

Strat-O-Matic Games: A Connection With Youth For 35 Years

by Matthew Ross

Thank goodness Harold Richman wasn't a great athlete. In 1947, Mr. Richman began inventing games in his home, instead of on the street. Instant heroics at the age of 11.

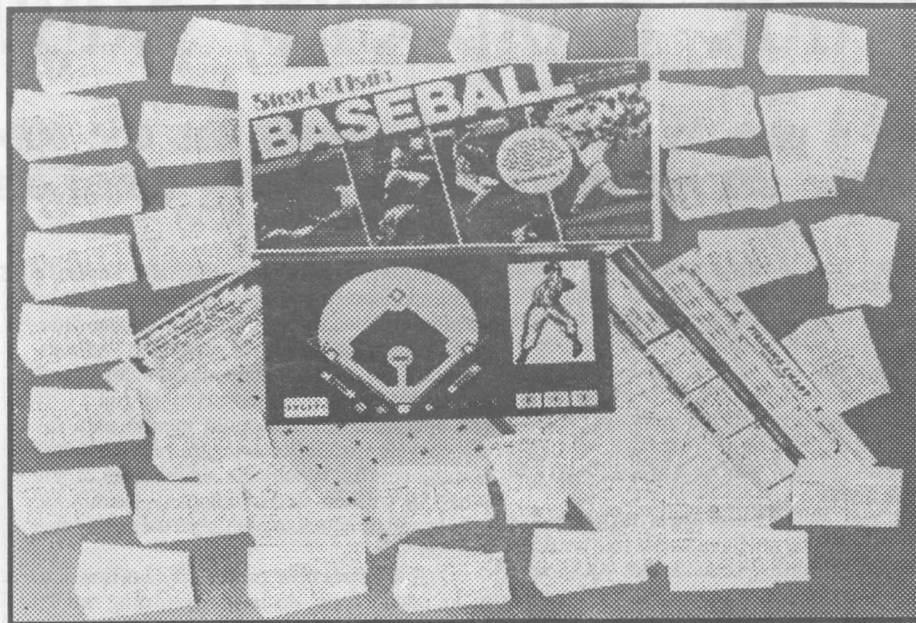
Creating games became his lifetime career and the fruits of that labor of love manifested in the Strat-O-Matic Game Company. Located at 46 Railroad Station in Glen Head since 1975, Strat-O-Matic is a game played with dice and a deck of players cards that simulate major league performance. What is unique about Strat-O-Matic is that it offers you the opportunity to make strategic decisions, to manage a ball club containing real players whose performances reflect actual statistics. The game is played by sports fans nationwide and in Canada who form leagues, tournaments, or play solitaire.

For ten years, Mr. Richman, creator and founder of Strat-O-Matic, cultivated his creations and tried them out on friends around his neighborhood in Great Neck, N. Y. What emerged from those experiments was the first official version of Strat-O-Matic in 1958.

"In many ways it's a lot like really running a major league club," says Richman, who lives in nearby Port Washington. "There are many different types of situations. People have actual draft leagues or play by themselves or even by mail. It's not a kid's game. It's for college people and older people. The range of players is sixteen to eighty-one years."

Richman emphasizes that Strat-O-Matic is more than just a game company. In fact, it's a sports research institution in itself. The company, located in Glen Head since 1975, prides itself on the extensive research aspect of the game, particularly the old-time baseball cards. "We go through all the box scores from the Sporting News from that era," says Richman. "We really give you a real flavor for those days. The old cards mean a lot to us. There's a lot of pride in them for us. They give you a real feel for what the past was."

In 1966, Strat-O-Matic negotiated a royalty agreement with Marvin Miller of the Major League Players Association. This royalty contract was the first of its kind and established a



Strat-O-Matic Deluxe Baseball Game

standard for the sports gaming industry. "We have no relationship with the teams," says Richman. "But we do pay players royalties."

The retail division of the company began in 1971 with Bloomingdale's purchase of Strat-O-Matic Football, released in 1968. Professional basketball and hockey games soon followed, as did an advanced version of the baseball game which included pitcher's stamina factors, individual batter's performances computed against lefty and righty pitching, and pitcher's rating against both lefty and righty batters. Strat-O-Matic Baseball also became available on computer in 1985.

In 1981, the strike-shortened baseball season, Strat-O-Matic was played in Cleveland Municipal Stadium. This enlarged model of Strat-O-Matic was displayed in the Hall of Fame for two years. A regular sized version of the game is on permanent display there.

While Strat-O-Matic has continued to grow over the years, they have remained in Glen Head because it works for them. One half of the employees at the company live in Glen Head. "The post office is less than two miles away and I live so close by," added Richman. "We really like it here."

Strat-O-Matic is celebrating their 35th anniversary this year. It all started with a very creative young Harold Richman. "I created games because it gave me the ability to create my own heroics," says Richman, who confesses that he doesn't actually play the game very much anymore due to constraints on his time. "I was an avid player up until about ten years ago."

If you ask Richman, Strat-O-Matic has one big advantage over poker. "It's a connection with youth," he explained. What more can you ask of a game.

Ordering Information for all Strat-O-Matic Products

Mail Orders: Strat-O-Matic Game Co., Inc., 46 Railroad Plaza, Glen Head, N.Y. 11545. Phone orders: (516) 671-6566; 800-645-3455. You can call or write to inquire about the retail availability of Strat-O-Matic products.

DWIGHT GOODEN						throws RIGHT	e13	#3R	pitcher- starter(B)
54% AGAINST LEFT-HAND BATTER			46% AGAINST RIGHT-HAND BATTER						
4	5	6	4	5	6				
2- gb (p) B	2- fly (rf) B	2- gb (1b) C	2- GB (ss) X	2- GB (p) X	2- GB (ss) X				
3- FLY (lf) X	3- FLY (rf) X	3- GB (p) X	3- GB (2b) X	3- FLY (lf) X	3- FLY (rf) X				
4- GB (ss) X	4- TR 1-10	4- strikeout	4- strikeout	4- GB (3b) X	4- strikeout				
5- fly (cf) C	DO .11-20	5- GB (ss) X	5- strikeout	5- GB (2b) X	5- strikeout				
6- WALK	5- DO** 1-2	6- SI* 1-2	6- WALK	6- GB (ss) X	6- strikeout				
7- strikeout ●	SI** 3-20	lo(ss) 3-20	7- strikeout ●	7- strikeout	7- strikeout ●				
8- strikeout	6- SINGLE (cf)	7- strikeout	8- strikeout	8- strikeout	8- strikeout				
9- strikeout ●	7- strikeout	8- strikeout	9- strikeout ●	9- strikeout	9- strikeout				
10- GB (3b) X	8- strikeout	9- gb (2b) C	10- CATCH-X	10- strikeout	10- strikeout				
11- FLY (cf) X	9- GB (2b) X	10- CATCH-X	11- GB (1b) X	11- DO 1-18	11- FLY (cf) X				
12- gb (p) B	10- WALK	11- GB (1b) X	12- GB (p) X	fly(lf)B 19-20	12- FLY (cf) X				
	11- GB (2b) X	12- gb (1b) C		12* TR 1-10					
	12- FLY (cf) X			SI** 11-20					

Dwight Gooden's Rookie Card: 1984, Advanced Version