# Better Lucky than Good League (BLGL) ~ FAQ

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The answers here are based on the official rules contained within the <u>BLGL Constitution</u>. If there is a discrepancy between what is here and what is in the Constitution...the Constitution wins...and Chris H. gets 10 lashes with a wet noodle.

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Have a question that's not listed? E-Mail the Commish: somnolentiac@yahoo.com

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# **GENERAL QUESTIONS**

# What is this league going to cost me?

The entry fee is \$100. Plus, there are fees for using more than 5 Cuts (which release a player and place them on waivers). The 6th Cut is \$1, the 7th is \$2, etc. Most teams end up spending \$115 - \$125 for the year. There may also be some degree of cost in the form of mental anguish, depending on how many injuries your team endures ;-)

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#### What can I win?

All entry fees and transaction fees are pooled in the "Money Pot". Sportsline fees and any other league fees are paid out of that fund. The remainder goes out to the top four scoring teams at the end of the year. The league champion gets 50%, the runner up gets 25%, 3rd place gets 15%, and 4th place gets 10%. Back to the top...

#### How is scoring calculated?

Teams are ranked based on their cumulative team stats in 10 categories: Home Runs (HR), Runs Batted In (RBI), Runs (R), Stolen Bases (SB), On Base Percentage (OBP), Earned Run Average (ERA), Walks+Hits per Inning Pitched (WHIP), Strikeouts (K), Saves (S), and Wins+Quality Starts (W+QS). For each category, each team is ranked and the team last in a category receives 1 point, 2nd to last receives 2 points, etc. Therefore, the most points a team may get in a 10 team league is 100 and the least is 10. We track standings throughout the season for the purposes of granting various player claims, but as far as the prize money is concerned, the only stats and standings that count are the final ones. Back to the top...

If only the top four teams get paid, why should I try hard near the end of the season if I find myself likely out of the money?

Here are three good reasons. If you pay attention and stay active:

- a) You may be able to get some keepers from the FA Pool,
- b) You may be able to get closer to 5th place which is the team that gets the best Reserve Draft picks (followed by 6th, 7th...),
- c) We'll all like you more because that makes it more challenging and fun for everyone else.

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# What websites are used for this league?

These websites are used:

- a) Sportsline for our current stats, rosters, message board, etc: http://blgl.baseball.sportsline.com/
- b) Our MSN group for historic listing of official transactions and standings and links to all versions of our Constitution including the most recent:

http://groups.msn.com/BetterLuckyThanGoodLeague

c) The Meet the GMs page - for personal info on the GMs trying to kick you butt:

http://www.bludgeonriffola.com/blgl\_gms/BLGL\_General\_Managers.html

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# PRE-DRAFT QUESTIONS

#### Are there any players that I have to retain going into a new season?

Technically, No. However, if you do not keep a player whose contract was extended in 2006 or later, then you will be assessed a salary cap penalty equal to half of his salary times the remaining number of years if you do not keep him going into a season if (a) he is still in the NL and (b) he is not selected in the Dispersal Draft by another team.

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#### What do the contract letters mean?

Before the draft, the contract letters listed on Sportsline are as they were at the end of the previous season:

- 1) A and A\* contracts are players drafted last year or undrafted players picked-up from the FA Pool.
- 2) B contracts are players who were A or A\* two years ago, were kept, and finished their 2nd year last year.
- 3) contract letters after B and before T are extended contracts.
- 4) T contracts are players who finished their final season under the current contract last year.
- 5) If you have a player with a contract with two asterisks (e.g. R\*\*), then it was extended prior to 2006 and not subject to current salary cap penalty rules other than the standard penalty for cutting the player during the regular season. You may choose to not keep these players going into a new season without any penalty.

If a player is kept, his contract letter will advance one letter in the alphabet for the upcoming season except:

- 1) T contracts can't be "kept". His last owner gets his Topping Rights at the Auction Draft.
- 2) B contracts may be extended by request on a Keeper List. If they are not extended, B's become T's (last year). If they are extended, we count back from T in the alphabet however many years the contract is extended. For example, a contract extended two years becomes an R contract. See Constitution for a diagram showing this.

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#### What about the X, XX and XT contracts I see on rosters?

In previous years, we had a special contract classification for players traded to the NL from the AL if you claimed them at the \$25 level (you can also claim at the standard \$10 level, but this special contract didn't apply). The contract assigned was "X". There were two differences between a regular 1st year contract (e.g. A) and an "X":

- a) The contract was for three years max only, no extensions.
- b) They couldn't be traded.

Following the 2005 season, the returning owners voted to get rid of those stipulations on traded AL players claimed at the \$25 level which effectively eliminated the need for a special "X" contract. That's why you don't see it mentioned in the latest version of the Constitution. However, the players currently assigned an X, XX or XT contract are grandfathered under the old rules. Here is a link to the section of the previous version of the Constitution that includes these rules:

http://www.bludgeonriffola.com/Better\_Lucky\_than\_Good\_v15.html#ch7 If you have one of these players who is listed as an X or XX, here are your options going into a new season:

- a) Keep them (X's will become XX's and XX's will become XT),
- b) Don't keep them and they become Free Agents.

They can't be claimed in the Dispersal Draft if you don't keep them. They'll simply become Free Agents and may be nominated on Draft Day.

If you have an \$50 X player on your team listed in Minors/ML status, then those players were selected in the Reserve Draft last year and never activated. Here are your options on these players:

- a) Keep him and fit him in your active lineup. His entire \$50 salary will count towards your cap. Once the season starts, you will not get a free move to take them out of your active lineup if they are still in the AL. This option is probably a very bad idea.
- b) Don't keep him and he becomes eligible for the draft for everyone.
- c) Since he was never activated the year before (that's what Minors/ML status is used for on Sportsline), slide him into Reserve status using Rule XVIII, E: <a href="http://www.bludgeonriffola.com/Better\_Lucky\_than\_Good\_v16.html#ch18">http://www.bludgeonriffola.com/Better\_Lucky\_than\_Good\_v16.html#ch18</a> Back to the top...

# What are those things listed on my roster that aren't players?

Each year, each team is issued 3 Reserve Draft picks for the next season. They are listed on their team as AA#, where AA are the team owner's initials and the # is the round of the Reserve Draft in which the pick is for. So, each year I'm issued CH1, CH2 and CH3 and they'll be listed on my roster and usable in the

following year's Reserve Draft. These are tradeable. The order of picks in the Reserve Draft is based on the previous year's final standings.

Before Draft Day, the ones on our rosters are for that year's Reserve Draft (follows the Auction Draft in which we bid for and fill our active roster). A pick that has an '\*' in it (e.g. CH\*2-A on my team) is a compensation pick granted when a player with a permanent roster spot was traded to the AL last year. The '2' means it's for the 2nd round and the '-A' part is added just in case there is another player traded out of the league that gets the team another pick in the same round. If there were, the compensation pick would look like AA\*#-B. Compensation picks always happen at the end of a round. So, CH\*2-A is a "sandwich pick" between round 2 and round 3. Btw, when you get a compensation Reserve Draft pick for a player getting traded to the AL, the round in the Reserve Draft is determined by the player's salary...the higher the salary, the lower (better) the round.

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# What else are Reserve Draft picks good for?

A couple things....

- a) Reserve Draft picks may also be used to select players left who are currently on a roster but left off of the Keeper Lists. There is a Dispersal Draft held after Keeper List deadline to distribute claimed players and the claiming team gives the team who released the player a draft pick as compensation (you always give up your lowest pick automatically). See FAQ "What happens to the players that aren't kept?"
- b) 1st round Reserve Draft picks (e.g. CH1) may also be turned in for an extra Reserve move to be used any time after Keeper Lists are due. This must be indicated in the Keeper List and there is no limit on how many 1st round picks you may turn in for extra Reserve moves. When you turn in a 1st rounder, it just goes away...making the ones that come after it a little more valuable. Back to the top...

# What do I have to put on my Keeper List?

Keeper Lists should include:

- a) names of all players the team wants to keep going into the draft in one of the 23 active roster spots,
- b) clear indication of which B contracts the team wants to extend and for how many more years,
- c) whether the team is turning-in any 1st round Reserve Draft picks for extra Reserve moves,
- d) whether the team is carrying over a player currently listed in Minors/ML status into the upcoming season in Reserved status. This player must be one that was drafted in the Reserve Draft last year and never activated.

Unless (d) is involved, all players listed on your keeper list must fit into an Active roster spot. However, you may use a Reserve move during the allowed period prior to the draft on any player to free up that active roster spot and to free up that salary for Draft Day. You may also use a Cut on a kept players and release them prior to the draft, but you will be assessed a salary cap penalty for doing so.

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#### Is there a limit on many players may I keep and put on my Keeper List?

Not a hard limit, no. You may keep any player you own who has time left on their contract (not a T contract during the previous year) who

- a) fits legally on your active roster, or
- b) may be Reserved using the special rule about players drafted in last year's Reserve Draft and never activated, or
- c) you plan to Reserve after Keeper Lists are turned in by using a Reserve move) and

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#### When are Keeper Lists due and how should they be sent?

They'll usually be due about a week before Draft Day. The Commish should let everyone know weeks in advance. If you have MS Word, I recommend you send your lists in a password protected .doc. If you don't, send an e-mail with a subject that makes it clear that it's a Keeper List and shouldn't be opened until after the deadline.

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# What happens to the players that aren't kept?

Usually about two days after Keeper Lists are due, we hold what's called a Dispersal Draft and allow teams to select players that were not kept by other teams. The procedure of claiming them is simply to send in a list of players in preferred order. Special directions are also allowed...like I only want one pitcher or \$X in salary. After the deadline, the Commish will open all the claims and divvy out players in rounds as described in the Constitution. Like Keeper Lists, send your claims in a password protected doc if possible. As with Keepers, to claim a player you must be able to fit him into your active lineup. As compensation for losing a player to another team, the claiming team sends a Reserve Draft pick to the team that released the player. Therefore, you may only claim as many players as you have Reserve Draft picks. Back to the top...

# **DRAFT QUESTIONS**

What's going to happen on Draft Day?

On Draft Day, we'll hold the Auction Draft to fill our 23-man active rosters by nominating and bidding on available players. Usually only after a few minutes break, the Auction Draft is followed by the Reserve Draft in which the teams use their Reserve Draft picks to select players (no bidding) to stash away on on their teams in Reserved status.

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#### Who can be nominated during the Auction Draft?

You may only nominate, bid on, and win players who fit into an open active roster spot on your team with respect to position eligibility rules and the salary cap (\$260). For position eligibility, the last year that the player played in the Majors is used. A player is eligible for any position at which he played 20 games during that season (usually the previous year). If he didn't play 20 games at any position that year, then he is eligible at the position(s) he played most. If he never played in the Majors, then he may only be placed into your Utility Hitter (UH) or Utility Pitcher (UP) spot.

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#### **How do Topping Rights work?**

Any players who ended the previous year on a BLGL team with a T contract are automatically released from their BLGL team going into Draft Day. However, the last team that owns these players retains what is called their "Topping Rights" or "Toppers." These rights allow the BLGL team that owns them to refrain from bidding during the Auction Draft and wait for the bidding to end. They then have 30 seconds to decide whether to take the player for \$1 more than the highest bid or let the player go to the highest bidder at the final bid.

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# Who can be selected in the Reserve Draft and what will their salary be?

Anyone not kept or drafted in the Auction Draft may be selected in the Reserve Draft. This includes Minor Leaguers, American Leaguers, active NL players, your next door neighbor, or even Barney, the purple dinosaur. The contract for these players will always start out as A\*. Their salary will be assigned as follows:

- a) a player who starts the season on an NL ML team will have a salary of \$5,
- b) a player who starts the season on an NL team (active or DL) will have a salary of \$10, and
- c) all other players will be assigned a salary of \$25 (even Barney). Note, however, that since their contract is A\*, if you activate them as a temporary replacement after Draft Day, only \$1 will count against the in-season salary cap (\$340).

# What happens to my picks after the Reserve Draft?

By making your selections in the Reserve Draft you are using the picks and they will be dropped from your team. You will, however, be issued new ones with your initials for the next year's Reserve Draft that you may trade whenever trading is allowed.

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# TRANSACTION QUESTIONS

# One of my players went on the Disabled List or sent to the minors by his NL Team. What are my options?

Your options are:

- a) You may claim a Free Agent (FA) from the FA Pool to temporarily fill the active spot while your player is on the DL or in the minor leagues. The player you pick up only needs to fit on your team position-wise and salary-wise. Most FAs have A\* contracts and their effective salary is only \$1, but there may be a few who were previously Cut so check their current salary and contract on Sportsline.com before putting in your claim. Temporary replacements from the FA Pool will go back to the FA Pool when the replaced player is activated by his NL team (unless the "60-Day Rule" is invoked).
- b) If you have a player who is on your team in Reserve or Minors status, then you may activate them as a temporary replacement. Again, make sure that they fit. Also, remember that if you use a player that is in Minors status, then you lose the option of carrying that player over to the next year in Reserve status without having to use a Reserve move. Temporary replacements from your own Reserve or Minors roster will go back to Reserve status on your team when the replaced player is activated by his NL team (unless the "60-Day Rule" is invoked).
- c) You may trade for a player to fill the open active roster spot. The complication with doing this (unless the player you trade for is in Reserve or Minors status), however, is that when you trade for a player in Active status, then they are entitled to an active roster spot even when the replaced player comes back. Because of this, you may need to use a Cut, a Reserve move, invoke the "60-Day Rule", or make another trade to keep your roster legal. d) You may do nothing Sperhaps to wait a little while for a better option to
- show up in the FA Pool. There is no direct penalty for not finding a replacement within a specified time, but not responding promptly can affect your team's standings and a team could end up being unable to trade if they don't collect enough At Bats or Innings Pitched.

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#### How does a player become eligible for a particular position?

Besides the position(s) that the player is eligible for based on the rules described above in "Who can be nominated during the Auction Draft?", after Draft Day a player will also qualify for any position at which he plays during the regular season (even if it's just once).

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#### What's the salary and contract of a player in the FA Pool?

Unless the player was ever given a permanent active roster spot during the current season and later released, or if they were just traded from the AL, then these players have a standard salary of \$10 and an A\* contract (so only \$1 of the \$10 counts against your salary cap as long as they are used strictly as a replacement for another player who went on the DL or was sent to the minors). Back to the top...

# Are players used as temporary replacements (e.g. due to an injury) treated differently salary-wise?

Usually, but not always. Most temporary replacements come from the FA Pool or from a team's own Reserve roster. Most of the time, those players have A\* contracts meaning that they were un-drafted NL players or were selected in the Reserve Draft and never given a permanent active roster spot. Players with A\* contracts activated as temporary replacements only have an effective salary of \$1 towards your salary cap. Once an A\* player is given a permanent roster spot, his contract changes to A for the rest of the season regardless of whether he is later Cut or Reserved.

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# What's the in-season salary cap and how does it work?

After Draft Day, the team salary cap goes up to \$340. This means that the cumulative salary of all active players on a team must not go over that amount. The salary of players kept or drafted in the Auction Draft counts fully toward the the cap while they are active. As stated before, A\* contracts (temp replacements) only count \$1 towards this cap.

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# What's the waivers process for players entering the FA Pool?

When a player enters the FA Pool, he is automatically placed on waivers for the rest of that day ("Day 1") and all of the next day ("Day 2"). During that approximate two day time period, teams may put in claims for him. A player may enter the FA Pool in many ways:

a) At the beginning of the season, the FA Pool consists of all undrafted players on active NL rosters. They are all placed on waivers such that the day on which the first NL game of the season is played or Draft Day (whichever is later) will be considered Day 1.

- b) When a player is released from a BLGL team but is still on an active NL roster he is added to the FA Pool and placed on waivers. Day 1 is the day of his release or the day the league is reasonably notified of his release, whichever is later. Some notifications take the form of an e-mail, but some are just entries on the transactions list on Sportsline. It is recommended that you set up your preferences so that you are e-mailed league transactions.
- c) A player is added to the FA Pool and placed on waivers when he is signed, promoted, or otherwise acquired by an NL team during the regular season and placed on their active roster. Day 1 will be determined by this process directly from the Constitution: "In order to establish for BLGL purposes that a player has been added to or taken off of an active NL roster, MLB.com's transaction lists will be used as the primary source. If there is more than one entry for a given transaction on the MLB transactions list or individual Major League team's transaction list on MLB.com, then the earliest date listed will be used. If a transaction can not be found at MLB.com, then ESPN.com, sportsline.com and rotoworld.com will be used collectively. If there are multiple, conflicting dates for a transaction listed on those three sites' transaction lists, then the earliest date will be used. For activations, if the date of a game played by a player is earlier than the date we would otherwise use, then that date will be used as the assumed activation date."

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# How do I put in a claim for a Free Agent, including players just traded from the AL?

If you are claiming a FA who is no longer on waivers (entered the FA Pool two days ago or before), then you can either (a) e-mail the league (blgl@baseball.sportsline.com) with your move or post to everyone on the BLGL message board on Sportsline. When you do this, the transaction is effective immediately roster-wise provided your move is legal and stats will start the following day. If in doubt about whether the player is still on waivers, you should ask the Commish.

If you are putting in a claim for a player who is still on waivers, then the claim should go to just the Commish. I recommend sending in waiver claims in a password protected Microsoft Word doc if you have Word. If not, then send them to the Commish with a subject that indicates that it should not be read until (date). Again, be sure to indicate how you are fitting the player into your active roster (e.g. is he an injury replacement or are you cutting another player to make room or ?). If it's for a player just traded from the AL, be sure to specify whether you are claiming the player as a \$10 or \$25 player (if the latter,

he must not be a temporary replacement). All waiver claims that will be effective the same day are grouped and players are divvied out to teams using rounds based on reverse order of the standings.

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# Are there penalties for Cutting (releasing) a player?

There are two possible "penalties" for Cutting a player:

- a) Half of the salary of the cut player will continue to count against the team's salary cap for the remainder of the season (perhaps more if the player had an extended contract), and
- b) You may have to pay real dollars for the Cut depending on how many you have already used. You are allowed 5 free ones and then the 6th is \$1, the 7th is \$2, and so on. These fees must be paid before the Cut is official.

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# Can I move a player out of my Active lineup without releasing him?

Yes, by using a Reserve move, but you get a limited number of them per year. A Reserve move is when you move a player from Active status to Reserve status (not released). **Reserved players do not count against your salary cap.** After Keeper Lists are turned in, each team gets one Reserve move that it may use any time between then and the end of the NL season except for a short time before Draft Day TBD each year by the Commish. There is no cost or penalty of any kind for using a Reserve move.

There are a few ways to get extra Reserve moves:

- a) You can indicate on your Keeper List that you are trading-in a 1st Round Reserve Draft pick for another Reserve move. There is no limit on how many 1st Round picks you can turn in for extra Reserve moves.
- b) If you have a player who was drafted in the previous Reserve Draft and never activated on a BLGL team then you can indicate on your Keeper List that you are Reserving this player going into the draft/season. Eligible players are generally listed on your roster in Minors (ML) status with an A\* contract. You can only use this rule on one player each year.
- c) On Sept 1, every team gets three more Reserve moves to use before the end of the year.

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# What's the "60-Day Rule" (AKA "Sluggers' Rule")?

If one of your players is put on the Disabled List (DL) and remains on it for 60 continuous days, then you may invoke this rule and shift his status from Injured to Reserved. When you do, his replacement gets his permanent active roster

spot. The 1st and 60th day need not be full calendar days. You must decide whether to invoke this rule by the end of the day following his activation, but it's better if you let the Commish know well ahead of time what your plan is. As with all players returning from the DL or minor leagues, if a BLGL team doesn't specify a plan before the player is activated by his NL team, then the player will be activated automatically and his replacement (if any) will go back where he came from. The BLGL team will still have until the end of the next day to invoke the rule and re-activate the formerly temporary replacement player.

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#### One of my players just got traded to the AL. What now?

Assuming the player doesn't get traded back to the NL by the end of the day, then the player is released from your team and his contract is reset. If the player had a permanent roster spot (not a temporary replacement from the FA Pool) on your team and the trade happened during the regular season, then you are granted a compensation Reserve Draft pick for the next year's Reserve Draft. The round of the pick is based on the salary of the player (see Constitution).

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#### When can I trade?

You can trade:

- a) From the time you've paid the entry fee for the up-coming season until about two days before Draft Day, and
- b) After Draft Day through July 31, and
- c) August 1 through August 31 (only with teams next to you in the standings). Back to the top...

#### How do I consummate a trade?

After negotiating your deal, you need to e-mail the deal to the Commish stating which team you are trading with and what players and/or picks are changing ownership. It's official when both trading partners have e-mailed the same deal to the Commish and the Commish approves the deal.

You may make a trade that results in one or both teams having an illegal roster provided that the roster is made legal (e.g. by trade, Cut, Reserve move, etc.) by the end of the day.

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#### Can a trade be vetoed?

It can be vetoed by the Commish, but only if it's so lopsided that in his view it significantly disrupts the league and/or not all owners were given reasonable access to the players being traded. Only one trade in 5 years has been vetoed and it was mainly because one owner did not respond to any owner for months but then accepted a trade with one particular owner at the deadline. Rule of

thumb: be polite and respond promptly to trade requests with a thumbs-up, thumbs-down or a counter-offer.

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I want to ignore my team and the league in general and then pop up in August and trade all my best, high-priced players for low draft picks and a sack of potatoes. Is that OK?

Nope. During the season you do have to stay reasonably on top of your team to be allowed to trade after June. Your AB+BB total must be at least 3000 and your IP total must be at least 600 through June 30 to be allowed to trade in July. Teams may not trade in August if their AB+BB total is less than 4000 or have less than 800 IP through July 31. If you don't let active roster spots sit open or with inactive players in them for extended periods, then it shouldn't be an issue. And, for the record, sacks of potatoes (of any variety) are never allowed to be part of a trade.

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# How does September Expansion work?

On September 1, rosters expand by three spots. The are all Utility spots (UH or UP). Teams may add players from the FA Pool or their Reserve/Minors to fill these new spots. There is a special September Expansion process where teams may submit lists of players they wish to claim from the FA Pool. These lists are due on August 31 and the process of distributing the players claimed is just like processing waivers; It's done in rounds with the picks going to teams in reverse order of standings in each round. A team may add 1, 2, or 3 players, but a team may never have more than 16 active hitters or 11 active pitchers (i.e. the three spots can't be filled by all pitchers or all hitters).

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Have a question that's not listed? E-Mail the Commish: somnolentiac@yahoo.com