

"HELPFUL STATS AND ENTERTAINING PROSE"
—SPORTS ILLUSTRATED

PATTON'S 1.9.9.0 FANTASY BASEBALL PRICE GUIDE

THE ULTIMATE SYSTEM FOR ROTISSERIE LEAGUERS

- STATISTICS AND DOLLAR VALUES FOR ALL MAJOR LEAGUERS
- DOLLAR PROJECTIONS FOR 1990'S TOP ROOKIE PROSPECTS
- WINNING STRATEGIES FOR...

Super Value

ALEX

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Player	IP	H	R	ER	ERA	WAR
Montgomery	2.7	2.57	20	0	30	0
Gubicza	3.2	2.58	23	0	9	0
Lebrandt	12.9	2.64	0	0	0	0
Sabers	8.1	0	0	0	0	0

Player	IP	H	R	ER	ERA	WAR
Reid	11	57%	45	15	15	7
Guilley	3	21	15	7	15	7
Lyons	1	38%	28	11	18%	148
Martinez	0	154%	157	61	157	54
Sales	0	0	0	0	0	0
Walker	0	0	0	0	0	0

Player	IP	H	R	ER	ERA	WAR
Reid	287	349	45	135	23	38
Guilley	272	332	27	16	27	3
Lyons	288	344	103	350	41	104
Martinez	263	342	73	245	41	69
Sales	282	342	100	372	94	21
Walker	283	314	100	372	94	21
Reid	243	292	94	271	34	69

Jerry Heath of Heath Research has once again been the single largest source of information on Rotisserie leagues. Thank you, Jerry; if everyone didn't know who you were already, I'd give the name and address of your stat service. (They're in the first chapter.)

Many individual players of the game have sent me information. I learn much more from this wealth of material than I'm able to show in the text, and at the very least I should be able to name my sources. I can, I hope; however, during the summer, a disaster befell my office. Humpty was finally put back together, but if pieces are missing, no one regrets it more than I do.

My informants were: Michael Belsky, Lloyd Benson, Terry Bucher, Jim Chaffin, Greg Churchill, Jack Cohen, Jack Curtis, Barry Cohen, Dave Disselbrett, Peter Donahoe, Don Egan, Mike Fengler, Ron Fox, Steve Fox, David Gates, Bruce Grabell, Richard Gurnett, Roger Hayes, Steve Hendrick, Joe David Jackson, Adam Jacobs, Karl Junkersfeld, Frank Kastelic, Ted Koch, Tom Leone, John Melting, Russ Miller, Roy Nelson, David Peregrin, Harold Rennett, Stuart Rosen, David Sebastian, Chris Stavros, Bob Vavra, Sam Watson, Kirk Whittaker, and Cary Wolfson.

Two other people were happy to help me with my scientific pursuits, and they did, but they felt that their names here would be counter-productive. This has become a serious business.



Okay. Why should I buy this book?

Because someone else might.

But I think you'll find a lot that's useful here. First, I have to ask you: Are you an old hand at this or is yours a new league?

New league.

Then I know you will. Rotisserie baseball distorts real baseball in two particularly blatant ways, which my prices reflect. Who would you say was the best player in baseball last year if I told you it was not Kevin Mitchell?

Hojo.

How'd you know that? You were supposed to say Will Clark. Second was Rickey Henderson. Who would you say the best pitcher was?

Saberhagen. Not even close.

In real baseball, you're right. In Rotisserie baseball, you're almost right. For the first time in the four years I've been ranking both leagues, a starting pitcher earned the most in one of the leagues, but overall it's again a relief pitcher. I've listed the 10 top Rotisserie MVPs last year—but since you're new to the game, you might want to list your own before you read it.

No, that's all right.

Sure? I mean, they're all good players, but there are some good players missing.

I guess you're sure.

HOWARD JOHNSON \$51
RICKEY HENDERSON \$48
MARK DAVIS \$48
BRET SABERHAGEN \$45
JEFF RUSSELL \$45

KEVIN MITCHELL \$45
DENNIS ECKERSLEY \$43
ERIC DAVIS \$43
WILL CLARK \$40
DOUG JONES \$39

Who are the good players missing?

I don't know—Mike Scott? Wouldn't you expect to see him?

A 3.10 ERA in the National League is nothing to write home about.

You're right. Um . . . Fred McGriff?

Only 92 ribbies. Nine AL hitters had 100 or more.

You're right again. Um . . .

Well, *normally* there are good players missing. You're at least supposed to be surprised to see Doug Jones in there.

Thirty-three saves, doesn't walk anybody.

Is all this stuff in your head?

I like baseball.

Well, you've come to the right place. Maybe.

Let me ask you this: Three players on the list are repeats from 1988. One is a three-year repeat; he's also a four-year repeat.

Henderson?

Thank God. No. Eric Davis. The other two-year repeats are Eckersley and good old Doug.

It looks to me like Saberhagen was only tied for the best AL pitcher.

There are no ties. Opening up the spreadsheet, we get Saberhagen \$45.36 and Russell \$45.31.

So that's my price guide for this year? \$45.36 for Bret Saberhagen?

It's what he earned last year. My prices are not projections and they're not predictions. Occasionally someone misses that point and goes into a draft bidding last year's values; the results are often embarrassing. All this book does is calculate the value of players' performances in the past.

The biggest shock you're going to have is that perfectly respectable starting pitchers in real baseball aren't worth ten cents in this game.

How?

How?

Calculate how?

Oh. For the technical explanation you're welcome to the chapter called "Notes for Masochists," but the theory is quite simple. When the season's over, I know the statistics of the average hitter and pitcher, and I can determine how much those statistics helped the typical Rotisserie team. With the standard salary cap of \$260, I know what the average player was worth. All what's left is to compare the statistics of actual players to the average player to figure out what they were worth.

I don't ignore batting average, ERA, and ratio. If a player helps a team in these categories, he gains points as surely as he does with a home run or a win. However, in these qualitative categories, players can also lose points for a team. Hitters can lose in one category, pitchers in two. They can and they do and they must. By definition, the average hitter only contributes in three categories. The average pitcher contributes in even fewer, two. That hitter is bringing in three "good things," that pitcher two, so I make the average hitter worth 50 percent more than the average pitcher.

Even though pitchers still account for half the standings?

Yes.

Even though there are fewer pitchers than hitters?

Yes. I know it's a radical theory, but it's my theory. And in practice, it's not radical at all.

There are two "salaries" to consider, of course. Mine is the retrospective one, what players end up earning, the salary that Karl Marx would award them in October. The other is what we have to pay to

own them. This is determined at auction in April. It's their market price, and believe me, people spend more on hitters than they do on pitchers.

More on each hitter?

Absolutely. Thanks to Jerry Heath of Heath Research, a stat service with dozens of leagues (3841 Croonenberg Way, Dept. P, Virginia Beach, VA), I've got the market prices from all over the country, and the rule of thumb is, the older the league, the more it spends on hitters.

All because of the pitchers' two bad things?

Essentially, yes, although there are other factors, which I'll get to.

The average price per player theoretically is \$11.3 (\$260 divided by 23). The Dirty Dozen, formed in 1988, spent \$11.5 per hitter; South Main Street (1987) spent \$11.8 per hitter; the Crabhouse League (1986), \$12.2. On and on like that, until you get to the American Dreams, formed in 1981, spending \$12.8 on each hitter. It's fascinating stuff. If you want the complete details, you should give Jerry a call at (804) 498-8197.

Hey, I'm surprised he doesn't have a 900 number.

Don't underestimate the difference between 12.8 and 11.5. On a per-player basis it's hard to see, although it is visible. For teams as a whole, it's more apparent, and for entire leagues it's obvious: Leagues that spend much less than \$13 per hitter are spending much more than \$8.67 per pitcher, and in the process are burning their money up, buying things that aren't there.

Like Danny Jackson, for instance?

Exhibit A. But you'll see much more sneaky exhibits at the end of this chapter—Fernando, Charlie Hough, people who got the job done in real baseball. It might be a good idea to take an inventory of a league first, however, to see how it's a closed system.

Jerry Heath runs up what he calls hypothetical final standings for his customers after the season: standings based on draft rosters with no changes. No trades, no activation of reserves, no waiver claims. From these standings of his it's easy to see exactly what each team bought in the draft. Here's the analysis of the PTL Clubs, a National League Rotisserie formed in Virginia in 1988:

PTL CLUBS STATISTICS BOUGHT IN THE DRAFT

PITCHING	IP	W	S	ERA	RTO	SPENT	EARNED	+/-
COCKROACHES	1219	74	56	3.10	10.89	77	107	30
LOUNGE YANKS	1065	73	70	3.11	10.63	106	120	14
MUFFINS	1058	57	43	3.41	11.44	76	71	-5
CEPEDAS	1104	66	54	3.60	11.72	97	79	-18
LAST TRAIN	1114	59	9	3.34	11.00	42	52	10
CONSTRUCTION	1198	65	55	3.39	11.85	81	81	0
CLUB MED	1371	81	7	3.34	11.49	72	58	-14
ALWAYS 2ND	1483	78	25	3.27	11.04	82	79	-3
MEADOWS	1389	84	42	3.49	11.10	109	90	-19
SLUGS	1047	64	7	3.78	11.87	88	33	-55
LEAGUE	12049	700	370	3.38	11.29	830	772	-58

HITTING	AB	HR	RBI	SB	BA	SPENT	EARNED	+/-
COCKROACHES	5774	128	650	155	.263	174	209	35
LOUNGE YANKS	5162	142	662	144	.261	152	212	60
MUFFINS	5205	131	599	170	.266	182	211	29
CEPEDAS	5660	114	646	146	.262	160	198	38
LAST TRAIN	5728	128	610	138	.254	211	191	-20
CONSTRUCTION	5442	111	643	134	.275	175	201	26
CLUB MED	4328	125	547	137	.261	188	185	-3
ALWAYS 2ND	4779	120	510	62	.228	174	130	-44
MEADOWS	4281	52	406	107	.249	145	112	-33
SLUGS	4791	101	576	139	.247	172	168	-4
LEAGUE	51150	1152	5849	1332	.257	1733	1817	84

OVERALL	SPENT	EARNED	+/-	H.F.S.* PTS	FINAL STANDINGS	PTS
COCKROACHES	251	316	65	68.5	LOUNGE YANKS	70.0
LOUNGE YANKS	258	332	74	68.0	COCKROACHES	69.0
MUFFINS	258	282	24	49.0	CEPEDAS	48.5
CEPEDAS	257	276	19	44.0	LAST TRAIN	44.5
LAST TRAIN	253	243	-10	42.5	CONSTRUCTION	41.0
CONSTRUCTION	256	282	26	42.0	MUFFINS	41.0
CLUB MED	260	244	-16	38.5	ALWAYS 2ND	34.0
ALWAYS 2ND	256	209	-47	36.0	CLUB MED	32.5
MEADOWS	254	203	-51	31.0	MEADOWS	31.0
SLUGS	260	202	-58	20.5	SLUGS	28.5
LEAGUE	2563	2589	26			

*hypothetical final standings

Under "spent" we have the total of actual salaries, or market prices, for each team's pitchers and hitters. Notice the wide variation: from \$42 to \$109 on pitching.

Under "earned" is the Patton \$ value of the statistics the players produced. Even wider fluctuations: from \$33 all the way to \$120 in pitching. Far and away the best staff belongs to the Lounge Yanks, who spent the second highest amount on pitching. However, between the Meadows and the Last Train, who did a better job?

Last Train, I say. The Meadows' pitchers weren't bad, but they sure didn't deliver as they were supposed to.

Name a few of their stiffs.

Bruce Hurst \$25, Pascual Perez \$15, Bob Ojeda \$12—they weren't stiffs at all, just not worth those prices.

The 10 teams combined spent \$830, or \$9.22 per pitcher, for a total loss of \$58.

The hitters get it back.

No they don't. They more than get it back. How's that? How can a whole league turn a profit?

Good question.

I mean, is this a closed system or not?

How did you spot that? Are you an accountant?

But you're right; the books have to balance—the players earn exactly what you spend on them—so if the pitchers lose a certain amount, the hitters gain it. There are two reasons why they don't for the PTL Clubs. The formulas I use are based on a composite of draft rosters; they will be accurate to the extent that a given league conforms to that profile. In essence, if your league has a sharper draft than the average league, it will turn a slight profit, but it's extremely slight. A formula tailored specifically to the PTL Clubs would change a few decimals and not a single player value would change.

The second variable is how much money leagues actually spend. I base my prices on \$2600 for NLRs (National League Rotisseries) and \$3120 for ALRs. The PTL Clubs didn't use \$37 of their budget. By underspending it looks like they turned a profit, whereas in fact they were \$11 short of the average league. The important thing, though, is that prices for them will be 99.5% (2589/2600) accurate.

How could the Cockroaches only spend \$251?

I really don't know. As you can see, Heath has them ahead of the Lounge Yanks by half a point if no changes occur after the draft, and

then virtually no changes occur. Neither team, I know from the Heath rosters, made a trade all year. The Lounge Yanks picked up a little offense from a few stabs at its reserve list or waivers and gained two points. The Cockroaches gained half a point in the same halfhearted way, to come in second by one point.

Me, I'd go—I will go crazy if that happens. I'd pound the waivers every week.

Me, too. The only team that was at all aggressive in this league was the Slugs, with four trades, and it didn't quite get them out of last. But the team that I feel for is the Muffins. They had a good draft, both by Heath's reckoning and Patton \$. Their long suit was stolen bases: 15 more than the second-best team, a nice surplus. So they did the right thing, they dealt it, and here's how it looked in stolen bases at the end:

COCKROACHES	163
LOUNGE YANKS	161
SLUGS	159
MUFFINS	157

The next team had 141.

And I see the Muffins ended up tied for fifth, instead of third.

Yes. If you can buy over \$275 in the draft, you've got a good shot at finishing in the money. If you can buy over \$300, you're a contender for first.

Unless someone else buys \$400.

I've never seen that happen. You'd need a lot of cooperation from the bottom. Here you see three teams—Always 2nd, the Meadows, and the Slugs—that are hopelessly out of it after the draft, but five teams are in a scuffle for third and fourth.

They can't trade their way into contention with the two big guys?

No harm in trying—in fact, the whole fun is to try; I don't know why you would just sit there—but it seldom works. Luckily, we can't know it at the time, but our fates are pretty well sealed at the draft.

What was your draft team worth?

\$284.

Where'd you finish?

Third.

How much you make?

We don't play for money.

Who are you kidding?

You. I don't know you.

Well, did you make any trades?

Four, ranging from neutral to terrible. I had a fortunate reserve list and picked up some good scrubs on waivers. I basically finished where I belonged, and even so missed second on the last day because Mike Heath broke early for third in a bunt situation, a rookie pitcher threw the ball away, and Heath was credited with a steal. I was sitting there in Yankee Stadium with the fellow who owned Heath—his team was the second-place team—and he hooted and I hollered. It was a great season.

Let's just hope the idiots don't screw up this one.

Do you mind if we don't talk about that?

In the player charts you'll find everyone that anyone spent a nickel on, right down to Willie Upshaw. Asterisks indicate players who were not available at the start of the season.

The first number in boldface is what the player earned last year in Patton \$. The next five columns are the market prices for five different start-up leagues, designated by their initials. The "average salary" is obviously the average of these five, and the "profit or loss" is determined by subtracting the average salary from the player's earnings—that is, market prices from Patton \$.

The advantage of using start-up leagues only is that almost all established leagues allow owners to freeze at least a few underpriced players, which affects all prices, as I'll discuss. The disadvantage would seem to be that start-up leagues—no offense—don't know what they're doing.

No problem.

I picked the five leagues carefully from the possibilities supplied by Jerry Heath, and as veteran owners look over the prices, I think they'll agree that these rookie owners knew more than we did when we were rookies. I was impressed.

There are two advantages, it seems to me, of listing specific market prices instead of just the average, or the average and the high and low. Number one, you see the evidence. I always like to see it.

Number two, the five prices contain their own drama—I almost said music: the strange harmony on the subject of Canseco, the wild adulation of Clemens, the foreboding gloom about Dale Murphy, the disarray caused by Mitch Williams. There are all sorts of patterns here, or not here; road signs telling us, if we can read them, who might be available this year at a good price.

I see you glancing ahead—what do you think?

Huh? Holy mother of God, look what one team spent on Rickey! What did you say?

EARNINGS AND MARKET PRICES FOR NL HITTERS

	EARNED 1989	MARKET PRICES					AVG. SAL.	PROFIT OR LOSS
		PEW	FAI	CFL	PNC	LGV		
ALDRETE, MIKE	1	4	9	1	3	4	4	-3
ALOMAR, ROBERTO	33	17	11	14	26	11	16	17
ANDERSON, DAVE	2	1			1	1	1	1
ASHBY, ALAN	-1	3	5	1	5	2	3	-4
BASS, KEVIN	16	21	25	22	27	16	22	-6
BELL, JAY	6				5	2	4	3
BELLIARD, RAFAEL	1							
BENEDICT, BRUCE	-2	1					1	-3
BENZINGER, TODD	17	6	14	12	10	5	9	8
BERROA, GERONIMO	2	2		1		1	1	1
BERRYHILL, DAMON	8	12	25	6	4	7	11	-3
BIGGIO, CRAIG	22	1	5	4	1	2	3	19
BLAUSER, JEFF	15	15	8		7	2	8	7
BONDS, BARRY	28	36	24	22	36	31	30	-2
BONILLA, BOBBY	30	33	30	20	41	24	30	0
BREAM, SID	0	12	13	8	8	10	10	-10
BROOKS, HUBIE	20	25	17	22	27	21	22	-2
BRUNANSKY, TOM	20	27	22	22	9	26	21	-1
BUTLER, BRETT	21	27	22	17	7	15	18	3
CAMINITI, KEN	15	3	1	3	10	1	4	11