

STRAT-O-MATIC® NEWS

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Winter 2018

Diamonds Are Forever: Power Everywhere in 2017 Baseball Set

After a star-studded Major League Baseball season, some of the glitziest cards ever will soon be on tabletops across the Strat-O-Matic galaxy.

2017 was a Big Bang season, with teams blasting a stratospheric 6,105 home runs, shattering the all-time record. Pitchers countered with their own star power, setting the record for strikeouts.

Fittingly, the new champions are called the Astros, the first team in more than 100 seasons of Texas baseball to win the World Series.

"Houston Strong" was the post-season rallying cry for an Astros team that helped its community recover from devastating Hurricane Harvey, but the play on words also described the 238-homer squad (second only to the Yankees) that also hit the most home runs in World Series history.

Until now, if a man had 10 card chances for home runs against right-handed pitching, he probably had the dominant power card in the set. There are five such players in this set, topped by Oakland rookie Matt Olson's jaw-dropping 19.4 chances (he has 10.8 against lefties, too).

J.D. Martinez, who hit 45

HR and led the Majors with .690 slugging, is second against righties with 11.5 chances and first against lefties with an obscene 17.4 chances.

Home-run king Giancarlo Stanton has 15.3 chances vs. lefties and 11.4 vs. righties after his MLB-best 59-homer campaign that shattered the Miami franchise record.

American League homer champ Aaron Judge has the other big card vs. righties (10.1 HR chances), but five others have more than 9 HR chances vs. right-handers.

Overall, 110 Major Leaguers hit at least 20 HR and some of them, such as Yonder Alonso and Elvis Andrus, never had hit 10 before. More than 120 batters have the maximum 8 ballpark HR chances on at least one side of their Strat-O-Matic cards.

On the flip side, there was a time when 40 strikeout chances was the mark of a dominant pitcher. There are 110 such creatures in this Strat-O-Matic set, 90 of them carded.

Washington's Max Scherzer has the elite 71 chances vs. righty batters. Among relievers, Dodger Kenley Jansen has 78 chances, Boston's Craig Kimbrel 76, Cleveland's Andrew

Pre-orders begin: Jan. 24
Opening Day at SOM: Feb. 16

Pre-orders for Opening Day pickup will begin the same day as all other pre-orders. However, those coming for Opening Day pickup don't have to rush to be among the first to call.

Miller 71 (all vs. righties) and the Yankee's Chad Green has 76 vs. lefties.

Wow. But then, 242 Major League pitchers averaged at least 9 strikeouts per 9 innings pitched.

Powerful First Impressions

The record-setting feats of hitting and pitching that most teams achieved were highlighted by celestial rookie performances unequaled in baseball history. The Yankees' Judge set the Major League rookie record with 52 homers, hit the most ever at Yankee Stadium and his 127 walks broke Ted Willams' rookie record.

Cody Bellinger's 39 HR for the Dodgers broke the National League rookie record.

Hunter Renfroe's 26 HR set the San Diego rookie record.

Rookie shortstop Paul DeJong led St. Louis with 25 HR. Rafael Devers led Boston with .482 slugging.

While hitting 24 HR in 189 AB, Oakland's Olson set the team record for homers in a month. He, Franklin Barreto and Jaycob Brugman hit their first career homers in one game, something never done before.

Philadelphia's Rhys Hoskins reached 18 HR in just 34 games

continued on Page 2

This is the Golden Age of Strat-O-Matic

Seven years ago, when Strat-O-Matic celebrated its 50th anniversary, the word "golden" was used a lot. But so much has happened since then.

Today, there are more ways to enjoy Strat-O-Matic than ever. The best-selling baseball board game is going strong. The ever-better Windows game is a simulation force. Baseball 365 has a potent and expanding following online.

Now we have Football 365, Baseball Daily (with a new digital card set every day of the season), improved NetPlay, Game Lobby and mobile apps, including the amazing Card Viewer App that displays images for every Strat card ever created.

Strat-O-Matic reaches a new milestone this year: Every season of Major League baseball, back to 1871, is available for computer play.

You can read about these and other gamer-pleasing advances on the pages inside. Then follow Strat-O-Matic on Facebook or Twitter for more developments throughout the year(s) in all five SOM sports.

Time, and Strat-O-Matic, march on

CHICAGO-N		VS. LEFTHANDERS										VS. RIGHTHANDERS																			
HITTERS	AB	SO	BB	HIT	OB	TB	HR	BP	CL	DP	SO	BB	HIT	OB	TB	HR	BP	CL	DP	STEALING		STL	SPD	B	H	FIELDING					
Grace,M*	547	0	8	31.2	39.2	39.5	1.4	w	+1	22	0	11	36.7	47.7	49.8	0.9	1	+1	20	4/11 (13-4)		E	11	D	B	1b-1e5					
PITCHERS		VS. LEFTHANDERS										VS. RIGHTHANDERS										ENDURANCE									
BALT	IP	SO	BB	HIT	OB	TB	HR	BP	DP	SO	BB	HIT	OB	TB	HR	BP	DP		HO	BK	WP			F	BAT/BUNT		ST	SP			
Orosco,J*	56	28	20	7.2	27.2	16.0	1.6	2	4	34	8	5.3	13.3	7.7	0.8	1	5	+3	R(1)		-5	0	7	2-15	1WR-C		E	10			

Strat-O-Matic Baseball 2018

More Realism and More Convenience

Wow! Optional New Rule Captures Extreme Batter-Pitcher Matchups

Baseball broadcasters are fond of telling us when a batter loves to face a certain pitcher or when a pitcher has dominated a certain hitter. Now, Strat-O-Matic brings to life those extreme advantages with an optional new feature in Strat-O-Matic Baseball 2018.

Dubbed **Extreme Batter-Pitcher Matchups** because they apply only to matchups where one player dominates, this computer-only feature is based on actual Major League data.

“Using a proprietary method Strat-O-Matic has identified certain batter-pitcher real-life matchups as statistically significant enough to warrant an adjustment in the game engine,” the Help file explains.

A new Team Report will identify which players have the advantage and against which foes. It also indicates the extent of the advantage, at one of four levels.

Extreme level 1 alters OPS by 200 points, level 2 by 300, level 3 by 400 and level 4 by 500, so even a level-1 advantage is extreme.

For that reason, most matchups will not be affected. But most players will have one or more favorable or unfavorable matchups.

For example, 2017 American League batting champion Jose Altuve has the edge against 25 pitchers, including a level-4 edge against Wade Miley, and has unfavorable matchups against 10 pitchers, including a level-4 problem against Jose Quintana.

While Altuve has matchup issues with 35 pitchers, and Justin Verlander has 48, Astros pitchers Tyler Clippard and Chris Deveniski have only two each.

The matchups are sure to influence lineup and in-game decisions.

For instance, Miley has problems with Astros Altuve, Marwin Gonzalez (level 1), Brian

McCann (level 1) and George Springer (level 3), but he has a level-1 advantage over Jake Marisnick, who usually thumps lefty pitchers (such as Miley) harder than he does righties.

The matchups judged to be extreme are based on career numbers, weighted more heavily on performance over the past three seasons.

During game play, alerts will indicate when an extreme matchup is present, whether it is batter or pitcher with the advantage and at what level.

On various screens, notations in magenta will indicate that the pitcher has the edge and an alert in orange indicates the batter does.

For now, this feature is available only for play with 2017 players. “The feature is only valid for players from the same year, so if you mix players from different years within your league you should not use this feature,” the Help file warns.

That’s Not All ...

The major features described above are just the beginning of what the latest version of the Windows game has to offer.

Even without employing Cloud Hosting, league commissioners can import an entire league’s computer managers with one click. With all the CMs in the Import folder, just run **Batch Import Computer Managers** from the Team Menu.

If **starting pitchers** have been pre-assigned, they will now appear on the pre-game schedule dialog that appears when New Schedule Game is clicked.

There are six new **ballpark** photos and 34 new ballpark-entry photos. And gamers now can locate lefty and righty pitchers in separate mound locations.

Already the sim with the most comprehensive statistics, Strat-O-Matic is offering some

Cloud Hosting Will Make League Commissioners’ Lives Worth Living

That gust of wind you just felt was not the latest tornado, but the collective exhale of league commissioners who manage computer leagues.

Thanks to improvements in Strat-O-Matic Baseball 2018, your commish will have automated help and single-button control from handy menus rather than team-by-team importing of game files and manager files.

Sharing the updated files with league members will be easier than ever, too.

It’s all part of the new, free, **Cloud Hosting** feature which, Strat-O-Matic says, was designed to make file exchanges “less error-prone and faster and easier to use” than manual exchanges.

Step-by-step procedures for commissioners and league members are described precisely in the Help file, but in a nutshell:

The commish has a menu and managers have a menu. The commish can use his to send all

files to one place in the Cloud and also to retrieve all team files from the same place.

After the commish creates the league, he selects Create Cloud Storage for League and uploads the league files. Managers then download the league and claim their teams. In return, they upload their computer managers. The commish can import them all with a single click.

Managers post game-result files and the commish imports them in the same fashion.

The upload/download process is repeated after each block of games has been played.

Using the menus will be easier, and much faster, than posting or e-mailing files for manual transfer, one team at a time.

Clicking options from the menu also will reduce inadvertent errors.

And single-button control automates part of the commissioner’s job.

You can get used to this!

juicy new reports. **League leaders** now can be displayed for the entire season or for any month.

The **Player Detail Report** will break out the wins, losses, innings pitched and ERA for all pitchers for their roles as starters and relievers and for any subsets you are saving (by month, by opponent, etc.). Just choose Automatic Subsets before the season begins, then you can see, for instance, that your ace pitcher went 4-0 with a 1.29 ERA in your September drive for the playoffs.

Wins Above Replacement (WAR) has been added to the Player Notebooks. Strat-O-Matic has chosen to offer a single number that combines each player’s wRAA, rWAR and dWAR. But there’s more: As the Help file explains, “We included a calculated WAR for

the player card as well (that is located under the “actual” column of data). This roughly estimates the real-life WAR of the player’s card, but is not an exact match of other WAR systems available elsewhere.

As always, the latest version brings you up to date. The 10-day disabled list employed by MLB in 2017 replaces the 15-day DL. Team play-by-play files are updated and more than 6,000 lines of Nickname play-by-plays are included. So are new and updated trivia questions.

Strat-O-Matic Baseball 2018 is needed to play the newly released rosters for 2017, 1968 and the six sets from the National Association, Negro Leagues and Japanese Leagues, as well as the updated Hall of Fame and Career Historical rosters.

For more, check the Help file.

Classic Strat: 1968 and So Much More

Year of the Pitcher: In 1968, McLain, Gibson and Lolich Rivalled a dramatic World Series for immortal fame

Enhanced with super-advanced features, the 1968 Major League season is re-created in time for the 50th anniversary of The Year of the Pitcher.

In this memorable season, Detroit's Denny McLain was the last to win 30 games (31-6, 1.96). Bob Gibson (22-9) registered a miniscule 1.12 ERA in a year when seven qualifying pitchers had sub-2.00 ERAs. Nine of the top 20 men in Wins Above Replacement were starting pitchers, including Hall of Famers Gibson, Tom Seaver and Ferguson Jenkins. Gibson and McLain were the league MVPs.

Maybe the most sensational pitching feat of all occurred in Game 7 of the World Series when Detroit's Mickey Lolich, pitching on only two days of rest, threw a complete-game five-hitter to out-duel the fully rested, mighty Gibson (winner of Game 7s in 1964 and 1967 and two games already in this World Series). That made Lolich 3-0 for the Series, which St. Louis once led three games to one.

The American League hit a paltry .230 and Boston's Carl Yastrzemski won the batting title at .301, the lowest winning mark ever. After the season, MLB lowered all pitching mounds.

But the Tigers had offense in LF Willie Horton (.285-36-85, .895 OPS). Catcher Bill Freehan and 1B Norm Cash each hit 25 HR with more than 800 OPS. Hall of Famer Al Kaline, in his only World Series season, had an .820 OPS for the season. Pinch-hitter Gates Brown hit .370 with an 1.127 OPS in 92 AB.



In the NL, Cincinnati's Pete Rose led with a .335 average, and San Francisco's Willie McCovey led with 36 HR, 105 RBI, .545 slugging and .923 OPS.

The list of top sluggers is filled with legends: Philadelphia's Dick Allen (33 HR); Chicago's Ernie Banks (32 HR), Billy Williams (.288-30-98) and Ron Santo (26 HR, 98 RBI); Atlanta's Hank Aaron (.287-29-86); San Francisco's Willie Mays (.289-23-79); Houston's Jimmy Wynn (26 HR), and Pittsburgh's Roberto Clemente (.291, 18 HR, 12 triples) and Willie Stargell (24 HR).

Pitching was the bigger story. San Francisco's Juan Marichal led the NL in wins (26-9, 2.43) while other NL stars were Jenkins (20-15, 2.63), Jerry Koosman (19-12, 2.08), Steve Blass (18-6, 2.12), Nelson Briles (19-11, 2.81) and Chris Short (19-13, 2.94).

AL pitching greats included Luis Tiant (21-9, 1.60), Dave McNally (22-10, 1.95), Mel Stottlemyre (21-12, 2.45), Sam McDowell (15-14, 1.81, 283 Ks), Stan Bahnsen (17-12, 2.05), Jim Hardin (18-13, 2.51), Ray Culp (16-6, 2.91) and Blue Moon Odom (16-10, 2.45).

Every Major League season in history now available from Strat-O-Matic; More Negro, Japan leagues, too

Strat-O-Matic has reached a baseball milestone: Using the Windows game, it is now possible to play every season in Major League history, beginning with the 1871 National Association, one of seven new releases this year (along with 1968, three Negro Leagues seasons and two seasons from the Japanese leagues).

Here are glimpses of the six Windows-only roster sets.

1871 National Association. This was the first organized professional baseball league and the start of the National Association, forerunner to the National League. Playing fewer than 35 games, the Philadelphia Athletics (22-7), Chicago (20-9) and Boston (22-10) all claimed the pennant, thanks to confusion and controversy, but Philadelphia ultimately was recognized as the pennant winner. The Athletics had top hitters Levi Meyerle (.492), Al Reach (.353), George Bechtel (.351), Fergy Malone (.343), Count Sensenderfer (.323), and John Radcliff (.303). Boston's Al Spalding led the league with 19 wins.

1916 Negro League. The class of the six-team Negro League was Rube Foster's Chicago American Giants. Pro-rated to a 150-game season, the Giants went 88-62 to overcome the talented New York Lincoln (84-66). Gamers familiar with Strat-O-Matic's Negro League Stars set will recognize 26 players, including Hall of Famers Oscar Charleston, Rube Foster, Pete Hill, Pop Lloyd, Louis Santop, Ben Taylor, Cristobal Torriente and Smokey Joe Williams.

1936 Negro League. In a 10-team league pro-rated to a 144-game schedule, the Pittsburgh Crawfords (85-59) held off the Kansas City Monarchs (82-62), Homestead Grays (80-64), and New York Black Yankees (78-66). Philadelphia's Red Parnell (.351) led the 24 hitters who topped .300. Newark's Mules Suttles led the league with 35 home runs and 135 RBI. Crawford's Josh Gibson was runner-up in average (.350) and home runs (42) and led in OPS (1.173). Homestead's Buck Leonard (1.003) and the Cubans' Martin Dihigo (1.001) also had huge seasons.

1949 Negro League. Now in its late stages, the Negro Leagues continued to lose talent to the Major Leagues and minor leagues. But there was still high-quality play and strong pennant races. Jim Gilliam, Elston Howard and Sam Jones were among the excellent future Major Leaguers who had roles in the 1949 Negro League.

1969 Japanese League. For the fourth time in nine seasons, the Central League champion Yomiuri Giants won the Nippon Series, besting the Hankyu Braves of the Pacific League. Sluggers Sadaharu Oh (.345-44-103 with 111 walks) and Shigeo Nagashima (.311-32-115) led the Giants and the league in average, hits, home runs, RBI and runs. Teammate Tazumi Takahashi (22-5, 2.21, 221 Ks) led the league in victories and was voted the outstanding starting pitcher in Japanese baseball.

2017 Japanese League. Shohei Otani's signing with the Los Angeles Angels was a big story following the 2017 season. Otani was limited by an elbow injury in 2017, but batted .332 and hit 8 homeruns in 202 at bats for the Nippon Ham. As a pitcher, he was 3-2, 3.20. But the glory went to the Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks, who dominated the Pacific League, then won their third Nippon Series in seven seasons. Pacific MVP Dennis Sarfate set a Japanese single-season record with 54 saves, accompanied by a 1.09 ERA, then was named MVP of the Nippon Series.



Get Your Daily Dose with Baseball 365

There are more ways than ever to enjoy Strat-O-Matic's ultra-popular online baseball draft game. Play via PC or the new mobile app. Draft from player pools from single seasons, decades or all-time greats. Play historic seasons (e.g. 1982), the 2017 season or with the current players, updated daily in the return of the acclaimed Baseball Daily, preparing for its third season.

However you roll (electronically in this case), you'll draft 25 players under a salary cap, plus a ballpark, then set your lineups, pitching rotations and other computer-manager instructions, then wait for it (if you can stand the wait) – each morning you'll get the results of your team's latest three-game series, complete with recaps, boxscores and more.

For max fun, join the chat rooms and find out why so many gamers play Baseball 365 year-'round, with season after season of attempts to win pennants and glory. Newcomers get free trials and significant discounts, too.



Now Playing Online: SOM's Football 365

Strat-O-Matic Football 365 is the newest way to enjoy one of the most engaging and addictive sports simulations ever.

The online draft game works much like Strat-O-Matic Baseball 365: You draft a team online with salary-cap limits, set computer-coach instructions, play a full schedule (16 games) with playoffs for the best teams, and analyze results with a comprehensive post-game report package.

It is a simulation game that combines your talent as a general manager and coach. You draft a full team, make trades and transactions as necessary, set your starters, choose your schemes and tendencies to create a championship winning team. No more "fantasy points" or abstract units of measurement ... you have one simple goal – to win football games.

You will draft a team of 19 skill and special teams players plus four team units (offensive line, defensive line, linebackers, secondary) from your choice of player sets and join a 12-team league.

Each day you can offer and accept trades with other teams, pick up free agents, scout your opposition, change your starters while managing your team's health, and adjust your schemes and tendencies as necessary.

A week of the season is simulated each night. The next morning you will have your results. Take a quick look at the boxscore and game recap or pore through detailed play-by-play accounts of the games to see what strategies should be adjusted going forward.

So far, the two available player sets are 2016 and All-Time Franchises. More are on the way, including each year's most recently completed NFL season.



Strat-O-Matic 365 app icon



The Card Viewer app icon

Infinite Joy: Explore the App Universe with Strat On the Go

The opportunity to enjoy Strat-O-Matic never has been greater. With two great apps – and more in development – gamers no longer have to be tethered to a personal computer or to a board game table top.

Play Strat-O-Matic's Baseball and Football 365, Baseball Daily, or spend endless hours tracing baseball history with the Card Viewer App.

The free app comes with images of every card in the careers of the 117 players in SOM's first Baseball Heroes set.

For \$4.99/month or \$49.99/year, gamers can get every MLB season SOM has ever created – a vast resource for research, for draft preparation or to immerse yourself in nostalgia, among limitless other uses.

For an additional 99 cents/month or \$9.99/year you can view all of SOM's specialty sets – Baseball Daily, Hall of Fame, Negro Leagues and Japanese Leagues.

With Baseball Daily, play the current season as it happens



(you can begin your play at any time during the real season.)

Strat-O-Matic's journey into the app universe also includes a free app for Baseball and Football 365, the online game. While gamers cannot buy credits for that game through the app, they can do everything else – draft, set their computer managers, check game outcomes and more.

More apps are in the works. Details will be available when the apps are ready to launch. For the latest news, stay connected at www.strat-o-matic.com.

**For product discounts and daily company updates:
Like us on Facebook (Strat-O-Matic Games) and
Follow us on Twitter (@StratOMatic)**



Everyone Needs a Laugh

Competitive Strat-O-Matic can be, uh, *intense*. If you are feeling a bit stressed over that losing streak, lighten up with the YouTube video series, *Strat Mat*, hosted by actress **Laura High** and her husband **Adam Andrianopoulos**, an actor who doubles as Strat-O-Matic's customer-service rep. Hear their sports gags and street interviews (9 episodes so far) on youtube and at www.strat-o-matic.com



We Have a Winner — and a new T-Shirt

Surely by now your red *Did You Strat Today?* T-shirt, and the black one with the yellow -O-, and the blue one with the right-handed power pitcher are worn out from overuse, or from some dramatic act immediately following a blown lead.

No worries. The solution is here and this time the smart design is the work of a team of high schoolers in upstate New York who won Strat-O-Matic's T-Shirt design contest.

The students and teacher/club leader Jeff DiPaola take part in Strat-O-Matic's After School Program, which offers discounts to school clubs that want to enjoy the hobby together.

The contest attracted nearly 100 entries. The four-color design represents all four Strat-O-Matic sports and adds the stylized -O- just above the heart (just where Strat belongs, right?).

Let's let DiPaola, a special-education teacher, introduce his club of special-ed students and general-education students:

"We are Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake High School which is located just north of Albany, New York in Saratoga County.

"The club members range from 9th to 12th grade. We started the club last year with 8 members (including co-founders Gabe LoBaido, Jack Kislowksi

and Adam Solario) and have grown to 16 members this year.

"We created a season format where we meet bi-weekly and play head-to-head matchups. We keep track of standings and at the end of the year we hold our playoffs.

"We have a World Series party where we invite anyone from the school to attend. At this party we have traditional ballpark food (hot dogs, popcorn, Cracker Jack and soda).

"The World Series participants are awarded their own game boards and card sets. The winner of the World Series is awarded an engraved trophy.

"At the beginning of the year we hold a fundraiser during Homecoming where we have a speed-pitch booth. This year we gave 50 percent of the proceeds to a school in Texas that was affected by Hurricane Harvey.

"We also hold various fundraisers throughout the year. Our goal is to raise enough money so that at the end of the year we can take a group trip to a ballgame, ideally Yankees or Mets but have also discussed just going to our local Astros' single-A affiliate Tri-City Valley Cats."

The T-shirt may be ordered from Strat-O-Matic's website for \$22.99 (\$24.99 for sizes 2XL and 3XL).



SOM's After School Program

Strat-O-Matic's After School Program, such as the one organized by Jeff DiPaola, offers substantial discounts on Selector Sets (50 percent off a full board game with your choice of five current teams) and Baseball Express Games (40 percent off the popular game for Strat-O beginners).

The discounts also apply to football, hockey and basketball board games.

The offer is open to all teachers who start their own After School Strat-O-Club or would like to use Strat-O-Matic games as a teaching tool in the classroom.

To place an order and/or ask any questions, send an email to corporateinfo@strat-o-matic.com with the subject line "Strat-O-Matic After School Program" or call 1-800-645-3455.

This discount program may apply to other groups on an individual basis as well. Sample organizations include JCCs, YMCAs, Community and Church Youth Groups, Rec Centers, Summer Camps and Boy/Girl/Cub Scouts. Please call or email to find out if your specific group is eligible for the discounts.