

SOUTHWESTERN BASEBALL LEAGUE

2026 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
- 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 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 onetime \$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
- RBIs
- 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 eight teams in The League, the team gets 8 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 6.5 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 IL 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:

- 1 CATCHER
- 1 FIRST BASEMAN
- 1 THIRD BASEMAN
- 1 SECOND BASEMAN
- 1 SHORTSTOP
- 1 UTILITY IF PLAYER ("UIF"- ANY IF POSITION, INCLUDING 1B and 3B)
- 4 OUTFIELDERS
- 6 PITCHERS (4 Starters and 2 Relievers)
- 7 FARM TEAM PLAYERS (Any Position)

(23 TOTAL Players)

NOTE: Since we no longer have a U position, any player only listed as a DH will be considered an OF.

B. Farm Team: Each franchise will have a farm team roster of 7 players. Stats for these minor leaguers do not count toward the official standings. The minor league roster may be made up of any positions. The purpose of the farm team is to have players readily available to replace active players who go on the DL or get sent to the minors, and to give owners option of making shrewd voluntary player moves. Farm team players also make it easier for teams to pull off trades.

C. 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. Players may be frozen for one year only,

and trading a frozen player does not allow him to be frozen for the following season by the receiving team. (The “No Freeze Fernando Rule”)

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 must 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.

Ohtani Rule: Due to his unique abilities as a hitter and pitcher, Shohei Ohtani will be considered as 2 different players for all purposes, including drafting, trading, freezing and stats: “Ohtani” the hitter, and “Lefty” Ohtani, the pitcher. CBS Sports will track stats accordingly.

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.

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 an NL team, i.e. in the minors or on the IL. No AL players or free agents may be drafted. If owners draft a player who is on the IL 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 freezes or drafts a player who, at the time of freezing or 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 4th 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").

G. After the Draft (or Midyear Draft) is concluded, if it is discovered that a drafted player is not qualified at the position for which he was drafted, and that no moves can be made within the roster to obtain roster integrity and the player does not qualify for the position by the following Tuesday, the following penalty shall be enforced. The drafted player must be returned to the pool of undrafted players, and a replacement chosen at the required position from the same NL team as the mis-drafted player. If no qualifying player is available on that team, the selection shall be made via rotation to the next NL team as in other sections of these rules. Furthermore, the qualifying replacement will not accrue retroactive stats, and the replacement will be considered a last round draft choice. ("The Out of LUX Rule")

SECTION 6---VOLUNTARY and INVOLUNTARY PLAYER MOVES:

A. Throughout the season owners may make an unlimited number of voluntary moves and 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, CBS SPORTS is now the official source of player news and status. Player moves are made anytime a franchise has an active roster player leaves 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 Injury List (IL), 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 IL 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 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. Alternatively, any franchise noticing a replacement player's return to an active roster which has not been reported may post the return and make a claim if desired.

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

----The owner MUST select (a) a Farm team player who qualifies at the position; or, if no qualifying Farm team player, (b) an active, undrafted player who plays the same position and who is from the same National League team, with the following limited exception: If the owner has a multi-position player on their roster who can be moved to temporarily replace the IL/minors player, that move may be made and the owner may then temporarily backfill the player of the vacated position with a player from the same National League team as the player being moved to serve as a replacement. (For example, if a 2B is on the IL and the owner has a 3B who qualifies at 2B, that 3B may be moved to 2B as a temporary replacement and the owner may then backfill the 3B position with a 3B from the (a) the Farm, if one is available, or (b) a 3B from the same NL team as the player who is serving as a replacement). Only one such backfill move may be made per transaction, i.e., franchises may not move multiple players to reach a player they want, and there is no rotation if there is no qualified player to backfill. Upon the return of the IL/minors player, the transactions must be reversed, returning players to their original positions.

Replacements for the UIF position: A UIF player must be replaced from the Farm if any of the 4 IF positions players are available on the Farm team. However, if a replacement from the pool is required, the replacement must be the same team/position as the injured/minors UIF player.

Farm team players may not be replaced unless they are sent to the real Minors, released or placed on the 60-Day DL or longer.

----Rotation: If there is no available, qualifying Farm team player or an undrafted player at the same position and on the same National League team, the owner then "rotates" to the next National League team using the following order and selects a replacement at the required position:

ARIZONA/ATLANTA/ CHICAGO/CINCINNATI/COLORADO/

LOS ANGELES/MIAMI/MILWAUKEE/NEW YORK/PHILADELPHIA/PITTSBURG/

SAN DIEGO/SAN FRANCISCO/ST.LOUIS/ WASHINGTON/ARIZONA

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.

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

F. 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 IL procedure is no longer in use, an owner may seek The League Office's permission to replace that player. "Virtual IL" 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.

G. For any player designated by CBS Sports as both a "Batter" and "Pitcher", one or the other player so designated may be injured and not placed on the IL or may be removed from the rotation for a significant period of time. In such a case, the owner of the alter ego of that player may claim virtual IL status in the manner provided in these rules for late season moves. ("Lefty Logic" Rule)

SECTION 7---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 claims. 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 8---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 4th 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 IL 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 IL 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")

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 9—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. Frozen players who are traded cannot be frozen by the receiving team the following season as they may only be frozen for one season. (The “No-Freeze Fernando” Rule).

SECTION 10—MID-YEAR DRAFT:

There is to be a special mid-year League Meeting of owners near the time of the All-Star break. At the meeting a mid-year draft will be held. The following guidelines apply to that draft:

1. Prior to the Mid-Year Draft all players who have been added to a team's roster as temporary replacement players will be returned to the pool of players available for drafting.
2. Prior to the draft, teams may protect 22 players on their roster. The remaining players are available for drafting.
3. The first round of the draft will be in the reverse order of the standings at the time of the draft with the remaining snake rounds to be determined by lottery.
4. Players not on a NL roster at the time of drafting may be drafted if there is a reasonable expectation that they will be activated or called up in the near future. Speculative selections (NL players who may not be called up or activated in the near future) are limited to one per franchise, and AL speculative picks are not allowed. Any

speculative pick who is not activated or called up prior to 9/1 will be returned to the pool as a potential free agent. Speculative picks may be replaced after the draft.

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.