

150 YEARS

The National League came into existence in 1876. Hard to imagine Baseball started shortly after the Civil War ended. But it did! And they've been playing it now for 150 years. The oldest professional sports league in our nation. Wow!!

Many changes to the game have come in the long expanse of time. Each year there seems to be a little tweak. Sometimes not so little, like an expansion and league re alignment, which is coming - - but not yet. This year's big change is the ABS challenge. Short for automated ball-strike challenge. We've seen a bunch of them already, in only a small number of games played. I think it's one of the better things Baseball has done in recent years.

We will see what changes next year brings, but for us - - one constant is Bob and Dom's Baseball Pool. It hasn't changed in format at all since we started it. Kids - - it's time to start the 2026 Baseball Pool. Here are the particulars.

It's 60 Doubleday's to enter. Some of you have verbally committed to me or Bob. Please respond to this email anyway with a YES, just so we have it in print. We haven't forgotten but Bob likes it in writing. There are a limited number of spots for this pool (30) so unless we get an overwhelming response and think we can try to fill two pools the first 30 YES'S get to play ball. We will start the first Monday after we fill the 30th spot. Or 60th spot if they sell out so fast our heads are spinning and try for a 2nd pool. We'll see.

Much like the Basketball Pool, no knowledge of the sport is required (nor would it be helpful), it's just plain luck of the draw. You get 1 team, selected old school out of a hat by me this time- Bob had the honors for March Madness. We will both be on the bench for this one to make room for all of you.

As for that entry, veterans know the drill, Doubleday's are due as soon as you commit. Newbies - - contact me or Bob as to ways to get this done.

OK Dom, enough jibber jabber, how does this work? How can we win? How big are the prizes? How many prizes? Fair questions all. Let's get to those answers.

Two prizes will be awarded. The first player holding the team that scores all the numbers (0-13) of runs in a single game (doubleheaders are two separate games) takes the first place prize. We keep it running until a second team achieves the goal and that player wins the 2nd place prize. Probably won't last to the All-Star game. Hasn't in quite a while. Ended in early June last year.

Veterans of the pool know this, but if you are new don't despair if you draw a *bad* team record wise in this pool. Everyone wants to draw the Dodgers. They will probably be a contender, but will they get shut out this year? Zero is gonna be a tough number for them to get. Last year, as good as the Dodgers were, and Toronto, the other WS team, neither scored a prize in the pool.

That answers most of the questions. One more. The prize numbers. The 1st place prize is a nice round 1200 Yamamoto's. 2nd place prize will be 420 Scherzer's. If two teams hit their last number on the same day (the day the game starts) they split the sum of both prizes. If the 2nd place race ends with 2 or more teams getting there on games started the same day they split that prize. None of those things have ever happened in pool history but I have to cover the possibilities, so I have. Most years, several teams get one number away and it's a waiting game (sometimes a couple of weeks) for the final number, usually 12 or 13, to be hit. 2nd place usually gets hit shortly after.

Each Monday, Bob will put out an updated grid listing all the teams, players holding them and boxes checked off on the scores they have achieved so far. I will add a brief verbal report with hopefully entertaining facts about the prior week's games.

PLAY BALL!!