

STRAT-O-MATIC®

NEWS

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Winter 2019

2018 Baseball: So Many Stars in the Strat-O-Matic Sky

Strat-O-Matic's unique ability to bring pennant races and superstars to life will have a special shine this year following a unique year of Major League Baseball. Gamers' eager wait will end on Feb. 8, SOM's Opening Day.

Then, you will get to see if Mookie Betts, J.D. Martinez and Chris Sale can dominate for the 108-win Boston Red Sox in an American League with two other 100-win powerhouses in Houston and New York. You will get to see if Milwaukee, the Chicago Cubs or Colorado – who all fell one game short of greater glory in the National League – can reach the World Series ahead of the Los Angeles Dodgers.

You will get to see if your managing skills are up to the challenge in a season that, for the first time, had more strikeouts than hits, had a record low of sacrifice bunts and starting-pitcher durations so short that Strat-O-Matic has introduced new endurance ratings – (4) for 90 starting pitchers and a mere (1) for a handful. Can you operate an eight-man bullpen as efficiently as 90-win Tampa Bay?

If you are lucky enough, you will get to manage some in the potent list of superstars, such as MVPs Betts and Christian Yelich. Those cards and the ones for other MVP-worthy players Martinez, Mike Trout, Javier Baez, Nolan Arenado, Paul Goldschmidt, Jose Ramirez and Alex Bregman will make your jaws drop. All the moreso because all of those guys, except Martinez, are rated as 1s defensively.

In this high-home run era, you also will get your shot with Matt Carpenter, David Dahl, Kendrys Morales and others who had prodigious home-run streaks in 2018.

Some of the youngest great hitters ever in baseball get their first Strat-O-Matic cards,

too. NL Rookie of the Year Ronald Acuna and runner-up Juan Soto lit the sky with offensive fireworks while AL Rookie of the Year Shohei Ohtani was all the rage for his skill at bat and on the mound.

They headline an exciting rookie class that includes the Yankees' Miguel Andujar and Gleyber Torres, Miami's Brian Anderson, Tampa Bay's .300-hitting Joey Wendle, the Mets' .329-hitting Jeff McNeil, Tampa 16-game winner Ryan Yarbrough, the Dodgers' Walker Buehler and three Cardinals: potential pitching ace Jack Flaherty, 100-mph reliever Jordan Hicks and speedy, 1-rated CF Harrison Bader. Then there are the pair easily confused for rookies after forgettable debuts years ago: St. Louis' Miles Mikolas (18-4, 2.83) and the Dodgers' sudden slugger, Max Muncy (35 HR, .973 OPS).

Mikolas, Buehler, Flaherty and Yarbrough join deep ranks of impressive starting pitchers. Wait till you see the cards for Cy Young winners Jacob deGrom (1.70 ERA) and Blake Snell (21-5, 1.89) and finalists Max Scherzer (18-7, 2.53), Aaron Nola (17-6, 2.37), Justin Verlander (16-9, 2.52) and Corey Kluber (20-7, 2.89).

In the year of the reliever, lights-out closers Edwin Diaz (57 saves), Blake Treinen (0.78 ERA), Josh Hader (15.9 K/9), Sean Doolittle (no on-base chances vs. LH) and Aroldis Chapman (no hits on *either* side of the card) have some of the best cards ever.

Strat players know that defense matters, too. Boston offers an all-1 outfield of Betts, Jackie Bradley Jr. and Andrew Benintendi. The Cubs have five ones in their starting lineup. Oakland's corner infielders, Matt Olson and Matt Chapman, get 1s in their first full season and had such range that they made Gold Glove finalists out of the A's ordinary middle infielders.

Happy New Year to all, Strat Fans

Last year closed stronger than ever for Strat-O-Matic and its customers, with an easier-to-use, redesigned website, two more sets of Diamond Gems great teams (bringing the total to 32 teams), a great new Daily Fantasy Predictor app and Football 365.

You will find details about all those on the following pages.

As you also will read on those pages, the game company is not slowing down one bit for 2019.

As always, the curtain-raiser is Opening Day, when cards and Windows-game rosters for the 2018 and 1980 Major League seasons are released on Feb. 8.

Those much-sought-after seasons have lots of company this year: A special prize-winning contest celebrating the updated card/roster release for the baseball Hall of Fame's 80th anniversary; three new rosters for Negro League seasons and two new rosters for Japanese baseball seasons, an updated Career Historical package, renewed Baseball Daily excitement and new features for the Windows game, Strat-O-Matic Baseball 2019.

By Opening Day expect new features for competitive online play in Baseball 365.

There's even a fashionable new Championship Logo T-shirt in colors that all baseball fans, especially those in New England, can appreciate.

Strat-O-Matic intends to roll out a succession of advancements throughout 2019. Look for new developments in Strat-O-Matic's app universe. Baseball, basketball, football and hockey fans all have more to anticipate. For the latest information, follow Strat-O-Matic's announcements on Facebook, Twitter and at www.strat-o-matic.com

Shop Smart, Get Lucky, Win \$250 in HOF 80th Anniversary Contest

Open your new package of Hall of Fame baseball cards very carefully this year. You may find your Golden Ticket worth as much as \$250 in Strat-O-Matic credit.

To celebrate the Hall of Fame's 80th anniversary, Strat-O-Matic will make winners of 26 fans who buy the 2019 edition of the game company's highly popular card set that includes every player elected to baseball's Hall of Fame.

The grand-prize winner will receive a credit for \$250 that may be applied to any Strat-O-Matic purchase – games, cards, Windows rosters, Baseball 365 entries, apparel and more. Five other winners will receive \$50 credits. Twenty more winners will receive a free Baseball Express game, ideal for travel or for introducing young gamers to Strat-O-Matic.

In another way, everyone who purchases the new HOF set will be a winner. Not only will such buyers have a card of every player in the Hall, but these gamers also will receive select bonus cards of Hall of Famers based on a two-year period of peak performance (Hall of Fame cards in the main set are based

on each player's seven best seasons.)

As this was being written, the precise number of bonus cards in what will be a 270-card set were uncertain while awaiting the 2019 election results to be announced on Jan 22. Most analyses project that all-time great closer Mariano Rivera will head a class with multiple new honorees.

The new HOF card set is the first since 2016. So it will have these additional players elected since then: Jeff Bagwell, Harold Baines, Vladamir Guerrero, Trevor Hoffman, Chipper Jones, Jack Morris, Tim Lincecum, Ivan Rodriguez, Lee Smith, Jim Thome, Alan Trammell and the Jan. 22 election winners.

Winning tickets in Strat-O-Matic's contest will be packed randomly with HOF card sets. If you are a winner, use the contact information provided on the ticket to contact Strat-O-Matic and provide the number on the ticket.

Those who purchase the updated Hall of Fame roster for the Windows game will receive the new players, but not a contest ticket.

HOT DATES

Jan. 24: Pre-orders begin

Orders are filled first-come, first-served

Feb. 6: Last day to place orders for pickup on Opening Day

Feb. 8: OPENING DAY at SOM headquarters

Feb. 11: Shipping begins

Downloads, too

March 28: Baseball Daily

Launches the day that MLB's regular season is in full swing

Win More Games with The Baseball Ratings Book

Every game and every season of Strat-O-Matic Baseball is won and lost because of a series of decisions, large and small. Who should be your starting pitcher in this hitter-friendly park? Who should pinch-hit against left-handers? Who should bat third in the lineup? Sixth? Does this trade do enough to help me? Even at the end of the season, the questions never end and decisions must be made on the best information available.

Strat-O-Matic's Baseball Ratings Book is the best information you can find. It is the only guide with the official data from Strat-O-Matic. The only guide with all the carded and computer-only players. No other source provides as many ratings.

Experienced gamers talk about "chances" of getting on base, hitting a homer or other results. These charts give you that informa-

tion at a glance, saving you hours of number-crunching. It's the detail you need to decide who should play, who to draft or trade, and what strategy to use.

When you roll three dice, there are 216 possible combinations, 108 on the pitcher's card and 108 on the hitter's card. Each column has 36 chances. You might look at the 2-12 listed results on a card and ask, "How can that be when each column only shows 11 results?" The answer, of course, is that the 2-12 rolls do not have equal value. The only way to get a 2 result is by rolling snake-eyes, so a homer on the 2 roll has only one chance in 216 of happening. A homer on the 7 roll has six chances in 216 of happening. Counting chances is further complicated when you consider lefty-righty combinations and split chances.

The charts from a past season below show how the Ratings Book does the number-crunching for you. If you have a runner on first and you want to know the chances of a double play, you see that Grace has 22 chances of a double play against a lefty pitcher, and Orosco has 4 double-play chances against a left-handed batter. Add them and you get 26 out of 216 chances for a double play in that situation. Do you stick with Grace? With the Ratings Guide, you can make an informed decision.

The charts even show such ratings as ballpark homerun chances (BP), clutch, hold and endurance, as well as complete fielding data for all of each player's rated positions.

Since the Ratings Book is published weeks before the cards and computer rosters come out, you can best be prepared by ordering the 2018 season book now.

CHICAGO-N		VS. LEFTHANDERS										VS. RIFTHANDERS																	
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. RIFTHANDERS										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 2019

Now Batting: Defensive Shift Strategy, Cloud Reporting

Gamers playing Strat-O-Matic Baseball on their computers will be able to refine strategies, receive helpful pre-game alerts and use the cloud to report their statistics, among other improvements with the forthcoming release of Strat-O-Matic Baseball 2019.

Strategy: Now you can set any team's defensive-shift frequency relative to the season being played: Much More, More, Normal, Less or Much Less. Or you can turn off the shift altogether. The 2018 season teams will come with settings reflecting their real-life usage.

When using the 40/25 method for roster management, you can give the computer manager a target for how many pitchers should be active (10 to 13). The CM will comply, within the constraints of roster makeup, injuries, rest, etc.

Another option, not team specific, is a new Max Rule that will allow any outfielder with an error rating above zero to make one-base, two-base and three-base errors. In the board game, outfielders with very low error ratings do not have that variety for lack of enough dice-roll outcomes to distribute three ways. The computer can overcome that handicap, so now it will (if you ask nicely).

Pre-Game Alerts: How much angst have you experienced when you have incurred league discipline or distorted your replay because you have lost track of a player's usage? Wouldn't you like to be warned when you are about to overuse a player? Now you will be, before you start a manual game, if you have checked the new "Warn When Actual Usage Exceeded" box on the Lineups and Usage Options screen. The game will

compare your usage to a batter's real-life at-bats plus walks, or a pitcher's real-life innings pitched.

Have you ever been unaware when a player reached a statistical milestone, then thought how much more fun it would have been to anticipate the event, and then experience the excitement when it happened? If you have an encyclopedia database assigned to your league, a new feature in the Team Statistic Report will highlight any stat that is approaching the next 100 mark (e.g. when a player has hit 195-199 career home runs in your league, that stat will appear in red). Just run the new "Career Totals" report before each series.

Cloud Reporting: Want to tell the world about the fun you are having with Strat-O-Matic Baseball? It's never been easier. When viewing any individual league, team or player report simply click "Send to Cloud" in the file menu. That uploads your report, where it will be stored on Strat-O-Matic's cloud server for 30 days. To share, just use CTL-V to paste the URL for the report into an email, social media post, etc. There is no limit on the number of these reports you can send, but, sorry, it will not work with more-complex reports like batched reports or year-books.

And More: As always, this latest version of the Windows game is needed to play the latest season releases: 2018 and 1980, plus the five Negro League and Japanese baseball seasons listed on page 6, as well as the updated Hall of Fame and Career Historical rosters. For a complete list of new features, see the game's Help file and/or www.strat-o-matic.com

About that Other Opening Day ...

Play the current season as it happens

All the current players updated with new electronic cards every day!

Strat-O-Matic and Fantasy Baseball rolled into one

details at www.strat-o-matic.com



Strat-O-Matic's competitive online game experience lets you draft your favorite players under a salary cap, set computer manager instructions and receive detailed results of your latest three-game series each morning.

Join a league of 12 from among friends or strangers of all experience levels. Use players from the 2018 season (ready in late February/early March), a past season or popular decade collections or all-time greats.

In 2019, Baseball 365 is better yet, fine-tuned based on gamer feedback. Platoon players will be more useful – a new feature that lets you set a specific pinch-hitter for anyone in the lineup when facing a reliever with different handedness than the starting pitcher. Your DH now can be a backup at other positions in case of injury. And the bunt-for-a-hit feature has been disabled – the Computer Manager no longer will decide your slugger should bunt for a single.

The All-Time Greats player pool has expanded by 159 players, including the 2007 Rockies, 2011 NL MVP Matt Kemp, 1961 NL hits leader Vada Pinson (.343) and 1990 NL Cy Young runner-up Ramon Martinez. Check out the improved division-race graphics and salary info in the roster chart.

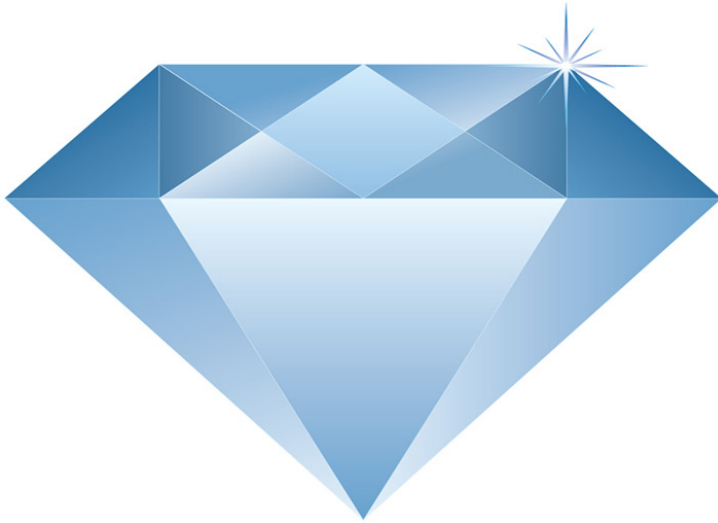
Look for more announcements in the coming weeks how Baseball 365 is evolving with frequent changes.

Learn more at 365.strat-o-matic.com



Now there is Strat-O-Matic Football 365, too. Your drafted team will play a game a day for a 16-game season.

Even better for some, Football 365 now has its own app that can be found in the iTunes and Google Play app stores. The app includes an exclusive Game Replay feature not available on the website version of the game.



Diamond Gems: The Best of the '80s, '90s

The first Diamond Gems card set of top teams from the 1980s and 1990s was such an instant hit last fall that Strat-O-Matic followed it with a second. Now, you can have each of the two eight-team sets of '80s teams and two eight-team sets of '90s teams.

That these two-sided cards with full super-advanced features would be highly popular should have been no surprise given that single-sided great teams, such as the 1927 Yankees, 1953 Dodgers and 1957 Braves have been a staple since Strat-O-Matic's early years. The 32 new teams include 14 World Series winners and nine other pennant winners. Each eight-team set represents eight different Major League franchises.

Created to give gamers who missed out on sold-out seasons a second chance at such sought-after teams as the 1986 Mets and 1998 Yankees, you won't want to miss out this time.

1980s Set A	1990s Set A
1981 Dodgers	1990 Reds
1983 White Sox	1990 Pirates
1984 Cubs	1993 Phillies
1985 Cardinals	1993 Giants
1985 Blue Jays	1994 Expos
1986 Mets	1996 Braves
1986 Astros	1997 Orioles
1989 A's	1998 Yankees
1980s Set B	1990s Set B
1981 Yankees	1990 A's
1982 Brewers	1991 Twins
1983 Orioles	1992 Blue Jays
1984 Tigers	1995 Indians
1985 Royals	1996 Yankees
1986 Red Sox	1997 Marlins
1987 Twins	1998 Astros
1988 Dodgers	1998 Padres

Champion Phillies, George Brett's .390 Made 1980 Special

The last of the original National League teams to win a World Series was Philadelphia. The first expansion team to reach a World Series was Kansas City. After Ted Williams' .406 batting average in 1941, George Brett was the first to finish a season at even .390. All of this happened in 1980, a season filled with drama and durable baseball memories.

You will be able to re-live it all when Strat-O-Matic makes 1980 its next classic-season release in early 2019, complete with expanded rosters and super-advanced features. The board-game cards and Windows rosters will be released at the same time as the 2018 season.

For 124 years, the championship had eluded the Phillies. They did it this time with Cy Young winner Steve Carlton, who led the NL with 24 wins and 286 strikeouts, MVP Mike Schmidt, who led the NL with 48 home runs, 121 runs batted in and a .624 slugging average, charismatic closer Tug McGraw (1.47 ERA) and superior defense.

To reach the Series, the Phillies had to overcome Houston in a five-game NL Championship Series that some consider the most exciting ever. Four of those games went extra innings, including the final two Phillies' come-from behind wins.

The Astros, bidding to reach its first first Series, had to overcome much, too. J.R. Richard, off to a 10-4 start with a 1.90 ERA, suffered a career-ending stroke. Then they beat the Dodgers in a one-game playoff to reach the NLCS.

The Astros got there on top-flight pitching (Richard, Joe Niekro won 20 and Nolan Ryan fanned 200 while Dave Smith Joe Sambito and Frank LaCorte formed a deep bullpen).

In their third attempt, the Royals finally overcame the

Yankees in the ALCS. Brett still was hitting .400 on Sept. 19 before settling for .390, with a .454 on-base average, .664 slugging percentage, 118 RBIs and 135 runs created – all league bests – and the AL MVP award.

Brett had help. Outfielder Willie Wilson hit .326 and stole 79 bases, while leading the AL with 230 hits, 133 runs scored and 15 triples. Pitcher Dennis Leonard won 20 games and Larry Gura won 18. Closer Dan Quisenberry led the AL with 33 saves, while winning 12 himself.

The stolen base was seldom more popular in post-War baseball. Oakland's Rickey Henderson swiped 100 bags. Montreal's Ron Leflore had 97 steals and Pittsburgh's Omar Moreno had 96. Houston had six men who topped 20. San Diego had three who topped 50.

Many other stars shined brightly in 1980:

- Cecil Cooper (.352-25-122), Ben Oglivie (tied New York's Reggie Jackson for the AL lead with 41 homers) and Gorman Thomas (next with 38 HR) powered Milwaukee.

- Reggie Jackson hit a career-best .300 with 41 HR and 111 RBIs. Teammates Tommy John (22 wins), Rudy May (15-5 with AL-best 2.46 ERA) and closer Goose Gossage 6-2, 2.27, 33 saves) shined on the mound.

- Montreal, just one game short of Philly in the NL East, had Leflore's speed, Gary Carter's power (29 HR, 101 RBIs) and center fielder Andre Dawson's all-around brilliance (.308-17-87, 41 doubles, 34 SB and a cf-1(-2) defensively).

- Steve Stone won a Majors-best 25 games and the AL Cy Young award. Teammate Scott McGregor and Oakland's Mike Norris also won 20.

Keith Hernandez, Bruce Sutter, Eddie Murray, Al Oliver, Ken Singleton and Jim Bibby were among many others who had special seasons.

New Website's Winning Formula: Form + Function = Fan Favor

Strat-O-Matic customers are a demanding lot. It's always been true. So when the game company's re-designed website debuted to practically unanimous acclaim, it attested to the site's visual appeal, ease of use and versatility.

Strat-O-Matic.com now combines a modern look with a better shopping experience. The look is practical, too: It's easier to get right to the place you need to go to shop, read, research or interact. In the shopping sections, drop-down menus locate desired seasons swiftly, without endless scrolling through pages of products.

Coming Soon: Daily Fantasy Sports Predictor App

Are you ready for a full season of winning? Strat-O-Matic tested the waters with its Daily Fantasy Sports Predictor app beta release last September and the app will re-load in time for the 2019 MLB season.

This year's new app promises to be the best anywhere at forecasting daily full-game performance by Major League players. The Daily Fantasy Sports Predictor app forecasts game-by-game fantasy stats for any player based on stat projections adjusted by ballpark and opponent.

This is sure to be endless entertainment for, as they say, fun and profit. After all, when it comes to choosing your daily fantasy baseball lineups, wouldn't you love to know the future? Nobody can tell you for SURE what will take place in the anything-can-happen world of Major League Baseball, but Strat-O-Matic's DFS Predictor app is the next best thing. Strat-O-Matic Media, the company that has been replicating big-league ballplayer performance with unsurpassed accuracy for

six decades, spent months last summer developing the finest fantasy sports algorithm so that subscribers can capitalize on the day's match-ups.

The DFS Predictor app runs thousands of games in the background with the time-honored Strat-O-Matic game engine.

Players' projected stats and fantasy points are displayed. The app also will show you the percentage chance your player will hit various fantasy-point milestones (or fantasy-point targets). Choose from pre-set point structures from major DFS websites or customize your own to match the settings you are using. Easily compare players side by side to make your ideal lineup choices.

This season you can win with the same great algorithm that has simulated the past five World Series with uncanny success, as displayed on such websites as CBS Sports.

Get ahead of the game by downloading the app from the iTunes or Google Play store now.

See www.strat-o-matic.com for subscription pricing.

- **Card Viewer**
- **Strat-O-Matic 365**
- **Strat-O-Matic Football 365**
- **Daily Fantasy Sports Predictor**

**The Stars
in SOM's
App Universe**

Thanks to new mobile-friendly features, shopping for Strat never has been easier when on the go. With so many new ways to enjoy Strat-O-Matic, the site may turn out to be your constant companion.

Use it to find games and accessories. Use it to get up to speed on new ways to enjoy the hobby, such as Baseball and Football 365, Baseball Daily, the amazing Card Viewer app and the new Fantasy Predictor app. Use it get the latest word on Strat-O-Matic's ever-expanding line of cards and Windows rosters. **For new orders, easiest access is click the New Products page under the baseball tab.**



The Card Viewer app icon



Strat-O-Matic 365 app icon

With Strat-O-Matic's amazingly versatile Card Viewer app, you can trace the SOM-card history of every player in Major League history or track your player's progress to next year's card through access to the ever-evolving Baseball Daily cards.

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.

The Strat-O-Matic 365 and Strat-O-Matic Football 365 apps are free, giving you access to Baseball 365 and Football 365 – SOM's online-draft games – and to Baseball Daily, to replay the current-season.

While gamers cannot buy credits for the 365 games through the app, they can do everything else – draft, set their computer managers, check game outcomes and more.

With Baseball Daily, you can keep pace with the current season or begin your replay at any time during the real season. Watch as each player's electronic card changes after each real-life appearance.

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





Championship Logo Shirt: Get 'em While They Last

Here's the first look at Strat-O-Matic's 2019 shirt. It's called the "Championship Logo" shirt and it's navy with red text. Wonder what championship team that commemorates? Can't be Da Bears. Like all sports champions, this shirt will have a limited run.

Time to Update Your Career Historical Rosters?

If you haven't acquired the latest Career Historical Rosters for a few years, or if you've never tried this digital monument to baseball history, the time to do so may be ideal.

In just the last several seasons, many exciting rookies have made splashy debuts and many baseball legends have retired. The 2018 season alone brought us Shohei Ohtani, Ronald Acuna and Juan Soto and ended the careers of Adrian Beltre, Adrian Gonzalez, Chase Utley and David Wright.

With full-career averages for nearly 15,000 Major League players – all who ever appeared in a big-league game – the Career Historical Disk allows you to form all-time franchise teams, era teams, decade teams and unique combinations of players limited only by your imagination. Many gamers spend whole evenings in creative drafts (for instance, seeing who Draft-O-Matic ranks highest).

The updated Career Historical rosters offer you more than 140 seasons worth of players for the bargain price of \$55.

New Windows Rosters: 3 Negro League, 2 Japanese Seasons

Strat-O-Matic's commitment to capture Negro League history and Japanese baseball continues with five new Windows rosters ready for play with Strat-O-Matic Baseball 2019. They will be available to play at the same time as the 2018 Major League season rosters.

This year's Negro League issues are the 1912, 1919 and 1933 seasons, bringing the number of Negro League-season rosters available to 22. There will be 11 Japanese seasons available with the new 1998 and 2018 rosters.

Negro League counting stats below are higher than actual, pro-rated from shorter seasons and normalized for era and competition level.

1912 Negro League

Until this year, the New York-to-Philadelphia corridor was the fulcrum of Negro League baseball. The power shifted to Chicago, where the brilliant Chicago American Giants (89-61) led the league in runs scored and trailed only the Havana Cubans (78-72) for least runs allowed.

New York's (77-73) Smokey Joe Williams, the league's 30-game winner (30-10), formed a mighty tandem with Dick Redding (26-12). Havana also boasted a 20-win pair, Jose Mendez (23-8; league low 1.85 ERA) and Jose Junco (20-10). Brooklyn (65-85) boasted of Frank Wickware (25-16; league-high 224 Ks), Chicago's Pete Hill (.361; .918 OPS) was the champion batsman, though Brooklyn's emerging double-duty star Hurley McNair batted .383 (1.008 OPS) with 9 HRs in his 90 games.

1919 Negro League

This 100th anniversary season showcases Rube Foster's superb Chicago American Giants (87-53), the league's second-highest scoring team and the league's toughest to score against. Detroit (83-57), a team that Foster helped to create, came closest to denying Chicago's glory. The Stars, in their bandbox, could hit with Chicago but didn't have the pitching to compensate.

Chicago featured a pair of 20-game winners, Dick Whitworth (28-8) and School Boy Johnson (23-13). Detroit had Samuel Crawford (22-13). New York's (75-65) Smokey Joe Williams was an outstanding 27-5. Chicago's Oscar Charleston wore the Triple Crown (.383; 17 HR; 94 RBI; 1.025 OPS). Detroit's Pete Hill (.352; 14; .988) and Edgar Wesley (.318; 12; .848) took full advantage of their home park. New York's Zack Pettus (.349; .896), Brooklyn's Pop Lloyd (.345; .872), Chicago's hard-working Cristobal Torriente (.335; .947; 11-4; 2.84), and Philadelphia's Dick Lundy (.348; .882) and Louis Santop (.338; .889) flashed with the bat.

1933 Negro League

The mighty Pittsburgh Crawfords of the 1930s had all they could handle this year, winning the pennant by one game over the Indianapolis Giants (88-56, and by two games over the pitching-rich Philadelphia Stars (87-57).

Chicago had the top winners, Big Bill Foster (24-7) and Willie Powell (24-10). Satchel Paige (10-8; 2.30 ERA) of the Crawfords compiled the lowest ERA, though in only 23 starts/184 innings.

The Crawfords' Josh Gibson (.359; 40 HR; 125 RBI; 1.112 OPS) won the Triple Crown, with stiff competition from teammate Oscar Charleston (.319; 33; 119; 1.016) and the Giants' Turkey Stearnes (.338; 28; 118; .999). The Stars had Jud Wilson (.352; 12; 76; .955) and Rap Dixon (.328; 18; 100; .951).

1998 Japanese leagues

The Yokohama BayStars forged the best record in Nippon Baseball (79-56-1) to win the Central League with its "Machine Gun Offense" and MVP Kazuhiro Sasaki (45 saves, 0.64 ERA). Then the BayStars won the Nippon Series against the Seibu Lions, winners of the hard-fought Pacific League, where five of six teams finished within five games of first place.

Major League fans should recognize Sasaki, who saved 129 games in four seasons with Seattle, future Mariner Ichiro Suzuki (who hit .358 in Japan in '98) and future Yankee Hideki "Godzilla" Matsui (.292-34-100, 104 walks, 103 runs).

2018 Japanese leagues

The Hiroshima Carp won their third straight Central League pennant but lost four straight games in the Nippon Series to the Pacific League runner-up, the Fukuoka SoftBank Hawks. One of the six games was a tie. The Hawks won a game 9-8, and another on a walk-off home run. The 2-0 finale was won only after Hawks catcher Takuya Kai threw out eight Lions trying to steal – in one game. Though he hit only .143 for the Series, Kai was honored as the Series MVP.

Nippon Baseball's stars were spread around this year. Major League Baseball fans may want an advance look at left-hander Yusei Kikuchi, a candidate to be in Seattle's rotation in 2019 after going 14-4, 3.08 with 153 strikeouts in 164 innings for the Saitama Seibu in '18. The Seibu Lions, who had the season's best record (88-53-2), had the Central League MVP in Hotaka Yamakawa (.281-47-124). Hiroshima had the Central League MVP, Yoshihiro Maru (.306-39-97, 130 walks).