

How To Get Started and Manual Addendum

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How to Start Your Own Fantasy League

Putting together a fantasy league is relatively easy. All you need is a few friends who love baseball.

Typically, leagues have between six and 12 teams, but you can make a go of it with either more or fewer teams. Often teams are owned by partnerships, so if you work in an office full of baseball fans, you should be able to accommodate everyone who wants to play.

There are those who will tell you that you must absolutely follow a certain set of guidelines and regulations, or your league will be an abomination. In reality, part of the fun is making up your own rules and guidelines and making your league perfect for you.

Remember the only constant for all fantasy leagues is that they're based on the current statistics of real-life major league ballplayers.

A typical league will require each team to have two players at each infield position, five or six outfielders, and eight or nine pitchers — often with the provision that a certain number will be starting pitchers, and the rest will be relievers.

In addition to these “active” players (players whose statistics are figured into the team's totals), some leagues also have “reserves” (players they can substitute into their lineup for injured and/or slumping players). Other leagues allow teams to “sign” free agents and “drop” or “disable” other players when they so choose. (When a team makes a substitution, the statistics generated by the outgoing player count until the time of the change; the statistics generated by the new player count from there-

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after) And, of course, making trades with other teams in your league is not only permitted, but strongly encouraged. The whole idea, after all, is to try to simulate what it's like to own and manage a professional sports franchise.

The “traditional” fantasy-league statistics are *home runs*, *RBI's*, *stolen bases*, and *batting average* for hitters; and *wins*, *ERA*, *saves* and *ratio* ([hits allowed + walks allowed] divided by innings pitched) for pitchers. Many leagues use other stats in addition to, and sometimes instead of, the traditional eight. Among other popular choices are *runs*, *hits*, and *total bases* for hitters; and *win-loss percentage* and *strikeouts* for pitchers.

Standings are determined by assigning points to each team in each category based on overall rankings within that category and based on the number of teams in the league. For example, imagine a 10-team league that uses eight statistics. The highest possible score would be 80 (8 x 10) and the lowest would be 8 (8 x 1) because first place in each statistical category would be worth 10 points, second place would be worth nine, and so on, down to one point for last place.

Of course, as in real-life, you can see what the standings are *during* the season, but ultimately it's the *final* standings that count.

If you're a baseball fanatic and you've never been in a league, get ready for the time of your life.

If you simply can't get a league going, or want to experiment on your own before getting involved in a full-blown league, try using *The MicroLeague System* and let us know

how your team performs. We'll publicize the most successful owners and teams in our newsletter.

Here's how the MicroLeague System works:

Select a name for your team and draft any players you want. But you must adhere to a salary cap of 200 units.

Use real-life salaries to determine the unit value of each player, with each \$100,000 of salary counting as 1 unit. Hence, a player who makes a paltry \$200,000 a year will use up only 2 of your units, a player who makes \$700,000 will use up 7, a player who makes \$3 million will use up 30, and so forth.

Remember, your total payroll may not exceed the salary cap.

Select 15 players whose positions break down this way:

Catcher	—1
First baseman	—1
Second baseman	—1
Shortstop	—1
Third baseman	—1
Outfielders	—3
Designated hitter	—1
Starting pitchers	—4
Relief pitchers	—2

Note: To be eligible at a position, an offensive player must have played at least 20 games at that position last year (or at least half of his games). Any player may be used as a designated hitter. Starting pitchers must have started at least half the games they appeared in,

and relievers must have relieved in at least half of their appearances.

Enter your team in *Fantasy Manager* just as you would a whole league.

On the *Define Scoring* screen of *Fantasy Manager* (see page 6 of the manual), choose "FIXED," and assign these values:

Home runs	3	Wins	5
Troubles	1	Losses	minus-5
Hits	1	Saves	3
Stolen bases	1	Strikeouts	1
Runs	1	Earned runs	minus-1
RBI's	1	Walks	minus-1
Walks	1		

Now sit back, and see how good a general manager you are.

When you update the statistics (page 9 of the manual), *Fantasy Manager* will compute your team's total score to date.

Keep us posted as to how you're doing, and watch for our newsletter to see how your team stacks up.

Note: If you miss the beginning of the season, draft a team at any point of the season and count the statistics from the time of the draft onward. This goes not only for the MicroLeague System, but for all Fantasy or Rotisserie Leagues. We'll publicize the best second-half GM's as well.

Quick Keys

For those of you who do not have, or use, a mouse there are a few keys that you can use that are not mentioned in the manual. For instance, if you were trying to input stats you may need to use the [insert] key to access information. Whenever there is a field available for user input, but the cursor is not blinking, you can use the [insert] key and the blinking cursor will appear. Once the cursor appears you can input the needed data into the field.

If you are in the middle of editing or inputting information and you want to skip a section, use the [tab] key. This will let you jump from field to field so you can make changes only to the fields you want. You can also use the up or down arrow keys. They will perform the same function as the [tab] key. Please note that the left and right arrow keys only let you move left or right within the field you are in. If there is a field that you want to edit to the right of the field you are in, use the [tab] or down arrow keys.

Whenever you are in a screen that has both user inputs and toggles, use the [alt] + [toggle letter]. As an example, in the League Setup screen you have two available toggles and two available inputs. The toggles are 1) the National, American, or both Leagues and 2) the east, west, or both divisions. The inputs are how many teams you want in your league and the league name. Without hitting [esc] you can use either toggle. [alt] + [A] toggles you through the leagues and [alt] + [B] toggles you through the divisions. When there are two types of selections use the [alt]+[selection letter] to access the toggles.

Utility Pitchers

Many Rotisserie and Fantasy league players use a "Utility Pitcher" in their rosters. There is no slot for a utility pitcher in this program, but that doesn't mean you can't have one. All you need to do is add one to the amount of pitchers you can have on your team. If you have nine pitchers and one utility, just make it ten and draft the utility pitcher last. The program is very flexible this way, so be creative.

USA TODAY Demo

On the Update Stats Screen there is an option that is not fully explained. The USA TODAY demo lets you link up to the USA TODAY Sports Center and try it out for free. The Stats Service is only part of what USA TODAY has to offer. Take the complimentary "ride" and see all the news and information you can access. It fulfills all your sports needs with box scores, standings, transactions, and injury reports, all updated 24 hours a day. Your first 30 minutes (up to 3 sessions) are "on the Sports Center", you pay nothing. An online application will be provided for you to become a member of the USA TODAY Sports Center, once you have expired your 30 minutes. So sign on and enjoy. (Modem required)

System Settings

When you press [I] from the main menu you will go to the System Settings screen. There are a variety of options for you to select. The options are as follows:

- [A]- Member Handle
- [B] - Member Password
- [C] - Hide/View Communications
- [D] - Telenet Phone
- [E] - Tymnet Phone
- [F] - Gateway Script Entry
- [G] - Port (address) & IRQ (address)
- [H] - Baud Rate
- [I] - Init Modem Command
- [J] - Dial Prefix
- [K] - Dial Suffix
- [L] - Init Response
- [M] - Connect Response
- [N] - Fail Response
- [O] - Busy Response
- [P] - Print (LPT1 or LPT2)
- [Q] - Printer Init

[A] allows you to change your Member Handle

[B] allows you to change your Member Password.

[C] allows you to see everything that is going on when you dial the Sports Center. You would see the member information being passed as well as the password. If you would rather not see these things and just be prompted when you need to do something, leave this selection as "Hide Communications".

[D] and [E] allow you to store the access numbers for both

Telenet and Tymnet. This way if you are having trouble with one you can immediately use the other.

If you need a script for using Gateway press [F] and a pop-up window will appear allowing you to enter your script.

A modem can be a very difficult item. If you need to change your port or your port and IRQ address press [G]. When you press [G] a window will pop-up with [F1]-[F4] listing the Com port 1-4, while [F5] lets you define the port address and the IRQ address. You would input the new address in the appropriate boxes and hit [esc] when you are done. If you are not familiar with these terms please refer to your systems user manual or your modems user manual.

[H] gives you the ability to change your communication speed from 1200 to 2400 baud. If you are not sure what the speed of your modem is please refer to its user manual.

[I] allows you to send a specific initialization string to the modem. An example may be for people dialing internationally. You can tell your modem to wait until a certain signal has been given before you continue with communications. To do this you would input "?K". This would tell the modem to send the character K to the receiving modem. Once it has sent this character the modem is to "wait" until the receiving modem sends it back. When it sends it back the communications will continue.

If you need to dial a prefix or suffix before you can dial the appropriate access number you would need to use [J] or [K]. [J] allows you to input the needed prefix such as:

ATDT9~(your Telenet or Tymnet access number). The "~" character tells the system to wait one second before

continuing to dial the rest of the number. Please note that you do not input the phone number. The program picks up the phone number from [D] or [E]. The same holds true for [H]. All you need to input is the actual suffix, not the access number.

[L], [M], [N], and [O] are all user definable response signals received by the "receiving" modem. When you connect you can have the program respond with "That's Great" by press [M] and entering it into the box. The same holds true for Init Response, Fail Response, and Busy Response.

You have a choice of printer addresses, either LPT1 or LPT2. when you press [P] a pop up menu will appear with the two choices. Press [F1] if your printer is connected to LPT1 and [F2] if your printer is connected to LPT2.

You also have the option of sending specific commands to your printer. An example would be if you needed to set your printer into landscape mode. You would want to select [Q] from the System Settings Screen. Once you make that selection a pop-up window will appear and you would input \027\038\108\049\079 (For an HP III printer). Now whenever you print you will print in landscape mode.

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