

# **SOUTHWESTERN BASEBALL LEAGUE**

## **2018 RULES AND GUIDELINES**

### **PREAMBLE:**

**This document contains the official rules, conditions and guidelines that govern the Southwestern Baseball League. All team owners agree to be governed by these rules, conditions and guidelines. Failure to comply may subject franchises to certain disciplinary action, even including the forfeiture of a franchise in extreme cases. This League was founded in the spring of 1988 on the very premise that we are “in league” with one another, as defined by Webster and that each member willingly subjects itself to the greater good (as defined by these rules and guidelines). Situations not covered by these rules and guidelines, or differences of interpretation are arbitrated by The Commissioner. In the end, the Commissioner’s decisions are final. SWBL uses only National League players and statistics because the National League is superior in every way, and because the National League is the only league that is somewhat faithful to the traditions that made our game great. We believe that if you build it, people will come.**

### **SECTION 1---FRANCHISES:**

**A.** The Commissioner is the ultimate authority over League matters. The Commissioner has broad powers in order to protect the interest of The League as a whole. The Commissioner serves for life. The Commissioner must always strive to be pretty fair.

**B.** The following franchises make up The League membership:

- **TAYLOR JETS**
- **RICHTER RIFF RAFF**
- **ECKHART OYSTERS**
- **LANE TUFFYS**
- **REHM/LANE WORKS**
- **LOEHMAN/CALDWELL KNICKS**
- **CALDWELL MOOSE**
- **LAWRENCE LEMURS**

- **ALEXANDER/EASON/BROWN WHITE SOX\***

\*(Joined the League in 1993)

**C.** Owner relocations to another city must pay \$12 to The League as compensation to other owners for the loss of a potential expansion site and to cover League administration cost. In addition, there is a \$3 handling fee—for a total of \$15. The relocation of a full, half, majority or minority owner requires full payment. The relocation of a non-owner individual who is acting as an employee of a franchise in an executive capacity likewise requires full payment.

**D.** Applications for expansion franchises or replacement franchises must be considered by all existing owners and requires a two-thirds approval vote.

**E.** Franchise Fees are \$100 each season. All of the franchise fees will be used to pay League championship prize money and administrative fees.

**F.** Owners may take on minority or half owners by submitting an application in writing to the League Office. Since The League naturally wants to continue the high level of character associated with the original group, any owner may object to an application. The Commissioner must carefully consider the merits of the objection(s) before approval. There is a \$6 fee for adding partners.

**G.** Under unusual conditions, an owner may need to retain the services of hired help (i.e. General Manager) for a period of time. The Commissioner determines if the conditions merit such action. If the use of hired help is approved, there is a one time \$4 fee per employee.

## **SECTION 2---HOW THE LEAGUE WORKS (OR, KEEPING STATS):**

**A.** Each spring, around the time of Opening Day, The Owners will gather and draft players that make up his/her team. The statistics of those players in 10 major categories will determine each team's performance. The categories are:

- **HOME RUNS**
- **TOTAL HITS +WALKS**
- **RUNS SCORED**
- **RBI's**
- **STOLEN BASES**
- **PITCHING WINS**
- **TOTAL INNINGS PITCHED**
- **ERA**
- **HIT/WALK RATIO TO INNINGS PITCHED RATIO**
- **SAVES**

Note that there are five offensive and five pitching categories. Team results are a total of the individual members of each franchise's roster for each category.

**B.** League standings are determined by rank in the above categories. For example, if a team finishes first in HOME RUNS and there are nine teams in The League, the team gets 9 points. If a team is last in home runs, the team gets 1 point. The total of all categories determines the standings. If two or more teams tie in a category, the number of points normally awarded for those rankings are summed and divided by the number of teams tied for the category. For example, if two teams are tied for second in SAVES, both teams get 7.5 points.

**C.** Tracking of stats will be done by CBS SPORTS, and the standings will be updated on a daily basis. Retroactive adjustments based on owner errors or omissions may be made from time-to-time as needed. Owners are responsible for submitting all player transactions, including players returning from the DL or minors.

**D.** Fielding is important in baseball, but is too hard to fool with in our league.

**E.** CBS SPORTS is now the official source of statistics.

### **SECTION 3---ROSTERS:**

**A.** There will be 23 players on each franchise's active roster. On opening day, those players must be divided as follows:

- **2 CATCHERS**
- **1 FIRST BASEMAN**
- **1 THIRD BASEMAN**
- **1 SECOND BASEMAN**
- **1 SHORTSTOP**
- **1 CORNER INFIELDER ("CIF"-UTILITY FIRST OR THIRD BASEMAN)**
- **1 MIDDLE INFIELDER ("MIF"-UTILITY SECOND BASEMAN OR SHORTSTOP) \***
- **1 UTILITY PLAYER ("U"- ANY OFFENSIVE POSITION) ·**
- **5 OUTFIELDERS**
- **9 PITCHERS** (A minimum of 5 Starting Pitchers (SPs), and 2 Relief Pitchers (RPs) and 2 additional pitchers of either variety)

*(23 TOTAL Players)*

\*("Stupid Paul Lane Middle Infield Rule")

**B.** The draft will be for the number of rounds needed for each franchise to have a total of 23 players. At the end of the final round owners must have drafted players whose positions meet the requirements shown under SECTION 3-A.

### **SECTION 4---PROTECTED (FROZEN) PLAYERS AND FREE AGENCY:**

A. No later than March 1 of each year franchises will name one player from the previous season's roster to make the core of their team going into the new season. These are called protected or frozen players. However, a franchise may not freeze a player they protected in the previous season.

B. At the end of the season, all frozen players are returned to the pool of available players.

C. In the event that a frozen player is seriously injured or traded to the AL after the freeze date but prior to the start of the National League season opener, the Commissioner may award a revised freeze selection from the prior year's closing roster of that franchise or the Commissioner may award an extra draft selection at the end of the first round as compensation should the franchise request to drop the injured player. However, for any injury occurring after the start of the National League season, there shall be no compensation. (The "Griffey Rule")

#### **SECTION 5---THE DRAFT:**

A. The draft is to be held as close as practical to Opening Day of the National League.

B. The order of the draft is determined by a drawing. The drawing is held using The League's sacred balls. The drawing is to be witnessed and be pretty fair. After the first round, the drafting order is reversed each round.

C. CBS SPORTS will determine the eligibility of players at one or more positions based upon a threshold of games actually played at the position to be determined by the Commissioner. The threshold number of games played at a position may be adjusted by the Commissioner to maintain pretty fairness. The current thresholds are as follows: Position Players are eligible for all positions for which they played 10 or more games last season, and they are eligible for additional positions in the current season after having played 3 or more games at the position. Pitcher eligibility thresholds are as follows:

**[Starting Pitcher (SP)]:** 5 or more started last year or 5 or more started this year; **[Relief Pitcher (RP)]:** 10 or more non-starting appearances last year or 10 or more non-starting

appearances this year; [**Rookie Pitcher/No Recent History**] are classified by CBS SPORTS based on past experience and expectations.

**D.** Drafted players hold the same position throughout the season unless they qualify for additional positions in accordance with the thresholds established for the season. Owners may utilize voluntary and/or involuntary moves to change player positions assuming the players qualify at the positions and roster integrity is maintained. For example, teams may move a MIF to shortstop or second base, or move a player from second base or shortstop to MIF (assuming the players were designated to play second base or shortstop prior to The Draft, or have become eligible by virtue of meeting eligibility thresholds) in connection with a voluntary or non-voluntary player move. Likewise, teams may move CIF to first base or third base, or move a player from third base or first base to CIF (assuming the players are designated to play first or third base prior to The Draft, or have become eligible by virtue of meeting eligibility thresholds) in connection with a voluntary or non-voluntary move.

If a player is called up from the minors or has otherwise yet to establish any position eligibility under these rules, his initial position shall be established as the one at which he played the most games in the minors or a prior season, as the case may be. This initial eligibility may be established by published reports or other satisfactory evidence. (The “Posey Postulate”) CBS SPORTS initial determination of position for such players may be appealed using the above criteria.

**E.** An owner may draft players not currently on a National League roster if the player is affiliated with a NL team, i.e. in the minors or on the DL. No AL players or free agents may be drafted. If owners draft a player who is on the DL or is in the minors at the beginning of the season, they may replace the player with a temporary player, but that move is effective the following Wednesday (not retroactively to the beginning of the season). Because of the liberal replacement rights for the U Position, teams must open the season with an active player at the U Position.

**F.** If a franchise drafts a player who, at the time of drafting, is: under a suspension for the use of performance enhancing drugs (PEDs) or other banned substances or activities, OR was suspended in the prior season for 50 or more games for such use or activities, that franchise shall be required to keep the player on the active roster without replacement until (1) the end date of the player’s suspension, or (2) the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday in May, whichever is later. Provided, however, that in the event the player successfully challenges his suspension, the penalties of this rule shall not be applied. (“Ryan’s Rule”).

## **SECTION 6---INVOLUNTARY PLAYER MOVES:**

A. Throughout the season owners will need to make “involuntary” player moves. Player moves are always made on Tuesday. The Tuesday date is historical. This date was coincidental with the Tuesday edition of USA TODAY which carries a listing of players on the Disabled List or sent to the minors. (In the early days of the League, USA TODAY published this list on Wednesday and that was the reporting date). While USA TODAY was at one time the only generally available compilation of player status, its accuracy and timeliness are no longer state of the art. Consequently, the CBS SPORTS is now the official source of player news and status. Player moves are made anytime a franchise has an active roster player leave the active National League roster for any reason for 10 days or longer. The most common reason for a player move is to replace a player who has gone on the Disabled List (DL), but involuntary moves may be necessary for many reasons, including players being sent to the minors. Bereavement Leave or other absences of less than 10 days are not justification for player replacement. Players who are released may be replaced, but if they subsequently are activated on a NL roster, they must be reacquired and the replacement player released. Owners are obligated to replace players who leave their National League roster. Owners should generally replace these players on the first Tuesday possible. However, owners may occasionally wait till the following Tuesday if there is some complication, but by then it is necessary for a team to have a full roster. Player moves should be submitted to the CBS SPORTS **League Website Bulletin Board** as early as possible each Tuesday, but in no event later than 7:00 PM on Tuesday, Central Time. For each move requiring a replacement player, franchises must submit a first choice and at least one alternate choice of a replacement player before the 7:00 PM deadline. Failure to submit an alternate choice may result in forfeiture of replacement rights for the week in the event of a conflict involving multiple claims for the same replacement player. **Franchises must also submit with their posted moves, the draft round in which the players to be replaced or dropped were selected. [For example. “Kershaw (1)”].** Player moves submitted before the deadline will be effective as of Wednesday, in the same manner as those submitted on Tuesday. Owners may change player moves submitted early as long as the final moves are submitted prior to the deadline, and there is no need for franchises to “reserve their rights” to do so.

The time of submission of player moves has no significance in terms of the effective date of the move or a franchise’s rights to that player. In other words, it is not “first come, first served” when it comes to player moves. A player’s status is determined as of Tuesday, and players cannot be replaced if they are not on the DL or in the minors on the reporting Tuesday----even if they were temporarily sent to the minors during the week. (“Hitchcock Hiatus”)

In the event that more than one franchise claims a player, either as a result of a trade or on the regular reporting date, the priority of claims shall be determined in accordance with other provisions of these Rules.

**B.** Replacement players must be deactivated on the Tuesday following the original player's return to a National League roster. If a franchise fails to report the return of a roster player (and/or the associated deactivation of his replacement) by the reporting deadline of the Tuesday following the original player's return to a National League roster, the following penalty shall apply: No stats shall apply for the returning player until the Tuesday following the Tuesday of his return and all stats of the replacement shall be removed retroactively to the correct reporting Tuesday of the player's return.

**C.** There is a procedure for selecting temporary replacement players:

Owners may select an undrafted player who plays the same position and who is active on any National League team. For both voluntary and involuntary moves, inactive players may be chosen and called up if there is a reasonable expectation that they will play in the upcoming reporting period.

**D.** Priority for involuntary move claims for the same player shall be given to the team losing a player drafted in the earliest round of the draft. In the event that players were drafted in the same round, priority would go to the franchise lower in the standings according to the standings which appear on the Tuesday reporting date, except when a conflict arises with a franchise which has lost a player in a trade to the AL. Players acquired by use of a Chip are considered last round draft picks.

**E.** Players changing National League rosters have no effect on SWBL rosters.

**F.** In the event that a CIF or MIF needs to be replaced, a franchise may select a replacement that plays either of the combined positions; for example, if a MIF needs to be replaced, a 2b or a SS may be selected as a replacement player. Similarly, a RP or a SP may be chosen as a replacement for any pitcher provided the minimum roster requirements for SP and RP are observed. If a U needs to be replaced, any available offensive player on any team may be chosen. However, no player who is on the DL/Sent to Minors may be moved to the U position, and no player may be moved to the U



position if in the judgment of the Commissioner that player was moved to improve replacement rights for the franchise.

**G.** In the event a player is hurt toward the end of the season after the National League allows teams to expand their rosters and the formal DL procedure is no longer in use, an owner may seek The League Office's permission to replace that player. "Virtual DL" permission is routinely given if evidence is presented indicating that the player is actually to be sidelined for the remainder of the season or for at least two weeks from the Tuesday reporting period.

## **SECTION 7 VOLUNTARY PERMANENT REPLACEMENTS ("CHIPS")**

**A.** Franchises may exercise a maximum of 8 Voluntary Permanent Replacements (hereinafter "Chips"). In any season where the Draft precedes Opening Day, the number of Chips will be increased to 10. The use of Chips replaces the prior use of the Mid-Year Draft and the 3-player farm system.

**B.** When using a Chip, a player from the active roster is dropped and permanently replaced by a player chosen from the pool of available players. The player chosen remains on the roster for the remainder of the season and is not available as a replacement player. Roster integrity must be maintained when using a Chip. Generally, this means that the replacement must play the same position as the player being dropped, but in certain cases (e.g., SP/RP, MIF, CIF, U) Chips may be used to replace a player at a different position as long as roster integrity is maintained. Chips may be used to replace a player previously acquired via the use of a Chip. Once a player is obtained by the use of a Chip, he is treated as a last round draft choice for purposes of these rules.

**C.** In the event a franchise wishes to place a Chip claim to retain a player already on their roster as a replacement player, they may do so, but they must post their move no later than 7 PM on MONDAY prior to the Tuesday reporting period. This will give other franchises notice of the claim and an opportunity to post a claim as well. The same rule will apply to DL/minors moves where a replacement player to be released is desired as a replacement for another DL/minors move. Any such moves may be withdrawn, if applicable, prior to the Tuesday deadline. If a franchise seeks to retain a replacement player by use of a Chip, and the player he is replacing is not returning to the active roster, the Chip move will be automatically withdrawn in the event that a higher priority claim is posted.

**SECTION 8---GENERAL CONFLICTS RULES:** In cases of conflicting claims for the same player, franchises losing players by virtue of trades to the AL shall have priority over temporary replacement player and/or Chip claims; and, temporary replacements shall have priority over Chip requests. Within these priorities, the franchise replacing or dropping a player drafted in the earliest round of the draft shall have priority, and in cases of a tie the team lowest in the standings shall have priority.

**SECTION 9---TRADES TO THE AMERICAN LEAGUE (THE “PENA OPINION”):**

**A.** In the event roster players are traded to the American League during the season, SWBL will use the following rules to compensate owners for their loss:

1. As compensation for a player drafted in rounds 1 through 3, an owner may select any non-roster player in the National League. If the player selected does not play the same position as the protected player, the owner will need to release a player at a position that will cause the roster to conform to League guidelines. If the owner does select a player at a different position than the one lost to the AL, the owner will need to select an undrafted National League player at the same position as the lost player, and can do so from any National League team, releasing a player to conform to roster requirements.

2. For compensation for one of the 4<sup>th</sup> through Final Round draft choices, the owner may select any available roster player from any National League roster who plays the same position as the lost player.

3. Any drafted player involved in a trade to the AL who is on the DL or is in the minors at the time of trade will be considered an active roster player.

4. Players who are temporarily filling a roster spot for DL or sent to the minors player, and are traded to the AL are not considered roster players for the purposes of SWBL trade guidelines. The affected owner should replace the lost temporary player in the normal manner. Players who are serving as replacements on other teams are not available to be selected as compensation for a trade until they are released on Tuesday. (“Dontrelle Decision” aka “Tuffy Tough Call”) A Chip permanent replacement player shall be considered as a last round draft pick for purposes of conflicts.

5. In the event more than one SWBL player is involved in a trade or trades during a reporting period, the following rules apply,

· The team losing the player drafted in the earliest round has first claim on replacements.

- If more than one team has a player involved who was drafted in the same round, the team lowest in the standing at the last official report has first claim.

- If a SWBL team has more than one player involved in the same trade, compensation will be as if each player was the only one traded.

**B.** All player moves that are the result of a trade to the AL are effective the first Wednesday the trade is reflected on CBS SPORTS.

### **SECTION 10—SWBL TRADES:**

**A.** Trades between franchises are allowed under the following guidelines:

- Trades are effective on Tuesdays, and stats are effective at the same time.
- Stats compiled by the traded players prior to the effective date of the trade remain with their original team.
- The trading deadline is the Tuesday after Labor Day.
- The Commissioner has the duty and obligation to void any trade that is deemed to be a threat to the competitive balance of The League or violates the integrity of the pennant race.
- Trades involving future draft choices or changes in draft position are allowed but must be finalized and approved by the Commissioner by the first Tuesday in August.
- Chips may be included in trades.

### **SECTION 11---MISCELLANEOUS:**

**A.** SWBL is a highly principled, ethical organization. Each franchise is charged with the responsibility of maintaining the good image of our League. Conduct by the players on an owner's roster is the responsibility of that owner. Acts deemed to be detrimental to the best interest of The League can result in fines. Abusing our fans, cheating, speeding, fighting, drugs, fits, gambling, women, alcohol, excessive political correctness, mound charging, umpire bumping and general tackiness are all examples of actions that can invoke fines. The Commissioner is the judge and jury for this matter, and must be pretty fair in all decisions. All fine money is paid to the League Comptroller and goes toward the championship prize money. The League Champion team is to designate the charity of its choice and all the prize money is given to that charity in the team's name.

**B.** From time to time owners may decide they want to change their team's name. Owners request for a name change must be submitted to The League Office and approved by The Commissioner. Approval should not be withheld if the name does not in any way harm the image of The League or doesn't seriously offend fellow owners. Name changes are \$4 apiece.