

Baseball

Examination of methods and procedures

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The game of 'Baseball', or 'TallBall', as it is known to midgets, is a game so simple that even Americans can apparently understand it. It has an interesting history, and an even more interesting rule set, which I shall now explain to you in detail.

In America, there are seven 'overleagues', each headed by a 'League Overlord'. These overleagues contain 7 underleagues each, as well as 13 subdominant minor leagues. Each league game has 37 matches a year which are spread out into 4 quarters with each quarter containing two matches, plus a bonus quarter in case there are any unplayed matches. The bonus quarter always falls on the 29th February every year, unless it isn't a leap-year, in which case the matches are carried over to the next leap year. This, of course, makes February 29th an exceptionally busy day for professional baseball players, many of whom resort to breaking the space-time continuum in order to attend all their scheduled games. This generally results in a huge number of speeding fines, hence the 29th's nickname in baseball parlance, 'The Orange Afternoon'. This rule obviously doesn't apply when the League Overlord's birthday falls on a Wednesday - in these cases 37 ½ games must be played in order to include the extra time needed for blowing out the candles.

This brings me on to the setup of each game. Baseball is played on a non-uniformly asymmetrical isosceles polygon superimposed on a diagonally slanting multi-dimensional hexagrammatic nonagon. However, being somewhat of a mouthful, this is often abbreviated to 'NonUnAs-IsoPol-SupIm-DiSlan-MulDim-HexaNon'. According to the Baseball Handbook, an official NonUnAs-IsoPol-SupIm-DiSlan-MulDim-HexaNon must contain all or none of the following official items:

- A Fish called Wanda
- A Stairway to Heaven
- The Matrix
- West Quay
- The Bridge on the River Kwai
- A half-eaten bagel
- Snakes on a Plane
- Midgets

Each game is broken down into 82 innings, and 3 outings (normally to the beach for a picnic). Each inning tends to precede the previous inning by roughly 5 minutes, meaning the games can become

rather temporally convoluted. It is for this reason that after 7 innings, by which time the game will have been running for -35 minutes, the spectators traditionally perform an intensive calisthenics routine, in order to maintain continuity with the rest of the universe.

So, how is this game played, I hear you ask?

Well, I'd be happy to answer. The most important thing to bear in mind, however, is that Alaskans are not, nor have ever been, allowed to play in any of the overleagues. So, the best place to start is probably the 'Over-Under' rule. Whilst not technically a part of the game *per se*, an understanding of it is vital to comprehension of every other rule. Essentially, this rule states that the number of midgets playing baseball at any one time must be less than the number of balls used during the game, a number that could theoretically be anywhere between 1 and ∞ , depending on how muddy the field is, and how many eyes the BaseUmpire has.

Now that this rule is firmly ingrained into your mind (And don't forget the Alaskans), we can move on to more complicated rules. For example, the Mannhauser Rule, which first came into play in 1851, essentially grants the ball the status of Demigod. This was implemented for many reasons, but chiefly in order to stop players hurting the balls feelings by spitting or swearing at the ball, and talking about it behind its back. At least one of those still applies today.

The last rule that we shall consider today is the **Shadowdeath Rule**. This was implemented during the murky years of the Early 80s, a dark time for baseball, when the 7 League Overlords were replaced by puppet leaders under the sway of the mysterious **NecroUmpire**, a time of confusion and chaos, when Penguins were given the right to bat, and MC Hammer became Executive Vice President. This rule laid down 3 commandments that were to be followed by players at all times.

1. Top Hats are NOT suitable baseball attire
2. Onety-Twelve is NOT a number
3. **The souls of all mankind are now in the service of the great and glorious NecroUmpire**

Obviously the second rule caused a lot of confusion amongst the baseball-playing community, as onety-twelve had previously been used as every player's number, as well as the final score of each game. The last rule caused a small amount of turmoil, but phantom ballplayers were already part of the sport (Unlike Alaskans), so no one really cared about it that much.

And so, my friends, I come to the end of my talk. With all that you have learned in mind, I hope that if you take only one thing away from this talk, it's that midgets are awesome.