

# Strat-O-Matic Is Satisfying Game

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Many veteran table gamers cut their baseball teeth with a 1961 creation from the Strat-O-Matic Game Company. Since that time many more table top baseball games have appeared on the market, yet few provide more satisfaction than *Strat-O-Matic Baseball*.

To the credit of the game company, this is a product which, despite huge successes, has frequently changed, much of it for the better.

Quite simply the basic game plays with three standard dice. One tells the gamer to find the result off the pitcher or hitter card, while the other two are added for the final result. To keep mathematics in line for the game, some results will read, "Double 1-12, Single 13-20." When that comes up, the gamer will draw from a deck of small cards numbered from 1-20 for the result.

Those cards also control such things as players taking an extra base on hits, advancing on fly balls and stealing bases.

The advanced game has one good quality--the fielding ratings. While the basic game gave a fielder only one rating to cover both range and errors, the advanced product has two fielding ratings to divide those qualities. For example Cincinnati's Dave Concepcion will find no one better at robbing hitters' base hit attempts at shortstop, but he will also error more grounders than Philadelphia's Larry Bowa.

Also in the advanced unit ratings are given for outfielder's arms and catcher's arms. One other feature of the advanced game is most troublesome. Each hitter and pitcher is given a separate card for facing right hand or left hand throwers or hitters.

That means that a hitter like Pittsburgh's John Milner, almost never used against southpaw pitching, could have a good card against that type of pitching because the only left handers he would face would be the weaker ones.

Also for a relief pitcher who is right handed, though he might mostly face right handed hitters, could have a good record against lefty batters, since he wouldn't have faced the best of those type of hitters. Often the players have too small a sample on which to base a complete card.

One other complaint about the game comes from the availability of past seasons. The company offers over 80 past all-time great teams, for use with the basic game only, yet no complete seasons, other than the most recently completed one. As soon as Strat-O-Matic quits catering to the collectors, who drive up the price of these past sets, and pays more attention to what the average gamer wants and can afford, *Strat-O-Matic Baseball* could once again climb toward the top of a very large baseball game heap.

With many teams totally unavailable and with the process for rating players still in the company's secret vault, there are more rewarding baseball games on the market for the avid baseball game fan.

*Strat-O-Matic Baseball* is available at many retail outlets, including Cincinnati's 580 Gift Shop, where this copy was purchased. It is also available by mail at: Strat-O-Matic Game Co. Inc., 46 Railroad Plaza, Glen Head, N.Y. 11545.