chances went up from 1-5 to 1-8 and the home run rating stayed the same, a lofty 1-18.

Below is a listing of the ball parks, the ratings for this year (1990 but based on 1989 real-life), where there's been an increase (+), decrease (-) or the 1990 rating is the same (SA) as in '89. Also, the highs and lows for each ball park are listed for the five years of the ratings.

## NATIONAL LEAGUE

		1989		1990		+/-	High	Low
		SI	HR	SI	HR			
Chicago	L	1-10	1-15	1-8	1-15	S -2	1-10	1-6
	R	1-10	1-15	1-8	1-15	HR SA	1-15	1-14
Montreal	L	1-12	1-6	1-10	1-9	S -2	1-12	1-4
	R	1-12	1-6	1-10	1-9	HR +3	1-10	1-4
New York	L	1-4	1-6	1-3	1-7	S -1	1-7	1-3
	R	1-4	1-6	1-3	1-7	HR +1	1-10	1-6
Philadelphia	L	1-10	1-8	1-7	1-9	S -3	1-13	1-4
	R	1-10	1-8	1-7	1-9	HR +1	1-10	1-6
Pittsburgh	L	1-4	1-9	1-3	1-10	S -1	1-12	1-3
	R	1-4	1-9	1-3	1-10	HR +1	1-10	1-9



	1989		1990		+/-	High	Low
	SI	HR	SI	HR			
St. Louis	L	1-11	1-4	1-9	1-4	S -2 .. 1-11	1-8
	R	1-11	1-4	1-9	1-4	HR SA .. 1-6	1-4
Atlanta	L	1-12	1-15	1-11	1-12	S -1 .. 1-13	1-11
	R	1-12	1-15	1-11	1-12	HR -3 .. 1-15	1-12
Cincinnati	L	1-10	1-16	1-8	1-14	S -2 .. 1-13	1-8
	R	1-10	1-16	1-8	1-14	HR -2 .. 1-16	1-8
Houston	L	1-10	1-2	1-10	1-2	S SA .. 1-11	1-8
	R	1-10	1-2	1-10	1-2	HR SA .. 1-2	1-2
Los Angeles	L	1-12	1-4	1-9	1-4	S -3 .. 1-12	1-9
	R	1-12	1-4	1-9	1-4	HR SA .. 1-7	1-3
San Diego	L	LO	1-14	LO	1-16	S SA .. 1-4	LO
	R	LO	1-14	LO	1-16	HR +2 .. 1-16	1-13
San Francisco	L	1-4	1-9	1-2	1-9	S -2 .. 1-6	1-2
	R	1-4	1-9	1-2	1-9	HR SA .. 1-10	1-8

## AMERICAN LEAGUE

	1989		1990		+/-1	High	Low
	SI	HR	SI	HR			
Baltimore	L	1-4	1-13	1-7	1-10	S +3 .. 1-7	1-3
	R	1-4	1-13	1-7	1-10	HR -3 .. 1-14	1-9
Boston	L	1-19	1-4	1-19	1-5	S L SA 1-20	1-18
	R	1-15	1-8	1-16	1-9	R +1 1-17	1-15
Cleveland	L	1-10	1-6	1-10	1-4	HR L +1 1-7	1-3
	R	1-10	1-8	1-10	1-7	R +1 1-11	1-6
Detroit	L	1-2	1-14	1-2	1-16	S SA 1-13	1-10
	R	1	1-11	1	1-13	HR L -2 1-10	1-4
Milwaukee	L	1-10	1-8	1-9	1-8	R -1 .. 1-12	1-2
	R	1-10	1-8	1-9	1-8	HR SA .. 1-8	1-4
New York	L	1-5	1-10	1-7	1-10	S +2 .. 1-7	1-5
	R	1-5	1-10	1-7	1-10	HR SA .. 1-10	1-5
Toronto	L	1-8	1-9	1-6	1-9	S -2 .. 1-10	1-6
	R	1-8	1-9	1-6	1-9	HR SA .. 1-12	1-9
California	L	1-2	1-12	1-2	1-13	S SA .. 1-5	1
	R	1-2	1-12	1-2	1-13	HR +1 .. 1-13	1-12
Chicago	L	1-11	1-3	1-9	1-3	S -2 .. 1-11	1-9
	R	1-11	1-3	1-9	1-3	HR SA .. 1-12	1-3
Kansas City	L	1-18	1-3	1-16	1-2	S -2 .. 1-18	1-10
	R	1-18	1-3	1-16	1-2	HR -1 .. 1-3	1-2

(continued on page 11)

	1989		1990		+/-1	High	Low
	SI	HR	SI	HR			
Minnesota	L	1-13	1-11	1-12	1-11	S -1 .. 1-16	1-10
	R	1-10	1-11	1-9	1-11	HR SA .. 1-11	1-6
Oakland	L	1	1-4	1-4	1-5	S +3 .. 1-4	1
	R	1	1-4	1-4	1-5	HR +1 .. 1-5	1-4
Seattle	L	1-5	1-18	1-8	1-18	S +3 .. 1-8	1-5
	R	1-5	1-18	1-8	1-18	HR SA .. 1-18	1-17
Texas	L	1-11	1-9	1-11	1-12	S SA .. 1-11	1-10
	R	1-11	1-9	1-11	1-12	HR +3 .. 1-12	1-5

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## Readers roll 'em

### PROGRESS SLOW

I'm a pretty big fan of the Strat-O-Matic Basketball game. However, I feel that progression in the basketball game, as compared to those other games, has been slow if not non-existent.

Sure, the 3-point replay is a novel, if not obscure feature, but is this all we can expect?

Speaking of 3-pointers, why not print the limitations right on the player's card? Same goes with the offensive tendency of the team.

Furthermore, I can understand the difficulty of instituting a practical system for the inclusion of technicals, illegal defense, ejections, etc.

But how about rules for conventional practices like intentionally fouling, running down the clock, or desperation 3-pointers? Ignoring these would be tantamount to discarding the bunt in baseball.

By the way, here's an idea for the budding brainstormers out there: How about an easier way to tabulate minutes played?

E.J. SELL  
Brook, IN

### REVIEW PRAISED

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the fine job you do on your magazine. You have given me many hours of

enjoyment.

One suggestion/request: If possible, please prepare a compilation of all the various playing tips that have appeared in the Review over the years.

BRIAN FITZGERALD  
Jamaica Plain, MA

Editor's note: Thanks for the kind words. If nothing else, the Review is known for its longevity as this issue starts our 20th year of publishing a monthly magazine devoted to Strat-O-Matic games.

### ENJOYS GAMERS' EXPERIENCES

As a recent subscriber to the Review, I felt compelled to write after reading the thoughts, experiences and ideas of fellow gamers.

I've been playing regularly for six years in a league my best friend and I founded (TCIBL, Trans Continental Indoor Baseball League) and stocked it with all the best players.

Originally, we both played six teams each, but due to the influx of new talent we expanded to a 32-team league with each of us playing 16 teams.

We keep track of 21 offensive stats and 14 pitching and have played 14 seasons of 36 games.

Basically I'm writing because  
(continued on page 24)

## He's guided ESSOM's fortunes for 16 years

# King gives up commissioner's throne

By GLEN SARVADY, Brooklyn, NY

The Empire State Strat-O-Matic League (ESSOM), one of the most stable and longest-running play-by-mail baseball leagues in history, is undergoing a change in command. After 16 years of service, league founder Larry King has decided to step down as commissioner.

ESSOM actually consists of two leagues: the Spring League, which uses primarily National League players, has a season that stretches from March through September; the Fall League, featuring mostly American League players, runs from August through February, although the draft of rookies and AL newcomers is held soon after the cards are released.

Each league has 10 teams and players are retained from year to year (including rights to uncarded players).

Between the Spring and Fall leagues, King has actively performed commissioner's duties 12 months a year for the past 16 years, issuing lengthy (4-40 pages) newsletters an average of every 2-3 weeks. It's no wonder he wants a break!

### IN THE SPRING OF '74...

ESSOM's Spring League began in 1974 with a draft of cards based on the 1973 season. In addition to all National League players, the talent pool was supplemented with 30 A.L. "superstars" who were dispersed in a separate draft. Of these initial draftees, 10 are still on ESSOM rosters.

Nolan Ryan, Bert Blyleven and Bob Boone are the most prominent names that are still going strong, while Mike Schmidt is wrapping up an ESSOM career every bit as illustrious as his N.L. version.

Ironically, both Ryan and Schmidt are now members of the Staten Island Zodiacs, whose manager, Paul Alexander, will be the only remaining veteran of ESSOM's opening pitch after King's retirement. The Fall League began play 18 months later, using cards based on the 1974 season.

### SCHMIDT HAS 520 CAREER HOMERS

With such a long and stable history, ESSOM is one of the few play-by-mail leagues that can provide meaningful career records. Several major stars came up as rookies through the ESSOM draft and have already retired, but the league keeps churning along with the new wave of sensations.

Schmidt holds the all-time home run mark with 520 through the 1989 campaign, a whopping 155 ahead of Dave Winfield, who ranks second on the list. However, Winfield holds a 2,214-2,113 advantage over Schmidt in the all-time hit parade.

Late in the '89 season, Ryan passed the 4,000 strikeout mark in ESSOM. His record is now at 4,032, and the way he's going, he may make it to 5,000 in ESSOM as well. Ryan is also the all-time win leader (247-189) and, although he's easily the class of the hurlers, other notables are Blyleven (second in strikeouts, 2,904; fourth in wins, 206-177) and Don Sutton (second in wins, 211-167; third in strikeouts, 2,354).

### ESSOM ENCYCLOPEDIA PLANNED

King was recently presented with an engraved watch as a thank you  
(continued)

for the years of hard work and dedication he put into ESSOM. As his going-away "gift" to the league, King plans to publish an update of the ESSOM Encyclopedia (last revised in '80), listing career stats for every player who ever passed through ESSOM, a log of every trade ever made and other tidbits that ESSOManiacs can't live without.

Digging through these archives, it's surprising that Ryan was dealt five times in his early ESSOM career, before finding a home in Staten Island in the late '70s.

The trade winds have calmed considerably in recent years, with an average of only seven or eight per season. Every so often a new manager arrives and shakes things up, but most of the longtimers are happy with their rosters and are committed to building through the draft, an annual extravaganza that takes place over the phone on a Sunday evening in March.

#### OVER 100 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

On the managerial front, the Spring League's current 10-manager lineup can boast of over 100 years of play-by-mail experience.

As with any mail league there has been some turnover among managers but ESSOM has been fortunate to maintain a level of consistency and stability that is rare in the PBM world. For example, Scott Wharton had guided the Birmingham Blazers' franchise for six years, but still ranks only sixth in the Spring League in seniority.

Most of the credit for this record of longevity has to go to King, who has kept newsletters flowing on a regular basis and has managed to screen out all but the most enthusiastic managers.

To smooth the transition into the A.K. (After King) era, responsibility for the two leagues has been split. Harold Coleman, a 12-year veteran of both Spring and Fall leagues, will take over Fall League duties. I will assume Spring League chores.

I don't think anyone can be expected to do the spectacular, time-consuming job that Larry has done for the last 16 years, but Harold and I both love ESSOM so much that with the help of our managers, I'm sure we'll keep it rolling right along.

Meanwhile, King plans to devote more time to his other hobbies, organizing and participating in chess tournaments. ESSOM managers can't thank him enough for starting, maintaining and passing on such a stable and enjoyable league.

#### ESSOM CAREER RECORDS

<u>Home Runs</u>		<u>RBI</u>		<u>Hits</u>	
Mike Schmidt	520	Mike Schmidt	1,371	Dave Winfield	2,214
Dave Winfield	365	Dave Winfield	1,247	Mike Schmidt	2,113
Reggie Jackson	331	Gary Carter	1,021	Keith Hernandez	2,067
Gary Carter	313	Reggie Jackson	968	Bill Madlock	2,030
Darrell Evans	294	Darrell Evans	966	Dave Concepcion	1,953

<u>Stolen Bases</u>		<u>Wins</u>		<u>Saves</u>	
Davey Lopes	585	Nolan Ryan	247-189	Rich Gossage	143
Tim Raines	577	Don Sutton	211-167	Kent Tekulve	132
Bill North	428	Tom Seaver	208-144	Lee Smith	109
Rod Carew	412	Bert Blyleven	206-177	Dave Smith	105
Cesar Cedeno	411	Steve Carlton	157-151	Jeff Reardon	97

<u>Strikeouts</u>			
Nolan Ryan	4,032	Steve Carlton	2,321
Bert Blyleven	2,904	Tom Seaver	2,291
Don Sutton	2,354		

## Lack of player cards is big drawback

# 'HOOPS' computer game critiqued

By BART EWING, Fairway, KS

In the December Review I noticed your call for opinions on the Billy Packer college basketball computer game (Hoops). I would be glad to give one man's opinion.

My first impression on Billy Ball after two games was it's a dud, a zero. My biggest complaint is it's boring.

Strat-O-Matic is right on in its inclusion of cards in conjunction with its computer games. The cards add something to the experience. I'm not sure what. Perhaps it makes you feel as a person apart of the game and not a spectator.

The Packer game is like watching TV without a picture. Once the game starts it doesn't feel like there is much you can do as far as being involved in the action of the game. Sure, you can call timeouts and switch defenses, make subs, etc., but primarily you just leave it in the hands of the computer and watch.

One gets the feeling that no matter how much or well you try and influence the game as a coach, the result is pretty much in the bank. In fact by switching offenses and defenses you really don't have a clear idea of what and how it's going to influence the players and game.

### TOO MANY FOULS, TURNOVERS

I began a replay of the Big Eight Conference schedule and began to like the game a little more. Overall, though, I'd only give it a D+-C-grade.

Specifically what I don't like besides the basic interplay between human and game are its inability to keep statistics after a game and too many fouls and turnovers. One team had six guys foul out; there seemed to be nothing I could do to stop it.

I question the various category ratings in general. I mean how well do the creators of the game really know all of these teams dating back to the 1940s, and how does one rate the defensive ability of the backup point guard for Old Dominion?

What is a good rating? It seems every team has "A" players. Is Glen Rice's "A" in scoring equal to the same "A" rating the best scorer on the Air Force?

What does the game take into account in deciding what makes a good player? Everything stat-wise should come out fairly close in regards to major stats like scoring and field goal percentage, but the way it happens doesn't strike me as realistic.

### EVERY TEAM HAS AN 'UNSTOPPABLE'

The game is predictable in that every game someone on each team is unstoppable. I'm talking 10 and 11 field goals, while another player is a complete bust.

Things seem to even out, but only through extremes. After four games, Oklahoma State's Tom Jordan is still popping 87 percent from the field, scoring 20 a game. I saw the guy play. He was good but he wasn't exactly dominating Stacey King.

Another big peeve is that every team has a bottom player who barely played and somehow gets an "A" rating, usually in scoring, but doesn't have the stats to back it up.

I want to control the players more, not all the time but just some. I don't want the last shot of the game depending on the percent-

(continued on next page)

age of time everybody touched the ball; I want my go-to guy to get it, Glen Rice, Stacey King, all the big players.

There are some good points, but they are few.

If I'm not mistaken, college ball is more popular than pro. S-O-M already makes the best pro game on the market, so why not put out a college game with the NCAA tourney teams, along with complete conferences for the more popular areas (Big 10, Big East, ACC, although I realize the Strato population is not as thick in those areas).

**Editor's note:** Bart Ewing is a 30-year-old social worker, married, with no children. He's a clinical therapist, working with emotionally disturbed boys. His favorite sport is baseball, with basketball running a close second. A 22-year veteran of S-O-M gaming, Ewing belongs to two play-by-mail leagues - Tracball, a 14-team draft league using American League players, and the American Tabletop Basketball League, founded by frequent Review contributor Dick Hunt. He also enters between two and four of John Kreuz's TBA tournaments every year and claims to have won the dubious title of "Mr Mediocrity" for always finishing around .500.

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## A basketball coach's dream

### Jordan, Ewing, Chambers, Stockton, Thomas, all on one team

How would you like to coach a basketball team that has Michael Jordan, Patrick Ewing, Tom Chambers, John Stockton, Kevin McHale, Isiah Thomas, plus an enforcer in Rick Mahorn?

Well, that's exactly the talent well that Randi Harrison of Hempstead, NY, can draw from in the Strat-O-Matic All-Star Basketball League (SABL).

The league, which is based in Hempstead, is face-to-face and currently in its seventh year. The cards are based on the 1988-89 season.

"We play two seasons with the current cards, with each season having 15 regular-season games, a best-of-seven semifinal playoff series and a best-of-seven championship series," says Randyl Jones, the SABL's commissioner.

It should be mentioned that only four teams are used, thus the super star look to Harrison's roster. And he's not alone as all the coaches/general managers have juggernauts.

In fact, it's almost like having an all-star series between four teams.

Harrison, even though he has an imposing lineup this season (it also includes Derek Harper, Larry Smith, John Lucas, Brad Daugherty, Otis Thorpe and Atlanta's defense), hasn't been a big winner in the SABL.

Jones and Brian Montague (who lives in Flushing) have each won five championships, while the other member of the league, Ron Ellerbe, has won once.

It's also interesting to note that Magic Johnson, not Jordan, was the first player taken in the draft. Johnson was taken by Montague. Jordan was second, Karl Malone third and Charles Barkley fourth.

Here's how the draft went:

<u>Brian Montague</u>	<u>Randi Harrison</u>	<u>Ron Ellerbe</u>	<u>Randyl Jones</u>
(1) Ma. Johnson	(2) Jordan	(3) K.Malone	(4) Barkley
(8) Tarpley	(6) Ewing	(7) Drexler	(5) Olajuwon
(9) D. Ellis	(11) Chambers	(10) Mullin	(12) E.Johnson
(16) Parish	(14) Stockton	(13) K.Johnson	(15) J.Williams
(20) C. Oakley	(19) McHale	(18) Schayes	(17) Rodman
(21) D. Wilkins	(23) D.Harper	(22) M.Malone	(24) M. Richmond

## (SABL Draft Continued)

<u>Brian Montague</u>	<u>Randi Harrison</u>	<u>Ron Ellerbe</u>	<u>Randyl Jones</u>
(27) Strickland	(26) L. Smith	(25) Pressey	(28) M.Jackson
(29) Tisdale	(31) Mahorn	(30) By.Scott	(32) Laimbeer
(35) Lever	(36) J.Lucas	(33) Price	(34) Bogues
(43) J.Lane	(37) Daugherty	(40) W.Cooper	(38) R.Harper
(47) Conner	(42) Thorpe	(41) Person	(44) Floyd
D - Washington	(45) I.Thomas	(48) M.Adams	(46) Newman
	D - Atlanta	D - Detroit	D - Utah

The Review expects to hear from the SABL sometime this summer with the results of its latest replay.

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## Strat-O-Matic spotlight

(continued from page 8 )

Flanagan of the 1981 Orioles who teamed up to no-hit the New York Yankees. Llamas, who's been playing S-O-M since 1966, had another no-hitter when Marius Russo of the '41 Yankees stopped Boston over 10 innings, 1-0, outdueling Eddie Guzman.

### A VOTE FOR CINCINNATI

It was the Kenny Anderson show when Cincinnati hooked up with San Francisco in a replay of the 1981 Super Bowl conducted by Bill Severn of Baltimore, MD.

Anderson completed 22 of 41 passes for 309 yards, threw for two touchdowns, including the game-winner with a minute left, a 12-yarder to Cris Collinsworth, as the Bengals edged San Francisco and Joe Montana, 31-30.

Montana, although his numbers weren't as impressive as Anderson's, was the Montana that would dominate the '80s in the fourth quarter as the 49ers rallied for 21 points. Montana completed 18 of 32 throws for 190 yards and hooked up with Dwight Clark on a 36-yard TD play.

Clark finished with 113 yards off seven receptions, while Collinsworth turned five catches into 97 yards.

The advanced version of the game was used and Anderson was sacked four times for 35 yards in losses and Montana only once for seven.

### BATTLE OF MOTOWN

Chuck Osmak, a dental officer stationed in Oak Harbor, WA, might seem an unlikely candidate for a baseball replay pitting the 1968 and 1984 World Series champs from Detroit.

But he grew up in Detroit, fondly recalls that '68 Tiger team, and says he was in his junior year of dental school when Detroit won it all again in '84.

For the Battle of Motown, Osmak used the designated hitter and had Mickey Stanley in center field, Ray Oyler at shortstop for the '68 Tigers.

The series lasted about as long as a Mike Tyson fight as the '68 team won four straight games. Norm Cash was the MVP after homering twice and driving in seven runs. Willie Horton batted .389 and the '68 Tigers had a team ERA of 2.13.

Jack Morris was bombed for 12 runs in 5 2/3 innings, Kirk Gibson hit a paltry .067 (1-15) and overall the '84 Tigers were like pussycats with a .193 batting average and a whopping 5.00 ERA.