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# 24th Annual WFBL Winter Talks

## February 18th, 2018 ▪ Burlington, NC

1. Attendees:
   * Fostoria Screwballs (Dennis Welly)
   * Raleigh Middle Fingers (Thomas Lipps)
   * Power Rangers (Adam Brake)
   * Durham Indians (Dennis Close)
   * Ellicott City Black Sox (Chip Kiel)
   * Hickory Scorpions (Chris Burkett)
   * Ball Hawks (Matt Burkett)
   * Pittsburgh Brahma Bulls (Mike Rudd)
   * West Raleigh Moundchargers (Jeremy Moore)
2. Check Presentations

2017 League Fees: ($40 x 11) + ($20 x 1) = $460

2017 League Expenses: ($150 website) + ($10 engraving) + ($25 ball) = $185

2017 Prize Money: $460 - $185 = $275

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|  |  | 2017 | 2016 | 2015 |
| 3rd Runner Up | Mauer Patch Kids (Nolan Parker)  2017 Keatts Division Champions (19-4) | $40 | $40 | $40 |
| 2nd Runner Up | Fostoria Screwballs (Dennis Welly)  2017 Doeren Division Champions (16-7) | $52 | $52 | $52 |
| 1st Runner Up | Fuquay Nine (Andrew Blue)  2017 Wild Card Winner (15-8) | $74 | $76 | $77 |
| League Champion | Raleigh Middle Fingers (Thomas Lipps)  2017 Avent Division Champions (16-7) | $109 | $112 | $115 |

1. Trophy Presentation

2017 Season in Review

* Both Fuquay Nine and Raleigh Middle Fingers returned to the postseason in 2017. Fuquay has now made the playoffs 4 of the past 5 seasons. Fostoria returned to the playoffs after a 1-year hiatus. Mauer Patch Kids made they first ever appearance in the postseason.
* Fostoria had won 7 in-a-row (and 12 of their previous 13) heading into the playoffs. Before that incredible run, they had a 5% chance of making the playoffs. Sadly, their run came to a brutal, first-round shellacking by the eventual champs.
* Mauer Patch Kids had a 13-game win streak during the 2017 season on their way to leading the league in wins.
* 25% of Raleigh Middle Fingers regular season win total came at the expense of their division rival Power Rangers.
* Trending up: Doeren Division Champion Fostoria Screwballs was far-and-above the most improved team in 2017, winning 10 more games in 2017 over the previous season.
* Trending down: Hickory Scorpions, Spivey’s Corner, Ellicott City and Pittsburgh all lost 5 or more games in 2017 than they had in the previous season.
* Ellicott City Black Sox posted their lowest win total since 2008.
* After an 8-3 start, the Pittsburgh Brahma Bulls were poised to make the playoffs, predicted to have an 85% chance. But in the final 12 games, the reigning Doeren Division Champions only managed 3 wins (one of which was against the Ball Hawks).
* The Durham Indians had a near 80% chance of making the playoffs with only 3 games left holding a 1-game lead PLUS the *always*-important tiebreaker over Fuquay, their next closest challenger. Durham lost all three (Fuquay won all 3).
* Ball Hawks have now posted back-to-back 4-win season, and haven’t cracked 10 wins since 2013.
* Trends
  + 11 draft picks traded in 2016 (down from 19 in ‘16) – most active was Spivey’s Corner (6) and Durham Indians (4)
  + 83% (10/12) of the league either traded away or received a draft pick in ‘17 (up from 75% in ’16). The Hickory Scorpions and Ball Hawks were the only franchises that were not involved in a trade which included a 2018 draft pick.
  + 75% (9/12) participation in the 2017 Minor League Draft (up from 66% in ’16)
  + 92% (11/12) participation in the 2017 Winter Talks (up from 83% in ’16)
* The 2017 WFBL Summer Talks event was held in Baltimore, Maryland, June 16-17. Attendance was low.
* All 2017 3rd-year protectees were traded away or dropped during the 2017 season.

1. Draft Location & Date

Location

* Raleigh
* Mike’s house? Thomas’ house? Other ideas or suggestions?
  + Mike’s house – can’t be Thomas’s due to cats/Chip

Date

* Saturday March 24th, Sunday, March 25th, Friday, March 30th, or Saturday, March 31st?
* If day draft, 10am or 11am?
  + 10:30 on March 25th
* If March 30th or 31st, do we include Thursday (and Friday) games, or just start the season on Monday April 2nd?
  + Yes, include in Week 1

1. Important Dates

The official WFBL Player Price Guide must be released no later than 2 weeks prior to the draft. Ideally, it should be released 2 weeks prior to when protection lists are due (which would be 3 weeks prior to the draft, since protection lists are due 1 week before the draft).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Player Price Guide Released | Sunday, March 11, 2018 |
| Protected Lists Due | Sunday, March 18, 2018 |
| Schedule Released | Friday, March 23, 2018 |
| 25th Annual WFBL Draft | Sunday, March 25, 2018 |
| MLB Opening Day | Thursday, March 29, 2018 |
| Initial Roster Transaction Requests Due | Friday, April 13, 2018 (email in by 10pm) |
| Minor League Draft | Sunday, April 22, 2018 (online at 9pm) |
| Expanded Rosters | Monday, August 20, 2018 |
| Trade/Transaction Deadline | Monday, August 27, 2018 |
| Playoffs Begin | Monday, September 10, 2018 |

1. League Software

Cost for CBSSports.com remains $149.99 as the “Early Bird Special” (deadline was Feb 9th) **PAID**

1. Draft

* Online draft board: expect only minor improvements in the 15th installment of our home-grown online draft software. **New** URL for WFBL is <http://wfbl.acbrake.org>

1. Minor League Draft

The last 8 years, we’ve held the minor league draft online all in one night. This alleviates issues where a player lost minor league draft eligibility during the course of the draft. Owners who cannot be available have the opportunity to submit a list.

1. Open Forum
2. Three years ago, we lowered the salary cap from $300 to $280. How is that working? Should we go down again to $260?
   1. Proposal: Adjust pricing:
      1. Move top level from 700 pts to 600 pts
      2. Instead of 100 pt tiers, use 50 pt tiers
      3. No change to keeper levels or cap
   2. Vote: 2nd – yes
   3. Vote: 9-0
3. Vote that Adam has to pay dues:
   1. Vote: 2nd – yes
   2. No vote
4. A couple years ago, we decided to use CBS’s new lineup option where lineups lock for each individual player 5 minutes prior to the scheduled start time for that player’s team. We still like this?
   1. Yes
5. Scheduling. As you are probably already aware, the MLB season is more “spread out” this year than in years past, giving teams more off days during the season. In order to do that, the season now starts 4 days earlier than usual (on Thursday March 28th). Historically, Opening Day was on Monday, which corresponding nicely to the start of a Fantasy Week. Then, ESPN threw a bunch of money at MLB for an exclusive Sunday night game to kick off the season. That game soon became 2-3 games, with an occasional series being played in Australia or Japan. Anyways, we need to decide when to start our Fantasy season. I propose we start on Monday, 4/2 and Week 1, is 7 days like every other week (except All-Star week). This would also allow us to have the draft the Saturday before (March 31st). Note, by doing this, we would not count the stats from the games held March 29, 30, 31, and April 1. Games would be likely be in-progress during the draft, as well.
   1. See above.
6. Any thoughts on the initial waiver period? Do we still like having transactions frozen for the first 2 scoring periods? Initial roster transactions is a manual process (email waiver lists by Friday 10pm) – less and less people are even submitting lists anymore. Should we just scrap the emails/lists and simply allow transactions that Saturday at midnight? Or does that put people at a disadvantage (who may or may not be online)?
   1. Proposal: Open up waivers as soon as draft ends
   2. 2nd – Yes
   3. Tabled to next year, see below.
   4. What about 2 week rule for keeping players picked up?
      1. Change 2 week rule to 2 scoring period rule
         1. Must be on roster for 2 scoring periods
         2. 2nd – yes
         3. 7 for, 2 against
         4. Passes
   5. Proposal: Cap enforcement only when lineups lock for a week. Penalty: Rollback transactions. Table to next year. Rules committee to handle any issues during the year. Jeremy to have action to word new rule.
7. This leads to a question was presented as to whether or not a minor leaguer could be promoted during the initial 2-week period. The constitution does not forbid this, but does say that you need to have cap room on your roster. The question then was, can I drop someone to make room? I said yes, if that player was not drafted (i.e. was protected), as dropping a drafted player would break the 14-day rule. The question then was, well aren’t we breaking that rule already by processing initial waiver transactions on day 13? Bottom line: I would be for changing the wording in the constitution from “14 days” to “2 scoring periods”. This would allow someone to theoretically pickup someone on a Sunday, then drop him 8 days later (after the following week's lineups lock) such that the player's salary is accounted for on the active/reserve roster for a minimum of 2 scoring periods (I'd have to check to see if this complicates things more since our lineups no longer "lock" all at once any more, since moves can be made up until a player's team plays in a given scoring period). The point of this rule is to prevent constant streaming of players. Who knows, maybe that whole concept is antiquated and it’s time to revisit the entire set of roster limitations.
   1. See above
8. Commissioner leagues like ours now have the option of allowing teams to trade draft picks for up to 3 years in advance. This option is only available for leagues that use their Live or Extended drafts, and is not available for offline drafts like ours.
   1. No change
9. Shohei Ohtani is the first true two-way player in 100 years. He will be listed in CBS with a primary position of SP, but with dual-eligibility at DH. When setting your weekly lineup, you’ll need to decide whether to use him at hitter or pitcher, and you’ll accumulate his stats for that position only.
   1. Proposal: SP only, gains DH eligibility
      1. Projections only show points for SP, not batter, show price will only be for an SP
      2. No precedent for anyone not having position eligibility starting with two position eligibility
   2. Vote = 5 for/4 against (against = Should be both SP & DH eligible)
   3. Send out to league for vote
10. Other?
11. Constitution Review
12. Rules Committee Nominations and Elections

Dennis C. and Jeremy were elected to serve a 2-year term beginning in 2016. Nolan was elected to serve a 2-year term beginning in 2017. So, we need 2 new guys to replace Dennis and Jeremy to serve a 2-year term beginning in 2018.

* + - Chip and Dennis W. - Unanimous

1. Draft Lottery

2 “chances” – Raleigh Middle Fingers, Fuquay Nine, Fostoria Screwballs, Mauer Patch Kids

4 “chances” – All other teams

* + - 1. Durham Indians (Doeren)
      2. Ellicott City Black Sox (Keatts)
      3. Raleigh Middle Fingers\* (Avent)
      4. Hickory Scorpions (Doeren)
      5. Power Rangers (Keatts)
      6. Spivey’s Corner Knockouts (Avent)
      7. Ball Hawks (Doeren)
      8. Pittsburgh Brahma Bulls (Avent)
      9. Fostoria Screwballs\* (Doeren)
      10. Fuquay Nine (Keatts)
      11. West Raleigh Moundchargers (Avent)
      12. Mauer Patch Kids\* (Keatts)

1. Division Alignment

\* Defending Division Champs:Raleigh Middle Fingers (Avent), Fostoria Screwballs (Doeren), Mauer Patch Kids (Keatts)

Doeren:

1. Durham Indians
2. Hickory Scorpions
3. Ball Hawks
4. Fostoria Screwballs\*

Keatts:

1. Ellicott City Black Sox
2. Power Rangers
3. Fuquay Nine
4. Mauer Patch Kids\*

Avent:

1. Raleigh Middle Fingers
2. Spivey’s Corner Knockouts
3. Pittsburgh Brahma Bulls
4. West Raleigh Moundchargers