

GAME THEORY/Dave Minch

A TRIP THROUGH DESIGN LAND

About six months after I acquired my first copy of STRAT-O-MATIC BASEBALL I designed my first table game. It, too, was a baseball game using a deck of playing cards and a drastically simplified version of the SOM system. Mercifully, I can only barely remember it now. I suspect that most other table gamers have a dimly remembered baseball game in their past. A few have "stuck with it" and each year a new crop of table baseball games sprouts from those seeds. Designing a baseball game is, relatively, simple. It's also great practice for the budding game designer. For those of you interested in game design, I propose to walk you through the basics of a baseball game; from there, you can take it where you like. I suggest that you first read John Swistak's article, "Theories of Table Top Ratings" in the Summer 1976 TTS. The basis of our rating system will come from Swistak's piece and I will not repeat it here. I will present a table of formulae for the ratings, so "To TTR" is not essential, only recommended.

First, you're going to need data for all the players you use. You'll need players' at-bats, hits, doubles, triples, home runs, walks, and strikeouts. For pitchers, innings pitched, hits given up (by type, if possible), walks and strikeouts will be required. Any other information you can get--hit batsmen, balks, grounded-into-doubleplay and so on--can be used to add trimming, but it isn't essential.

Next, total all of this data for pitchers and batters and compute the league average in each of the several categories for pitchers and batters. Unlike the system in "ToTTR", we only need to compute these averages to three decimals.

The averages you'll need to compute are as follows.

For batters:

- singles, doubles, triples and home runs
- per plate appearance
- strikeouts per plate appearance
- walks per plate appearance.

For pitchers:

- the same data, per batter faces.

Using the "ToTTR" system, we will use the league averages for pitchers to compute the figures for individual batters and vice versa.

Round the numbers to the third decimal.

The sum of the figures for batters and pitchers, both individually and league average, will be less than one. The remainder, naturally, represents the chance of an out other than a strikeout. We will need to divide these chances between the infield and the outfield. If you have this information already (say, if you collect box scores), use it. Most of us don't so we'll have to manufacture it somehow.

For batters, we'll need another league average. Compute the total number of chances for all fielders in your league, for all infielders and for all outfielders. From these totals calculate the proportion of outfield chances and infield chances. Use these to divide the out possibilities for each individual batter. For pitchers, calculate the same division, this time based on the chances for the fielders backing them; a team average only. If it suits you, change the division for any individual batters or pitchers as you see fit. Home run hitters are entitled to more outfield outs, low average hitters to more infield outs. Pitchers with a lot of strikeouts probably yield more flyouts. "Junk" pitchers

(cont'd p. 7)

GAME DISCUSSION/Julian Compton

BASEBALL NORMALIZATION:

Playing with the All-Time Best

I have before me a set of game cards representing the fifty best baseball players of all time. I am confident they are the most accurate ratings ever produced for playing baseball stars from different ages against each other. The ratings are based on statistics, but which have been analyzed and interpreted according to when the performances were achieved. For example, Maris' sixty-one homeruns in 1961 were achieved when homers were more common while Ruth's fifty-four in 1920 occurred when they weren't so common. The ratings adjust these differences as well as high and low earned run averages and many other aspects of baseball to a common standard or norm.

Where can you get these cards? You can't! The most accurate baseball ratings which were ever put on the market are no longer on the market. Those of you who know sports game history probably know that I'm talking about EXTRA INNINGS and the concept of normalization. The cards I referred to are my own hand-lettered cards taken from EXTRA INNING'S top 400 player ratings which in the third edition (1973) were normalized. In that normalized list the homers for Maris were dropped to 142 (the sixth best of all time) rather than the 144 (the second best of all time) in the current edition. Ruth's were raised from the current 151 to a normalized 155 (both were the first all-time).

For some reason unknown to me EXTRA INNINGS dropped normalization beginning with its fourth edition. In the third edition it was termed a "precious" secret which would cost extra money. Apparently nobody wanted to pay for it.

The result is that although thousands of dollars are spent on baseball games yearly, none of them is statistically accurate beyond that one year.

Given that we live in an imperfect game world and that nothing is definitive (except maybe Jim Thorpe's superiority in DECATHALON), where do we go if we want to play the 1927 Yankees against the Koufax Dodgers? Six baseball games stand out as major ones--at least to me: APBA, BLM, EXTRA INNINGS, REPLAY, STATIS-PRO, and STRAT-O-MATIC.

These six games are all good and, except for playability, only subtleties divide them. All of them are fairly strong on realism and accuracy and all have satisfying strategy/tactics. However, only three yield their results from an elaborate mix of pitchers' and batters' abilities--BLM, EI and REPLAY. APBA has a limited mix, and SOM and SP work on either the pitcher or batter. Whereas EI and BLM mix hits, strikeouts and walks, REPLAY mixes almost everything, and must be considered superior to the others. With a man on third, one out, bottom of the ninth, score tied and a bunter or a long fly out man up, I would rather be playing REPLAY.

On playability, there are great differences in these games and I grade those differences carefully. However, the slowest baseball game is twice as fast as the fastest football or basketball game. Therefore any baseball game can move once you get the rhythm. But to simplify, I'll list the minimal number of operations required for each normal turn, excluding keeping score. These include dice rolls (one or more), card flips and player and board references. I'm sure that a veteran can handle all of the operations in "his" game in two seconds, so nothing would slow down, but the differences are instructive. SOM (two, sometimes more), STATIS-PRO (three or more), APBA (three), REPLAY (four), EXTRA INNINGS (six), BLM (eight). Obviously BLM would rate lower on playability than SOM even if one (or two) veteran players could do eight operations in one second. But the differences are there; I didn't make them up.

But when it comes to playing with the best of baseball's past where does one turn? STATIS-PRO has produced only the 1956 season. BLM has twelve old-time teams, and 320 all-time stars upcoming, APBA has thirty-five old teams, forty all-time all stars, and the 1930 and 1949 seasons. SOM has 42 old teams and 80 Hall of Famers. REPLAY has emphasized whole seasons--1876 and 1927, 1934, 1955, and 1961. EXTRA INNINGS offers forty old teams, all Hall of Famers, the 400 all-time best stars, the 1933 All Stars with pictures, the 1961 season and the 1947 National and

(cont'd p. 8)

From the Editor

Our only breathtaking news for this quarter is that we have decided to go bi-monthly beginning with the January 1978 issue. We'll give it a try and see if there is enough subscription interest to sustain an every-other-month publication. If there is, then we'll probably experiment with a monthly schedule a couple of years later.

The subscription rate for 1978 will be \$6.00 per year. All subscriptions received after October 15 must be for \$6.00 (or \$10.00 for two years). Until October 15, however, we will continue to accept one year subscriptions at the rate of \$4.00 per year. All current subscriptions in effect January 1978 will have their expiration dates changed to correspond to the new schedule. Winter expiration dates will expire with the January - February issue, Spring with the March - April issue, Summer with July - August, and Fall with September - October.

The only other item that needs to be covered is why the pictorial spread of the APBA Rabbits is missing. For those of you that subscribed just so you wouldn't miss this issue, we apologize and offer this explanation - we lied. However, we did enjoy receiving your money and we want you to know it was appreciated.

From the Readers

Dear Sir: I'm an irritable solitaire player that would hide my game if anybody was watching. I've been playing solitaire games for 24 years since my father bought me All-Star Baseball when I was twelve.

Through the years I've played and invented many games. I bought one of the first APBA baseball games when I went to the owner's home and bought it on his porch. The game was a new experience. Nothing like it was available. I experimented and improved the game until I had a game almost exactly like Strato-Matic. I'm probably one of the few gamers that participated in athletics and still enjoyed table sports. I continued to buy various APBA games through college until I began to see other games appear. I bought Strat-O-Matic baseball and football. I realized then that there were others like me that wanted to improve on APBA. Each year I noticed better and better games appearing. A wider diversity of sports such as tennis and boxing. Since I've bought quite a variety I thought you would like to know my feelings on the games. Remember I rate them strictly as a solitaire game. I'm impatient and lazy so I like a game that's quick and easy. But I keep statistics so I like an accurate game.

BASEBALL

APBA - Tedious big board. Inaccurate pitching. Limited flexibility. Good for being first. Fair to poor compared to recent models.

STRAT-O-MATIC - My favorite in baseball. I like the 11-66 dice plus the extra die to tell offense and defense (hitter and pitcher).

Best system until cards are perfected.

STATIS PRO - Cards instead of dice aren't as important for me in baseball since this is a short game. But I still like cards and this could be better with more detail.

FOOTBALL

APBA - Same as baseball. Good in its day but others have improved.

STRAT-O-MATIC - Superior with less looking at boards. I don't play much football today so I'm limited. But my taste would suggest this would still be one of my higher rated games.

BASKETBALL

APBA - Nothing outstanding. Fair game.

STRAT-O-MATIC - Not as good as their baseball and football games. Again an ordinary game.

REAL/LIFE - You can make your own players but if 10 is highest you can't tell me somebody is worth an 11 in rebounding such as Russell or Chamberlain.

BLM - Totally against my principles of fast and easy. I fall asleep by the second quarter.

FAST BREAK - Best so far. Defense player card makes it superior. If you could get rid of the dice it would be almost perfect. You can feel the players playing.

STATIS PRO - My second favorite because it's simple and quick to turn cards. Game is inaccurate, especially in assists. If you could combine this and FAST BREAK you'd really have something hard to match.

NEGAMCO - For my 10 year old. For 12 and under.

GOAL - Nothing exciting. An average game.

BOXING

DATA - Best by a long shot. This game was conceived by careful thought to detail. It can be improved by bringing into play types of punches. Nevertheless this and APBA golf show the most unique and accurate design of its kind. You feel like you're fighting. But Alexander having a KO rating better than Louis, Foreman, Marciano? Really.

21ST CENTURY - Best until DATA came along. Not enough fighters. Still a very good game.

The rest of the boxing games fall far short and are similar.

ASD, GOAL, STATIS PRO, All are too simple and you don't have the feel of the fight.

GOLF

APBA - The champion of all table games. Whether you enjoy golf or not you must marvel at the details. You are Nicklaus, Hogan, etc. You are George Bayer booming a drive and missing an easy putt. It is a longer game than necessary and more accurate details could be given to the players but I don't think too many people are interested in a golf game. I've taken APBA and improved on it until now it takes 2/3 the time to play and the players are more flexible but my hat's off to APBA for this one.

NEGAMCO - Terrible. This isn't golf.

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED - Could be better if pro's were rated instead of general handicap golfers.

3M BOOKSHELF - Again I want to play Bobby Jones against Arnold Palmer but you can't without players.

* Both the 3M and Sports Illustrated games could be played by converting APBA players to fit the games. But it's easier to buy the APBA Game.

(Cont'd. p. 11)

TABLE TOP SPORTS

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SHOT SELECTION AND DISTRIBUTION FOR STATIS-PRO BASKETBALL

One of the few problems I noticed early in playing Statist-Pro basketball was the lack of a realistic shot distribution system. Players vary a great deal in their frequency of field goal attempts but the game provides for this variation only by giving the coach the option of shooting or passing on each offensive sequence. I feel this puts too much of a burden on the coach. First of all he has to know, and remember, how often each player shoots. Even if he can keep that straight for 20+ players he faces the temptation to stray from realistic usage because some players are simply much better shooters (at least statistically) than others, even though they may take fewer shots.

An example of this would be the Warrior backcourt of 74 - 5. Butch Beard shot 53% while his running mate, Charles Johnson, shot an unimpressive 41%. Johnson, however, took a lot more shots, 50% more. But a coach who wanted the Warriors to win might reverse things and have Beard do a major share of the shooting and CJ more passing. The game systems as it stands makes no distinction, sets no limits, because each guard has the ball equally.

Apparently the Secondary Shooting Rating was devised to deal with this problem and it works to an extent - certain players are forced to pass off when they receive the ball thru Action or suffer a significant reduction in shooting ability. On the whole I think the Secondary Rating causes more problems than it solves, primarily because it slows down the game by causing more passing and interrupts the flow of the action in an effort to force a realistic use of the players.

I would like to replace the Secondary Rating system with a system that modifies the Fast Action Cards to eliminate, under normal conditions, the need for the coach to make a decision to pass or shoot on each play. The purpose of this proposal is to bring about a more realistic distribution of shot attempts by automatically getting the ball to each player in approximately the same frequency that he gets it in real life. I think this modification of the FACs can be done fairly simply and without detracting from the game's simplicity and flow.

As the game is now the ball goes to a certain offensive position ("Pass to G1", etc) when Action or Advance is used. The problem with this method is that it means that each player handles the ball about the same number of times in the course of a game, and thus has an equal number of shot possibilities (assuming, of course, that playing time is equal). A player doesn't have to shoot everytime he gets the ball - he can Advance it - but Statist-Pro doesn't really provide for a lot of meaningless passing, just enough to provide realism without interrupting the flow of action. APBA, in contrast, makes the passing factor so important that the game becomes unplayable.

The weakness of the current system can best be seen by taking players at the extremes of shooting frequency. If Bob MacAdoo and Wes Unseld go head to head for 48 minutes, MacAdoo should take about 28 shots while Unseld should shoot only 9 times. Under the present system it's entirely possible for Unseld to take just as many shots as MacAdoo (though he will have to use his secondary rating much of the time); what is probable is that both centers will have the ball about as often, so that MacAdoo would shoot almost every time he gets the ball while Unseld should shoot sparingly and Advance the rest of the time. The change I propose takes both the burden of decision making and the temptation to stray from reality off the coach's shoulders by incorporating into the FACs readings which automatically give a player the right proportion of attempts.

This is done by augmenting the current FAC readings under Action and Advance which pass the ball to a particular position with readings that pass to a specific player according to his Shot Frequency Rating (SFR) and ranking. The SFR is simply the fga per 48 minute game (e.g. MacAdoo would have a 28 rating). The ranking would be done on the basis of who, in the game at the time, has the highest SFR, the second highest, and so on. I would suggest that the rating be placed in the upper right hand corner of the player's card and in red ink to

make it quickly visible.

Before making changes I had to know what the FACs read now. An analysis of the 204 card deck shows:

	under Action	under Advance
Pass to F1	31	22
Pass to F2	27	20
Pass to C	18	32
Pass to G1	31	21
Pass to G2	33	23
	140	118

Next I determined, from actual statistics, the average proportion of shots taken by the five players in the game:

player ranked no. 1	28% of all fga
no. 2	24%
no. 3	20%
no. 4	16%
no. 5	12%
	100%

Thus the changes to be made on the FACs should reflect the fact that shooting frequency varies from 12% to 28%. Since the present pass-to-a-position system treats each position more or less equally (i.e. about 20% for each), some of the readings under Action and Advance must be changed.

I'll do the Action readings first. Since all players take at least 12% of the total shots and since 12% of the 140 cards reading "Pass to..." is 17 (rounded off), then 17 of each card reading "Pass to F1", etc., need not be changed. This is the base figure. The remaining 55 cards ($17 \times 5 = 85$; $140 - 85 = 55$) must be changed to reflect the proportion according to ranking. In other words, player no. 1 should have a total of 39 card readings ($28\% \times 140 = 39.2$ or 39). It should be noted that player no. 1 could be a guard, forward, or center but whichever position he plays he has 17 cards already since that's the number that remained unchanged at each position. Thus he needs 22 more card readings ($39 - 17$) to give him his total of 28%. So 22 of the 55 excess cards will be changed to read "Pass to no. 1". Rankings no. 2-4 are done in the same way. Player no. 5, it should be noted, has no cards changed for him since the 17 he already has represents his allotted 12%.

The specific changes to be made are given below:

17 "Pass to F1" readings remain unchanged; 14 "Pass to F1" cards are excess and will be changed (31 - 17)

17 "Pass to F2" are unchanged; 10 are excess

17 "Pass to C" are unchanged; 1 is excess

17 "Pass to G1" are unchanged; 14 are excess

17 "Pass to G2" are unchanged; 16 are excess

So 85 of the "Pass to..." readings are kept as is and 55 are to be changed as follows:

22 of the 55 excess cards are changed to read "Pass to no. 1"

17 of the extras become "Pass to no. 2"

11 of the extras become "Pass to no. 3"

5 of the extras become "Pass to no. 4"

Using the players in the example above it can be seen that MacAdoo would thus have 17 "Pass to C" readings and 22 "Pass to no. 1" readings (since he would be ranked first on the Braves) for a total of 39 cards. Unseld, on the other hand, seldom shoots, is accordingly ranked no. 5 on the Braves and will be eligible to shoot only on the minimum 17 "Pass to C" readings.

Because I've used a league average in ranking the players there may be small variations from the proportion chart when specific players on specific teams are examined. Unseld actually takes only about 10% of the Braves' shots and MacAdoo about 29% of the Braves', but a variation of only 2% and 1% from the typical proportion doesn't seem significant especially when compared to the present system that treats them both

the same with variations of 10% and 9%.

What I've done above is given the changes for the Action readings. Although I'll give the Advance reading changes below, it's important to recognize that the Action reading, under this system, determines the shooter in most circumstances. And since the players are receiving the ball realistically, there is no need to retain the Secondary Shot Rating. Wes Unseld, for example, can use his normal rating of 11 - 54 whenever he gets the ball, with the two exceptions outlined below, without fear that an unscrupulous coach is going to get him the ball 20 times a game just because he shoots 56% of a very few, carefully selected attempts from the floor.

Two special rule changes must be followed in this system:

(1) Offensive rebounds - must be followed by an Action pass to determine the next shooter. Allowing an offensive rebounder to immediately put up a followup shot would totally distort the ratios in favor of front-courtmen in general and great rebounding centers in particular.

(2) Mandatory Advance Passes - the system as it stands will give each team too many shots per game. To bring this number down to a more realistic level, the following procedure should be used: an Advance pass has to be made following all field goals. In other words the first Action pass after a basket (not free throw) must be a mandatory passoff - instead of the Action reading determining the shooter, the Advance reading on the next fast action card does.

Although the general rule is that the Action reading automatically selects the shooter, it needn't be an absolute. I allow myself two exceptions: (1) when a player is ice cold he doesn't have to keep missing every shot - he can pass off and (2) in a critical situation the coach can try to work the ball into his best scorers by Advance passing. And since the Advance readings also reflect the high to low ratios there is a better chance of actually succeeding than in the present system which would just as likely give the ball to your worst shooter as your best.

The Advance reading changes to be made are:

14 of each "Pass to F1, etc" reading remain unchanged, the rest are excess to be changed.

note: $12\% \times 118 = 14 = \text{base figure}$

So 70 (14 x 5) of the present readings are kept as is and 48 (118 - 70) are to be changed as follows:

19 of the 48 excess cards are changed to read "Pass to No. 1"

14 of the extras become "Pass to No. 2"

10 of the extras become "Pass to No. 3"

5 of the extras become "Pass to No. 4"

Well, that's it. The theory behind the idea is more complicated than actually implementing it - it really only requires 103 easily made changes to the Action and Advance readings plus writing the SFRs on the players' cards and it works quite well in practice. I changed my old FACs using slightly different ratios for the high school league. I've developed just by typing the changes on those small circular self-adhesive labels (made by Avery and probably others) and then sticking them on the Fast Action Cards to cover up the readings to be changed. You might think that it takes extra time to determine who's ranked where while you're playing the game but once you get into it you just automatically remember your top two shooters without referring to the card ratings and those two players account for over two-thirds of the new readings. I especially like this idea because it does not inhibit the flow of the game and at the same time gives more realistic statistics. I don't have to pause constantly and ask myself who's turn it is to shoot or be frustrated because Clifford Ray ends up shooting more than Kareem. And tho I don't myself, a person who likes to pass a lot, working the ball around, will not be inhibited by the revision - he'll just find the ball going where it really does - to the players who actually have it most.

I would be very interested in any comments, criticisms, etc. that you might have about this idea. I'd also like to know how it works for you if you decide to implement it. And of course I'd be happy to answer any questions and clarify any points you might have.

Mike Stephens, 312 Newton Ave., Oakland, Cal 94606.

It has been brought to my attention that under this system assists will not be statistically accurate. That's true since Statis-Pro advises that an assist be credited whenever an advance pass leads to a basket and

my system doesn't provide for enough advance passing. You would have to make at least one advance pass before each shot (since an assist is credited on more than half of all baskets); but doing this will significantly decrease the number of fga per game and thus result in low scores. Personally I do not credit assists since I feel that the Statis-Pro method is not accurate because it is not based on players' actual passing ability (except of course for those advance passes which call for an addition of the Assist rating to the shooter's fg rating, a situation that seldom happens). Any player making an advance pass which leads to a basket gets an assist - obviously a poor shooter who passes off a lot will be credited with more assists than a good shooter who seldom passes up a shot even tho the good shooter may also, in real life, get a lot of assists (e.g. Calvin Murphy). I feel that this is an area that Statis-Pro is weak in; perhaps a method could be devised to statistically credit assists without actually being a part of the normal game procedure, for example as in Mickey's Fastbreak game.

GAME REVIEW/ Rich Berg

A GRAND CONCEIT

"The World's Greatest Baseball Game", by JWW

Admittedly, the title of this, the fifth - or is it the sixth - new simulation table baseball game to appear in the last three years, is asking for it. Given the number of different baseball games on the market, and the names they encompass, finding a new and evocative title for a baseball game isn't going to be easy. And JWW called its recent hockey board game by the same appellation. So the title doesn't really aspire to what it purports to be - and neither, unfortunately, does the game.

Now it should be understood that it is very tough to produce a bad baseball game, and TWGBG is far from that. Statistics are statistics, and they can be reproduced in a myriad number of ways. Thus each table game can simulate the game of baseball with reasonable accuracy and playability - enough to satisfy a large number of people. (This is attested to by the sheer number of people who keep insisting that APBA is still the best game, a passion akin to voting for George III in the next presidential election. The heart can tell the mind some strange things.) Furthermore, given the number of baseball games on the market it takes something special - aside from sheer gall - to come out with a new game. And TWGBG has something special - it has everything other game has ever tried to ram into its system, and from its sheer quantity of gimmickry TWGBG is assuredly one of the most intriguing games of the last five years.

The price of TWGBG is quite stiff: 21½ big ones! And for that at least you get quality production, and a lot of it. The game is packaged in a sturdy, if uninspired, flat box (which, unfortunately, will not hold too many of your team cards once they have been assembled and "stacked") with a rather humorous, Thurberesque drawing as the company logo. Inside is a veritable fountain of paper: charts, tables, booklets, and the now-ubiquitous game-cards-in-sheet-format. The cards (see samples) are well-printed in two colors (and the pitchers' cards are yellow, as opposed to batters' white): however, they are not as durable as those of APBA or Replay. They are sort of midget-sized Strato-Matic. And they are a bitch to cut out, because they simply are not perforated for tearing by hand, a la Statis - Pro. They must be cut by scissor in order to assure no tearing. Now this is not a tragedy, but it is a pain. The game charts - and there are many - are printed on heavy cardboard and, in the case of the field chart - which contains all sorts of info - they are laminated. (My feelings about lamination are mixed, having to encounter the same problems in the wargame industry; lamination looks nice and protects against spills, but it reflects direct light in such a way as to cause a mild case of snow blindness.) There are some other, optional charts, which are printed on regular paper. The Rules booklet and Additional Player booklet are somewhat cramped and not all that easy to read, but they are professionally done. In all, a good job, if not a great one - but

CALCU-BALL

That which is new:

1. Team fielding - ratings are 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent) and don't just affect errors (there is one number on the Play Results List designated to affect each rating for errors), but 1 and 2 rated teams will also allow singles to become doubles, etc. Individual players are not rated, which is really superfluous at this price range or application.

2. Players with better than average speed are rated F or F-1 through F-6 to affect stolen bases, non-homerun extra-base hits, and advancing on flyouts.

3. Degrees of homerun power are ranked by ratings of HR and HR-1 through HR-4. The only problem I can see here is that the only difference given a 3 and 4 is one instance when they are out trying to stretch a single. At the moment the problem is academic since there are no HR-3 or &4-R rated batters; but it should be corrected before some come along.

4. There are several instances on the Play Results List where the ball park being played in will affect hits - generally homeruns being added or removed in conjunction with power or speed ratings.

5. Pitchers with a large number of strikeouts receive a "K" rating allowing them to convert other forms of put outs into strikeouts.

6. Pitchers may also receive a "w" rating which allows for a greater number of walks, hit batsmen, balks, etc.

All of these ratings are used as changes to the original results; e.g., number 11 reads "SINGLE to leftfield (runners advance one base)--- Double if batter has F - 3,4,5, or 6 running rating and if team in field has 1 fielding rating." So, the play is still one step and apply ratings as necessary.

The 1977 player rosters have a more professional look and are four to a page instead of two. One point I missed in my earlier review is that the rosters are up-to-date (not previous season), including trades-so that Lenny Randle is on the 1977 Mets roster.

I still can't get enthused like Larry Green about the lack of an activator (actually, the inning is the activator since the pitchers grade decreases each inning); but I can enjoy the game more and overcome this "obstacle" by adding the sum of two dice and subtracting 7 (net result = 0) from the number designated for the Play Results List.

With these improvements and at \$1.50 for seasonal ratings and \$3.50 (plus \$.50 postage) for the entire game, it gets an okay and moves up two spaces on my list. By the way, past owners get the revised Play Results List with the new season rosters.

(A Grand Conceit, cont'd)

nothing that will cause you to feel cheated.

TWGBG is predicated on a variety of systems that will all seem familiar to aficionados of the genre; there's a little something from everything here. It is as if the designers said, "Let's take all the good things from each game, mix them in a bowl, and come up with a game." The basic idea is fine; borrowing ideas is certainly not a crime (I do it all the time in designing wargames) and the best games are those that usually take an old system and improve on it. However, I'm not too sure that's what has happened here. It's more as if everything was simply lumped together.

TWGBG uses a 1 - 100 system, in a fashion quite similar to BLM. To activate the numbers the game has an incredibly clumsy mechanism which uses a deck of cards, each card containing a number. The player turns over two cards to get the activator number. Each of these cards also contains a secondary number which is used to determine the location of the batted ball (out or hit). Each batter is rated in a rather large number of categories on his card, including Fielding Range, Error Chance, Throwing Arm, Ability to Sac, Running Speed, and Power (how much does he pull the ball: Denny Doyle is a spray hitter and thus tough to defense; Dave Kingman hits virtually everything to left - when he hits it . . . if he hits it). These are basic ratings; down below the batter has more ratings. Aside from the usual walk-hit-K stuff each batter is rated for the type of out he makes.

(cont'd p. 8)

POTPOURRI OF TABLE GAMING NEWS

The "Calcu-Ball" baseball game has undergone a major revision. The improvements make Calcu-Ball the best mini-game available. Additional ratings are now available for power hitters to provide greater accuracy in reproducing homerun output. Batters who have power are now rated HR or HR1 to HR4. In addition, the ball park the game is being played in has an effect on the amount of homeruns occurring in a particular game. A drive to right field may be a double in Comiskey Park but a homerun in Yankee Stadium. Base running ratings have been introduced (F, F1 to F6) which affect base advancement and stolen bases. The various teams are now given fielding ratings which affect errors and sometimes base advancement. The most important change, in my judgement, is the new method of handling the pitcher adjustment. Previously a pitchers rating would drop a point each inning and then increase for the later innings and then decrease again in extra innings. This was a little unrealistic and also sometimes resulted in identical results in a couple of innings. The new method has the pitcher rating being reduced by one point for every inning pitched after the first. In addition pitchers are given control and strikeout ratings (K & W) to more accurately reflect the effect of high strikeout pitchers and pitchers who are extra wild. All of these changes have increased the statistical accuracy and provided a greater variety of plays. All things considered, it's going to be hard to find another game to beat Calcu-Ball at the price of \$3.50.

I had a lengthy telephone conversation with Timothy Ashburn of Ashburn Industries regarding "Longball". Mr. Ashburn was very interesting and candid. He mentioned a number of changes that will be made to improve "Longball". The first of the changes has already been made effective with the 1977 edition. The new edition now has a hit and run play. In 1978 additional improvements will be made in the defensive area to better utilize the fielding ratings. Mr. Ashburn also has plans to put out great teams of the past using a conversion factor to equalize teams from different eras. Mr. Ashburn's thinking on the conversion element seems to go beyond the usual normalization procedures. The most exciting news, however, was Mr. Ashburn's plans to retail "Longball" through Sears stores. "Longball" will also get national television advertising. To my knowledge this will be the first time a sports table game has been advertised on television.

I am sure that most subscribers have seen the ads for the new table baseball game "The Worlds Greatest Baseball Game". I received a brochure about the game and I am quite impressed with their concept. There is one problem though - the price tag! The complete game sells for \$21.95. I think a lot of potential customers will stick with Strat-O-Matic, Extra Innings, etc., for half the price. The company should put out a playoff edition to sell for about \$10 to entice fans away from the other less expensive games.

For those of you interested in a good tennis game I suggest you try Parker Brothers tennis card game. The game does not reproduce player abilities but it does a good job in simulating the game of tennis. The game can be played by two people (singles) or by four people (doubles). The game include a serve deck and a play deck of cards plus a miniature tennis court to plot the placement of the ball. The game is sold on a retail basis for \$3.98.

Recommended reading for table game hobbyists is the "Player's Guide to Table Games" by John Jackson. The book contains an evaluation of today's popular board and card games. The section on sports games is weak because the author isn't much of a sports fan. There are, however, some excellent hints for playing 3M's "Speed Circuit". There also some excellent discussions on "Monopoly" and "Diplomacy". The chapter on war games seems much more complete than the chapter on sports games. The book, copywrited in 1975, is available at your local library.

PLAYOFF BASKETBALL

FAC	PL	SA	RM	ST	TH
1	26	30	28	25	30
2	30	29	30	-	5
3	0	0	0	0	0
4	0	0	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	-	0
6	30	28	30	-	5
7	30	30	30	-	30
8	30	30	30	-	20
9	30	30	30	-	20
10	24	20	25	-	10
11	30	30	30	-	29
12	30	26	30	30	30
13	0	0	0	-	0
14	0	0	0	-	0
15	24	26	28	-	30
16	28	30	30	-	30
17	12	24	15	-	10
18	12	24	15	-	10
19	12	22	18	-	10
20	0	0	0	-	0
21	0	0	0	-	0
22	29	28	29	30	5
23	0	0	0	-	0

FAC	PL	SA	RM	ST	TH
24	30	30	30	-	5
25	0	0	0	-	0
26	26	30	27	20	30
27	30	30	30	-	25
28	0	0	0	0	0
29	0	0	0	0	0
30	0	0	0	0	0
31	0	0	0	-	0
32	0	0	0	0	0
33	0	0	0	0	0
34	30	20	15	15	15
35	21	-	20	30	10
36	16	30	28	-	30
37	30	-	30	30	-
38	20	30	26	30	20
39	0	0	0	-	0
40	15	15	15	-	21
41	24	-	-	-	-
42	20	10	25	-	15
43	20	25	25	30	15
44	30	15	25	-	15
45	0	0	0	-	0

RESULTS

	Tot	Avg	Areas not covered
PL	689	24.6	17
SA	642	25.6	17
RM	694	25.7	17
ST	240	26.6	7
TH	475	18.2	17

DISCUSSION

This game plays fairly well except for rebounds which sometimes require the flipping of several cards to determine who gets the ball. The strongest part of this game is its ability to control shooting frequency. Shooting percentage and fouls called on players other than defender are also handled well.

Theoretically, PLAYOFF falls down in the same way FASTBREAK does in that it takes the play result from either the offense or the defensive card and not from a mix of the two. The second edition ratings are shown here and the game has improved much over the first edition.

Overall, this is neat, well designed game which rates fairly high on the gaming pole.

THEORETICAL

Is the game constructed in a manner which allows all play results to be theoretically plausible? For example, in FASTBREAK the play result is taken from either the offensive card or the defensive card. Thus a player might score a basket but if the result was taken from his offensive card, it wouldn't matter who is guarding him. Likewise, if he blocks a shot on defense, it doesn't matter who he's guarding, he still blocks the shot. Theoretically, this is not what goes on during a game. All play results are a mixture of the individual player talents.

VOTE FOR THE TOP 10 GAMES

A few years ago the Canadian table gaming publication "Coaching Lines", contained a feature which was very interesting and successful. Subscribers were asked to vote for their favorite game and the votes were tabulated to arrive at a top ten. I think this feature would be perfect for this publication and would like to start it with this issue. The rules of the survey are simple. Subscribers will send me a note with their choice of their favorite game. Subscribers must indicate the sport and the manufacturer. For example, if you are a baseball fan and you prefer "Strat-O-Matic", you would indicate that your favorite game is "Strat-O-Matic baseball". If you are a football fan primarily and prefer "T.H.E." football you vote for "T.H.E." football. You can only vote for one game! The votes will be tabulated and accumulated so that the top ten can be continuously updated. The top ten will be updated in two ways. First, new subscribers will be able to vote and have their vote added to the accumulated total. Second, a subscriber can change his vote as he tries new games. Suppose, for example, a subscriber originally voted for "APBA" baseball and then buys "Extra Innings" which he decides is a better game. He would then send me a note and tell me to reduce 1 vote for "APBA" baseball and add 1 vote for "Extra Innings". I can recall that as soon as the "Extra Innings" and Statis-Pro (then called Midwest Research) baseball games appeared on the market they immediately jumped into the "Coaching Lines" top ten. It will be interesting to see if "APBA" baseball and "BLM" baseball will still occupy the two top positions as they did in the "Coaching Lines" survey.

Please send your vote to:

Larry Green
16 Monrovia Street
Springfield, Massachusetts
01104

Table Top News

compiled by Larry Green and Jerry Faulk

Big League Game Co. is now publishing All Sports Digest twelve times per year. BLG is also offering the formulae for their baseball games for sale this year for the first time ever.

Statis Pro Games has moved. Their new address is Box 987, Asheville, NC 28802. Statis Pro is also offering its formulae for sale along with the regular game parts. The first will be for college football.

Strat-O-Matic Game Co. has done preliminary testing on its hockey game but no announcement has been made as to whether or not it will be available Fall 1977 or Fall 1978. The SOM National Convention will be held July 29-30-31 on the U. Of Illinois campus at Champaign - Urbana.

Avalon Hill has taken over the Sports Illustrated game line and plans to revamp it somewhat. Sometime this fall they intend to begin publishing a table sports magazine entitled either Sports Illustrated Times or All-Star Replay. No price given as yet.

APBA Game Co. has released a new golf course - Pine Valley.

(A Trip Through Design Land, cont'd)

and most relievers should have more infield outs. Do it the way you like; just be consistent.

If you don't have the breakdown of hits by type for any or all of your pitchers, you can divide them up similarly. Calculate the proportion of all hits represented by each type of hit, then "jiggle" that division to suit you for individual pitchers.

Now to apply the player ratings. Individual player cards will probably be best but make your own choice. Each player's information must be listed. Make lines on each "card" labelled single, double, triple, home run, walk, strikeout, infield chance and outfield chance, in that order, I suggest. On the line for singles (or whatever your first line is), list the number representing that player's chance of getting or giving up a single. On succeeding lines, add the chance of that event occurring to the previous line; a sort of running total. Since the sum of all these chances must be one for any player, you needn't list anything in the last line. Add them all up anyway, just to be sure.

For an activator, you'll need three percentage dice, a box of red, white and blue poker chips, a container like a coffee can, a brush and some paint; patience won't hurt either.

With this odd assemblage of tools we'll build an activator. The three percentage dice will be read as a sequence, sort of like EI. So, you'll have to make them three different colors. Percentage dice are sold in pairs, one red, one white, so take the white die from the second pair and color it; green, blue, yellow, whatever suits.

The poker chips are part of the activator, too. Take the chips one color at a time and divide them into three equal stacks. Use the paint I mentioned earlier to number the chips 1, 2 and 3.

The activator works quite easily. Roll the dice and read them as a three digit number. Next, draw a chip from the can. A white chip refers you to the batter's card. A blue or red chip refers you to the pitcher's card. To find the result, go down the column of numbers on the proper card until you find the interval into which the number you've rolled fits. That's your result. Say you've rolled 1-5-4 and pulled a white chip. If, on the batter's card "single" lists .147 and "double" lists .197, the batter has just doubled. See what's happening?

The numbers on the chips indicate the fielder for infield and outfield chances. On outfield chances, 1, 2 and 3 indicate left, center and right field. In the infield, they refer to first second and third base. If the chip is blue, the putout is made by the indicated fielder. A red chip is an "X" result; an error may occur. The number indicates the fielder involved. In the infield, 2 can refer to either the second baseman or the shortstop. With the bases empty or full, call it the second baseman. Otherwise it's the shortstop. Else you could flip a coin or split it according to the dice--even or odd.

At this stage, the game could be played, but only barely. In the next installment, I'll take up the matter of fielding ratings, what to do if you draw a red chip on a fielding chance, how many of which chips to put in the can and maybe a few other things. Until then, experiment. Steal a fielding chart from another game, or make one up. Your ideas may be better than mine.

TABLE 1

For any category on a player's card, the likelihood of occurrence is given by

$$c = 2p - a$$

where **C** is the number for use on the player's card, **p** is the player's individual performance and **a** is the league average "opposition"; average pitching for batters, average batting for pitchers.

The likelihood of occurrence for figuring personal performance or league average opposition is the ratio of the number of times the event occurred to the total number of opportunities for it to occur--plate appearances for batters (at bats plus bases on balls), batters faced pitching for pitchers. If BFP is unavailable for a pitcher, it can be approximated by

$$BFP = (3 \times IP + H + BB) \times .98$$

The following table lists the number of occurrences of certain events, in the NL, AL and Major League total. The numbers in parentheses after the different hits are their proportions of total hits. This can be used to approximate a player's hits if they are not available by category.

Event	NL	AL	Majors
1B	12514 (.746)	12643 (.752)	25157 (.749)
2B	2652 (.158)	2588 (.154)	5240 (.156)
3B	499 (.030)	467 (.028)	966 (.029)
HR	1113 (.066)	1122 (.067)	2235 (.067)
BB(app.)	5763	5907	11675
K	10602	9143	19745
PA(app.)	71602	71786	143388
BFP(app.)	67617	70559	138176

The following table lists the value of **a** for calculating batter and pitcher cards. The average batter and average pitcher data for each event is separated by leagues and also given for the majors as a whole.

Event	AVERAGE BATTER			AVERAGE PITCHER		
	AL	NL	Majors	AL	NL	Majors
1B	.176	.175	.175	.179	.185	.182
2B	.036	.037	.037	.037	.039	.038
3B	.007	.007	.007	.007	.007	.007
HR	.016	.016	.016	.016	.016	.016
BB	.082	.080	.081	.084	.085	.084
K	.127	.148	.138	.130	.157	.143
IFC	.385	.359	.372	.379	.340	.360
OFC	.171	.178	.175	.169	.169	.170

Finally, here are two sample players, a batter and a pitcher. Tabulated with them are **p**, **c** and the suggested listing for a card. These are "uncorrected"; Jackson should probably have fewer infield/more outfield chances, Denny should probably have more infield/fewer outfield chances.

REGGIE JACKSON

Event	p	c	card
1B	.149	.119	.119
2B	.049	.061	.180
3B	.004	.001	.181
HR	.049	.082	.263
BB	.098	.112	.375
K	.196	.265	.637
IFC	.313	.247	.884
OFC	.144	.119	1.000

JOHN DENNY

Event	p	c	card
1B	.165	.155	.155
2B	.035	.033	.188
3B	.007	.007	.195
HR	.013	.010	.205
BB	.086	.092	.297
K	.086	.015	.312
IFC	.407	.455	.767
OFC	.202	.226	1.000

When reading the percentage dice, 0-0-0 is 1.000. After drawing the chip from the randomizer, replace it before drawing another.

Data for these tables was drawn from Dell's **BASEBALL/1977** and **STREET AND SMITH'S 1977 BASEBALL YEARBOOK**.

NEWSLETTERS?

Some of you will probably notice the absence of TSG and T.H.E. Newsletters and of football material in general. We simply did not receive any articles pertaining to football this time or any material for T.H.E. Newsletter. We do have on hand some material for TSG Newsletter, principally on the running of draft leagues. We promised to run most of it this issue but we're going to break our word and save it for next time so that we can better organize it into our general emphasis for the Fall issue on the formation and operation of table game leagues. And we'll try to get some material on football games in general.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The copy of **PLAYOFF BASKETBALL** surveyed by Al Wasser was provided by **PLAYOFF GAMES**, Box 902, Metuchen, NJ 08840.

MOVING?

If you are planning a change of address, please notify Table Top Sports giving both your old address and your new address, as well as both your **OLD AND NEW ZIP CODES**.

(Baseball Normalization, cont'd)

1948 American leagues.

Conceptually, the superior features are: (1) EI's normalization, which they have dropped. I wish they would make it public for us dreamers. (2) SOM's left-right ratings which do not exist on their old teams. (3) REPLAY's total mix approach which may work beyond the rated years.

My final judgement: If you're playing with the current season, BLM is slower than the others. Otherwise take your choice. If you're playing with the old-timers and want a whole season with all the teams, REPLAY is best, with five complete past seasons, and if you want isolated best teams and players from the past, EXTRA INNINGS is your best bet. Of course with EI you get everything for one price, but without individual player cards. With the other five you pay extra for everything. If you don't own EXTRA INNINGS and REPLAY, where have you been?

(A Grand Conceit, cont'd)

Players who hit more Deep Flies and Line Drives may have further chances at hits, while fast runners have excellent chances to beat out slow rollers. The pitchers' cards contain less info, mostly because they have less to impart. Pitchers are rated in durability (under an excellent system a la BLM), and, under three different conditions, (Normal, Men-on, and Tired), for walks, hits given up, K's, HR's, and Deep Flies. These are all adjustments to the batter's ratings. In addition, there are ratings for Hit Batsmen (a rating I prefer on the batter's card, where it is more reflective of individual performance than on the pitcher's card), Wild Pitches, etc.

The play result is, again, remarkably similar to BLM. As one can see from the above description the pitcher adds or subtracts his rating from that of the batter (using the numbers from that cumbersome deck of cards) to determine whether a) the batter has walked; b) he has gotten a hit; and c) if neither of the above, what kind of out has occurred. And that's the basic game. There are six more levels of play to go.

I'm not too sure at exactly which level of play I started to laugh; I think it was when they started talking about crossing lines to determine fielding range, a mechanism that I had to read three times to completely understand. (I lay this more to fatigue than to ignorance; the game is not that difficult - no baseball game is after designing a war game. No, I'll take that back; I have now spent a month trying to figure out how to compute BLM's ratings from their newly-published formulae - now there's a bit of arcane jibberish that should satisfy even the most hardened puzzle fan.) There are so many things that the player can do in this game that it is virtually overwhelming. Depending on a batter's power rating the ball will be hit to certain areas of the field. As a fielder's range and error factor both affect the chance of throwing a runner out on, say, a regular groundball, this makes fielding quite important. It also throws several more calculations into the play: determine the field location; add fielder's range to activator number to see if ball is caught; check for error; ad infinitum. Now all this is quite accurate - if the ratings are accurate - as fielders with poor range will let outs become hits, even though they may make few actual errors. It does not make for a speedy game, though. And the player is not finished yet! The basic playing board contains a field with a series of concentric lines, creating boxes in which the players can place his fielders. Thus he can pull his outfield in and swing it to the left, or keep it deep and straight away for a strong hitter to all fields (like Foster). That's where the "crossing lines" comes in. The location of the out (or hit) may be different from the location of the fielder, and if he has to cross lines to reach the ball that, too, affects his fielding ability. If I am not mistaken, this idea appears, in a somewhat simpler form, in Sherco. In any case it really makes for some great strategy, moving all your men around, bringing in the lefty to get them to hit it to right, etc., etc. It also doubles the playing time of the game - at least! And woven into all this is a series of simple, but confusing, arithmetical processes used to determine even the most arcane plays, such as pick-offs.

Other items of interest include an excellent Home Run system. Not only are players rated for ability to hit pure Home Runs (as are pit-

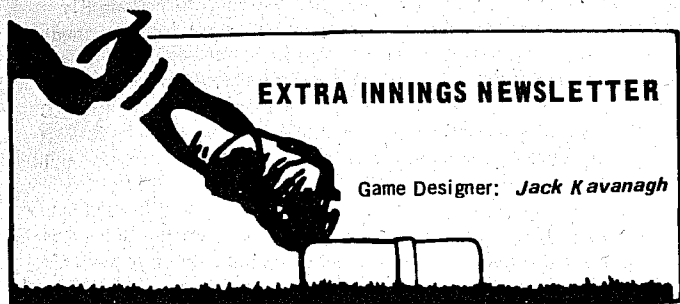
chers rated for their "gopher ability") but batters have a Deep Fly capability - as do pitchers. Dependent on the park you are in (shades of Ball Park and BLM - and Sherco!) you can make those Deep Flies HR's. I'm not too sure whether I agree with some of the ratings for this aspect (each field is rated for R, L, and C fields, as well as RC and LC!) but it is a small matter - and it does make for some interesting strategy. There are some exceptionally silly rules for throwing in the Bull Pen, special rules for Night Games, a Weather Chart (nice idea!), and a series of special events quite similar to those put out by Replay this year. There are even special rules for the Green Monster in Fenway. Runners stretching base advances is quite similar to BLM in that a running rating (the same as used for stolen bases) is used, along with an arbitrary number plus throwing rating. Double plays use a system that seems a bit too ornate in that you have to determine each play separately, using a different chart for each out. And, of course, there are lefty-right differentiations.

All of the above is quite a bit to handle, but most of it is optional. Then again, I don't know anyone in this hobby who plays a "basic" game when a more advanced one is available. None of TWGBG is overly complex, it's just that it is all so much. I remember my first few games of BLM - a game which I can play by rote now as much as I can play APBA or Replay; utter confusion and turning of pages every play to check what was supposed to happen. The same thing occurs here: there is no instant assimilation as in Strato-Matic or Replay. And, like BLM, it all becomes second nature after a while - unless you play field positions, something I suggest avoiding except in head-to-head play. There is thus plenty of meat to the TWGBG system, even if none of it is exceptionally original (which is not meant so much as a criticism as a simple statement of fact). There is a great deal of strategy involved and play begins to move fast after a while. I also suggest to players that they ditch the activator cards and dig up an old 1 - 100 BLM Random Number booklet, or some other such device. The cards are a definite drawback.

But what is even more of a drawback - at least to my way of thinking - is the basic idea behind the game, an idea that is even more of a conceit than the title. While giving you players with ratings based on last year's statistics the designers at JWW assume that you want to replay the new season, rather than the season past. So, while the game includes over a 1000 players (yes, I said 1000; most are on cards, but about 300 or so are listed in an additional booklet) nowhere can you find Mickey Lolich, or any other retiree for that matter. You can find such stalwarts and thrill-producers as Lee McLaurine, Dewey Hoyt, John Pacella, Jack Bastable, Galen McSpadden and that ever-redoubtable Monroe Greenfield. Exactly where they got ratings for these future Cobbs and Mathewsons is anybody's guess - probably including their's. And, if I'm going to get cow-kickers like those why don't I get Lolich?!? And, of course, none of the ratings of the "rookies" (who almost outnumber the actual players) even remotely resembles their performances so far this year, perfect examples being both Jim Norris and Paul Dade of Cleveland. Upon what basis does a designer come up with a card for Cardell Camper when he hasn't even thrown a ball in the bigs. Given the numbers he has been assigned by JWW I would assume his "card" (he is actually listed in the Additional Player Book) is based on the wonderful season he had last year at Toledo: 4 - 8, with a 5.40 ERA. But based on those stats, which his card seems to reflect, I would safely say that the chances of Camper appearing in a game in '77 (without getting killed by a returning baseball) are slimmer than those Seattle has to win the pennant.

The problem with this line of thinking by TWGBG is that throwing rookies - i.e., players without statistics on which to make an accurate card - into the game distorts anything you attempt to do. You cannot reproduce the previous year (even given the fact that some of the players aren't in the game) because these rookies will affect the stats of the other players, and you can't recreate the new season because that simply hasn't happened yet. My Manny Trillo card will in no way hit .350 (even with a healthy dose of cheating) which is what Trillo is hitting as of this writing. (Say, has anyone checked his saliva lately?) The whole game is thus a hybrid - an unwanted hybrid at that. It is neither fish nor fowl as it can satisfy neither of my desires as far as a simulation baseball game goes. And the big question is why? Why, especially because of the sheer number of players includ-

(cont'd p. 13)



FROM THE BENCH/Jack Kavanagh

A letter from Steve Sandhop, Baytown, Texas was all we needed to put a rainy afternoon into research after the fact regarding the put out assignments on the new (Fifth Edition) Second Roll Chart.

Steve wondered about the reality of assessing one sixth of all put outs to infield pop ups or line drives. Also he wondered about the comparison of outfield fly outs to infield ground outs.

We have always used a guide line, "all things relatively equal or not vital, use that which is easiest to memorize." That's why we split the Second Roll Chart into three nicely rounded off groups.

We also put the variables where they seemed to make the most sense. Base hits most often land somewhere in the outfield when they are not caught. So, we related outfield fly outs to the low number end of the chart where base hits are determined.

At the high end we located the ground outs with the stipulation they could be converted into strike outs. Much of the content of "EI" draws upon my impressions stored up from playing and watching thousands of ball games. It is my belief that strike outs reduce ground balls more than they do fly balls. I'll leave it for someone else to chart Ryan, Tanana, Seaver and other strike out pitchers but will assume until proven wrong fewer ground balls are hit off their speed than is the common result.

This provides a kind of "bonus" to pitchers who obtain a higher number of outs via strike outs. Runners don't advance on strike outs. They do on ground balls hit behind them, some grounders not handled cleanly enough to force the runner but soon enough to retire the batter and

the runner who moves up on the hit and run which produces an infield ground out.

After reading Steve's letter I figured it was time to prove what my instincts had determined and which my wish to put things into easily memorized form had provided. I used the 1974 American League stats for no other reason than the baseball guide for that year was closest at hand. There was a league batting average of .258, close enough to divide the one half of all combinations (1-1-1 through 3-6-6) into nearly equal parts.

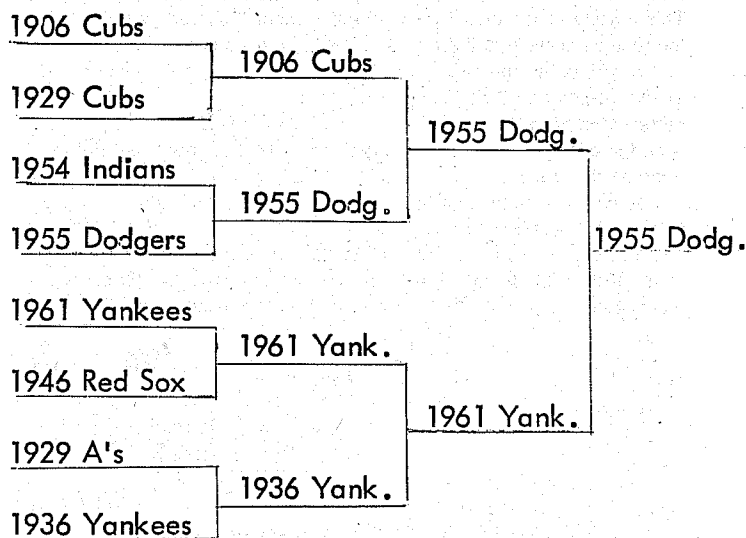
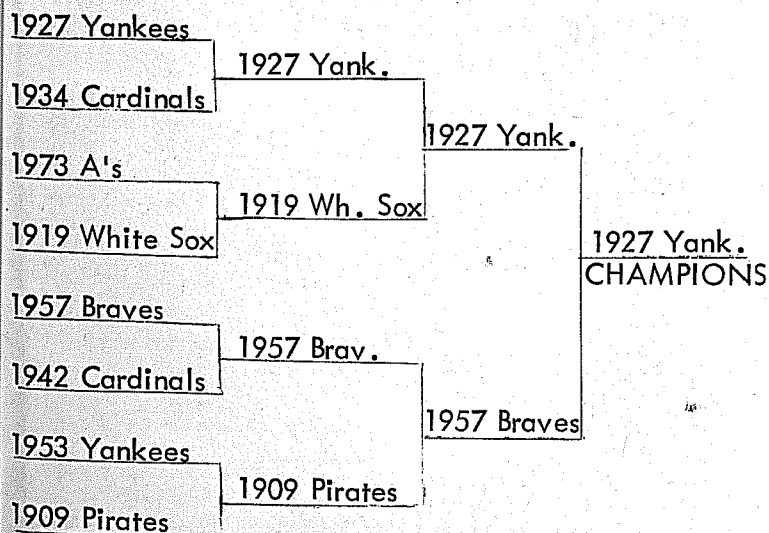
The Official League stats produced 13,566 put outs by outfielders with a league total at all positions of 52,346 a comforting .2591 and as close as one could hope to come on a permanent basis when one is relating total put outs to individual teams, leagues, etc. drawn from any possible time in baseball's past.

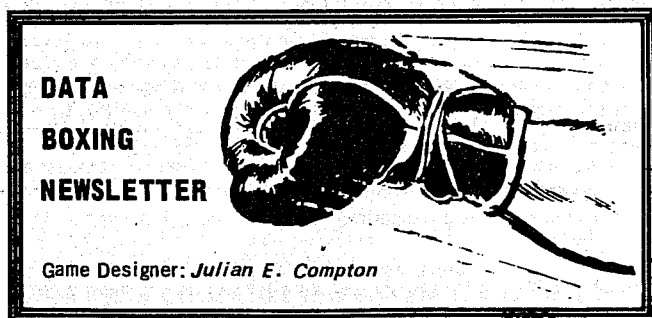
To determine the relationship between infield put outs via line drive or pop up (in other words, "unassisted") and the automatic assignment to one sixth of all combinations (4-1-1 thru 4-6-6) needed some adroit stepping through data. We tabbed all outfield assists (445); catcher's put outs (remember, a strike out is recorded as a put out by the catcher) and assists (10,385 and 1,043); pitcher's put outs and assists (965 and 2574) which gave us totals of 24,916 put outs and 4,062 assists for all positions except infielders. By subtracting those totals from the league totals we established 27,430 infield put outs and 17,431 infield assists. And that's 9,999 (shall we round it off at 10,000?) unassisted put outs. And that's .1910 of the league's put outs with .1667 of the chart having been given to this form of out.

However, while there can only be one put out per assist, there can be more than one assist per put out. A ball deflected by the pitcher to the short stop who throws the batter out at first produced two assists to the put out.

We also realize that while the range 4-1-1 to 4-6-6 (.1667) is referred to as "Infield Fly Out" we've included outs to the catcher or pitcher in the combinations on the chart. There are 24 possibilities and, without allowing for the imbalance for there being more right handed batters than left handed, four of these involve non-infield positions. So, the actual possibilities of there being an unassisted put out by a first, second or third baseman, or short stop, are .1481, not .1667. We'll still consider it close enough to leave the more easily memorized form untouched.

(Ed.) Chuck Shipan, Chicago, Illinois, has sent us the results of an EI tournament that he held recently. The first round was a best-of-three series, and the second and third rounds were five game series, and the final round was a seven game series. Highlights included an 18 inning game between the 1957 Braves and the 1927 Yanks, won by the Yanks 11 - 9; a 3 - 1 game won by the 1919 White Sox over the 1927 Yanks in which Cicotte threw a two hitter, facing 29 batters, while the Yank's only run was a Lazzeri sacrifice for Gehrig; the 1906 Cubs over the 1929 Cubs by 1 to 0 in which Root and Brown threw 5-hitters, both walking one and striking out 6, with Root losing on a triple to Sheppard and a double to Chance. Babe Ruth was the MVP. In 16 games for the 1927 Yankees he batted 70 times with an amazing total of 12 homers, 35 RBIs, and a BA of .431!





FROM THE DESIGNER/Julian E. Compton

Comment: Duane Bobick suffered rib cartilage damage which postponed the bout with Norton. That was an indication that he might not be in top shape. Using Bobick's secondary TKO Rating of 25, and with Norton using all his Power Round Ratings in round one, the actual result was quite possible in **DATA BOXING**.

How a Bout Is Scored. Few boxing fans know much about scoring a bout. Except for the comments of referee Arthur Mercante, I have seldom seen public evidence that boxing commentators or writers have even read scoring instructions. New York scoring is based primarily on clean, forceful hits above the belt in proportion to their damaging effect. Lesser possible features are aggressiveness, defense, and ring generalship or controlling a bout. Negative features are fouls, delaying action, and clinching. (For further discussion consult **HOW TO JUDGE AND REFEREE A FIGHT** by Nat Fleischer, available from the Ring Book Shop for \$1.25.)

DATA BOXING has incorporated this method of scoring in the following manner:

Simple Play: Points and Power Blows are counted since they are most important. A running score tells who wins the rounds and has the best total score. One score card is enough to cover the basics.

Advanced Play: For the sophisticated boxing fan! All of the other details which play a lesser, but sometimes an important part, are included. With more detail, questions arise, so I will deal with some of the problems and suggestions for advanced scoring.

1. Advanced scoring uses scoring by a referee and two judges. However, advanced scoring should still use one Running Score throughout the bout, and not convert it to the Cards of the three judges until the bout is over. I do it like this: A five-point margin by a better rated boxer using the standard 5/5/3 scoring system would translate to a 2 1/2 for the three judges for that round. Remember the referee gives the better boxer one-half point per round, so the margin of five becomes five and one-half, good enough for two points on the card. The five-point judge on a 1 - 5 margin gives one point on his card. The last judge gives two points on the card, for he scores by threes. This sample bout indicates how the three normal scorers would convert the running score into their score cards. In round one the actual margin is five points but the referee gives an extra half-point. In round two the extra half-point by the referee makes each have the same points, and the better-rated boxer is awarded the round by the referee, though he loses it on the other two cards. In round three he wins by one point being awarded the round on a foul. Round four shows how three different scores can be achieved on the three cards. Again the referee's extra half-point makes his different from the other five-point judge.

When the bout is over, total each of the scorer's cards and find the result if it was a decision. On bouts which end early, do not count the incomplete round in the scorers' totals or in the rounds' total, but do

count it in the points total.

2. If you want to convert to other than the one-up system, make sure you understand the system. Be sure to keep the same score card margin except for British scoring, which goes in half-point increments. In London round one in the sample would be: B 10/10/10, C 9/9 1/2/9.

3. The advantage of keeping the Running Score separate from the three Scorers' Cards is shown when you get a Scorer other than the Normal ones. A cut judge can translate his view of the bout without messing up the score of the other two.

4. The Three-Judge Scoring System using the 5/5/3 evaluation of the basic running score is designed to be a specific and accurate scoring method. It serves to correct two errors that exist in most actual scoring systems: (1) Most systems rarely give more than one-point margins for a round even when they should. (2) many systems have far too many even rounds. In being more specific, DATA BOXING has a better scoring system than you will find in most jurisdictions. If you want results that are closer to the less-detailed scoring that often occurs, you can consider giving only one point margins per round most of the time. The optional method of grading on a 1 - 7, 1 pt. margin; 7 1/2 - 14, 2 pts; etc., suggested for heavyweights, may be closer to actual scoring. However, the detail of the 5/5/3 system is fairer and needed for close decisions, such as the best middleweights and lightweights often have. To have more even rounds you could require a one and one-half point margin before awarding the round.

New York points scoring gives margins as follows:

- 1 - Winning by a shade
- 2 - Clear win
- 3 - One-sided or well in front and scores a knockdown
- 4 - One-sided and two or more knockdowns.

Most actual systems have no such detail; DATA BOXING has slightly more detail.

Whatever system pleases you should work, but don't just make up one without at least studying Fleischer's book first. Of course, to have a fair tournament or an extended series of bouts, you should use the same scoring, judges, location and referee throughout.

5. Someone suggested that Carnera with his clinch and its negative scoring is very ineffective. To rate him otherwise would be inconsistent with the whole of the game structure. However, if you have a soft spot in your heart for Carnera, you may score his clinches negatively only on the Referee's Card. But he did get what he deserved.

6. **A Major Problem!** A few results indicate that some using advanced scoring have been misled by the "Missed Power" entry from the Scoring Abbreviations listed under "To Play: Advanced Method" in the Instructions. It should read, "Missed power (0) when no points score," and should "score a maximum of one-half point on any offensive exchange when no other points are scored."

To explain: A boxer scores automatically only on 1,2,3, and 4-point blows. Normally a boxer scores points on a possible offensive power play only if it actually scores, i.e., is matched by the defensive boxer's roll. Some boxers have possible power blows all over their cards, a string of three or more on several numbers. They don't score on those if they fail. You don't get points for punching air.

Why then this entry for "missed power when no points score.?" The entry should be seen as the way the boxer is exerting his control over the bout even though he has not scored. Most boxers have a possibility of scoring on numbers 3,4,12 or 13,14,16,17 and 18 on offense. If a boxer rolls any of these numbers where he has a possibility of scoring points and power blows, he gets the points automatically, even if the power blows fail. However, if he rolls a possible power blow where no points score (usually on numbers 3 and 18), then he gets a half-point for that effort and keeps his turn. He gets only a half-point for the turn, no matter how many missed

	2 1/2	1 0/0	1 1/1	3 2/4		Rounds	R/J ₁ /J ₂
B BOXER	7 322	9 11	9 F	21 3333	21 K05	3	7/4/7
C BOXER	2	2 4*	8 F W32F	10	15	1	0/1/1
		0/1/1					

powers he had on the turn.

A boxer may also have missed power possibilities if the Power Points Adjustment has removed points from his card. In an Ellis-Ali bout, Ellis has an Offensive Power Rating of D, against Ali's A on Defense, and has one point subtracted from numbers 14 and 17 before the bout begins. Consult Power Points Adjustment Chart on Game Board if this is not clear.) Subtracting one from his one on number 17 leaves zero, and an N1 when the bout begins. (The other power blows are not applicable until he achieves an N1). If Ellis rolls a number 17 and does not get an N1, he still gets a half-point for a "missed power when no points score." If, however, he was meeting a boxer with a C or D on his Defensive Power Rating, Ellis' one on number 17 would still be there and if he rolled number 17, he would get the one point and the "missed power when no points score" would not apply.

A few boxers with power blows on number 15 are the most affected by this scoring procedure. When they are not boxing, the missed power item may be omitted with little appreciable difference in results. The main thing to remember is that a boxer never gets a half-point for a missed power if he scored by any other means on that offensive exchange.

7. Jeff Barker, DB no. 12, suggests an adjusted scoring system. He replaces N on numbers 4 and 17 of the judges scoring and numbers 16, 17, and 18 on the referees scoring when F is not appropriate, with a KD. For KD score each N as 7 points. Such experimentation creates interest, but it should be pointed out that the probability of getting the various judges from the chart is based on data analysis of the kinds of judges who have actually scored championship bouts. Nothing in DATA BOXING is arbitrary; it is all based on data. The only needed adjustments should be to the forementioned, less specific scoring systems for bouts held outside of New York or during the old days.

8. Patrick Premo has submitted a Fuller Scoresheet, which requires a full page for each boxer, which we are reprinting. If you write large it may be what you need. See page 12.

THE DATA BOXING WORLD

When you send in your results as described in the game, we assign you an official ring number and will periodically report your results. (Please send your age and occupation.) In doing this you become a part of boxing history by providing information for making all-time rankings. If you hold all-time tournaments in any division, send them in, even though they don't produce the requested twenty bouts.

No. 5 Terry Baxter, Rolla, MO. - 56 Bouts. Louis had a 9-1 record among heavies. Thirty-three middle-weight bouts established this as the leading ring for that division. Robinson and Monzon both look strong, with Sugar Ray taking a decision over Carlos.

No. 6 George Pappas, Costa Mesa, CA. - 130 Bouts. In the most active ring in the world, things keep happening. In a 32-man, single elimination, all-time heavy tourney, Ali beat Norton in a 12-round split decision in the finals. In another 32-man tourney Tunney beat Ali in a 12-round split decision. Foreman KO'd Norton in 4 in the finals of an eight-man current tourney. Sixty-one other heavy bouts were held.

No. 9 Mike Tompkins, Eldon, MO. - 83 Bouts. Many current and all-time heavyweight bouts were staged. Norton KO'd Bobick in eight in a preview match here. In a possible future welterweight title match, Carlos Palomino beat Pete Ranzany by a split decision over 15 rounds. Rounds were eight to seven; points 42 to 37, one injury for each. Others may like to try this one.

No. 11 Millard Wells, Rockford, IL. - 80 Bouts. Single elimination tournaments: In 32-man middleweights - Walker beat Greb eight rounds to six with points even in the finals. Klaus and Cerdan also made the final four. Sixteen-man light heavies - Roster beat Moore 10 rounds to five and by eight points in the finals. Sixteen-man welters and junior welters - Cervantes beat Ryan by a TKO in six in the finals. (Though Cervantes is probably the best ever junior welter, I believe the reduced efficiency adjustments, explained in the second edition, would limit his success against pure welterweights.) Sixteen-man lightweights - Duran upset Leonard and went to the finals where he lost to Gans seven rounds to eight and 46 points to 47. Best points performance was 58 in 12 rounds by Willie Ritchie (L) in decisioning Moran. Most power was shown by Tony Zale with four knockdowns in a 15-round win over Turpin.

No. 13 Brian Kushniruk, St. Albert, Alberta, Canada - 27 Bouts. In a 28-man, single-elimination, heavyweight tournament Norton, Young and Wills were added to 25 champs (omitting Ellis) for the tourney. Ali beat Jeffries and

Dempsey beat Foreman in the semifinals. Ali TKO 12 over Dempsey in the finals. Norton KO 1 over Louis was the big upset.

No. 14 Allen Wiener, Washington, D.C. - 27 Bouts. A 28-man single elimination heavyweight tournament included Wills and Langford plus 26 champs. Foreman decisioned Johnson in 10, and Ali decisioned Dempsey in 10 in the semifinals. Ali KO'd Foreman in 12 in the finals. Langford decisioned Jeffries but was KO'd in three by Dempsey.

(From the Readers, cont'd)

TRACK

21st CENTURY - Track has possibilities but this one is not the one. More factors needed. Weather, conditioning, pressure, etc.

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED - Pits some decathlon men against each other. Interesting but not enough athletes.

This is my list of games I've bought through the years. What I'd like to see in the future are.....

An APBA type golf game with more golfers playing in 1/2 the time.

A boxing game with more details such as speed, defense (other than taking a shot). Ringmanship and amount of punches and % landed.

A basketball game that takes 30-45 minutes plus every detail.

A better detailed track and field game that pits country against country, college against college and track club against track club.

I've got writer's cramps so I bid goodbye. Sheldon Segall, Lewiston, Maine 04240

Dear Jerry: Since most of your stable of fine writers seem to consider the maker of a game to be "cheap" if they do not offer the formulas for rating the players as part of any Level 2 or 3 game, I am pleased to offer for publication the appropriate formulas for Simco Baseball!

1. Batting (B) ratings: $B = (BA \times 33) - 4$

2. Homerun ratings: $HR = 297 \times HR/AB$ obtain appropriate power rating by counting from z. (z 0, y 1; x 2, w 3, ...)

3. Speed: 30 or more steals - rate V, 10 or more steals - Rate F
4. Pitching (P) rating: Mostly subjective. Find league ERA. If pitcher's ERA is more than 1.25 above or below league average, rate 2 or -2, respectively. If less than 1.25 but more than .4 higher or lower, rate as 1 or -1, respectively. If within .4 of league ERA, rate as 0.

5. Strikeouts (K) rating: Two ways depending on available stats.

a.) $K = 33 \times SO/(3 \times IP) + H$ or b.) $K = 36 \times SO/BFP$

Use number obtained from formula in following chart:

NO.	RATING	NO.	RATING
3.0 or less	3	6.5 to 7.5	36
3.0 to 4.5	5	7.5 to 8.5	37
4.5 to 5.5	6	8.5 to 9.5	56
5.5 to 6.5	7	9.5 to 10.5	57
		10.5 to 11.5	67

Footnote to n. 4 above: The rating produced by the formula offered need not be used if a pitcher's W-L record or other stats seems to indicate a higher or lower rating is warranted. Steve Smith, SIMCO BASEBALL, Fort Wayne, IN.

Dear Sirs: As you can tell by the form I enclosed, I am renewing my subscription to Table Top Sports. This will now run through the Summer of 1978. I truly enjoy your magazine and am constantly looking forward to your next addition. I would like to see your magazine produced monthly. I own two Gamecraft games - EXTRA INNINGS and GOAL! I have trouble finding opponents for my EI game, and if I knew how to organize a play-by-mail league this would solve my problem. Would you please send me any information you could on how to start a play-by-mail league in EI. Keep up the good work! Don Collister, St. Clair Shores, MI.

Dear Don: We're in the process of rounding up someone to do an article on how to set up a play-by-mail league. We should have it ready for the Fall issue

(Cont'd. p. 13)

NAME	G	GS	1P	T	RATING
M. Gooper	37	35	279	R	2-8
Beazley	43	23	215	R	2-6
Krist	34	8	118	R	3-4
Lanier	34	20	161	L	3-5
Gimbert	38	19	163	R	4-5
Pollet	27	13	109	L	3-5
White	26	19	128	L	3-5
Dickson	36	7	121	R	3*-4
Warneke	12	12	82	R	4-7

NOTICE: For "Grand Slam" freebie game see the Spring 1976 issue of TTS. For "Grand Slam" 1976 ratings see the Winter 1977 issue. For "rate-them-yourself" instructions for "GS", consult the Spring 1977 issue. For instructions on how to use the expanded ratings of the two old time teams above, wait until our Fall 1977 issue is published. In the meantime, you can make use of the first part of the ratings in the usual way and ignore the remainder.

(Reduced 50%)

Submitted by Pat Premo

NAME	G	B	RATING	POS
B. Hassett	132	L	10(0h1)1	1B
J. Gordon	147	R	11*(og4)2	2B-X
P. Rizzuro	144	R	10(1g1)3	55
F. Grosetti	74	R	7(2h2)1	3B55-X
T. Henrich	127	L	8*(0d4)1	RF 1B
J. DiMaggio	154	R	11(2f4)1	CF-X
C. Keller	152	L	10*(1g6)0	LF
B. Dickey	82	L	11(0h1)1	c-1-X

R. Rolfe	69	L	6(0h5)1	3B
B. Rosar	69	R	6(0g2)1	c-1
J. Priddy	59	R	9*(0g1)0	INF
G. Selkirk	42	L	4*(0g0)0	OF
R. Hemsley	31	R	11(1h0)1	c-0
R. Cullenbine	21	B	14*(0e3)0	OF
E. Levy	13	R	2(0-0)1	1B
E. Kearse	11	R	5(0-0)1	c-2
Pitcher			3(0h1)0	P

NAME	G	GS	1P	T	RATING
E. Bonham	28	27	226	R	2-9
S. Chandler	24	24	201	R	2-9
H. Boroway	25	21	178	R	2-8
R. Ruffing	24	24	194	R	3-9
A. Donald	20	19	148	R	3-8
M. Breuer	27	19	164	R	3-7
L. Gomez	13	13	80	L	5*-7
M. Russo	9	5	45	L	3-6
J. Murphy	31	0	58	R	4-2
J. Lindell	23	2	53	R	4-3

Data Boxing										Score Sheet																
Boxer's name:										Versus																
*Boxer Rating (1/2 point) _____ TKO Rating _____										R O U N D S															R E S U L T S	
										1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Rounds	Points
TKO Resistance (1/2 TKO Rating; 15 min.)																										
**Offensive Rating: (+: cannot be reduced)																										
Defensive Rating (=: cannot be reduced)																										
Power Rating (put one die down, usu. 6)																										
***Control Rating (no point with ●)																										
*Aggression Rating (1/2 point)(add'l. exch.)																										
Points to "Decline Ability"										EXCH.																
TKO 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9																									1	
Rate																									2	
TKO Rate -1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9																									3	
																									4	
G.A x x -1 x x -2 x x -3																									5	
Knockdown Points:																									6	
CUT/INJ Points:																									7	
• high Aggression leads off round; if tied, best Boxing Rating leads off																									8	
																									9	
** decrease one letter every time TKO Resistance goes down by 3, or after two knockdowns																									10	
																									11	
*** increase by one when reach opponent's TKO Rating																									12	
																									13	
Fight Summary:																									14	
																									15	
																									16	
																									17	
																									18	
																									19	
																									20	
TOTALS																										

NAME	G	B	RATING	POS.
Hopp	95	L	8*(2d1)3	1b
Crespi	93	R	7(0-0)2	2b 55
Marion	147	R	10(1b0)2	55 X
Kurowski	115	R	8(of3)2	38
Slaughter	152	L	11*(2e2)2	RF
Moore	130	R	10*(og2)2	CF-X
Musial	140	L	11*(1d2)1	LF
W. Cooper	125	R	10(1c2)1	c-1

Brown	145	B	8(og0)1	INF
Sanders	95	L	7*(od3)1	1B
H. Walker	74	L	12(of0)1	0F
Triplet	64	R	9(2e1)1	0F
O'Dea	58	L	7(oh4)0	c-1
Dusak	12	R	5(0a0)0	0F
Pitcher			4(0h1)0	P

(A Grand Conceit, cont'd)

ed, Granted, there are few players in the category of Lolich, but Lolich is only an example of the general outlook - the conceit - which the JWW Corp. has taken in the direction of its product. In providing so much they have actually given little, for the game is truly unequal to the sum of its parts. I won't even stop to quibble with the Stolen Base system, whose numbers I disagree with vehemently (Morgan has a 70% chance of stealing second, given the fact that catcher's ratings tend to even out, as opposed to his actual capability of about 90%! Other stealers are even worse) because this may simply be a bug that will work itself out. I just cannot accept the fact that so much effort went into a product which ends up doing nothing.

The World's Greatest Baseball Game purports to be a simulation baseball game, yet it simulates nothing. Half its players are from one year, the other half from no year. I couldn't understand why Longball chose this route, and I can understand even less why JWW went the same way. Such a waste of an interesting system - unless, of course you have big plans for Sheldon Burnside and Shane Rawley. Available from JWW Corp., Box 188, Western Springs, IL 60551; \$21.45

A Note on Enclosed Cards: Dwight Bernard is in the Mets organization. That he is a distant prospect goes without saying (I never heard of him and I follow the Mets quite closely, which is neither here nor there). His record for Tidewater last year was 1-9, 6.40 ERA. His card appears to be much better than that record, altho his 2-5, 4.17 with Jackson of the Texas League might be the basis of the rating. His card ratings are somewhat similar to those of, e.g., Dennis

Eckersley of the Indians. And Bernard is no Eckersley (at least not now), altho JWW would have you believe so from the card ratings.

SOME GRATUITOUS AND CATEGORICAL RATINGS

Physical Quality: Good

Playability: Basic Game - Very Good

Intermediate Game - Good

Advanced Game - Mediocre

Strategy (How Much is in the Gamer's Hands):

Basic Game - Fair

Intermediate and Advanced Game - Very Good

Hitting Accuracy: Batting Average - Very Good

Running (Bases) - Good

Power - Excellent

Stealing - Fair

Fielding - Excellent

Throwing - Good

Pitching Accuracy: ERA/Hits - Very Good

BB/K - Excellent

Durability - Excellent

Gopher Balls - Excellent

Extras: Specials (Weird Events, etc.) - Very Good

Park Ratings - Good

Public Relations - Seemingly Good (Compared to APBA they're Dale Carnegie personified).

**DWIGHT BERNARD
NEW YORK (N)**

Thr: R LR: 7
ST: 13 SR: 4

Tired		Norm. Press.	
+5	W	+3	+3
+4	H	-1	-1
-6	SO	-3	-2
+3	HR	+1	+1
+7	DF	+2	+2

HB 99-02
WP 47-52
BK 78
PB 88

**GEORGE SCOTT
BOSTON**

Bat: R Thr: R Pos: 1B
Fld: 0 Err: 2 Arm:
Sac: -9 Spd: -7 Pwr: D

W: 06-13 SO: 72-86
Hit: 34-52

1b: 39-05 3b: 22-24
2b: 06-21 HR: 25-38

16 Foul Fly
17-26 Pop Fly
27 Slow Roller
28-70 Grounder
71-81 Line Drive
82-00 Line Fly
01-09 Fly
10-15 Deep Fly

(From the Readers, cont'd.)

Dear Jerry: I truly enjoy your magazine. I generally read it cover to cover, including the articles for those games I don't have or intend to have (T.H.E., TSG, etc.) - I have some interest in the sport they pertain to. Which brings me to my complaint - 3 pages devoted to a Canadian football game? Are you serious? If there are ten people in this country interested in this sport I would be surprised. If someone has a game based on cricket or curling would you publish a three page review of that?

While I have your attention, I found the article on basketball games fascinating. To think that someone would go to all that trouble to quantify what could better be done in a paragraph - then leave out one of the major games (Strat-O-Matic). While I agree with his downgrading of RLB (If you keep such things I once wrote a letter about

it) his individual ratings are strange - how can he rate it a 30 on strategy and tactics for substituting when you cannot make a substitution in the last five minutes of a game; nor can you protect a player in foul trouble by removing him except when allowed to!

Please find enclosed a check for renewal of my subscription for a year. Thank you, Barry R. Los Angeles, CA 90036

P.S. I don't have time for a lengthy critique, but I just got around to playing "Match Point" the other day (I had gotten it and three other games a few months ago). I am embarrassed for Gamecraft to be associated with such a ripoff. Arthur Ashe, Bjorn Borg, and Harold Solomon have equal first serves?! Are you serious? And what is the point of giving me the rules covering WTT substitutions when you don't include substitutes? Also, on your Clutch Tables,

(Cont'd. p. 14)



NEWSLETTER

Game Designers: *Jerry Faulk*
Larry Davenport

FROM THE DOCTOR/Jerry Faulk

I received the following nice letter from Stan Mamoth who seems to be engaged in all types of leagues. I am sorry to have to report to Stan that we do not as yet have a track & field game (or a golf game). In fact, it looks like early Spring 1978 before the game will be ready for sale.

Dear Sirs: I am a fanatic on table-top games ever since I bought your basketball game. I had two basketball league going, both for college. One has just been finished. I took out the best 56 players that had not graduated and had a draft. Wouldn't you know the team with Kent Benson, Bernard King, Eddie Owens, Rickey Green, and Phil Ford would win? However, it was not a runaway. This team was actually one game behind coming into the last game against a Lew Massey led team. They were trailing by one with one shot left when the ball came to Phil Ford in section 8. He threw up a desperation shot that went in.

They were declared league champs since they had beaten Massey's team twice.

Even though Lew Massey was not part of the winning team I named him MVP because of his influence when his team was down. Time and again he took over and won the games for them. In fact, he had 5 game winning shots.

For the other league I set up a tournament for the top 40 college game and have played most of it. The biggest upset has been when an unheralded VMI team beat Tennessee with Ernie and Bernie in which Bernard King was injured on the first play of the game. As you can see and have probably already guessed I am a big fan of college basketball and hope to get the next issue of your game. I am also involved in a league in EXTRA INNINGS in which we will play a round robin for each league and then bring the winners together for the World Series. Please send me the Track and Field brochure that I have asked for. I have a friend that really likes track and I am sure you could use the business so please send it with the Table Top Sports. Stan Mamoth, Derby, KS.

There's not much going on in basketball this summer so I'll finish up with a short diagram by David DeWees of Grove City, OH. Rather than use the spaces provided on the edge of the court for recording adjusted inside and outside shooting ratings, David uses a chart. Instead of erasing the old ratings on the court whenever a substitution is made, he merely writes in the new player immediately below the old one. It's simple enough and seems to work well. A sample is given below.

LG	IO	LF	IO	C	IO	RF	IO	RG	IO					
BUCKNER	-3	-1	ABERNATHY	0	-2	BENSON	2	0	MAY	2	2	WILLERSON	-2	-2

(From the Readers, cont'd.)

when it reads "Receiver hits ball into net" and the server is hitting the ball, what happens? Confusing and bad, gentlemen. Yours, B.R.

Barry, I'll admit there is not much interest in Canadian football among our readers but there is some. About 5% of our subscribers live in Canada. I don't think one article on Canadian football in 9 issues containing about 50 or more articles is an excess.

Yes, I remember your previous comments on substitutions for RLB. The system is set-up to provide an accurate use of players over a season. Although the strategy of substitutions at critical times such as the last few minutes of a ball game is a very real factor in actual play it is not a true factor in table top fantasy - simply because the players are rated on average stats, not on their play in clutch situations and not on their ability to be "up" at times and "down" at others. However, I'll admit that substituting in the last half quarter can add to the realism for some people because the laws of probability can artificially give you a hot or cold player. My suggestion would simply be to go ahead and do it. In fact, I always change the rules however I wish just to suit myself. But if you like something to officially written - rather than simply relying upon the old dictate "do that whichever would be the most realistic" (which is sometimes hard to follow when you are playing head-to-head against someone with weird ideas) - how about this: "... except in the last half-quarter when up to four substitutions may be made per team. Credit a half quarter of playing time to any player that plays

over half of a half quarter."

About MATCH POINT - I'll admit we've had problems. We simply rushed the game into production too fast. The ratings are not detailed enough in the sense that many of the players are rated exactly the same, not only for first serves but for everything. And of the ratings that are present, some are inaccurate. We have discovered that all first serve ratings are systematically too low and we have issued an errata sheet with the following suggested changes for first serves:

Old rating	New rating
1-15	1-38
1-14	1-35
1-13	1-33
1-12	1-30
1-11	1-28

When the Clutch Table reads "Receiver hits ball into net," and the server is hitting the ball, it means that the server's play was good and that the opponent's play was into the net.

I apologize to you and the other purchasers for the discrepancies in the game. We learned a lot from our experience with MATCH POINT. I hope we have sense enough to make use of it. At any rate, we'll be releasing some new ratings this Fall in chart form - based on the 1977 season - and we'll make them available free-of-charge to current owners of the game.

League Report

We are beginning a trial series of league reports with this issue. We're going to start out in a small way by reporting on just one. We'll add a few more next time - assuming that some of you league commissioners out there want to send us your newsletters - and then we'll try to determine if the readers want this type of material contained in TTS. If not, we'll drop it.

We're not going to give detailed reports - just the bare highlights. For replay leagues, team standings and individual leaders will be given. For draft leagues, we'll just report on the individual leaders. (Nobody is really interested in whether the Penguins are ahead of the Turkeys except the league members themselves.) So if you are a league commissioner, send us your newsletter and the name of the game being used and you'll get a chance for national exposure of your efforts.

Our first league report was submitted by Charlie Marshall, Elmont, NY. Charlie has been sending us his newsletter for about six months now and finally prodded us into this project. (We also received a report from Barry Koopersmith about eight months ago but can't locate it now. If you will send another one Barry, we would appreciate it.)

FABULOUS FIFTIES

Game: REPLAY BASEBALL
Type: Actual replay, mostly play-by-mail
Season: 1955 Major League

STANDINGS THROUGH JUNE 16	WON	LOST	PCT.	GB	BA	ERA
Chicago White Sox	41	17	.707	-----	.284	3.34
Boston Red Sox	43	19	.694	-----	.255	3.41
New York Yankees	37	24	.607	5½	.262	3.09
Cleveland Indians	31	29	.517	11	.251	3.67
Detroit Tigers	29	30	.492	12½	.265	4.35
Baltimore Orioles	27	36	.429	16½	.236	3.70
Kansas City Athletics	20	40	.333	22	.263	4.05
Washington Senators	15	48	.238	28½	.237	4.69
			LEAGUE		.256	3.86

STANDINGS THROUGH JULY 31	WON	LOST	PCT	GB	BA	ERA
Brooklyn	70	33	.680	--	.268	3.27
Milwaukee	58	42	.580	10½	.249	3.24
Cincinnati	55	49	.529	15½	.261	3.96
Philadelphia	56	52	.519	16½	.257	4.04
St. Louis	47	53	.470	21½	.257	3.87
Chicago	47	60	.439	25	.239	3.81
New York	43	62	.410	28	.245	4.03
Pittsburgh	42	67	.385	31	.253	4.42
			LEAGUE:		.254	3.84

LEAGUE LEADERS

Batting
Fox, CWS .376
Runs
Avila, CLE 60
Hits
Fox, CWS 97
Doubles
Goodman, BOS 20
Triples
Mantle, NYY 7
Home Runs
Berra, NYY 18
Runs Batted In
Berra, NYY 51
Stolen Bases
Rivera, CWS 16
Games Won
Sullivan, BOS 11
Strikeouts
Turley, NYY 81
ERA
Wright, BAL 1.79

LEAGUE LEADERS:

Batting
Ashburn, Phi .370
Runs
Snider, Brk 89
Hits
Ashburn, Phi 143
Doubles
Aaron, Mil 35(?)
Triples
Long, Pit 10
Home Runs
Kluszewski, Cn 35
R. B. I.'s
Kluszewski, Cn 84
Stolen Bases
Boyer, StL 19
Games Won
Burdette, Mil 13
E. R. A.
Schmidt, StL 2.24
Strikeouts
Roberts, Phi 119
Saves
Meyer, Phi 11

Classified Ads

Rates for TTS subscribers: Free for up to 30 words. No commercial ads. Subject must involve tabletop sports games. 5¢ per word over 30 words. Suggested categories: Wanted, For Sale, For Trade, Opponents Wanted, and League Managers Wanted. For Opponents Wanted be sure to also specify the game, your age, and - if you wish - your phone number.

Rates for non-subscribers: 5¢ per word.

Rates for owners of Gamecraft games: Free for Opponents Wanted or League Managers Wanted for these games: EI, TSG, T.H.E., or BPS. Paid otherwise.

WANTED: '61 Replay cards. **FOR SALE OR TRADE:** Exclusive Baseball Performance Batting & Pitching statistics (Cook's DX, Sisler's pitching ratings among others) \$3. NBA Guides - '71 - 2, '72 - 3, NFL Guide - '72 - 3. PTG ABA - '75 - 6, Statis - Pro NBA 58 - 9. Rick Dean, 1196 E. Diamond Dr., Tempe, AZ 85283.

WANTED: S-O-M '71 Red Sox (with extras). Top Dollar paid. Contact Bob Hannigan, 165 Sterling Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07305.

WANTED: 1967 NCAA Basketball Guide. William G. Boan, 1816 Forester Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45240.

FOR TRADE: Brandnew Negamco Football game. For any football game, Strat-O-Matic Basketball, Power Play Hockey or Top Bio. W. Patrick Donovan, 33 West Main St., Apt. 3-F, Mechanicsburg, PA. 17055.

OPPONENTS WANTED: EI or Strategy Basketball for PBM or FTF, also interested in being a manager in a league. Rick Derks, Box 219-D R no. 2, Russellville, MO. 65074.

OPPONENTS WANTED: George Pappas, 998 Cheyennest, Costa Mesa, CA. 714-540-1948. Data Boxing. Face to Face and play by mail, advanced.

NOTICE: Global League now rated for Extra Innings, Play a 4 game series, write William E. Campbell, 4525 South Cortez Avenue, Tampa, Florida 33611 for rosters and player's grading.

FOR SALE: TSG Football Game w/1971 cards \$20. Strat-O-Matic Football cards 1969, \$15. 1970, \$15. Strat-O-Matic Baseball cards 1969, \$20. 1970, \$20. All in near mint condition. R.I. Burgdahl, P.O. Box 1263, Gretna, LA. 70053.

FOR TRADE: 1956 and 1974 Statis Pro Baseball player cards (mint) available for any year, APBA or Strat-O-Matic cards. Cards must be in good condition. Contact Larry Green, 16 Monrovia St., Springfield, MA. 01104.

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FOR SALE: '76 APBA Baseball. Eric Cole, 2106 7th Ave. SW., Austin, MN 55912

FOR SALE OR TRADE: Sherco II Baseball 1976, Negamco Baseball 1976, APBA Basketball 1975-76. Will consider all offers. William Jones, 5 Harts Hill Parkway, Whitesboro, NY 13492

FOR SALE OR TRADE: '73-74 SOM Basketball game. Will buy or trade for Data Boxing, Power Play, Extra Innings games. Jeff Oehler, 807 18th St. SW, Austin, MN 55912

FOR SALE OR TRADE: Best offer, Longball (1974). APBA baseball (1975 + 1976), APBA MASTER game. Want SOM baseball, Statis Pro baseball, ASG baseball. Al Leitschuh, 3727 Foss Rd., Minneapolis, MN 55421

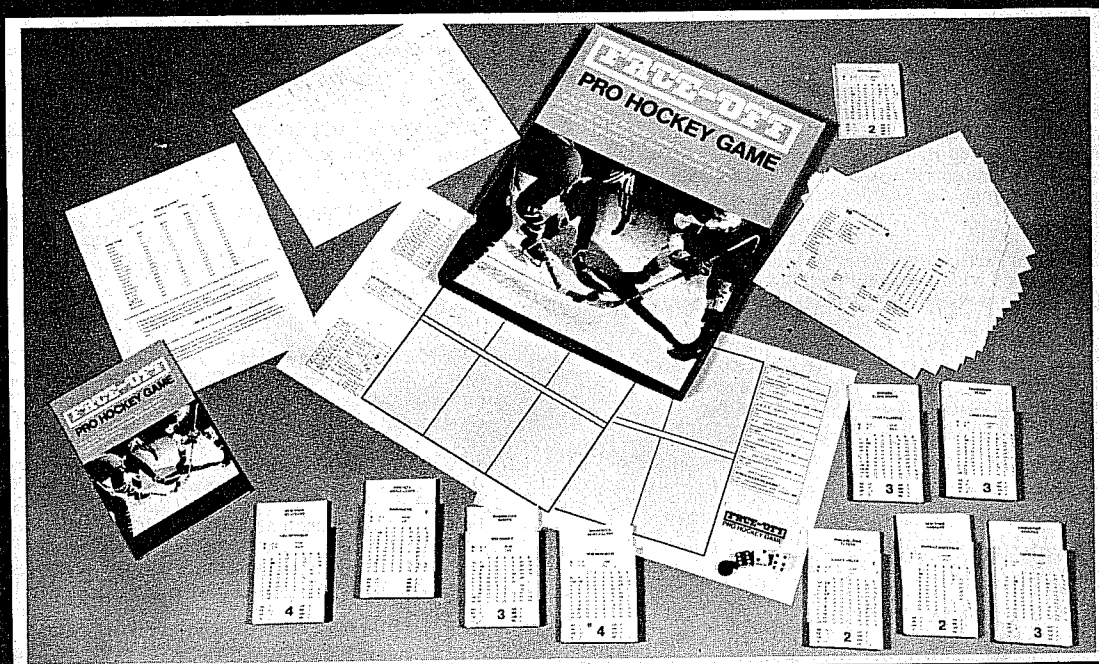
FOR SALE: Rosters of the 1916 National League to be used with EXTRA INNINGS: \$1.25 postpaid. Joaquin Lopez, Jr., 1214 A Orange Grove, Glendale, CA 91205

FOR SALE: 1976 Team statistics - a necessity for any replay. Batting stats include 16 categories (AB, R, OR, HR, SB, etc.). Pitching stats include 16 categories. Price is 25 cents, plus 10 cents postage. Tom Kopping, Box 3052, Walnut Creek, CA 94598

FOR SALE OR TRADE: APBA - NBA Basketball game 75/76 season -- Mint condition -- William Jones, 5 Harts Hill Pkwy., Whitesboro, NY 13492

FOR SALE OR TRADE: 1970 ed. BLM Football (complete), 1971 ed. BLM Basketball (complete). Trade for Power Play hockey, Replay, RLB, TSG (season sets) APBA Football and baseball, BLM baseball (cards). Terry Baxter, 1309 Whitney Ln., Rolla, MO 65401

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