**I. Membership**

The North American Baseball Conference (NABC) consists of eighteen members, six members in the East Division, six members in the Central Division and six members in the West Division.

**II. The Commissioner**

A. The Commissioner, who serves with the approval of the league members, is in charge of the schedule, the rookie draft, the free agent draft and player transactions. He also decides all conflicts and protests. The commissioner has the duty of enforcing all league rules. The commissioner requires an approval by 2/3 of the membership prior to expelling a league member.

B. The commissioner distributes a monthly newsletter that contains league news, player trades, league standings and various statistical leaders.

**III. The Schedule**

A. The schedule is 162 games and is arranged by the commissioner. Each series is either 3, 4 or 5 games. Games are deemed to be played on 4 consecutive days, with no rain outs. Five game series include a doubleheader on the 4th day. Three game series have an off day on the 4th day. The season runs from April through September, with playoffs in October. Series within a month may be played in any sequence.

B. Post-season playoffs begin immediately after the regular season is complete. The three division winners and the three teams with the best records that are not division winners are in the playoffs as wild cards. The division winners are seeded 1, 2 and 3 based on won-lost record and the wild cards are seeded 4, 5 and 6 based on won-lost records. The sixth seeded team plays the third seeded team and the fifth seeded team plays the fourth seeded team in best of seven series in the first round. The first and second seeded teams have first round byes. The first round series winner with the better regular season won-loss record plays the second seed and the other first round series winner plays the first seed in the second round best of seven series.  The winners meet in the best of seven World Series. All post-season playoff games 1, 2, 6 and 7 are played at the home of the higher seeded team. All best of seven series have travel days after game 2 and 5.

C. In the event of a tie in the standings at the completion of the regular season, playoff positions will be decided as follows:

1. Tie for 1st place in division: One game playoff

2. Tie for seeding position: a. Winner of season series between the teams

 b. Coin flip by the commissioner

3. Tie for final wild card position: One game playoff

 One game playoffs are played at the home of the winner of the season series between the two teams involved. However, a one game playoff to resolve a 1st place tie in a division will be played only in the event that the team winning the division would gain a 1st round bye (#1 or #2 seed) or that the team losing the division would not get a wild card berth. If the tied teams would all get seeds in the #3 to #6 range, then use the tie for seeding position tiebreakers.

D. The daily post-season schedule listed below is used to determine injury duration and starting pitcher rest (4 days off following each start). All pitchers are deemed fully rested on Day 1.

Day # Scheduled Event Day # Scheduled Event Day # Scheduled Event Day # Scheduled Event

 8 4/3 @ 6/5 16 2/1 @ 6/3/5/4 24 WS Game 2

 1 Playoff Ties 9 Travel 17 2/1 @ 6/3/5/4 25 Travel

 2 Travel 10 5/6 @ 4/3 18 2/1 @ 6/3/5/4 26 WS Game 3

 3 5/6 @ 4/3 11 5/6 @ 4/3 19 Travel 27 WS Game 4

 4 5/6 @ 4/3 12 Travel 20 6/3/5/4 @ 2/1 28 WS Game 5

 5 Travel 13 6/3/5/4 @ 2/1 21 6/3/5/4 @ 2/1 29 Travel

 6 4/3 @ 6/5 14 6/3/5/4 @ 2/1 22 Travel 30 WS Game 6

 7 4/3 @ 6/5 15 Travel 23 WS Game 1 31 WS Game 7

**IV. Mailing Instructions**

A. Visiting manager - Each month, the visiting manager mails his roster and playing instructions to each opposing home manager. These must be E-mailed or postmarked by the 5th of the month. Alternatively, the visiting manager may complete arrangements by the 5th of the month to play the games face-to-face, but should still send instructions, to be safe.

B. Home manager - Upon receiving the instructions from the visiting manager, the home manager plays the games. If instructions are not received by the 12th of the month, the home manager contacts the visiting manager or the commissioner to obtain emergency instructions and then plays the games to the best and fairest of his abilities. Upon completion of the games, he E-mails the F-file for the series and a note documenting any carryover injuries to the visiting manager and to the commissioner. (Actually, it is strongly recommended that F-files with series results should be E-mailed to the entire league membership). These must be E-mailed by the 26th of the month. Both the home and road manager should retain an electronic copy of the F-file to avoid lost data problems.

C. All managers - Upon completion of all home series, each manager E-mails all of his home series F-files to the commissioner (if he hasn’t already in B above) and includes a listing of all carryover injuries to either team in those home series. (This can be either 1 F-file with all of the series in it, or individual F-files for each series). These must be E-mailed by the 26th of the month.

D. Commissioner - Upon receiving each manager's monthly F-files, the commissioner loads them and then creates and distributes a new C-file and publishes the monthly newsletter which contains current league standings, season-to-date league leaders, carryover injuries, monthly reported highlights, reported trades and updated rosters.

E. Lateness - Penalty points are assessed for missing the mailing deadline for instructions and series and monthly F-files. If the deadline is missed by 1 or 2 days, 1 point is assessed. If the deadline is missed by 3 or 4 days, 3 points are assessed. If the deadline is missed by 5 or more days, 1 point per day is assessed. If all deadlines for the month are met, a 1 point credit is awarded. At the end of the season, draft choices in the next rookie draft will be lost according to the following schedule:

 5- 9 points 6th pick 35-39 points 1st and 6th picks

 10-14 points 5th pick 40-44 points 1st and 5th picks

 15-19 points 4th pick 45-49 points 1st and 4th picks

 20-24 points 3rd pick 50-54 points 1st and 3rd picks

 25-29 points 2nd pick 55 or more 1st and 2nd picks

 30-34 points 1st pick

 If a lost pick was traded, the next round's pick plus an 8th round pick is lost. If instructions or series F-file results are sent late, report it to the commissioner and include the late postmark or E-mail date. Consistent lateness is grounds for dismissal from the league.

**V. Rules of Play**

A. All games must be played with any version 5.75 or higher of the Windows APBA Computer game, and the official rules of baseball, except as modified below.

B. Designated Hitter - In the NABC, no pitcher may ever bat, nor may any player designated as the DH take a defensive position. The DH may be the only backup at another position.

C. Injury Duration - Injury durations are determined by the BBW Computer game. The injury is for the number of games specified by the computer. The game count begins with the next scheduled game of the series. If the injury duration carries past the last game of the series, the remaining number of games will carryover to games in the next month, beginning in the series number in the next month corresponding to the series number that the injury occurred. (Example: Injury occurs in series 3 of April; carryover games begin in series 3 in May). If an injury occurs in series 7 of a month, consider this the same as series 1. If the carryover games will not all fit into the next month, then the carryover games will begin in successive earlier series in the next month, until the carryover games will fit into the next month. If the carryover games are more than the games scheduled in the next month, then the injury begins in series 1 and carries over to series 1 of the following month. Multiple carryover injuries within a month will be added together and applied as one injury assumed to occur in the earlier series in the month. The master schedule dictates the order of games within each month for purposes of carryover injury duration. Carryover injuries from September are applied in the playoffs on a daily rather than a number of games basis, always beginning with Day 1 of the playoff schedule. All playoff injuries carryover to the next series on a daily basis. All carryover injuries must be reported to the visiting manager quickly so that he may plan his instructions. Please report all carryover injuries to the commissioner for inclusion in the monthly newsletter.

D. Rain Outs - If a game is rained out after it is an official game with a winner (either team leading after 5 innings, or the home team leading after 4 and 1/2 innings), then the game is official and complete in the NABC. If it has not reached official status with a winner (less than 5 innings played, or tied after 5 innings), then the game must be replayed from the start with the same lineups and starting pitchers. Any injuries that occur during a rained out game that must be replayed do not count. A rained out game that must be replayed is treated as if it never happened.

E. Player Usage - All batters are classified for usage limitations based on the actual number of official plate appearances (at bats, walks, HBPs, sacrifices, sacrifice flies) during the previous Major League season. No player may play a defensive position that is not listed on his card unless forced by prior substitution and injury or ejection. The last available player at a position can be removed from the game only by injury or ejection.

 **Regular Batter** - had 300 or more official plate appearances. Regular J-0 and J-1 batters may start all games of a series, regular J-2 batters may start 4 games of a series, regular J-3 batters may start 3 games of a series and regular J-4 batters may start 2 games of a series. All regular batters may start in all games of a playoff series. A start is defined as an appearance in a game before the 7th inning when the player remains in the game at a defensive position or DH. Replacing an injured or ejected player does not count as a start.

 **Limited Batter** - had 150 to 299 official plate appearances. Limited batters may start only 1 game of a series in the regular season. A limited batter may start 2 games of a 7 game playoff series. This rule is waived at a position (or at another position if a regular player can be shifted to the position that suffered the injury) if the named starter is injured or ejected. In the 7th inning or later, limited batters may play in all games.

 **Restricted Batter** - had 50 to 149 official plate appearances. Restricted batters may not start a game unless there are 2 or more injuries and/or ejections at a position, except he could replace an injured or ejected J-0 regular player. In the 8th inning or later, restricted batters may play in all games. A restricted batter may pinch-hit or pinch-run prior to the 8th inning provided that he does not stay in the game on defense. He may stay in as the DH, provided that he is removed for a pinch-hitter the next time he would bat, unless still in the same inning.

 **Draftable Batter** - had 30 to 49 official plate appearances. Draftable batters are eligible to be chosen in the rookie and free agent drafts, but may not participate in and NABC games.

 **Zero-Restricted Batter** - had fewer than 30 official plate appearances. May not participate in any NABC games.

F. A team's 26 player active roster must include a backup player for each position. Restricted players (rule V.E) may not be the backup except for J-0 regular players.

G. Limited Catchers - A Limited batter may start at Catcher in 2 games of any 4 or 5 game regular season series or in 3 games of any 7 game playoff series, only if he had 225 or more official plate appearances, and actually appeared in 20 or more games at Catcher, or 40 or more games at Catcher in the previous season.

H. Defensive Positions - A player may not appear at a defensive position listed on his card more than once per series prior to the 7th inning unless he meets regular batter usage (F) criteria and one of the following requirements:

 The position is listed first on his card (\* in the Computer game), or

 He actually appeared in 20 or more games at the position, or

 He actually appeared in 40 or more games at the position in the previous year.

 In order to start a game at a position (except in case of injury to the starter at that position), a player must meet one of the following requirements:

 The position is listed first on his card (\* in the Computer game), or

 He actually appeared in 5 or more games at the position, or

 He actually appeared in 20 or more games at the position in the previous year, or

 He is rated Fielding 2 or better at the position (C-7, 1B-3, 2B-7, SS-8, 3B-4, OF-2).

 Otherwise, the player may not play the position until the 7th inning or later. This rule does not apply to Restricted batters, who can not play any position prior to the 8th inning.

I. Batter **and Runner** Hit and Run Eligibility - A batter must have a Hit and Run Ability rating of 2 or more to attempt the Hit and Run play. **The Hit and Run play may NOT be called if the runner on First Base has a Steal Allowance rating of G26 or higher, or any R or N rating.**

J. Catcher's Rest - A player may not start at the Catcher position more than 4 games in a series during the regular season. Any player who plays defensive Catcher prior to the 7th inning (except due to injury or ejection) is considered to have started a game. A player, although not allowed to catch a 5th game, may appear at DH or another position on his card before the 7th inning, provided he meets the normal starting requirements.

K. Starting Pitchers - The starting pitcher rotation must consist of a different starting pitcher for each game of a regular season series. During the regular season, each starting pitcher is limited to the actual number of starts he had during the previous Major League season. During the playoffs, each starting pitcher is again limited to the actual number of starts he had during the previous Major League season. Any pitcher with 10 or fewer actual MLB starts will be further limited to 1 start in each post-season 7 game series and also may not start in any post-season play-in games to break ties to get into the playoffs or determine seeding in the playoffs. **Starting pitchers may not pitch past the 9th inning. They must be removed from the game at the beginning of the 10th inning.**

L. Relief Pitcher Used as a Starter - If a relief pitcher (no actual starts) must start because of injuries to other starters, he is limited to 5 innings pitched in that start.

M. Rain Delay - In the event of a rain delay that occurs in a BBW Computer game prior to the beginning of the game shut down the game and start over, such that the starting pitchers would begin the game with their full original grade. If a rain delay occurs during the game, continue to play.

N. Relief Pitchers - Relief pitchers must be designated in the instructions. Relievers may only make relief appearances in as many series as they had actual relief appearances. Starts not used may be counted as relief appearances, but not vice versa. All pitchers are classified for relief inning limitations based on their actual number of innings pitched, although there is no per game innings limit on relievers. In an extra inning game, the last available reliever may exceed the innings limit. In an extra inning game if the last available reliever has reached his limit, he may be replaced by another reliever who reached his limit in a previous game.

 **Regular Reliever** - had 90 or more innings pitched. May pitch 4 innings in any regular season series, 3 innings in a 1 game playoff, and 7 innings in a 7 game playoff.

 **Limited Reliever** - had 55 to 89.2 innings pitched. May pitch 3 innings in any regular season series, 2 innings in a 1 game playoff, and 5 innings in a 7 game playoff.

 **Restricted Reliever -** had 30 to 54.2 innings pitched. May pitch 2 innings in any regular season series, 1 inning in a 1 game playoff, and 3 innings in a 7 game playoff.

**Super - Restricted Reliever -** had 20 to 29.2 innings pitched. May pitch 1 inning in any regular season series, 1 inning total in all 1 game play-in games, and 2 innings in a 7 game playoff.

 **Zero Restricted Reliever** - had fewer than 20 innings pitched. May not participate in any NABC games.

O. Starting Pitchers as Relievers - If the last available pitcher is injured or ejected, one of the pitchers from the starting rotation may be used in relief. It can be any starter except the one that started this game, but the relief appearance counts against his season total of relieves or starts used as relieves (if he had no relieves left).

P. Relief of Starting Pitchers - Starting pitchers may not be relieved prior to the start of the 6th inning (except by injury or ejection) until they have met one of the following criteria:

 Allowed 3 or more runs before the end of the 1st or 2nd inning, or

 Allowed 2 or more runs before the end of the 3rd inning, or

 Allowed 1 or more runs before the end of the 4th or 5th inning.
This rule is waived in the case when a rain delay causes a reduction in the starting pitcher’s grade.

Q. Pitchers used as Pinch Runners - Pitchers used as pinch runners may not attempt a straight stolen base. They may try to steal if forced on a hit and run play.

R. Long Relief - Only in the event that a team's starting pitcher is injured or ejected from the game, one pitcher, who is rated as a starter only, is not scheduled to start in the series, and has not relieved in the series may exceed his normal relief innings pitched limit, up to a maximum of 11 innings in that game, provided that he pitch in only 1 game of the series. Split grade and asterisked relief pitchers are not eligible for this rule. This appearance, if exceeding his innings limit, counts as a start against the pitcher's season limits. Pitchers who relieve multiple games in a series are subject to the normal relief innings in a series limit based on their actual innings pitched. Those types of relief appearances count as a relief against the pitcher's season limits.

S. Each team may choose to play their home games in either Domed or Not Domed stadiums. However, all post-season games must be played in Domed stadiums in order to avoid rain out situations, so that the NABC can match MLB conditions which disallow any ranin shortened games in the post-season.

T. A player may be added to the roster in a post-season series to replace an injured player.  The injured player would not be allowed to return to the roster during that series.  Also, if the injury did not carry through the entire series, any usage of a Limited Batter beyond his eligible number of games or any batter playing a position beyond his games limit at a position would be limited to the length of the injury, not the remainder of the series.

U. Shohei Ohtani may bat in games in which he is the pitcher.  This would invalidate the use of the DH for Ohtani’s team in that game.  If Ohtani is removed from the game or is moved to another position during the game, then a pinch hitter must be used for the relief pitcher for every subsequent plate appearance.

**VI. The Teams**

A. Team Rosters - The team rosters are carried forward from year to year. Each team is allowed 26 players for a playing roster and the rest of the roster are on a "farm" team. A maximum of 38 (41 for first year expansion teams) players may be controlled by one team. Players may be moved from the "farm" team to the playing roster and vice versa for each series. Roster size maximums can only be exceeded during the time period from October 1st (when trading reopens after the regular season) until the post draft cut down date. Minimum roster size is 32. Changing players on a team is done by 1) trades, 2) the rookie draft (in March every year after the new cards and diskettes are available), and 3) the free agent draft.

B. Trading Procedures - Trades may be made at any time except from August 1 through September 30, but trades of players for a particular season must be completed before the first games of August. A trade may involve an unequal number of players. If an unequal trade is made, the team receiving excess players must cut his roster back to the maximum immediately (except during the time period from October 1st until the post draft cut down) as part of the trade announcement. Players cut in this manner are unowned until the next draft. Players cut in this manner between the cut date and the free agent draft do not become part of the Free Agent pool. The team receiving fewer players can only increase its roster by a future uneven trade until the next draft. All trades are to be reported to the Commissioner immediately and must not include any conditions or options. The report must specify the month the trade will be effective. A new manager may not complete a trade until 2 weeks after he has been announced by newsletter to the NABC. The Commissioner will announce the actual date.

C. Return Trades – If a player is traded from Team A to Team B, he may not be traded back to Team B from Team A until the end of the following season. A season is deemed to start at the end of the previous regular season. Example: The 2012 season began on October 1, 2011. Any player traded after that date can not be return traded until after the end of the 2013 season.

D. Trading Deadlines - Deadlines for trading current season players are shown below. All trades become effective on a month boundary and must be reported to the Commissioner by midnight Eastern time according to the following schedule:

 March 31 - Effective in April April 30 - Effective in May

 May 31 - Effective in June June 30 - Effective in July

 July 31 - Effective in August

 July 31 is the final deadline for trading current season cards.

E. New Player Procedure - Each NABC member must buy their own computer diskette. When the new diskette is issued, the Commissioner lists all unowned players (rookies) and sends the list to all members for the rookie draft. All players on the diskette who are not Zero-Restricted by the minimum actual appearance requirements (rules V.E and V.N) are eligible to be included in the rookie draft. Players who are Zero-Restricted may not participate in any NABC games and may not be drafted, but they, as well as players who are not on the current diskette, may be retained on a team's roster. After the draft, all teams must cut their rosters to the maximum player limits and report all cuts to the Commissioner. The Commissioner then prepares the free agent list of all players on the diskette that are not Zero-Restricted and are unowned.

F. Rookie Draft Procedure - Any player on the diskette who is not Zero-Restricted and who is not on one of the NABC team rosters from the previous year is classified as a rookie. Each team drafts as many rookies as it has rights. Each team has 8 such rights, but may trade them, thus reducing the number of rookies it picks. Draft choices for future seasons can not be traded until October 1st of the second preceding year. For example, 2015 draft choices can not be traded until October 1, 2013. The reverse of the previous season's won-lost records is used for the order of drafting. If 2 or more teams are tied based on regular season won-loss records, the better regular season head-to-head won-loss record will be used to determine the order of drafting among the tied teams in the first round.  If still tied, a coin flip will be used to break the tie(s). The tied teams would draft in order determined by the tie breaker in all odd numbered rounds of the rookie draft and even numbered rounds of the free agent draft.  The tied teams would draft in the reverse order determined by the tie breaker in all even numbered rounds of the rookie draft and odd numbered rounds of the free agent draft.  If one or more of the tied teams, based on regular season won-loss records, made the playoffs while other tied teams did not, the playoff teams would be considered to have a better record than the non-playoff teams and would then draft behind the non-playoff teams in all rounds. The World Series winner drafts last regardless of won-lost record. Teams may draft in person at the league meeting, via the chat room, over the phone, or from a list of preferences sent to the Commissioner prior to the draft.

G. Free Agent Draft Procedure - Any player on the diskette who is not Zero-Restricted and who is not on one of the NABC team rosters after the cut is classified as a free agent. Each team lists, in a priority sequence, the free agents it wants and the players from its roster that it will cut if the free agent is obtained. As long as a team is under the roster limit, it does not have to cut a player in order to select a free agent. Free agent choices are made in the reverse order of the previous season's late mailing penalty point standings with lower won-lost record as a tie breaker.

**VII. Protests**

A visiting team may protest any loss that it felt to be the result of the home team manager's

negligence. The Commissioner may order the game to be replayed.

**VIII. Amendments**

A. Amendments to this constitution may be adopted only between seasons. Any member may propose an amendment. Proposed amendments must be approved by a 2/3 majority vote of the active membership in order to be adopted.

B. Amendment Procedure - All rule change proposals must be submitted to the Commissioner by a date established by the Commissioner. The list of proposals will be published. All members will have one month to comment on any of the rule change proposals via E-mail. The commissioner will publish the official rule change ballot, along with all comments (without names).

C. Exception - Rule changes can still be proposed in January or February or at the draft meeting to cover emergency situations. These would be discussed at the draft meeting and are expected to be for only extremely exceptional situations.

**IX. Base Stealing Guidelines**

The Master game Steal Allowance Chart is published as a "guideline" for straight steal attempts in the Computer game. We are looking to provide realism in the frequency of steal attempts, especially for high success rate but infrequent stealers. In some versions of the Computer game, steal success chances are reduced when attempting a straight steal outside these guidelines. In newer versions, A through G stealers are not penalized, but the league suggests restraint with E's, F's, and especially with G and R stealers.