



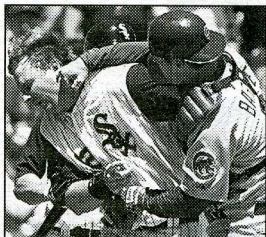
The Inside scoop

By Devin Clancy

This week on TV

May 18
White Sox at
Cubs, WGN,
2 p.m. ET

Interleague play begins a little early this year. With neither Chicago team in first place, the fans might be a little extra ornery.



By David Banks, Daily Southtown, via AP

Battle of Chicago: Michael Barrett connects with A.J. Pierzynski last May 20.

May 18
Braves at Red Sox, TBS, 7 p.m. ET

The Braves feel at home at Fenway Park. They are 13-5 against the Red Sox there in interleague play. Also, back in 1914, the Boston Braves borrowed Fenway for their four-game World Series sweep against the A's.

May 19
Yankees at Mets, Fox, 3:30 p.m. ET

Fans who bring an old hat to the game can trade it in for a new Mets hat. One has to assume Yankees fans aren't that easy to bribe.

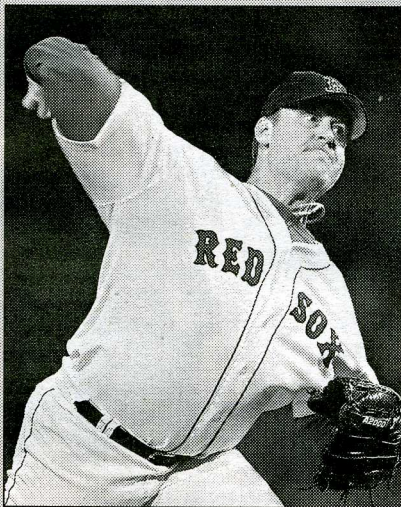
So, who's counting?

Regarding "Pujols: Ball three, take your base" (A May 9-15 Inside Scoop item about Albert Pujols getting a three-ball walk), I thought I'd seen and read everything about the game, being a fan for almost 50 years. I'm amazed that the pitcher, opposing players, coaches and manager all were unaware of the actual ball/strike count. Isn't it the responsibility of the other ump's to bring such an error to the attention of the home-plate ump? I know it's not uncommon for a player to occasionally forget how many outs there are, but I never heard of a player being awarded a base on balls due to an ump losing track of how many balls there were in the count! The integrity of the game is at stake!

Available for PC
via download at
designdepot.com

Text-based computer baseball games are a cottage industry compared with video-game console franchises such as *Madden NFL* or *MLB 2K7*. But the creators and players of the text-based games are a dedicated bunch.

Such dedication shows in the details of *Dynasty League Baseball's* game play. It's not a pretty game at all. In fact, there are no graphics, and even the look of the text appears somewhat old-fashioned by the standards of today's Windows programs.



By Eileen Blass, USA TODAY

Déjà vu from '04: Test game matched Curt Schilling, above, against the Yankees' Mike Mussina. The Yankees won 6-4.

REVIEW

'Dynasty League Baseball'

But the depth and realism of the baseball simulation is what matters the most. By that standard, this game performs brilliantly.

Dynasty League is a computerized version of a much older board game from the 1980s called *Pursue the Pennant*. That game allowed players to use dice rolls and player cards to play a realistic baseball game or, as many did, an entire imaginary season. The mechanics of the original game — in which dice rolls determined everything — are still kept in the PC version. This gives this game a much greater transparency than other games of its kind.

A complex series of random numbers produce results on each play and can include extremely unusual outcomes such as balls bouncing into a fielder's face for errors. Data is available for download to simulate hundreds of different major league teams from different seasons. Using Windows' built-in teleconferencing software, players can match up any two teams and play over the Internet. The game also allows you to draft fantasy rosters and play out your leagues.

In our test game, we re-created a Boston Red Sox-New York Yankees game at Fenway Park from 2004. The Yankees won 6-4, with New York's Mike Mussina pitching into the seventh inning and Boston's Curt Schilling exiting in the sixth after Ruben Sierra's homer to center.

With a strong sense of realism and the grounding of the original board game, *Dynasty League* provides many options for both the hard-core simulation gamer and the casual baseball fan.