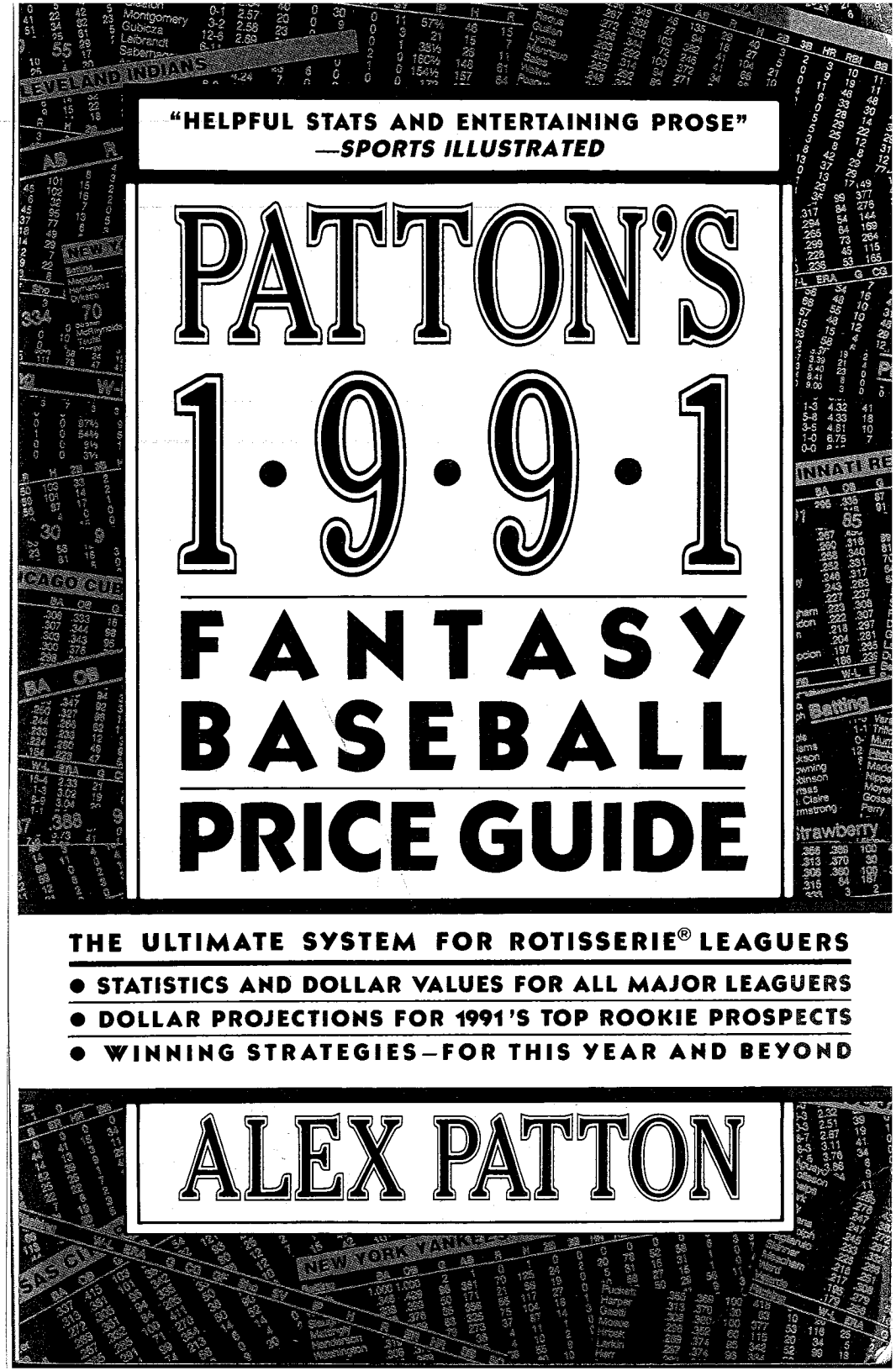


"HELPFUL STATS AND ENTERTAINING PROSE"
—*SPORTS ILLUSTRATED*

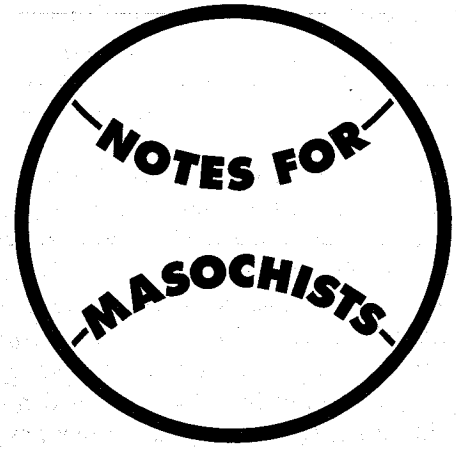
PATTON'S 1·9·9·1 FANTASY BASEBALL PRICE GUIDE

THE ULTIMATE SYSTEM FOR ROTISSERIE® LEAGUERS

- STATISTICS AND DOLLAR VALUES FOR ALL MAJOR LEAGUERS
- DOLLAR PROJECTIONS FOR 1991'S TOP ROOKIE PROSPECTS
- WINNING STRATEGIES—FOR THIS YEAR AND BEYOND

ALEX PATTON

CHAPTER 3



According to the Runs Created formula of Bill James, these were the five best real-life run producers in each league last year:

	AL		NL
RICKEY HENDERSON	137	BARRY BONDS	128
CECIL FIELDER	129	RYNE SANDBERG	124
FRED MCGRIFF	124	LENNY DYKSTRA	121
GEORGE BRETT	106	EDDIE MURRAY	118
WADE BOGGS	103	RON GANT	109

James spent a lot of time trying to figure out how the various hitting stats that baseball keeps relate to the scoring of actual runs. A double is worth more than a steal but less than a home run, and so forth. The results he gets are supposed to be a pure, even if theoretical, measurement of a ballplayer's contribution to team offense. Don't blame Ron Gant for only getting 84 RBI's; by the combination of his batting and baserunning efforts, he was responsible for 109 runs on an average team. If the Braves had nine Ron Gants, they would have scored 981 runs instead of 682.

If you apply the formula that James uses to determine how many runs Gant produced to the Atlanta team stats, you get 669; James's the-

oretical model comes within 98 percent of accuracy for that specific team.

The formula should work for other teams and it had certainly better work for entire leagues. The number of runs that Gant theoretically produced, or a team should have produced, can be disputed. The number of runs that a whole league did produce is hard to argue with. This is the one fact that makes or breaks any theory, for a league can no more over- or underproduce runs than it can have a won-lost record over or under .500.

If James's formula gives valid results for the whole, then he can argue that it gives valid results for individual players. He may not be right, but he can at least make a case. If some of his conclusions are surprising, such as that Dykstra created more runs last year than Gant, and really surprising, such as that Boggs created more runs than Kelly Gruber—well, maybe he has a measurement that was worth the trouble of inventing. At the very least, Mr. Bill is going to get himself hired by some players going into arbitration. Each presentation to the judge is going to begin with data showing the overall accuracy of his formulas.

And that's exactly where any pricing system for Rotisserie baseball has to begin.

We buy a certain amount of statistics in the auction. If we paid $2600 for them, they are worth $2600. If we paid $3120 for them, they are worth $3120. If we paid $10 for them, they are worth $10. There's a league in Dallas where they are said to be worth $10,000.

For simplicity, this book and most others go with $2600 and $3120, or $260 per team. Each team has $260 to spend on 23 players; hence each player is worth, on average, $11.3. So far everything is straightforward; even the people who skip this chapter get this far on their own. Remarkably, though—permit me to say it here—they often get no further.

Rather, they can move in this direction—from the general to the specific—but for some reason they can't reverse directions. I have this dialogue with people quite often:

"Shouldn't the salaries awarded to specific players on draft rosters add up to $260 per team?" I ask.

"Depends on the team," they answer, reasonably enough.

"Shouldn't the prices of all the players add up to $2600 or $3120?"

"I don't see why."

I've had exactly this conversation, in extended form, with two big-time masochists in the past year; one arguing that prices can't ever add up to league budgets, the other that they must always exceed them.

When I saw Les Leopold's prices in Peter Golenbock's book, it was immediately apparent that he put a lower premium on relievers; but I

couldn't see where the money he saved on them went. I applied the prices that he awarded to players for 1989 to all the players bought in April of 1989 by the Crabhouse League in New York (an NLR). They came to $2006. I added up mine, and they came to $2579.

As fast as I could, I called him up and said, "Les, good job! But you're missing almost $600."

"What do you mean?"

"Almost $600, Les! You're within 77% of accuracy. I'm within 99%."

Les explained—in the nicest way, considering I managed to get those percents into the conversation wherever I could—that in his system the winning team was awarded $260, and all other teams were pegged to that.

"Fine, Les, but where'd that $600 go?"

"People pay too much."

"How can they pay too much? What else are they supposed to do with their money?"

"Only the winning team earns the right amount."

"Les, everyone spends the right amount; not everyone gets the right amount back."

"How can you get back more than you pay for?"

We promised to have a lunch for masochists, then thought better of it.

As I've indicated in some of the player comments, Jerry Heath seemed to be coming in a little high with his prices for 1990; finally, I added them up for the draft rosters of the Princess Anne League in Virginia. They came to $3164. Unfortunately, Princess Anne is another NLR (much quicker and less confusing than American League Rotisseries). My prices for Princess Anne came to $2589.

Jerry's explanation was that players like Dave Justice were added to rosters during the season, and they inflated prices.

"But Jerry, Justice wasn't on a draft roster, and that's all I'm counting."

"Still, he does get added and that inflates prices."

"No, it breaks the salary cap, but the prices aren't affected. Prices are set by what's available in the auction."

"That's kind of theoretical, Alex. What do you do about Lee Smith?"

"He gets a salary *as if* he were in the auction, which is why the final totals are inflated."

"Sounds like we're saying the same thing, Alex."

I don't know ... Is it clear to my fellow sufferers? Every year I try to show what the formulas are based on; to emphasize how important it is

to understand the difference between April and October. In greater detail, here we go again.

The draft populations for National League hitters:

4 NLR'S	AB	H	HR	RBI	SB	BA
BLK	51486	13828	1332	6416	1543	.269
CHL	50540	13524	1317	6315	1570	.268
MAG	51778	13844	1330	6409	1589	.267
PRI	51577	13812	1329	6396	1585	.268
AVG LG	51345	13752	1327	6384	1572	.268
AVG TM	5135	1375	133	638	157	.268
AVG PL	367	98	9.5	45.6	11.2	.268

For American League hitters:

4 ALR'S	AB	H	HR	RBI	SB	BA
ADL	62378	16315	1553	7636	1240	.262
LSL	61676	16146	1518	7510	1261	.262
DDA	63477	16579	1570	7787	1246	.261
SCF	61542	16041	1518	7516	1228	.261
AVG LG	62268	16270	1540	7612	1244	.261
AVG TM	5189	1356	128	634	104	.261
AVG PL	371	97	9.2	45.3	7.4	.261

At the end of each auction, each league has basically bought the same players. The average player for one Rotisserie league is the average player for any other Rotisserie league (in the same major league; notice the clear supremacy of the NL average player). By use of denominators that you'll find later on, the average hitter is turned into a $13 player, thence the average team, thence the average league.

Here are the dollar equivalents of all the stats above:

4 NLR'S	$HR	$RBI	$SB	$BA	$TOT
BLK	568	756	493	1	1818
CHL	561	744	502	–1	1806
MAG	567	755	508	–1	1829
PRI	566	753	507	0	1826
AV LG	566	752	502	0	1820
AVG TM	57	75	50	0	182
AVG PL	4	5	4	0	13.00

4 ALR'S	$HR	$RBI	$SB	$BA	$TOT
ADL	691	922	576	1	2190
LSL	675	907	586	1	2169
DDA	698	940	579	0	2218
SCF	675	907	571	–1	2153
AVG LG	685	919	578	0	2182
AVG TM	57	77	48	0	182
AVG PL	4	5	3	0	13.00

Pitching—statistics of draft populations and dollar values:

4 NLR'S	IP	W	S	ERA	RATIO	$W	$S	$ERA	$RTO	$TOT
BLK	11290	672	312	3.67	11.70	550	236	0	0	787
CHL	10535	627	322	3.70	11.73	513	244	–1	0	756
MAG	11337	667	296	3.68	11.69	546	224	–1	1	770
PRI	11311	681	326	3.64	11.72	557	247	2	0	806
AVG LG	11118	662	314	3.67	11.71	542	238	0	0	780
AVG TM	1112	66	31	3.67	11.71	54	24	0	0	78
AVG PL	124	7.4	3.5	3.67	11.71	6	3	0	0	8.67

4 ALR'S	IP	W	S	ERA	RATIO	$W	$S	$ERA	$RTO	$TOT
ADL	12664	781	546	3.74	11.80	639	294	1	1	936
LSL	13148	792	537	3.78	11.85	648	289	–1	–1	936
DDA	13048	790	543	3.78	11.85	647	292	0	–1	938
SCF	12968	784	542	3.79	11.82	642	292	–1	0	933
AVG LG	12957	787	542	3.77	11.83	644	292	0	0	936
AVG TM	1080	66	45	3.77	11.83	54	24	0	0	78
AVG PL	120	7.3	5.0	3.77	11.83	6	3	0	0	8.67

There's a little more variation between leagues, as one would expect, since there are so many more pitchers to choose from. But the big, big difference is the relief pitching situation in each major league back on opening day 1990.

Now for some final Rotisserie pitching stats.

NLR'S	IP	W	S	ERA	RATIO	$W	$S	$ERA	$RTO	$TOT
BLK	13091	771	396	3.70	11.77	631	270	–2	–2	898
CHL	12295	734	396	3.71	11.78	601	270	–2	–2	867
MAG	12756	766	381	3.73	11.80	627	260	–3	–2	882
PRI	12682	754	395	3.71	11.82	617	269	–2	–3	882
AVG LG	12706	756	392	3.71	11.79	619	267	–2	–2	882
AVG TM	1271	76	39	3.71	11.79	62	27	–1	–1	86
AVG PL	141	8.4	4.4	3.71	11.79	7	3	0	0	9.30

ALR'S	IP	W	S	ERA	RATIO	$W	$S	$ERA	$RTO	$TOT
ADL	14998	898	593	3.80	12.02	735	319	–1	–5	1048
LSL	15099	903	565	3.83	12.06	739	304	–3	–6	1034
DDA	15318	919	593	3.85	12.07	752	319	–4	–7	1061
SCF	14875	891	575	3.81	12.02	729	310	–2	–5	1032
AVG LG	15073	903	582	3.82	12.04	739	313	–2	–6	1044
AVG TM	1256	75	48	3.82	12.04	62	26	–1	–3	83
AVG PL	140	8.4	5.4	3.82	12.04	7	3	0	–1	8.71

Many more innings, wins and saves in both leagues; both leagues pay for it in ERA and ratio. With Lee Smith and Dave Schmidt to the rescue, saves rally in the National League, and the final average pitcher is worth $9.30 instead of $8.67, a significant difference. The final AL pitcher, after a lot of huffing and puffing, is worth four cents more.

The final Rotisserie league hitting stats:

NLR'S	AB	HR	RBI	SB	$HR	$RBI	$SB	$BA	$TOT
BLK	54891	1408	6755	1674	600	796	535	0	1931
CHL	53435	1395	6638	1663	595	782	532	0	1908
MAG	54496	1390	6716	1676	592	791	536	0	1919
PRI	54325	1404	6707	1664	598	790	532	0	1921
AVG LG	54287	1399	6704	1669	596	790	534	0	1920
AVG TM	5429	140	670	167	60	79	53	0	192
AVG PL	388	10.0	47.9	11.9	4	6	4	0	13.72

ALR'S	AB	HR	RBI	SB	$HR	$RBI	$SB	$BA	$TOT
ADL	68244	1654	8268	1387	736	998	645	1	2379
LSL	68840	1665	8307	1379	740	1003	641	1	2385
DDA	69391	1679	8371	1393	747	1011	648	–1	2404
SCF	67446	1649	8171	1358	733	986	631	0	2351
AVG LG	68480	1662	8279	1379	739	999	641	0	2380
AVG TM	5707	138	690	115	62	83	53	0	198
AVG PL	408	9.9	49.3	8.2	4	6	4	0	14.17

The NL average hitter gains almost a dollar in value, the AL more than a dollar; Frank Thomas, Travis Fryman and National League evacuees Brunansky and Coles have brought more goodies to the AL than Dave Justice and his meager supporting cast have given the NL.

The whole thing can be summed up like this:

NLR'S

DRAFT	$P	$H	$TOT
BLK	787	1818	2605
CHL	756	1806	2562
MAG	770	1829	2599
PRI	806	1826	2632
AVG LG	780	1820	2600
AVG TM	78	182	260
AVG PL	8.67	13.00	11.30

FINAL	$P	$H	$TOT
BLK	898	1931	2829
CHL	867	1908	2775
MAG	882	1919	2801
PRI	882	1921	2803
AVG LG	882	1920	2802
AVG TM	86	192	278
AVG PL	9.30	13.72	12.09

ALR'S

DRAFT	$P	$H	$TOT
ADL	936	2190	3125
LSL	936	2169	3105
DDA	938	2218	3156
SCF	933	2153	3086
AVG LG	937	2183	3120
AVG TM	78	182	260
AVG PL	8.67	13.00	11.30

FINAL	$P	$H	$TOT
ADL	1048	2379	3427
LSL	1034	2385	3419
DDA	1061	2404	3465
SCF	1032	2351	3383
AVG LG	1044	2380	3424
AVG TM	83	198	281
AVG PL	8.71	14.17	12.23

All eight leagues start out adhering extremely closely to the salary caps; the only way they can beat their cap is to be better than the average league, and the best at that, Princess Anne, beats it by 1.2 percent. (PRI earns $2632 by the overall stats, $2589 by summing each player salary—the Lotus vexation persists.)

By the end, however, every National League team has improved by $18 and every American by $21. It may not seem like much. But a team worth $275 or more, *coming out of the draft,* is a contender for the money and in a year of parity has a chance for first.

But if you only get $18 or $21 "richer," you're standing still; if *you* get $36 richer and *he* activates Steve Avery—now you're talking.

One thing that makes people resist Heath's hypothetical final standings is that they make the actual playing of the season seem rather pointless. It is, as often as not. But what's nice about all the loot that's represented in these charts is that it seems to yield itself to hard work. Reserve lists take enormous preparation, waivers constant vigil. They don't even add up to 10 percent of the pie. A lot more loot exchanges hands in trades. But that's the whole problem; there's an exchange. The loot in the charts above is the only hope we have of thumbing our noses at the hated hypothetical final standings without being dependent on someone else's self-interest.

The next question is, if prices are valid for leagues, are they for teams?

Here are the hypothetical final standings last year of the Morgantown League in North Carolina, along with what the formulas award each team's stats in Patton $:

MORGANTOWN 1990 DRAFT

		$PIT	$HIT	$TOT	PTS
1	BLUE SOX	116	184	300	61.5
2	MORONS	86	220	306	59.5
3	IMBWAS	97	208	305	57.0
4	CLIFFHANGERS	126	163	289	55.0
5	REROONS	100	162	262	51.0
6	AGGIES	41	211	252	44.0
7	ANIMALS	29	168	197	31.0
8	JAILERS	38	168	206	30.0
9	TIGERS	78	123	201	29.0
10	SLUGGERS	52	132	184	22.0
	SUM	762	1739	2501	440.0

Every team that buys more than $260 worth of statistics in the draft finishes in the first division in the hypothetical final standings; every team that buys less finishes in the second division. Can't get a much stronger confirmation that a $260 team is a .500 team.

The top three teams in the hypothetical finish all earn over $300. However, they are close, both in dollars and points.

There are two reasons why the league as a whole only earned $2501. It bought an unusual number of bad pitchers, compiling an ERA of 3.72 (compared to the average league's 3.67) and a ratio of 11.77 (compared to the average league's 11.71). And with only 1440 stolen bases, it

came up over 100 short of the average league's stolen base total. I see that no team bought Eric Yelding, so that accounts for 64 right there.

But top to bottom, this is an even draft. The average point gap is 4.39, much closer than most leagues. Patton $ confirm that it's going to be competitive. For some teams to buy well over $300 in the draft, other teams have to buy well under $200, and only one team, the Sluggers, do that in this draft.

As a result, there are going to be shifts between the hypothetical order of finish and the actual one. Teams are closely bunched, Yelding is going to appear eventually, and so is Justice. Lee Smith and Dave Schmidt are going to land with someone. Altogether, this league is going to trade 32 active players, activate (or reactivate) 54 from reserve lists, and claim 45 on waivers ... Any clues, though, in Patton $, who has the edge? Pick your winner.

I agree. The Morons should win. They have the most Patton $, and they have a little bit of hitting to spare. But there's another team lying in the weeds.

Here are the actual final standings:

MORGANTOWN 1990 FINAL

		$PIT	$HIT	$TOT	PTS
1	CLIFFHANGERS	145	193	338	61.0
2	BLUE SOX	114	217	331	60.0
3	REROONS	113	197	310	55.0
4	IMBWAS	103	210	313	52.5
5	MORONS	90	232	322	52.5
6	AGGIES	73	202	275	41.5
7	JAILERS	58	191	249	35.5
8	TIGERS	100	123	223	33.5
9	ANIMALS	29	168	197	22.5
10	SLUGGERS	57	142	199	26.0
	TOTALS	882	1875	2757	440.0

Every team except one (the Animals) has gained in Patton $, but as a group, of course, they can't gain a single point. So, in essence, the teams are rearranged according to who has gained the most Patton $. There's an even stronger correlation now between the dollar worth of teams and the standings.

How did it all happen? Well, the league's year, without yet knowing anything about the rosters, can be largely inferred from the following

summary of dollars gained, points gained or lost, and post-draft activity:

		PATTON $ GAIN	POINT GAIN	MOVES			ALL MOVES
				TRADES	RL	WAIVERS	
1	CLIFFHANGERS	49	6.0	9	11	9	29
2	BLUE SOX	31	–1.5	0	6	7	13
3	REROONS	48	4.0	7	12	10	29
4	IMBWAS	8	–4.5	7	8	3	18
5	MORONS	17	–7.0	0	4	1	5
6	AGGIES	23	–2.5	7	6	6	19
7	JAILERS	43	5.5	2	1	3	6
8	TIGERS	22	4.5	0	4	2	6
9	ANIMALS	0	–5.0	0	0	0	0
10	SLUGGERS	15	0.5	0	2	4	6
	TOTALS	256	0.0	32	54	45	131

In this comparatively quiet league, the Cliffhangers and Reroons look like they were hyperactive. They also were the two biggest gainers, both in points and dollars. The Cliffhangers scrambled past three teams, two of whom made no trades, and the Reroons hustled from fifth to third. The Blue Sox and Morons helped themselves with their reserve lists and waiver claims, just not enough. The Animals must have gone on safari; they didn't make one move all season.

Since every team that does trade shows a gain in Patton $, the trades probably were more or less fair. The purpose of trades is to gain points, not Patton $. The secret of the Cliffhangers was their strong pitching; and the key to that was a huge surplus in saves. They had 72 coming out of the draft, 27 more than the next team.

Judging by the final rosters, the Cliffhangers traded Tim Burke to the Imbwas for Ramon Martinez—a fair, even a gutsy trade. They got John Tudor from waivers or off their reserve list, or maybe as part of a trade; in any event, he has no salary. Lee Smith is on their final roster; he must have been on their reserve list (a logical choice in April), since they would not have gotten him on waivers and had no reason to trade for him. Probably as a consequence of Smith's arrival in the NL, Randy Myers has departed from the Cliffhangers' ranks, and Tim Raines has been added.

The Reroons have Yelding on their final roster, but since they paid $26 for Brunansky, that seems fair.

The Jailers got Justice. That's what it says.

* * *

The last step is the players themselves. The prices are extremely accurate for leagues, and damned accurate for teams; does that make them right for players?

No, of course not. Gant drove in 84 runs for the Braves, no matter what any formula says. And if you need homers and don't need saves, Hector Villanueva is worth more to you than Randy Myers. The exact context is everything. You can figure out what every player on your team was worth to you, and only you, last year, if you want to take the time. Patton $ estimate what he was worth to a typical team, most likely.

The Cliffhangers froze Will Clark at $36; he lost $7, most likely. They froze Mitchell at $22; he netted $9. Eight dollars for Marshall seemed like a good buy in the draft, but he lost $4. The $1 pick-up of Mackey Sasser seemed unexciting, but he made a $10 profit ... bit by bit, the Cliffhangers, looking up the theoretical earnings in Appendix A, get a pretty accurate view of how their own season went. Clark made a greater contribution to their stats than Sasser did, but Mackey—the Cliffhangers surely knew without needing confirmation from a price guide—was a bigger key to their victory. Nor do Patton $ persuade them to keep Sasser and throw Clark back in the pool this year (if they can't keep both); they were going to do that anyway. But they admit they don't mind seeing that some pseudo-scientist agrees with their idea of how helpful Mackey was in a partial season. This year, if everything breaks right, Mackey will earn ... and the Cliffhangers start penciling in projected profits.

It's all quite innocent. For me, the big difference between what I do and other price touts do is that I haven't any idea what they do. Lee Berryman tells us (or used to; I haven't seen his stuff in the last few years) that with a thousand hours and a mainframe computer you could duplicate what he does. John Benson, while constantly despairing at our folly for caring about what players earned the year before, caters to our folly; he's an economist and perhaps other economists can follow his explanations of how he calculates salaries for the year before. Les Leopold, another economist, is much kinder. He advises me not to even try.

I'm afraid the way I handle other price guides is to peek at the prices. If I see Benson giving Steve Sax more money than Rickey Henderson in 1989, I shake my head at Benson's folly. However Les did it, his prices last year agreed with mine in most respects, and so I thought they were sound, naturally. Where we disagreed (relief pitchers) I didn't mind, either, since we play in the same league.

In the retrospective salary game, there's not that much room for difference of opinion anymore, I believe, but there is room. The ranking of players—at least of similar types of players—has almost no latitude. There's a very nice publication, for example, called *The Baseball Forecaster*. It's jammed full of goodies—linear weights, runs created, runs prevented—all tidily presented, a banquet for masochists. But its ROTR's (Rotisserie ratings) are another matter. When I see Thigpen rated over Eckersley in 1990, Stewart over Clemens, and Bonds over Henderson, I turn the page. They just don't get it.

Eckersley, Clemens and Henderson—each doing more or less the same thing as Thigpen, Stewart and Bonds—help their teams more. It's as simple as that. (In the case of Bonds and Henderson, they seem to think there are no league differences, which I admit can get complicated.) If one player helps a team more than a similar player helps a team—team after team after team, as Jerry Heath has shown—how can the second player be more valuable?

Comparing dissimilar players, however, is always going to be a problem. I'm still not satisfied with the Drabek/Myers conundrum. Is a win really more valuable than a save? Which do we prefer to see in the boxscore after one of our pitchers, a W or an S?

Too late to change it now. (I like an S.) But it's certainly ironic that I would get browbeaten by Heath's computers into lowering the wins denominator and raising the saves in a year when saves became even scarcer in one of the leagues. Here are the pitching formulas.

NL PITCHERS

```
SW =  8.67*(W/2.5)/4.237
SS =  8.67*(S/2.7)/4.237
SERA =  8.67*((3.67-(428.2+ER)/((1050+IP)/9))/0.04)/4.237
SRTO =  8.67*((11.71-((1366.2+H+BB)/((1050+IP)/9)))/0.07)/4.237
```

AL PITCHERS

```
SW =  8.67*(W/2.5)/4.237
SS =  8.67*(S/3.8)/4.237
SERA =  8.67*((3.77-(439.8+ER)/((1050+IP)/9))/0.04)/4.237
SRTO =  8.67*((11.83-((1380.2+H+BB)/((1050+IP)/9)))/0.07)/4.237
```

In Lotus, I use even more decimals than are shown here. The only one that's worth focusing much attention on is the 2.5 wins denominator, down from 3.0. As a statement (between two and three wins make a

difference in the standings, rather than three wins) it's less than earth-shaking, but there are repercussions elsewhere in these formulas. In the National League, rather than 2.5 saves, 2.7 saves make a difference. A slight adjustment; just enough to screw Randy Myers.

In the American League, the wins denominator gets dropped by the same amount. These are the only denominators that will always be the same for each league. If I ever back away from that principle, get rid of me.

As luck would have it, wins get a big boost in dollar value in the American League in a year when saves are proliferating like mice. These factors have a compound effect on the saves denominator—it jumps from 2.5 to 3.8. In essence, it was the only way I could make Drabek worth more than Myers and still keep a lid on pitchers as a whole.

Oddly, the beatings that Eck and Thiggy take don't bother me a bit. By the old reckoning, they'd be worth $65 and $61; inevitably, there's the suggestion that if they were worth that last year, they're worth risking that much on this year, and I definitely don't want to suggest that. So, Eck and Thiggy—tough darts.

The hitting formulas:

NL HITTERS

```
SHR =  13*(HR/4.8)/6.355
SRBI =  13*(RBI/17.365)/6.355
SSB =  13*(SB/6.4)/6.355
SBA =  13*((((1259.6+H)/(4700+AB))-0.268)/0.0012)/6.355
```

AL HITTERS

```
SHR =  13*(HR/4.6)/6.355
SRBI =  13*(RBI/16.945)/6.355
SSB =  13*(SB/4.4)/6.355
SBA =  13*((((1278.9+H)/(4900+AB))-0.261)/0.0012)/6.355
```

Yes, all three denominators in the quantitative categories are larger for the NL player; effectively, by having a higher batting average, the fourth denominator is higher as well.

The object of all the denominators is to put the eight categories in fair relationship to each other. By no means do they completely level the field. The way to survey it from the side is to look at what the average teams earn in the eight categories in the earlier charts. Since each

category is worth the same in the standings, shouldn't each category be worth the same to the average team?

I've never thought so. I've always insisted the average categories, on an average team, are worth zero. But beyond that, the quantitative categories aren't equal. The hierarchy goes: RBI's $76 (splitting the difference between the NL and AL average teams), home runs $57, wins $54, stolen bases $49 (splitting the difference), saves $24, ERA $0, ratio $0. Add these up and you get $260.

Look what Henderson and especially Eckersley have to contend with! Gross discrimination! They earn their pay, I tell you.

The most serious objection to my pricing system is not so much with the denominators, which create point totals; it's with the equations that turn the point totals into money. However, the equations spring directly from the point totals.

The average hitter in either league gets 6.355 points. What this means is, the statistics of the average hitter, added to the average Rotisserie team, tend to give the team slightly more than six additional points in the standings.

The average pitcher tends to give the team slightly more than four points (4.237).

Next year, maybe I'll make it six points exactly and four points exactly. The decimal points obscure the important point, which is that the hitter is 50 percent more helpful than the pitcher (because he pulls three oars, the pitcher two), and he should be paid 50 percent more. I do that. I give the hitter $13, the pitcher $8.67. The ugly-looking equations merely say 6.355 points are worth $13, 4.237 points are worth $8.67.

That's all there is to these formulas. They may seem impressive, at least the ugly ones, but they're not. A calculator is all you need: turn the points a player earns (or loses) in a category into dollars; add up the dollars.

The theory that an average hitter helps more than an average pitcher seems to have been supported by the work that Jerry Heath has been doing. His research will undoubtedly take this further. In the meantime, as I said in last year's book, plenty of top-notch mathematicians don't buy my theory at all. Many days on the phone, Les Leopold has all but convinced me that I'm a quack, that every category does count equally, that it's only my poor powers of perception that can't see that averages and quantities are the same, and he helps me see that they are the same; ultimately, my only defense against Les is that the next day I wake up and they look different again.

Mike Dalecki, a statistics professor in North Carolina, sent me a letter that I can't shed so easily.

"This is a rebuttal to your basic claim that 'hitters overall *have to* be of no value in batting average.' "

A team comprised of average hitters, he points out, does not get zero in batting average. "Such a team in the AL would get 6.5 points in batting average ... The 'zero point' you've chosen (.264) is not worth zero (if it were, such teams would come in last in the BA category) ... I think you have chosen the wrong average. The average BA of the last place team is .2494 ... BA value should be based on this as the zero point, because a hitter only has value to the extent he helps pull a team out of last place."

I'm sure this is what Les was trying to tell me. It's an excellent point. A .255 hitter isn't nearly the horrible person that I made him out to be. I was tempted to make .2494 the new batting average of my average player in the American League. If I did, though, I'd have to take the money the hitters now earned in batting average from somewhere else, for I still had to stay within the salary cap, and the whole house of cards would collapse.

In the end, I rationalized that one home run—be it from Jose Canseco or Gary Pettis—helps a team that is second in home runs inch towards first. If Canseco or Pettis goes 1-for-4, most teams inch towards last in batting average, and the teams that don't are beyond help. But that's the reaction you're going to get from me. Who wants to start over from the ground level? All I can do is relay Mike's critique in case anyone does.