

SLAPSHOT

Ice Hockey Strategy



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INTRODUCTION

Slapshot is a simulation of NHL Ice Hockey. The game concentrates on the decisions you would make as a team manager, dealing with decisions about which players to sign and draft, balancing the finances, player development and team selections.

In Slapshot we try to make the game work the same way as in real life. The decisions you make about your team are the same as the decisions that a manager would make in real life. Sometimes you have to balance one aspect against another (for example whether to spend on signing better players, or to coach your existing players, or to invest in increasing your future income).

Whether you're new to play-by-mail or not then you'll probably find this rulebook fairly hard going. The rulebook itself is written mainly for use as reference, once you're already playing the game, and the need to state every rule with the greatest possible precision does not make for easy reading. You will probably find that after an initial attempt at reading through the rulebook you'll be best advised to join a game. Once you have a set of game reports in front of you then you'll find it easier to digest the rules.

In the reference rules you'll find there are a lot of cross references to other sections, but you won't necessarily want to look these up when you first read through the rulebook. Cross references are given mainly to avoid having to repeat things too often and to make it easier to find the section you want when you refer back to the rulebook during play.

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1 GENERAL RULES

1.1 THE GAME There are thirty teams in each game. The league structure is similar to that of the National Hockey League arranged in the two conferences, each of which has three divisions of five teams (the Northeast, Atlantic and Southeast divisions form the Eastern conference, the Central, Northwest and Pacific divisions form the Western Conference). In this rulebook the players of the game are referred to as "managers".

1.2 SCHEDULE Each team plays five games per turn (or "week", though it doesn't actually represent a week in game time, more like ten days). There are 16 weeks in the regular season, so that each team plays an 80 game schedule (two less than in real-life). Each team plays five games against each of its four divisional opponents (so you play three home games against two of them, and three road games against the other two), three games against each of its ten non-divisional conference opponents (so two home games against five of them, and two road games against the other five) and two games against each of its fifteen interconference opponents.

The schedule is as balanced as possible. Each team plays the same number of games at home and on the road throughout the season, but from one week to another you may find yourself playing four home or road games and so on, and some teams may find themselves playing rather more games at home or on the road for a period of time.

Teams are awarded two points for a win, and one point for a tie. In addition a team which loses a game in overtime (referred to as a "regulation loss") is currently also awarded a point (so if a game is tied at the end of regulation each team is guaranteed a point, but can collect a second if they score a game winner). This system is currently in use in the NHL for the 1999-2000 season. If they remove it then it'll also be removed from Slapshot, though not mid-season.

1.3 THE GM The "GM" is the person responsible for the operation of the game. The game is actually processed by computer, but is supervised by the GM.

1.4 DEADLINES The GM sets a deadline each turn and games are normally processed on the day of this deadline. Your orders must arrive on or before this deadline. You should, if possible, allow three days for first class post (our experience is that next day delivery often fails at the vital moment). If your orders arrive late then they are discarded. If you miss a turn there is no way to make it up.

1.5 TURN CREDITS One turn credit is deducted for each turn played. Unpaid turns may be mailed at the discretion of the GM (second unpaid turns are not mailed). Current turnfees are indicated in startup information and game reports. When the prices of turn credits are changed any credits already bought are normally still worth a full turn.

1.6 TURNSHEETS Your orders should always be submitted on the turnsheet provided. Think BEFORE you fill in the turnsheet. The recommended method is to write out your plans on another sheet of paper and transfer the final version to your turnsheet only when you're finished.

1.7 CORRECTIONS In any play-by-mail game, you must be precise with your orders. It's NOT the job of the GM to interpret your orders, only to enter whatever orders he's given (though there are some "automatic" corrections made by the computer to prevent some of the most obvious foul-ups).

1.8 MESSAGES You may send private messages via the GM. These should be written on message cards (postcards or index cards preferred), clearly labelled with the game name and number, your name and team, and the name and team of the player you intend the message to go to. Inappropriate messages (anything likely to cause offence) will not be forwarded.

1.9 LOSING POINTS The currency used in the game is losing points, usually abbreviated to LPs (so called because you gain more if you lose, making it tougher for the more successful teams to stay at the top). Losing points are used to coach players, sign new players, attract more fans, merchandising operations, stadium facilities, etc. Each week your basic income is 55 LPs plus 4 LPs per defeat plus 2

LPs per tie (so your basic income is 55 LP for five wins, and 75 LP for five defeats).

If a team has a balance of more than 100 LPs at the end of a season, after the assessment of veteran abilities (see 11.7) and reduction of current stadium, trainers and fans levels, then any excess LPs are automatically spent on recruiting new fans (see 1.12) for the new season, up to a maximum of 200 LPs (any excess LPs are simply lost). These extra fans are also halved prior to the start of the new season. This is intended to prevent teams from carrying large numbers of LPs from one season to the next.

1.10 STADIUM FACILITIES Each team also gains LPs each turn equal to the current level of Stadium Facilities (see 6.7), representing increased income due to higher ticket prices. At the end of the season the Stadium Facilities level drops by two. The maximum level of Stadium Facilities is 15.

1.11 MERCHANDISING Each turn a team receives additional LPs based upon the total previously spent on merchandising (see 6.8), representing sale of shirts, hats etc. The current total of merchandising is reduced by a percentage equal to twice the number of wins gained during the turn plus the number of ties gained during the turn (rounded down), but double this amount is added to the team's income. The merchandising total is carried forward in full from season to season. You cannot have more than 200 LPs invested in merchandising at any time.

Example: A team has spent 80 LPs on merchandising and wins 5 games. The merchandising total is reduced by 10% (8 LPs) and double this amount is received as income (16 LPs).

1.12 FANS Each team receives extra LPs each turn equal to 1 LP per five hundred fans (see 6.9). At the start of each new game each team starts with 9000 fans. At the end of a season the level of fans is halved, with a minimum number of 9000 fans. Each turn your fans number increases by 1% plus 1% for each win achieved plus 0.5% for each tie achieved. The maximum income from fans per turn is 40 LPs, though the maximum number of fans allowed is 24000 (so you can have more than 20000 fans, but these will only increase the number that carryover at the start of a new season).

1.13 WAGES Each team must also pay its players their wages each turn (including players on the reserve and draft squads). Each player has a given wages level, which is normally equal to one tenth of their current value (rounding down, minimum 1 LP). A player's wages are normally fixed at the start of the season, unless he holds out (see 3.11) or signs for a new team, so if a player's value increases during the season (for example if he is coached) his wages will not increase at the same time. Note that as players decline in ability their wage demands do not necessarily drop!

1.14 NOTATION Players are identified by their shirt numbers (from 1 to 99). Players are referred to as either goaltenders (GLT) or skaters (SKT). There are five skater positions: Left Defensemen (LDF), Right Defensemen (RDF), Left Wings (LWG), Centers (CEN) and Right Wings (RWG). Wings and Centers are often referred to collectively as forwards.

1.15 ROSTER Each team has a roster of up to thirty one players. Twenty five players form the **active** squad (this is the same size as an active squad in real life) available for selection each turn, three players form the **reserve** squad, minor leaguers who can be promoted on demand to the active squad. In addition, you may have up to three "draftees" signed on your **draft** squad. During the first season the draft squad is empty. In later seasons you're advised to clear your draft squad (promote or release them) as soon as possible to minimise your wages bill. In pre-season you are not restricted to selecting players who are on your active squad; you may select ANY player on your roster regardless of which squad he is on (so you may select reserve and draft squad players in pre-season to see how well they perform before deciding whether to keep or waive them).

1.16 TRAINERS Each team has a level for its trainers, from 0 to 20 (see 6.10). Trainers reduce the severity of injuries suffered and also reduce the amount of fatigue suffered by players from game to game. At the end of the season your team trainers' level drops by two.

1.17 TEAM CODES The divisional structure and team codes for Slapshot are as follows:

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Northeast Division

Boston Bruins (BB)
Buffalo Sabres (BS)
Montreal Canadiens (MC)
Ottawa Senators (OS)
Toronto Maple Leafs (TM)

Atlantic Division

New Jersey Devils (NJ)
New York Islanders (NI)
New York Rangers (NR)
Philadelphia Flyers (PF)
Pittsburgh Penguins (PP)

Southeast Division

Atlanta Thrashers (AT)
Carolina Hurricanes (CH)
Florida Panthers (FP)
Tampa Bay Lightning (TB)
Washington Capitals (WC)

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Central Division

Chicago Blackhawks (CB)
Columbus Blue Jackets (CO)
Detroit Red Wings (DR)
Nashville Predators (NP)
St Louis Blues (SL)

Northwest Division

Calgary Flames (CF)
Colorado Avalanche (CA)
Edmonton Oilers (EO)
Minnesota Wild (MW)
Vancouver Canucks (VC)

Pacific Division

Anaheim Mighty Ducks (AM)
Dallas Stars (DS)
Los Angeles Kings (LA)
Phoenix Coyotes (PC)
San Jose Sharks (SJ)

1.18 TRADE DEADLINE At the end of the regular season a trading deadline is imposed. After this time you cannot complete trades nor sign free agents.

2 STARTUP RULES

2.1 INITIAL BALANCE At the start of a new game each team starts with a balance of 1000 LPs and no players signed. There is a single set-up turn, in which you select your initial squad. You must spend at least 800 LP on your initial selections but you are advised to spend at least 900 LPs. Each team receives an initial draft list of around one hundred players from whom they should make their initial selections of players.

You are advised to leave yourself with a small reserve of losing points (about 50 LPs) to spend on trainers, stadium development, fans recruitment and merchandising or you may find you are forced to deplete your squad in order to balance your books.

2.2 INITIAL SELECTION For your initial squad you should pick exactly twenty eight players from the draft list provided (the first twenty five form your active squad, the remaining three form your reserve squad). You must pick either two or three goaltenders in your initial active squad. The cost of players is related to their abilities and potential, so the more skilled players are more expensive.

2.2.1 Positional Balance You must pick at least three goaltenders, four centers, four left wings, four right wings, four right defensemen and four right defensemen in your initial squad.

2.2.2. Group Restrictions You are also restricted in the groups from which you may select players. You may not select more than two players from the level ten group, no more than two from the level nine group, no more than eight from the level eight group, no more than eight from the level seven group, no more than six from the level six group and no more than six from the level five group.

If you fail to send in your initial selection by the first deadline then a selection will be made for you. If you send in an invalid initial selection it will, time permitting, be returned to you by the GM for correction, with a small deduction of credits to cover administration costs.

2.3 INITIAL LINES The computer will select your initial lines and goaltenders for your first set of games (they're only pre-season games, so don't count for anything). You begin with no power play changes and your short-handed depth chart is comprised of your wings from your regular depth chart.

2.4 PLAYER NAMES Initial shirt numbers and names for your players are given on your initial turnsheet, and you can only change the names and numbers of up to three players during the set-up phase. You may change more numbers and names later. The real-life positions are also shown, but this is only given as a guide when naming your players. You do not have to match the real-life positions with player positions in the game.

Note: This is done simply to aid the GM. Typing in twenty eight names for thirty teams EVERY time a new game is started up is tedious, and rather a waste of time as the names concerned will usually be more or less the same from one game to another. The facility of changing up to three names is to allow you to include any favourite players on your team who are missing from the data roster.

2.5 FREE AGENTS At the start of a new game a free agent list is also generated, giving a selection of players who may be signed to replace your existing players (see section 7).

2.6 LEAGUE ROUNDUP After all teams have made their initial squad selections the fixture list is produced for the first season and the league roundup is issued. This lists all the teams and managers involved in the league along with outline information about their squads.

2.7 FINANCIAL ACTIONS In the set-up turn you have the opportunity to specify an initial level for your trainers, stadium facilities, merchandising level and initial expenditure on recruiting extra fans. These are processed via a TRAINER action (see 6.10), STADIUM action (see 6.7), MERC action (see 6.8) and FANS action (see 6.9).

2.8 INITIAL PARAMETERS At the start of a new game the computer will select sample player parameters for you. You will probably wish to change most of these fairly soon. The initial player parameters chosen by the computer should not be taken as being the "ideal" parameters for a player. At the start of a new game Cruise Rate is set to 2, Cruise Mins to 3, Hurry Rate to 4, Hurry Mins to 3, Pull Secs1 to 30 and Pull Secs2 to 0.

2.9 STANDBYS New managers may be appointed to an existing team where the old manager has dropped out. If the team has an LP balance below 100 then the balance is increased to 100.

2.10 PRE-SEASON WEEKS The set-up turn includes a set of pre-season games, played using the lineups determined by your initial selections. This turn is followed by a second round of pre-season games. Player fatigue and form gains/losses are recorded during pre-season, but form and fatigue are all reset to zero prior to the start of the regular season. There is also no income for pre-season weeks and nor do you have to pay your players wages. You should also note that in pre-season you are not restricted to selecting players from your active squad - in pre-season players any player on your roster may be selected regardless of which squad he is on.

3 PLAYERS & SQUADS

3.1 YOUR SQUAD Each team always has an active squad of exactly twenty five players, a reserve squad of three players and a draft squad of up to three players (so a full roster always consists of at least twenty-eight players, and can be as many as thirty-one). Whenever you sign a free agent to your squad he replaces another player who is waived.

You must always have at least two goaltenders, nine forwards (centers, right wings and left wings) and six defensemen on your active squad. You must have a third goaltender on either your active squad or reserve squad and you cannot have more than four goaltenders on your roster at any time. These restrictions should ensure that you can always put out a full selection of uninjured players. You are strongly advised to have a good balance of players on your active roster, to adjust to all eventualities.

3.2 PLAYER TYPES Each player is classified as either a goaltender (GLT) or a skater (SKT).

3.3 GOALTENDER ABILITIES Each goaltender is rated according to four abilities. These abilities are Reflexes, Balance, Catching and Durability. Each is detailed below, along with the three letter codes that identify them in reports and orders.

3.3.1 Reflexes (REF) A goaltender's Reflexes represents his ability to react to shots and save the puck. It is a factor in all attempts to save shots, but particularly shots from longer distance.

3.3.2 Balance (BAL) A goaltender's Balance represents his ability to maintain his balance whilst moving around in the net-mouth. It is a factor in all attempts to save shots, but particularly shots from close range where he has to react to an opponent moving close in.

3.3.3 Handling (HAN) A goaltender's Handling represents his ability at handling the puck, both when trying to catch shots in his catching mitt (which means no potential rebounds for forwards) and also distribution of the puck when required.

3.3.4 Durability (DUR) A goaltender's Durability represents his stamina and fitness. No goaltender is able to play every night without becoming fatigued and prone to injury, so a team usually has a backup goaltender who plays some games instead of the starter. The higher a goaltender's durability the more games he can play without requiring a rest.

3.4 SKATER ABILITIES Each skater is rated according to eight abilities, each of which represents his various skills. Some skills are more important for defensemen than forwards and vice versa, though all skills have some bearing on players effectiveness (if a defenseman isn't a scoring threat the opposition can defend other players more tightly and so on). Each of these skills is detailed below, along with the three letter code that identifies it.

3.4.1 Power (POW) A skater's power covers both his physical presence and his shot power, which is a factor in determining his shooting ability from distance.

3.4.2 Accuracy (ACC) A skater's accuracy represents his ability at placing his shots where the goaltender can't easily reach them. Despite the insistence of soccer commentators that a forward must "always hit the target" it's actually more important to hit the target where the goalie isn't; between his legs, over his shoulder and so on. A skater's accuracy reflects his ability at hitting the target and likelihood of scoring when hitting the target.

3.4.3 Quickness (QUI) A skater's quickness is a measure of his speed and agility around the rink and also handling the puck. A quick player may outskate opponents and also get into position to fire off a shot more quickly, giving defensemen less time to close him down.

3.4.4 Control (CON) A skater's control is his basic ability at controlling the puck and affects his abilities at face-offs, when receiving a puck or when skating with the puck.

3.4.5 Passing (PAS) A skater's passing is his skill at both reading a team-mate's movements and also passing the puck to him. There's no point in being a precision passer if you give the puck to a team-mate at the wrong time, nor in reading when to give him the puck if you can't get it there.

3.4.6 Defence (DEF) A skater's defence is his skill at reading the attackers' movements, positioning himself to defend against shots, intercept passes and so on.

3.4.7 Checking (CHK) A skater's checking is his ability to check opponents, and withstand opponents' checks on him. For defenders it's usually a key ability, as they need to be able to disrupt forwards and prevent them getting into scoring positions, or check them to dispossess them.

3.4.8 Stamina (STA) A skater's stamina represents how long he is able to remain on the rink before being tired. In Ice Hockey skaters are expected to play in short bursts (though defensemen tend to play for longer than forwards) before having a rest. The better a skater's stamina the longer these bursts can be, and the more time he can actually play during the game.

Some of the skater skills are more important for certain positions than others. For defensemen checking and defence are the most important abilities for obvious reasons. For centers checking and accuracy are both important, whilst for wings quickness and accuracy are important. For all players skills such as stamina, passing and control are important, and power is important for any player shooting from distance.

3.5 PRIMARY PLAYER POSITIONS Each player has a Primary Position: either Goaltender, Left Defenseman, Right Defenseman, Left Wing, Right Wing or Center. Each position has a different role to fulfil (though left and right defensemen are relatively interchangeable, as are left and right wings) and requires a different balance of the various player skills, with some of the skills being more or less important for certain positions. A player's Primary Position represents the position he generally practices at, and a player will be less effective playing out of position.

3.5.1 Goaltenders Goaltenders cannot play out of goal, and skaters cannot play as goaltenders.

3.5.2 Left and Right Defensemen The left and right defensemen guard against the opponents' right and left wings respectively. Defensemen frequently swap positions during a game anyway (if the wing you're guarding skates to the other side of the ice you follow him) and often in real-life no distinction is made between the two positions. Generally defence and checking are the most important skills for defensemen, but they often have to be able to bring out the puck from defence and act as a playmaker. In addition a defenseman who is a scoring threat can be a major asset to his team offensively.

3.5.3 Left and Right Wings As with defensemen wings frequently swap positions during a game, but the wings tend to be the major goalscorers on a team, having more space available to shoot the puck. Quickness and control are often key skills for wings, as well as all of the "shooting skills".

3.5.4 Centers The two centers generally mark each other and act as the pivot men for their teams offensively. Centers are often the main playmakers for their teams, and will often have more assists than scores. Power and passing are often key skills for centers, though goalscoring centers are not uncommon and may be very effective.

If a player is selected to play in a position other than his Primary Position he will be less effective. Right and left defensemen playing in the other defensive position are not at a significant disadvantage, though they will be significantly less effective in a forward position. The same applies for forwards playing in defence, though the forward positions are relatively interchangeable (particularly from one wing to another).

3.6 OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE LINES Teams will normally play in groups of players, known as “lines”. Defensemen usually operate in pairs (defensive lines) and forwards usually operate in lines of one right wing, one left wing and one center. Teams will normally have four offensive lines and four defensive lines on their active squad, though usually a team will only use three of each line in a game, resting the fourth (only eighteen skaters may be suited up for a game). Occasionally a team will use four offensive lines in a game.

Teams will usually have one or more “checking” offensive lines. These lines are primarily expected to avoid conceding goals rather than actively trying to score, so they essentially kill time while the “star” line(s) rest. Some managers choose to put all their top scoring threats in one “superstar line” while using the other lines as checking lines, other managers choose to spread their scoring threats amongst their lines, so all provide some sort of scoring threat.

3.7 PLAYER ABILITIES AND CLASS Each player's abilities (goaltenders and skaters) are rated from 1 to 35, but the actual values are hidden. Instead these abilities are rated according to "classes" - Poor (Po), Fair (Fa), Average (Av), Good (Go), Excellent (Ex) or World Class (WC), each of which covers a range of 5 or 6 ratings.

This means that a player's ability can increase, without the class changing (e.g. the player improves from the lower end of "Average" to the upper end of "Average").

3.8 PLAYER LEVEL A player's total abilities are also expressed as an overall level, usually accompanied with his best ability (so a skater 8 CON means level 8, best skating ability Control). A player's level represents his overall skills, whereas classes (see 3.7) reflect his skill levels in individual abilities.

3.9 FATIGUE & CONDITIONING Ice Hockey is a very demanding sport, which can have a team playing a game every other day, averaging three or four games a week. It is important to have extra players, goaltenders and skaters, to put into your lineup in order to rest your best players.

3.9.1 Goaltender Fatigue A goaltender's fatigue is rated as a percentage (from 0 to 100) and is a measure of his short-term fitness. Goaltenders accumulate fatigue fairly quickly, anything from 10 to 50 points a game, depending upon (in order of importance) his durability, the amount of time he plays for, the team's trainers level and the number of shots he faces. A goaltender will recover anything from 10 to 50 points of fatigue per game rested.

When a goaltender's fatigue at the start of a game is 25% or higher his effectiveness begins to decline (though initially the effect is slight), and the higher his fatigue rises the greater the loss of effectiveness. If a goaltender's fatigue reaches 100 he will automatically be rested for the following game (as long as another uninjured goaltender is available to replace him).

A starting goaltender will typically be able to play in anything from 50% to 90% of his team's games dependent upon his durability. Barring injuries a team should normally be able to play all their games using only two goaltenders, as a goaltender ought to always be able to recover as much fatigue in a game off as he suffers in one game. However, if his durability is really low he may not be able to play every other game.

3.9.2 Goaltender Conditioning A goaltender's conditioning is also rated as a percentage but begins at 100%, dropping during the season. Conditioning is a measure of a goaltender's long term fitness and cannot be recovered except between seasons.

Any time a goaltender finishes a game with a fatigue rating over 30% he may lose one point of conditioning (this loss is guaranteed at a fatigue rating of 50%), and may lose a second if his fatigue is over 75% or third over 100%.

Conditioning also affects a goaltender's performance, with a slight reduction below 90% conditioning and more reduction the lower the conditioning.

The combination of fatigue and conditioning for goaltenders is intended to simulate the real-life strains on goaltenders. During the regular season most teams try and keep their top goaltender as fresh as possible for the post-season, often resting him every second, third or fourth game. However, during the playoffs the top goaltender will often play every game, even though not at 100% fitness, because even a fatigued no.1 is better than his backup.

3.9.3 Skater Fatigue A skater's fatigue is rated as a percentage (from 0 to 100). When a skater's fatigue reaches 50% his effectiveness begins to decline, and the higher his fatigue rises the greater the loss of his effectiveness. Skaters typically gain 0-5 points of fatigue from each game (though gains of 6-10 points can occur if a skater plays for too long, or plays stints that are too long), dependent upon their stamina and recover 10-40 points when they rest from a game. A skater will typically be able to play in anything from 60% to 100% of his team's games dependent upon his stamina.

Skaters will suffer more fatigue if they play too much in a game, either in terms of total time played or the length of stints they play. You will be better advised to play skaters in short stints, with brief rest periods between, than in longer bursts with longer rest periods off the ice.

Skater fatigue is more of long-term concept than goaltender fatigue. If a skater's fatigue is less than 50 then his performance is not affected. The closer a player's fatigue approaches to 100 the greater the drop-off in performance. Skater fatigue accumulates quickly and it is rare for any player to be able to play every game without needing to be rested (those who do need to have their time on ice carefully restricted). In real-life an NHL team normally needs 30-40 skaters to play significant amounts of time to see them through the season, often because of injuries and the slight niggles and so on that fatigue simulates. You will find that you need to play all the players on your roster at some point, just to give your stars enough time to rest and recover fatigue so that you are in a position for a strong playoff run.

Fatigue is intended to be an important factor in the playoffs. Qualification for the playoffs is relatively easy (sixteen of thirty teams making it) and playoff success is not so much about whether you make it, but what shape you are in when you get there. The best teams ought to be able to spend the final weeks of the season cruising, resting their top players and reducing their fatigue, so they can be at full strength for the playoffs, while the lesser playoff contenders cannot ease off because they have to concentrate on just qualifying. In addition you do have to consider seedings and homefield advantage, so it's quite a balancing act however strongly you are doing during the season.

3.10 INJURIES At the end of each turn (i.e. after all games have been played) one of your active-squad players will normally suffer an injury. The chance of suffering an injury is dependent upon a number of factors, how much the player played, how fatigued he is (the more fatigued a player is the more likely he is to suffer an injury), his age and the quality of your trainers. Good trainers will also reduce the amount of fatigue your players suffer during the season, making them more effective and also less susceptible to injury. Injuries are not suffered in pre-season nor during the playoffs.

When a player suffers an injury its seriousness is expressed in terms of the number of games that the player will miss, starting with the first game of the following turn. Most injuries will be relatively minor, involving a player missing a dozen or so games, but occasionally injuries may be more serious.

Rarely you may have to select an injured player to play in a game (only if your squad is very unbalanced). In such cases the player's performance will be negligible and his injury will not recover whilst he continues playing. Players may recover fatigue whilst they are injured.

There are a number of restrictions on injuries, included to prevent squads being decimated by poor luck, and to ensure managers can balance their rosters. Only one new injury may be suffered per turn and no more than four players in total, one goaltender, two defensemen and two forwards (centers or wings) may be injured at any one time.

3.11 HOLDOUTS If, at the end of a turn, a team's LP balance would drop below zero then their highest value player (unless injured) or players will hold out. The team saves a number of LPs equal to the holdout's wages (essentially the player is fined) but he is unavailable for selection the following turn. In addition the player's value increases by 2 LPs and his wages are recalculated (see 1.13).

The restrictions on injured players (see 3.10) includes players holding out. A team may never have more than one goaltender, two defensemen, two forwards and four players in total injured or holding out at any time. If a goaltender is holding out then he may lose fatigue. If a team has holdouts, or worse a negative LP balance (meaning even holdouts can balance the books) then this will have an adverse affect on all players' form as well as performances. The more holdouts, the worse the effects.

Holdouts are intended to penalise teams who don't balance their books without allowing them to dig themselves into holes which will take them weeks to extricate themselves from. They generally occur at the start of the season (as the season progresses your fans and income increase). At the start of each season you have an LP windfall (because you are waiving three players to make space for your draftees) so you'll only get into difficulty if your wages are excessive and you don't invest these LPs wisely. If you're sensible you'll keep a reserve of LPs in case your finances get tight early in the year.

In early seasons in Slapshot you'll find that holdouts probably aren't a major concern, as your wage bills will begin reasonably moderate. However, as seasons progress your players' wage demands will increase (as hopefully will their abilities) and you'll find you need to chop and change more (exposing players to the free agency market) to reduce their wage demands. You can't keep watching your wage bill rise forever, eventually you'll have to do something to reduce it.

3.12 POTENTIAL A player's potential represents his ability to improve during and between seasons. A player with potential may be coached (see 6.5) during the season to improve his abilities. At the end of a season a player with good form throughout the season and potential is also likely to translate this potential into permanent increases in abilities, which may or may not be reflected in a change of classes and/or level (see 3.7 and 3.8).

3.13 EXPERIENCE A player's experience represents the number of seasons he has spent playing at the top level. Players with high experience are generally more effective than those with similar abilities but less experience.

3.14 AGGRESSION A player's aggression is rated from 1 (calm) to 9 (highly aggressive). It cannot be coached. Aggression is a double-edged sword - more aggressive players are more likely to win physical battles, but are also more likely to incur penalties.

3.15 VALUE & WAGES Each player has a value, which is a reflection of his ability (or more accurately, a reflection of his opinion of his ability). Once a player has lost all of his potential then as he gets older his abilities start to diminish, but it's unlikely his value will also do so. A player's wages are paid each turn during the regular season, irrespective of whether he is on the active, reserve or draft squad, unless he is holding out (see 3.11).

Players' wages are normally fixed at the start of a season (one tenth of value, rounding down, minimum 1 LP) unless he moves team (via trade or free agency) or holds out. Consequently if a player starts the season with value 28 LPs (and therefore wages of 2 LPs) and is subsequently coached (increasing his value to 30 LPs) his wages are unchanged at 2 LPs for that season unless he moves team or holds out.

3.16 RESERVE SQUAD You have three players held on your reserve squad, players normally playing in the minor leagues for a "farm team". Such players will usually gain form whilst on the reserve squad and may be activated to your active roster (see 3.1).

3.17 DRAFT SQUAD Draftees are placed in your draft squad. You can promote players to the active or reserve squad from the draft squad during the season (see 6.3) or release them (see 6.4). Your draft squad is automatically cleared prior to the draft and any rookies not already promoted to the reserve squad are lost. You are strongly advised to promote or release your draftees as soon as possible after the draft, otherwise you are just paying them wages without being able to use them.

3.18 FORM A player's form is a temporary modification to his abilities, representing whether he is playing well or poorly. Form cannot drop below -9, nor increase above 9. At the end of the season all form is reset to zero, though players with good form throughout the season are more likely to convert potential into improved abilities. Generally a player whose form is 9 is playing about one class above his normal abilities. An in-form player may be more successful than an out-of-form higher level player.

Each turn a player is rated for his performances and given a weekly form rating between -5 (poor) and 5 (superb). A player's overall form rating for the next week is the sum of his weekly form rating and half his previous form rating, rounded down (so a player whose form was 5 carries over 2 points into the next week). The weekly rating for form is dependent upon two factors, how the player actually performed and also how well the player is expected to perform. Lower level players will gain more form than more talented counterparts for similar performances. Reserve squad players are assumed to be playing successfully in the minor leagues (unless injured), so will generally gain form. Inactive players will not gain nor lose weekly form, so their form values will quickly tend towards zero.

Form is volatile. You will notice significant swings in a player's form from week to week. Remember the maxim "form is temporary, class is permanent". Just because a player is out of form doesn't mean he's utterly useless, just that he isn't performing up to scratch. The quickest way to get an out of form player back into form is to keep playing him, though by doing so you are taking a gamble on his performance.

3.19 SEASON FORM A player's total weekly form for the season is also recorded to determine whether he will convert any remaining potential into improved abilities after the draft (see 11.7). The higher a player's total form during the season the more likely he is to improve at the end of the season.

Note that this total form is the sum of the weekly form values (from -5 to 5) and does not take into account form carried over from the previous week (so the total form values shown on team reports is NOT the sum of the form ratings shown on the reports - these ratings include the carried over form).

3.20 CHANGING PLAYER POSITION You may change defensemen's primary position from one position to the other (left defenseman to right defenseman and vice versa) and you may change forwards' positions (right wings, left wings or centers to right wings, left wings or centers). You cannot change defensemen into forwards nor forwards into defensemen. In each case the cost of the change, using the special action NEWPOS (see 6.12) is 10 LPs and one point of potential. The player concerned will also take about eighty games (more or less a full season) to adjust to the new position, during which he will be less effective at his new position (most of the adjustment is made in practice, so the amount of time he plays during the game isn't very relevant). You cannot change the position of a player who is still adjusting position until he has adjusted to the new position, not even if returning him to his original position. A player who is adjusting to a new position is indicated by a "*" after his position on listings (e.g. a LWG* is a left wing adjusting to his new position).

3.21 NEW SIGNINGS When a new player is signed to a team (either a draftee or free agent) he will be less effective for about forty games (much less if a team is resigning a free agent who was last with that team) while he and his new team-mates adjust to each others' styles. The loss of effectiveness will decrease the more the players practice together and the adjustment period is not visible to the manager.

3.22 TRADE LEVEL Each player has a set Trade Level, which represents his basic "value" in a trade. A player's trade level is his level plus one fifth of his potential, rounding down. A player may only be traded (see section 8) for another player with the same trade level.

4 GAME INSTRUCTIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION Your instructions for each turn's games are made in several parts, set out on your turnsheet and described in this section. Some of these instructions apply for all games played that turn, whilst some apply for individual games only.

In these rules you will see many references to even-handed, short-handed, power-play and four-on-four situations. In all cases these refer to the number of **skaters** on the ice at the time. If both teams have the same number of skaters on the ice then they are *even-handed*, whether at *full strength* (five each) or *four-on-four* (four each). If one team has a man advantage then they are in a *power-play* situation and the other team are *short-handed*. If both teams have five skaters on the ice, but one team has pulled its goaltender (and have a man in the penalty box) it is still an even-handed situation.

4.2 GOALTENDERS For each game to be played that turn you must decide which goaltender will play. You cannot select an injured goaltender nor one who is holding out.

4.3 SUITING UP PLAYERS Only eighteen skaters are allowed to suit up for each game. For each game the computer first has to determine which eighteen skaters will suit up for that game. These skaters are comprised of three offensive lines (three men in each, nine players in total), three defensive lines (two men in each, six players in total) plus up to three others.

These three other players will be selected from (in order of priority): a fourth offensive line (if the FOURLINES option, see 6.15 and 6.16, is chosen), the short-handed depth chart, the power-play depth-chart and the four-on-four depth chart (if any players are selected on these depth charts without being on any of the regular offensive or defensive lines).

If these three extra players cannot be found to complete the eighteen men suited up for the game then you simply suit up less than the maximum number for the game.

Note that the computer decides which players to suit up for each game separately. You will often use different players from one game to another, though your basic depth charts are set up for the whole turn (though you can make some modifications to them during the turn).

It is common for any such "extra players" to be specialists appearing on the short-handed depth charts, known as "penalty killers" whose job is simply to prevent the opposition from scoring when they have a man advantage. However, you may choose to have specialists who only play in power-play or four-on-four situations. If you choose to have less than eighteen players suited up to play in a game then you will have more scope for resting players amongst your squad but those players who are playing will have more time on the ice themselves, because the "ice time" is being spread around fewer players. Quite often teams don't play their best players in short-handed situations, preferring to save them for power-play and even-handed situations when their offensive skills won't be wasted.

4.4 DEFENSIVE LINES For each turn you have to select four defensive lines of two defensemen. You cannot select a player in more than one line in any situation (including short-handed, power-play, four-on-four) and cannot select the same player in both a forward line and a defensive line (though you're strongly advised to only select defensemen in defensive lines). In each case the two defensemen in each line will play together on the ice and during the game your team will rotate from one line to another. Normally only the first three defensive lines will play, but occasionally your fourth defensive line will appear if one of the other lines is ineligible (being rested, one of the players is injured, etc.). You cannot select an injured player or a holding out player in one of your first three defensive lines (though you may substitute them in for later games during the turn, see 4.9.1).

For each game you must have three or four defensive lines in your rotation. If you fail to select three valid defensive lines then the computer will shuffle around players to ensure you have three valid lines.

4.5 FORWARD LINES For each turn you have to select four forward lines (groups of three forwards). You cannot select a player in more than one line in any situation (including short-handed, power-play, four-on-four) and cannot select a player in a forward line and a defensive line (though you're strongly advised to only select forwards in forward lines). In each case the three forwards in each line will play together on the ice and your team will rotate from one line to another (note that this rotation of forward lines is independent of the rotation of defensive lines). Normally only the first three forward lines will play, but occasionally your fourth defensive and/or forward line will appear if one of the other lines is ineligible (being rested, one of the players is injured, etc.). You cannot select an injured player or a holding out player in one of your first three offensive lines (though you may substitute them in for later games during the turn, see 4.9.1).

For each game you must have three or four forward lines in your rotation. If you fail to select three valid forward lines then the computer will shuffle around players to ensure you have three valid lines.

Note: Forward lines tend to play for shorter periods of time (but therefore more frequently) than defensive lines and will frequently swap over while the puck is in play (when a team loses possession behind the opponents goal either team can swap its offensive line while the puck is retrieved). It is rather more difficult to swap defensive lines in this situation (it's possible for the team who've just lost the puck to swap) so defensive lines tend to play longer "shifts". Teams will not swap forward and defensive lines at the same time if the puck is in play.

4.6 POWER PLAY CHANGES For each turn you have to specify up to three changes to your lines (forward or defensive) that you will make in power play situations (when the opponent has a player off the ice and you have an extra man advantage - five skaters against four). These consist of giving the shirt numbers of two players, who will swap their positions in their lines during a power play situation. For the change to apply in a particular game both of these players MUST be players who are suited up to play in that game (you may specify changes that involve players being rested for that game, or injured for that game, but the changes won't apply for such games, only for games when both are active). If you select a change involving one player who isn't on a regular line for the game (i.e. he's on the bench) then he comes off the bench to replace the regular player in power play situations - though this is unlikely to be something you'd want to do.

e.g.: in a power play situation you might decide to switch the right wing from your regular second line to play right wing in the first line.

4.7 SHORT-HANDED DEPTH CHART For each turn you have to specify three or four pairs of players (defensemen or forwards) for your short-handed Depth-Chart (these may be players who are injured, or members of regular lines being rested for a particular game, but in these instances they will not be eligible to play). These will be your forward lines in short-handed situations (your defensive lines remain the same as your regular defensive lines). If you have the FOURLINES (see 6.15) option set then all of these players must be from your regular lines (some may be ineligible to play because their line is being rested). If you do not have the FOURLINES option set then up to three of these players may be amongst those players not on any of your offensive or defensive lines (because so far you've only suited up fifteen skaters) or from any inactive lines. Note that if you deliberately decide to rest a line for a game (see 4.9.2) then none of the players on that line will be suited up for the game, so won't be available for the short-handed depth chart.

Your short-handed Depth-Chart is used when your opponent has a power play situation (you are a man short because of a penalty - four skaters against five). Whilst your defensive lines continue to rotate in pairs as normal, your forward lines (who are a man short because of the penalty - teams always play short of a forward rather than a defenseman) are replaced by a rotation of pairs of players from the first **three** lines of your short-handed Depth-Chart in order of their position on the depth chart (these may be defensemen - this is the only time you are advised to consider selecting defensemen as "forwards").

The fourth “line” of your short-handed Depth-Chart do not normally play. The only time they come into play is if one of the other players in the short-handed depth-chart is rested for the current game, in which case the fourth line is used instead of the rested line.

If one of your defensive lines or one of your short-handed forward lines have a man in the penalty box then you simply rotate between the other two lines for the duration of the penalty.

Notes: When a team is short-handed their priority is to avoid conceding a goal. Teams often carry players known as “Penalty Killers” whose sole job is to play as “forwards” in these situations and disrupt the opposition attacks and waste time. Usually you won’t want to use your star forwards in these situations (however good they might be defensively) and rather conserve their energy for situations when you do have goalscoring chances.

A team playing short-handed will rarely try and mount an attack on the opposition net, unless they have possession safely away from their own goal. More usually they simply fire the puck up the ice (see 5.7.1) to kill time. This is one reason why playing your star forwards in short-handed situations is often considered a waste of time - their offensive skills aren’t being used anyway, so it’s better to save their “ice time” for situations when they can use them and bring in other players who have good defensive skills, but not much else, and quite possibly are rather cheaper.

4.8 FOUR ON FOUR DEPTH CHART Each team has a Four On Four Depth Chart for each game. This depth chart is ONLY used when both teams have four skaters on the ice (i.e. both teams have a man in the penalty box or during overtime). You must have a minimum of three offensive and defensive lines available for each game from your Four On Four Depth Chart.

The basic Four On Four defensive lines are identical to your regular defensive lines, while the basic Four On Four offensive lines consist of the left and right wings from your regular offensive lines. In addition, for each turn you are allowed to specify three changes (similar to the power-play changes) to your four on four depth chart (either offensive or defensive players). In each case if both the players are suited up to play in that particular game (not necessarily in the regular depth chart) the two players swap position in the four on four depth chart.

The Four On Four situation is different from the other three. You’re in an even-handed situation, but both teams are playing, nominally at least, without a center. The changes are intended primarily to allow you to bring your top centers into the depth chart in this situations if you choose to do so.

4.9 PLAYER CHANGES/RESTING LINES For each turn you may give up to three player changes/line rests to be made during the turn. These take the form of three numbers, Pick, Drop (the shirt numbers of the two players concerned) and Game (from which the change applies). There are two formats for these, changing players (when all three numbers are used) and resting lines (when the Pick is always left blank).

4.9.1 Player Changes To change two players for a particular game and all subsequent games give the shirt numbers of the two players concerned in the Pick and Drop boxes and the game from which the change is to apply in the Game box. The two players swap their line-places (assuming they have one, if one player isn’t in a line prior to the change the other won’t be after the change) from that game and for all subsequent games. The players also swap places in your Power Play changes, Four on Four Changes and short-handed Depth-Chart. You may swap players already in the same line (for example if you want to swap your left and right wings). You cannot make such changes for game 1 (you should make such changes direct in your initial selection of your offensive and defensive lines).

e.g.: **Pick** [25] **Drop** [18] **Game** [3]

player no.25 and player no.18 are swapped in their offensive or defensive line positions from game 3 onwards.

4.9.2 Resting Lines To rest a particular line for a single game give the shirt number of any one of the players in that line in the Drop box (the Pick box MUST be left blank, otherwise the computer will assume you are trying to make a player change) and the game for which the change applies in the Game box. The line concerned (i.e. the player specified and the rest of his line) are rested for that game ONLY (unlike player changes it doesn't apply for the rest of the turn). You may make such changes for game 1 (you may well wish to rest on of your better lines for the first game of the turn).

e.g.: **Pick** [] **Drop** [36] **Game** [4]

player no.36 and the other players on his line are rested for game 4 only.

4.9.3 Bench Goaltender Changes To change your bench goaltender during a turn simply make a player change as per a skater change (see 4.9.1) - the bench goaltender is changed for the game concerned and all subsequent games.

4.10 PLAYER PARAMETERS Each skater has a number of playing parameters which affect his play during a game. Most of these parameters are time parameters, which determine how long he stays on the ice in a given "stint" of play, but there is also a parameter which affects the nature of how he plays. There are no player parameters for goaltenders - goaltenders play throughout a game if selected and always play defensively (obviously). These parameters, along with the two letter codes that identify them are as follows:

4.10.1 Normsecs (NS) NORMSECS is the maximum number of seconds a skater will normally play in a given "even-handed" (i.e. when both sides have equal numbers of players on the ice, regardless of whether a team has five men on the ice or four men on the ice) stint during a game. As soon as a player has been on the ice for NORMSECS then his manager will replace him **and his line** at the next available opportunity. You cannot set Normsecs below 20 or above 90.

4.10.2 Powersecs (PS) POWERSECS is the maximum number of seconds a skater will normally play in a given "power-play" (i.e. when the player's side has a man advantage) stint during a game. As soon as the player has been on the ice for POWERSECS then his manager will replace him and his line at the next available opportunity. You cannot set Powersecs below 20 or above 90.

4.10.3 Shortsecs (SS) SHORTSECS is the maximum number of seconds a skater will normally play in a given "short-handed" (i.e. when the player's side has a man disadvantage) stint during a game (whether on a defensive line or a short-handed forward line). As soon as a player has been on the ice for SHORTSECS then his manager will replace him **and his line** at the next available opportunity. You cannot set Shortsecs below 20 or above 90.

It is very important to note that these time parameters apply both to the player concerned and his line. When any one of the players on a line (offensive or defensive) needs a rest then his whole line is rested. Shift times can vary widely, and generally defensemen play for longer shifts than forwards. The typical shift for a forward is 40-50 seconds, and 60-70 seconds for a defenseman.

4.10.4 Attack-Defence (AD) ATTACK-DEFENCE is rated from 1 (concentrate on defending) to 5 (concentrate on attacking) and is a measure of how much emphasis a skater places on attacking during the game in even-handed situations (in short-handed situations skaters always concentrate on defending, in power-play situations skaters always concentrate on attacking).

Attack-Defence gives you the opportunity to affect how players will play during a game. It is common for teams to have "checking lines" - attacking lines whose main job is simply to ensure the opposition don't score while they're on the ice, rather than trying to score themselves (and risk conceding). Similarly there are defensemen given more licence to attack, at the risk of allowing counter-attacks.

4.11 ROTATING LINES For each game you will have a number of depth charts, made up as above (see 4.4 to 4.8) according to your selections. You must have a minimum of three forward and three defensive lines selected for each game, and four short-handed forward lines - though the fourth short-handed forward line are only used as reserves in case any of the short-handed forward lines cannot be used because one of their members are in the penalty box.

When the situation on the ice (even-handed full strength/power-play/short-handed/four on four) changes (e.g. after a penalty or when a goaltender is pulled) each team endeavours to return to their proper lineups (according to whichever depth chart applies to the current situation) as soon as possible, normally starting from the top of the depth chart. However, if a player is already on the ice from the previous situation, then his time on the ice is carried over to the new situation.

Example: a player may have spent the last sixty seconds of a power-play situation on the ice, and is then due (at the end of the power-play) to start on the ice as part of his even-handed line. In this case, his time on the ice is taken into consideration, so his line may be quickly replaced by a line whose members weren't on the ice at the end of a power play.

4.11.1 Goaltenders Your goaltender will normally play the whole game, though you may decide to pull (see 5.13) or bench (see 5.15) him during the game for tactical reasons. In Slapshot goaltenders cannot be injured during a game, and cannot suffer a penalty that takes them out of the game - in real life if a goalkeeper suffers a penalty one of his team-mates has to serve the time in the penalty box for him and goalkeepers may be substituted during the game.

4.11.2 Even-handed Play At the start of each period your lineup will consist of your first offensive line and your first defensive line (unless you begin a quarter in a power-play or short-handed situation). When any one of the players from a line reaches his NORMSECS time then as soon as possible his line is replaced by the next line on the depth chart. The lines continue to rotate through their sequence in this fashion, returning to the top of the depth chart

4.11.3 Entering Penalty Situations When one of the teams enters a "power-play" situation the regular depth-charts are replaced by the power-play depth-chart (see 4.6) and short-handed depth-chart. At the start of each penalty situation each team starts at the top of the relevant depth-chart, even if some of the players concerned were on the ice when the penalty occurred (it is assumed that the players are able to rest sufficiently while the penalty is being assessed - this usually takes a minute or so). The players then rotate through the relevant depth-charts until the end of the penalty situation.

4.11.4 Leaving Penalty Situations When a penalty situation ends there is not such a simple transition from leaving the penalty situation as there was entering it. As soon as the penalty ends the penalised player returns to the ice to even up the numbers of players, regardless of whether his line is currently on the ice. Each team will then return to their regular (even-handed) depth-chart lineups as soon as possible (if required), replacing their offensive lines first followed by the defensive lines.

This situation is rather more complicated because the change-over is instantaneous, with no period of rest in between. Both teams will endeavour to return to their regular lines as soon as possible. If the team which was in the power-play situation already has any of its regular lines on the ice (i.e. the power-play line is identical to a regular line) then the line simply remains on the ice as normally, otherwise the next line in the rotation will take the ice as soon as they can (note that for example this means that the second regular line will succeed the first power-play line if that is the line on the ice when the power play situation ends and so on. This may mean a player remains on the ice because he is a member of one regular line but on a different power-play line.

4.11.5 Coincidental Penalties If two players are assessed for penalties at the same time, both teams play a man short and use their Four on Four depth charts.

4.11.6 Double Penalties Occasionally during a game a team may have a penalty assessed on a player while they already have a man in the penalty box. In these cases the penalty will be delayed until the current penalty has been served and will then be assessed, so essentially the team will serve two consecutive penalties. The second player penalised will not enter the penalty box until he begins to serve his penalty and his penalty is not reported until the first penalty is concluded. If the first penalty situation is stopped early because the opposition score a goal then the second penalty is cancelled.

This is a simplification of the real-life situation. In real-life a team will play "double short-handed" in such situations. It's probably a similar disadvantage having to play double-short handed for a period of time or simply short-handed for double the time but it makes things easier for us to not need to have a separate "double short-handed depth chart".

4.12 BONUSES AND KEYS For each game you must specify a bonus ability, bonus ability and key player. The bonus ability may be any of the eight skater abilities or four goaltender abilities. Bonuses and keys on goaltenders are less effective than bonuses and keys on skaters. For that game (only) all of your players will be stronger in that ability. The bonus player is one player on your team, who will be more effective overall for that game and the key player is one opposition player you wish to particularly focus on and neutralise, who will be less effective during the game.

If you key on a player who is not on the opposition's squad, or key on player number 0, then the computer will automatically key on the opposition goaltender.

Bonuses and keys are intended to reflect a team's preparation for a particular game, both in terms of their own practice and how they'll counter opposing players. Bonuses and keys won't cause poor players to become stars, nor reduce stars to no-hopers, but they do allow you to shift the balance of play for a particular game.

4.13 GOALTENDER PARAMETERS Each goaltender has four parameters which determine whether and when he may be benched during a game (see 5.15).

4.13.1 First Deficit (FDf) First Deficit is the number of goals a team must be trailing by before it will consider benching the goaltender in the first period. First Deficit cannot be set below 1.

4.13.2 First Allowed (FAI) First Allowed is the number of goals a goaltender must have conceded during the game before the team will consider benching the goaltender in the first period. First Allowed cannot be set below 2.

4.13.3 Second Deficit (SDF) Second Deficit is the number of goals a team must be trailing by before it will consider benching the goaltender in the second period. Second Deficit cannot be set below 1.

4.13.4 Second Allowed (SAI) Second Allowed is the number of goals a goaltender must have conceded during the game before the team will consider benching him during the second period. Second Allowed cannot be set below 3.

You cannot set any of these parameters above 99 (if you don't wish to ever consider benching a goaltender set his parameters to 99).

4.14 CHANGING PLAYER PARAMETERS The section on your turnsheet for changing player parameters is used for skaters AND goaltenders. If the player concerned is a skater then Normsecs, Powersecs, Shortsecs and Attack-Defence are changed respectively. If the player concerned is a goaltender then First Deficit, First Allowed, Second Deficit and Second Allowed are changed respectively.

5 GAME ADJUDICATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION In Slapshot game adjudication is carried out second by second. This section is a brief introduction to the basics of Ice Hockey and how the results of each game are determined.

5.2 TIME OF GAME Each game is played over three periods of 20 minutes each. The clock is stopped when play stops and restarts when play restarts. There is a 15 minute break between each period during which the ice is cleared by a machine called the *Zamboni*. If a game is tied at the end of regulation time there is one sudden-death overtime period of 5 minutes. If one team scores in this sudden-death period it wins the game (the sudden-death period isn't continued to see if the other team can score an equaliser). If neither teams scores in overtime then the game is tied (except in the playoffs, when 20 minute overtime periods continue to be played until one team wins).

5.2.1 OVERTIME In overtime each team normally plays with only four skaters on the ice (using the Four On Four depth charts). However, if one team is assessed for an individual penalty then the other team play with five men on the ice as they would in a "normal" power-play situation until the penalty ends (when the penalty ends the power-play team have a man return to the bench, so that both teams are back to four men on the ice). If both teams are assessed for individual penalties then each team simply plays with four men on the ice, with the penalised players ineligible to play.

The NHL's introduction in 1999-2000 of four skaters in overtime is intended to increase scoring in overtime, and also reduce the chances of a repeat of game 6 of the 1999 Stanley Cup Finals (when almost three periods of overtime, 55 minutes, was played before a goal was scored). The theory being that fewer men on the ice increases the chances of scoring.

Our overtime power-play situation (essentially putting a man back on the ice) differs from real-life, but enables teams to use their regular power-play and short-handed depth charts.

5.3 THE RINK An Ice Hockey rink is 200 ft long and 85 ft wide with rounded corners, with fibreglass walls surrounding the rink to keep the puck (and players) within the arena. The rink is divided into three areas by two "blue-lines" so that each team has a defending zone, an attacking zone and a neutral zone. There are also three red lines, the centre-line drawn across the centre of the ice, and two goal-lines, along which the goals stand, which are 10 ft away from the back of the rink. There is a semi-circular goal-area (6 ft radius) in front of each goal into which no attacking player may enter without the puck. There are four face-off spots in the neutral zone (plus the centre face-off circle) and two face-off circles in each of the attacking/defending zones.

5.4 STARTING PLAY Play is always restarted (at the start of a period or following a stoppage) with a "face-off" in one of the face-off circles or spots. In a face-off an official drops the puck between the sticks of two opposing players (usually the centers) who try and pass the puck to a team-mate. A face-off is usually held near to the place where play was stopped. Face-offs normally occur at the start of a period, following a penalty, if the goaltender catches the puck or if the puck flies out of the rink.

5.5 PLAY Play is normally continuous. The attacking side may skate with the puck, pass the puck or even kick the puck (this is rare, and you cannot score by kicking the puck) to try and set up a shooting opportunity. Meanwhile the defending team will try to stop them scoring, blocking shots, trying to intercept the puck or by checking or blocking an opponent. Checking is a key part of the game, and involves a player bumping an opponent with his shoulder or hip to block his progress, throw him off-balance or knock him off the puck. Checking is only allowed against a player in possession of the puck, or who was the last player to control the puck.

5.6 SUBSTITUTIONS Substitutions in Ice Hockey are often made "on-the-fly", when the puck is in play (though play is usually stopped every minute or so anyway, so there are plenty of opportunities to make substitutions when the puck is dead). When the puck is being collected from behind one goal or another (a common occurrence) some of the teams' players will skate to the side and are replaced by team-mates. It is usual for players to spend no more than a minute or two on the ice before being

replaced by team-mates, and return to the game a short while later.

5.7 PENALTIES There are a number of penalties which can occur during a game. These can generally be divided into three categories, team penalties (which are generally for technical violations, cause the game to be stopped and restarted with a face-off) and the more serious individual penalties (resulting in a player being sent to the penalty box and his team having to play short of a man for a period of time) which can be further divided into minor penalties and major penalties. A few of the more obscure penalties are ignored in Slapshot (such as bench penalties, penalty shots, penalties that lead to ejection from the game), but the following penalties will occur regularly.

5.7.1 Team Penalties Team penalties are very common and simply result in an official stopping play and restarting with a face-off. The following team penalties will occur regularly in Slapshot and result in play being restarted with a face-off at the circle/spot closest to where the infraction occurred:

Offsides In Ice Hockey cannot wait in front of an opponent's goal waiting for a long pass from a team-mate, so instead all attacking players must follow the puck into the attacking zone. If both a player's skates go over the blue line he will be called for offsides. If a team is offsides but the defence already has control of the puck then play will be allowed to continue (the "advantage rule").

Two-line Pass A player is not allowed to receive a pass from a team-mate which crosses one of the blue lines and the red centre line unless the puck crosses the centre line before the player. This is another type of offsides violation.

Icing If a team shoots the puck from behind the red centre line, it crosses the red goal line of the opponents and it is first touched by a member of the opposition (this isn't a two-line pass infraction because the pass doesn't reach a team-mate). Icing is not called against a team which is short-handed, if the puck goes in the goal, if the puck passes through the goal-crease or if a defender could have easily stopped the puck from crossing the goal-line (a defender cannot "let" the puck past him to create an icing foul). Following an icing call a face-off is held in the penalised team's defensive zone.

Icing is very common in Ice Hockey, and is often used for tactical reasons. If a team is short-handed they cannot be called for icing anyway, so firing the puck down the ice behind the opponents goal-line is an excellent way of relieving pressure and wasting precious seconds (because all you want to do when short-handed is stop the opponents from scoring until your man finishes serving his penalty). Even in normal play it can be used to stop play to allow a team to make substitutions, though there is the risk of conceding a face-off close to their own goal.

5.7.2 Minor Individual Penalties A player who commits a minor penalty has to spend two minutes in the penalty box. If his opponents score while he is in the penalty box and his team is short-handed then the penalised player may return to the ice immediately. The following are all violations that lead to minor penalties in Slapshot: *interference* (blocking or checking an illegible player), *tripping*, *boarding* (violently thrusting a player into the boards), *cross-checking* (stick-checking a player with both hands on the stick and the stick off the ice), *slashing* (at an opponent with the stick), *charging* (taking two steps or jumping into an opponent during a check), *elbowing*, *holding* (the opponent or his stick), *high-sticking* (checking an opponent with the stick above the ice), *hooking* (the opponent with the stick) and *roughing* (scuffling with an opponent rather than fighting).

In Slapshot a team cannot have more than one player serving a penalty at any one time. If one player is already serving a penalty then any second penalty is delayed until the first penalty has been served.

5.7.3 Major Individual Penalties A player who commits a major penalty has to spend five minutes in the penalty box. If his opponents score while he is in the penalty box he does not return to the ice (unlike with minor penalties). Most of the minor penalties can also be assessed as major penalties, if there was a greater degree of violence used. In addition *fighting* and *spearing* (thrusting the stick at an opponent in a bayonet fashion) are automatic major penalties.

In Slapshot a player cannot have more than one major penalty called against him in a single game (in real-life these lead to all sorts of lengthy and complicated penalties). Major individual penalties are usually co-incidental, called upon one player from each team (usually for fighting with each other).

5.7.4 Delayed Penalties If a player is assessed for an individual penalty while a team-mate is already in the penalty box then his penalty is delayed until the first penalty is concluded. When the first penalty finishes the second penalty is served. If the second player penalised is currently on the ice then the player leaving the penalty box simply replaces him on the ice.

This means that a team can find itself with “extended” penalty periods, as two consecutive minor penalties can lead to a power-play situation lasting more than two minutes. This, in addition to major penalties, is one reason why you have to have three lines available for power-play and short-handed situations - you may be able to cover two minutes with only your first two lines (this can be achieved by setting your players’ time parameters appropriately) but if penalties are any longer then the third line will be needed so you don’t overplay your other two lines.

5.7.5 End of Penalties If a team scores while an opponent is in the penalty box serving a minor individual penalty **and** his team is short-handed (so not if both teams have a player in the penalty-box) then the penalty is ended as soon as the goal is scored. This does not apply for major penalties.

Notes: A single goal is considered sufficient punishment for a minor penalty. This may lead to a player being reported as serving less than two minutes for a minor penalty.

5.8 HOME-RINK ADVANTAGE Home advantage is a major factor in Ice Hockey, with the home side winning about 55% of games. There are a variety of reasons for this, support of the home crowd, the fact that with teams playing every other day a visiting team will usually have only arrived in the home city the night before a game is due to be played. Home-rink advantage will affect teams in almost every area of the game, with the team playing at home performing better than the visitors.

5.9 FATIGUE Each player will gain a certain amount of fatigue during a game, and will recover a certain amount of fatigue if he is rested (isn’t suited up to play - not if he’s suited up to play but doesn’t get on the ice). If a skater plays too much during a game (either his total time, or the length of stints he is required to play) then he may gain extra fatigue.

5.10 CRUISING If a team is winning towards the end of a game then it may start to “cruise”, concentrating on defence to protect the lead. This occurs if the time left (in minutes) is within the team’s “cruise range”. The “cruise range” is Cruise Mins (see 6.17) multiplied by the current lead (so if you lead by one goal it’s Cruise Mins, if you lead by two goals it’s twice Cruise Mins, etc).

When a team is cruising then in **even-handed** situations (either full strength or Four On Four) each player’s individual Attack-Defence rating is **reduced** by the team Cruise Rating (see 6.18), subject to a minimum modified rating of 1. If you do not wish to use the cruise option set Cruise Mins to zero.

5.10.1 Cruise Reverse The cruise reverse option **ONLY** applies when your team is cruising and allows you to give more ice time to your lower-rated players at the expense of your top players, enabling you to rest them. If you are cruising and the Cruise Reverse option (see 6.32 and 6.33) is set to YES then instead of the rotation of your offensive and defensive lines being from the top downwards (i.e. line 1 on the ice first, followed by line 2, etc.) it is done from the bottom upwards (i.e. line 3 or 4 first, followed by line 2 or 3, etc.).

5.11 HURRYING-UP If a team is losing towards the end of a game then it may start to “hurry up”, concentrating on offence to try and score. This occurs if the time left (in minutes) is within the team’s “hurry up range”. The “hurry up range” is Hurry Mins (see 6.19) multiplied by the current deficit (so if you trail by one goal it’s Hurry Mins, if you lead by two goals it’s twice Hurry Mins, etc).

When a team is hurrying up then in **even-handed** situations (either full strength or Four on Four) each player’s individual Attack-Defence rating is **increased** by the team Hurry Rating (see 6.20), subject to

a maximum modified rating of 5. If you do not wish to use the hurry up option set Hurry Mins to zero.

Notes: Hurrying Up is the opposite of Cruising, and works in exactly the same way.

5.12 OVERTIME RATING In regular season and pre-season overtime each team's players individual Attack-Defence ratings are **increased** by the team Overtime Rating (see 6.31), subject to a maximum modified rating of 5. This works in just the same way as Hurrying-Up (see 5.11) except that the Overtime Rating is used, and it only happens during Overtime. If you do not wish to use the Overtime Rating simply set your parameter to 0.

Notes: The reason for this rating is simple. In regular season overtime you've already clinched your point for the scores being tied at the end of regulation, so you may well wish to throw caution to the wind and go all out for the win, and a second point, knowing you've got nothing to lose. In the playoffs overtime continues until there is a winner, so this option isn't used.

5.13 PULLING YOUR GOALTENDER At the end of a game (regulation or overtime) if a team is trailing by one or two goals (and no more than two goals) they have the option of removing their goaltender from the ice and putting on an extra skater. The advantage is that essentially the team has an extra man on the ice, the disadvantage that no-one is protecting their net.

5.13.1 When a Goaltender is Pulled Your goaltender will be pulled from the game if you trail by two goals and the time left in the game is less than your Pull Time 2 parameter, or if you trail by one goal and the time left in the game is less than your Pull Time 1 parameter.

There is one exception. If a team is currently short-handed (i.e. has a player in the penalty box) and the penalty will end BEFORE half of the Pull Secs has expired then you won't pull your goaltender until the penalty ends (playing without a goaltender when effectively even-handed is very risky, so you wait until you are back at full strength before pulling the goaltender).

Notes: a team cannot always pull its goaltender immediately the Pull Secs is reached. They have to wait for a suitable opportunity to remove the goaltender before making the change (you don't take him off the ice if the opposition is bearing down on your goal). A team's players will endeavour to allow this change to be made (often they'll commit a team penalty, forcing a face-off) but you should be aware that while the opposition retain possession of the puck in a dangerous area the clock will tick by without you being able to remove your goaltender.

You have a great deal of flexibility with your Pull Time parameters. You can pull your goaltender only when trailing by one goal, or only when trailing by two goals, or mix and match the two.

5.13.2 Who Plays When a Goaltender is Pulled When a goaltender is pulled both teams will play with basically their first lines, regardless of the players' individual time parameters (remember it's the last minute of the game and you're desperate, so there's no great concern about them getting tired), though which lines are used are dependent upon how many skaters a team has on the ice.

If the trailing team have an extra skater on the ice (i.e. they have six skaters against four or five) then they play with their first power-play offensive line and their first power-play defensive line. The goaltender is replaced by the center from the second power-play offensive line (so the team effectively plays with two centers).

In these circumstances the team protecting their lead will play with their first short-handed defensive line and first short-handed offensive line. If they do not have a man in the penalty box (i.e. they have five skaters against six) then the center is the highest available center from their even-handed depth-chart (or if none are available, because they're already on the ice in short-handed lines, then a defender from the first regular defensive line).

Notes: In these cases the team which has pulled their goaltender effectively has a power-play situation, though it's six against four or five rather than the usual five against four. Nevertheless, both teams

retain their basic power-play lineups, supplanted by a center (where required and possible).

If the trailing team have an equal number of skaters on the ice (i.e. they have only five, because they have a man in the penalty box) then both teams play with their first even-handed offensive and defensive lines. If one of these players is in the penalty box then he is replaced by the equivalent player from the second even-handed line.

In this case the game is basically unchanged, with both sides having their regular lines on the ice. The only difference is that the trailing side don't have a goaltender!

If a team have pulled their goaltender but one of their first line (offensive or defensive) is in the penalty box then the second line will play instead.

5.13.3 When a Goaltender is Returned If a goal is scored by either team (either increasing or reducing the deficit) then the computer checks again whether you should still be playing without a goaltender, and if not, returns him to the ice.

Note: you cannot pull your goaltender if you trail by more than two goals. Partly this is practical, pulling your goaltender really is a desperate last ditch throw, and you're highly unlikely to score three times without your opponent doing so. However in Slapshot, the restriction is also included to prevent managers from setting silly parameters, and giving up ridiculous scores. In real-life they'd probably get lynched by fans after the game!

5.14 GOALTENDERS If you select a goaltender for a game who has reached fatigue level 100 then the computer will automatically replace him with whichever eligible goaltender has the lowest fatigue level. If no such goaltender can be found then the original has to play. In this circumstance the computer is also allowed to select goaltenders from your reserve squad.

Notes: you are strongly advised to avoid playing a highly fatigued goaltender, and you should always have at least three eligible goaltenders available. Note that you CANNOT order the selection of a goaltender from your reserve squad, but the computer may decide to choose him for you if you do not have an available active squad goaltender (presumably because one is injured/holding out and the other is on 100% fatigue). Essentially this exception ensures that you always have an emergency third goaltender available if required, without forcing you to use a valuable active squad slot for him (though many teams may well choose to carry an active-squad third goaltender anyway). Note that if the computer has to replace a goaltender for you this may have a spill-over effect to future games (because you've not been resting the goaltender you'd intended to).

5.15 BENCHING YOUR GOALTENDER A team may bench their starting goaltender if he is performing badly and a suitable replacement is available. This is non-reversible and the replacement plays the rest of the game. A goaltender may only be benched during the first or second period (if he's good enough to last two periods, you play him the whole game) and may only be benched immediately following the concession of a goal.

A team will only bench their goaltender during the first period if his team trails by First Deficit (see 4.13.1) goals and he has conceded First Allowed (see 4.13.2) or during the second period if his team trails by Second Deficit (see 4.13.3) goals and he has conceded Second Allowed (see 4.13.4) goals.

If either of these criteria is met, and the team's current Bench Goaltender (see 6.30) is eligible for selection (i.e. on the active squad) and has fatigue under 50, then the Bench Goaltender replaces the starting goaltender for the remainder of the game. If the Bench Goaltender is not eligible for selection, or is too fatigued the starter is left in the game.

In real-life teams always have a second goaltender on the bench, usually in case of mid-game injury (which we don't have in Slapshot). Rarely a starter will be benched for poor play. You are advised NOT to use one of your starting goaltenders on the bench (because they'll sustain extra fatigue you may not have planned for when selecting your goaltenders for that turn's games) but if you have a

third goaltender you may wish to use him. When you bring in a goaltender from the bench is up to you, but the deficit and allowed parameters allow you to be flexible - you may wish to bring in goaltender regardless of how many he's conceded, or only if the game is still close and within reach.

Note that if a starter is benched his fatigue gain will be reduced, but not by a proportion according to the time he's played (he's still had to warm up etc).

6 SPECIAL ACTIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION Each team has five special actions available per turn. Special actions are identified by a one word code. Some actions also require a number and/or a value and/or a name, which should be given in the appropriate boxes. **You must use the correct codes.** Each special action is detailed below, along with examples.

Special actions that pertain to active squad movements (ACTIVATE, PROMOTE and NEWPOS) and games (SETFOUR and CANFOUR) are all processed **before** games are played. Renaming and financial actions (in processing order:- FANS, STADIUM, MERC, COACH, TRAINER, REHAB, RENAME, SWAP, SCOUT and STATS) plus free agent bids (see section 7) are processed after games have been run but before income and wages for the turn are processed, so the losing points you have available for all financial actions are your LP balance at the end of the previous turn.

ROSTER MOVEMENTS

6.2 ACTIVATE The special action ACTIVATE is used to move a player from your reserve squad to your active squad, in place of a player who moves the other way. The shirt numbers of the player to be activated and the player he is replacing are given in the NUM and VAL boxes respectively. Activations are processed before all games are played. You must always have at least two goaltenders, six defensemen and nine forwards on your active squad.

ACTION [ACTIVATE] NUM [21] VALUE [43] NAME []

activates number 21 from the reserve squad to the active squad, replacing number 43.

6.3 PROMOTE The special action PROMOTE is used to move one player from your rookie squad to your active or reserve squad, in place of a player who is waived (see 7.3) so that the space on the rookie squad becomes vacant. The shirt numbers of the player to be promoted and the player to be waived should be given in the NUM and VAL boxes respectively. Promotions are processed before games have been run. You cannot promote a draftee onto your active squad until the draft has been completed, but you can promote a draftee onto the reserve squad whilst the draft is still in process.

ACTION [PROMOTE] NUM [14] VALUE [29] NAME []

promotes no.14 from the rookie squad to replace no.29 who is waived.

6.4 RELEASE The special action RELEASE is used to waive (see 7.3) a player from your rookie squad (you cannot release a player from any other squad). The shirt number of the player to be waived should be given in the NUM box and the player is automatically released.

ACTION [RELEASE] NUM [11] VALUE [] NAME []

releases number 11 from the rookie squad, waiving him.

COACHING AND SCOUTING PLAYERS

6.5 COACH The special action COACH is used to increase one ability of a given player (see 3.3 and 3.4). The cost is 10 LPs and one point of potential and the player's value increases by 2 LPs (but his wages don't increase). The shirt number of the player to be coached should be given in the NUM box and the skill to be coached should be given in the NAME box. You can only coach goaltenders in goaltending skills and skaters in skating skills. You cannot coach a player in a skill which is already "excellent" or "world class". The actual gain in ability due to coaching depends on the current ability of the player and may or may not lead to a visible gain in class. The higher that player's current skill rating, the lower the gain from coaching.

After a player has been coached his level is also recalculated. Coaching a player may lead to a change in level or class, but not necessarily in either. Coaching will ALWAYS improve a player's ability, but this will not always result in a visible change of class (because each class covers a range of abilities).

ACTION[COACH] NUM[21] VALUE[] NAME[] PAS []

coaches no.21 in passing at a cost of 10 LPs and one point of potential.

6.6 SCOUT & STATS The special actions SCOUT and STATS are used to scout a player abilities or season stats. To scout a free agent or draftee you should give the player's free agent or draft number in the NUM box and leave the name box blank. To scout a player signed to another team you should give the player's shirt number in the NUM box and his team's TWO LETTER team code in the NAME box. SCOUT reports back the player's current level, value, potential, experience, aggression, skill ratings and any injury he is carrying. STATS reports back the player's stats for the current season. There is no cost in LPs.

ACTION[SCOUT] NUM[101] VALUE[] NAME[]

scouts free agent number 101 for his player details.

FINANCIAL, TRAINER AND POSITIONAL ACTIONS

6.7 STADIUM The special action STADIUM is used to increase your team's Stadium Facilities Level (see 1.10). The cost is $N \times N - O \times O$ where N is the new level of Stadium Facilities and O is the old level of Stadium Facilities. The **new** level of Stadium Facilities should be given in the NUM box.

ACTION[STADIUM] NUM[6] VALUE[] NAME[]

Increases a team's Stadium Facilities to level 6. The cost would be 36 LPs developing from level 0 ($6 \times 6 - 0 \times 0 = 36$) or 11 LPs developing from level 5 ($6 \times 6 - 5 \times 5 = 11$).

6.8 MERC The special action MERC is used to increase your team's Merchandising (see 1.11). The number of LPs to be spent on merchandising should be given in the NUM box. If you try to increase your merchandising total above 200 LPs the computer will reduce the amount spent to ensure a maximum total of 200 LPs invested.

ACTION[MERC] NUM[16] VALUE[] NAME[]

Increases a team's merchandising by 16 at a cost of 16 LPs.

6.9 FANS The special action FANS is used to recruit extra fans for your team (see 1.12). The number of LPs to be spent on recruiting fans should be given in the NUM box. Thirty fans are recruited for each LP spent.

ACTION[FANS] NUM[6] VALUE[] NAME[]

spends 6 LPs on recruiting fans, increasing the number by 180.

6.10 TRAINER The special action TRAINER is used to increase the level of a team's trainers (see 1.16). The cost of the action is $N \times N - O \times O$ where N is the new level of trainers and O is the old level of trainers. The **new level** of trainers should be given in the NUM box.

ACTION[TRAINER] NUM[7] VALUE[] NAME[]

increases a team's trainers to level 7 (for example at a cost of 49 LP from level 0, or 24 LP from 5).

6.11 REHAB The special action REHAB is used to decrease the number of games required for a player to recover from injury (see 3.10). The cost of the action is the number of games remaining divided by ten (rounding up), minimum 5 LPs. The player's injury time is reduced by a third (rounding down). The shirt number of the player should be given in the NUM box. Each team may only make one REHAB action per turn. REHAB orders are processed after games are run (so injuries will have five games recovery before any rehabbing).

ACTION[REHAB] NUM[25] VALUE[] NAME[]

rehabilitates player number 25, reducing his remaining injury time by a third.

6.12 NEWPOS The special action NEWPOS is used to change the Primary Position (see 3.5) of any skater on your squad. The cost is 10 LPs and one point of potential is deducted. The player immediately converts to the new position. The shirt number of the player to be converted should be given in the NUM box and the new position (LDF, RDF, LWG, CEN or RWG) should be given in the NAME box. NEWPOS actions are not allowed after the end of the regular season.

ACTION[NEWPOS] NUM[34] VALUE[] NAME[RWG]

converts player number 34 to RWG.

RENAMING ACTIONS

6.13 RENAME The special action RENAME is used to change the shirt number and name of a player on your roster. There is no cost in LPs. The shirt number of the player to be renamed should be given in the NUM box, the new shirt number in the VAL box and the new name for the player in the NAME box. The new shirt number must not match the shirt number of another player on your roster. You may only use the RENAME action in the final (fourth) week of the playoffs.

If, at the end of the season, you wish to rename more players than your special actions will permit then your GM may allow you to do so at a cost of one extra credit. If you do so you should provide your GM with a full list (separated into goaltenders and skaters) of players with their old shirt numbers and names and new shirt numbers and names. Note that if you take this option then your team listing that turn will NOT be up-to-date, but your players' up-to-date shirt numbers and names **will** be shown on the league roundup which is also issued that turn. Your GM cannot process the renamings until after your team report is produced but will do so before producing the new season's league roundup.

ACTION[RENAME] NUM[23] VALUE[47] NAME[DAVE JOHNSON]

renames number 23 as number 47, Dave Johnson.

6.14 SWAP The special action SWAP is used to swap the names and numbers of two players on your roster. There is no cost in LPs. The shirt numbers of the two players whose names and numbers are to be swapped should be given in the NUM and VAL boxes. You may only use the SWAP action in the final (fourth) week of the playoffs.

ACTION[SWAP] NUM[21] VALUE[43] NAME[]

swaps the names and shirt numbers of no.21 and no.43

GAME ACTIONS

6.15 SETFOUR The special action SETFOUR sets the FOURLINES (see 4.3) option, specifying that your team will play with all four offensive lines when possible.

ACTION [SETFOUR] NUM [] VALUE [] NAME []
sets FOURLINES to YES

6.16 CANFOUR The special action CANFOUR cancels the FOURLINES option (see 4.3), specifying that your team will play with three offensive lines.

ACTION [CANFOUR] NUM [] VALUE [] NAME []
sets FOURLINES to NO

6.17 CRUISEMINS The special action CRUISEMINS is used to set your Cruise Mins parameter (see 5.10). It must be a whole number of minutes and cannot be set above 10. The new value should be given in the NUM box.

ACTION [CRUISEMINS] NUM [3] VALUE [] NAME []
Sets a team's Cruise Mins to 3.

6.18 CRUISERATE The special action CRUISERATE is used to set your Cruise Rate parameter (see 5.10). It must be set between 0 and 4. The new value should be given in the NUM box.

ACTION [CRUISERATE] NUM [2] VALUE [] NAME []
Sets a team's Cruise Rate to 2.

6.19 HURRYMINS The special action HURRYMINS is used to set your Hurry Mins parameter (see 5.11). It must be a whole number of minutes and cannot be set above 10. The new value should be given in the NUM box.

ACTION [HURRYMINS] NUM [2] VALUE [] NAME []
Sets a team's Hurry Mins to 2.

6.20 HURRYRATE The special action HURRYRATE is used to set your Hurry Rate parameter (see 5.11). It must be set between 0 and 4. The new value should be given in the NUM box.

ACTION [HURRYRATE] NUM [2] VALUE [] NAME []
Sets a team's Hurry Rate to 2.

6.21 PULLSECS1 The special action PULLSECS1 is used to set your Pull Time 1 parameter. Pull Time 1 cannot be set above 60.

ACTION [PULLSECS1] NUM [40] VALUE [] NAME []
Sets a team's Pull Time1 parameter to 40 seconds.

6.22 PULLSECS2 The special action PULLSECS2 is used to set your Pull Time 2 parameter. Pull Time 2 cannot be set above 120.

ACTION [PULLSECS2] NUM [75] VALUE [] NAME []
Sets a team's Pull Time2 parameter to 75 seconds.

EXTRA LISTINGS

There are a number of extra stats listings you may order. In each case there is no cost in LPs, but you will be charged a certain number of extra part-credits to pay for the listing. If you order any of these listings during the playoffs then you will receive the final **regular** season stats listing concerned.

6.23 ECLEADERS, WCLEADERS AND ALLEADERS Each of these special actions costs 0.2 credits and orders one of the three “leaders” listings. The ECLEADERS listing includes only players from Eastern Conference teams, the WCLEADERS listing includes only players from Western Conference teams and the ALLEADERS listing includes players from all teams in the league.

The “leaders” listings show the top thirty-two performers in twelve goaltending categories (games played, shots faced, goals allowed, goals allowed average, saves made, save percentage, games won, games tied, games lost, points from wins and ties, shutouts and catches) and twenty-four skating categories (games played, minutes played, times on ice, shots attempted, shots on target, goals scored, assists, points scored [goals plus assists], shooting percentage, plus, minus, plus/minus combined, power play goals, short-handed goals, game winning goals, game tying goals, individual penalties, penalty minutes, giveaways, loose puck wins, faceoff wins, faceoff losses, hits and takeaways).

ACTION [ECLEADERS] NUM [] VALUE [] NAME []

orders the ECLEADERS listing, at a cost of 0.2 credits.

6.24 ECPLAYERS, WCPLAYERS AND ALLPLAYERS The ECPLAYERS and WCPLAYERS special actions each costs 0.2 credits and orders one of the two “players” listings. The ECPLAYERS action orders a listing including only players from Eastern Conference teams, the WCPLAYERS listing orders a listing including only players from Western Conference teams. The ALLEADERS listing orders **both** listings and costs 0.4 credits (there is no combined LEADERS listing for players from both conferences, as it would simply be too big).

The two “leaders” listings lists **every** single skater who has played from every single team in the conference concerned. Players are ranked according to their “points scored” (goals plus assists) but all of the skater stats are shown as on team reports (games played, minutes played, times on ice, goal attempts, shots on target, goals, assists, shooting percentage, plus/minus, power-play goals, short-handed goals, game-winning goals, game-tying goals, penalties, penalty minutes, giveaways, loose puck wins, faceoff wins, faceoff losses, hits and takeaways). The listings are usually five or six sides in length. The leader in each category is shown underlined.

ACTION [WCPLAYERS] NUM [] VALUE [] NAME []

orders the WCPLAYERS listing, at a cost of 0.2 credits.

6.25 TOPPLAYERS, TOPDEF AND TOPFWD The TOPPLAYERS, TOPDEF and TOPFWD listings each cost 0.1 credits. This listings ordered are in the same format as the ECLEADERS and WCLEADERS listings (see 6.24), except that players from both conferences are included, but only the top 132 according to “points scored” are shown (so the listing only covers two sides). The TOPPLAYERS listing shows the top 132 skaters regardless of position, the TOPDEF listing shows the top 132 defensemen only and the TOPFWD listing shows the top 132 forwards (centers and wings) only.

Shortened versions (one side, showing the top 66 players only) of the TOPDEF and TOPFWD listings are automatically sent to you (at no extra cost) in weeks 2 and 10 and 4 and 12 respectively.

ACTION [TOPPLAYERS] NUM [] VALUE [] NAME []

orders the TOPPLAYERS listing, at a cost of 0.1 credits.

6.26 TOPGLT The TOPGLT special action costs 0.1 credits and orders a listing similar to the TOPDEF and TOPFWD listings (see 6.25), except that it shows goaltenders from both conferences. Only the top 132 goaltenders who have played a game are shown, but normally this will cover all goaltenders (even if every team has four goaltenders, they'll still all be shown). Goaltenders are ranked according to "points won" (i.e. from games won and tied) along with all the stats normally shown on game reports (games played, minutes played, shots faced, goals allowed, goals allowed average, saves, save percentage, games won, games tied, games lost, shutouts, catches, power plays and power play percentage). The league leader in each category is shown underlined.

Shortened versions (one side, showing the top 66 players only) of the TOPGLT listing are automatically sent to you (at no extra cost) in weeks 6 and 14 respectively.

ACTION[TOPGLT] NUM[] VALUE[] NAME[]

orders the TOPGLT listing, at a cost of 0.1 credits.

6.27 TEAMS The TEAMS special action costs 0.1 credits and orders a listing of offensive and defensive stats for each team in a conference. Teams are ranked according to goals scored or conceded per game and show the same stats as on team reports and the TOP listings (see 6.25 and 6.26). This listing is automatically sent to you (no extra cost) in even-numbered weeks during the regular season.

ACTION[TEAMS] NUM[] VALUE[] NAME[]

orders the TEAMS listing, at a cost of 0.1 credits.

6.28 ROUNDUP The special action ROUNDUP orders an up-to-date league roundup, at a cost of 0.2 credits. This listing is automatically sent to you (at no extra cost) at the end of the playoffs before the start of the new regular season.

ACTION[ROUNDUP] NUM[] VALUE[] NAME[]

orders the ROUNDUP listing, at a cost of 0.2 credits.

6.29 SCHEDULE The special action SCHEDULE orders an up-to-date league schedule, at a cost of 0.1 credits. This listing is automatically sent to you (at no extra cost) at the end of the playoffs before the start of the new regular season.

ACTION[SCHEDULE] NUM[] VALUE[] NAME[]

orders the SCHEDULE listing, at a cost of 0.1 credits.

6.30 BENCHGLT The special action BENCHGLT is used to specify your Bench Goaltender (see 5.15), the goaltender you will bring in from the bench if you decide to bench one of your starters.

ACTION[BENCHGLT] NUM[32] VALUE[] NAME[]

sets goaltender no.32 as your bench goaltender.

6.31 OTRATE The special action OTRATE is used to set your Overtime Rating parameter (see 5.12). It must be set between 0 and 4. The new value should be given in the NUM box.

ACTION[OTRATE] NUM[2] VALUE[] NAME[]

sets your overtime rating parameter to 2.

6.32 SETREVERSE The special action SETREVERSE is used to set your Cruise Reverse option (see 5.10.2) to YES.

ACTION[SETREVERSE] NUM[] VALUE[] NAME[]

sets your Cruise Reverse option to YES.

6.33 CANREVERSE The special action CANREVERSE is used to set your Cruise Reverse option (see 5.10.2) to NO.

ACTION [CANREVERSE] NUM [] VALUE [] NAME []

sets your Cruise Reverse option to NO.

7 FREE AGENTS

7.1 INTRODUCTION Free agents are players who are currently unsigned, and are available to be signed by any team. Free agents are not available after the trade deadline (see 1.18). Each free agent has a value, which represents the minimum cost of signing him and his value when signed. Free agent bids are processed after all special actions have been processed but you cannot sign as a free agent a player who was waived earlier that turn by another team. If a free agent is injured this is indicated by an "I" on the free agent list after his name and the number of games it will take him to recover.

7.2 SIGNING FREE AGENTS Each team has the opportunity to sign one free agent per week. When you sign a free agent he is placed on your active or reserve squad, and the player he replaces is automatically waived. When you make a free agent bid you should specify the list number of the player to be signed, the shirt number of the player to be replaced, the amount you are offering (which must be at least as high as the free agent's current value) and the new shirt number and name (assuming the player isn't already named) for the player to be signed. You cannot allocate an incoming free agent a shirt number of a player already on your roster (including the player to be waived).

7.3 WAIVER VALUES AND COMPENSATION When a player is waived, either as a result of a promote action (see 6.3), release action (see 6.4) or a free agent bid (see 7.2) then half of his value (rounded down) is recovered **unless** the player is injured. These LPs are available for any free agent bid concerned and the player normally becomes a free agent. When a free agent is signed his previous team receives half of his value (not half of the amount bid) as compensation regardless of whether he is injured or not.

This system means that if you waive an uninjured player and someone else (or even you) picks him up later you actually recover his full value (in two portions), or almost his value (his value may have dropped when he is signed). It allows teams in financial difficulties to release a high value player and sign a cheaper player to increase their LP balance and reduce their wage bill.

7.4 FREE AGENT LIST When a player is waived he normally goes onto the free agent list, as long as there is a space available for him, or a lesser player (lower level and/or value) occupying a spot. In the latter case the lesser player is automatically replaced, and simply disappears, without the usual advance warning (see 7.6). This will generally only happen to lower level players.

7.5 SIGNING VALUES AND TIED BIDS When bidding for a player you may offer more than the minimum amount required. If more than one team bid for the same player then the highest offer wins. If two teams make equal bids then the winner is the team with the better record, or the higher LP balance, or if equal the winner is determined randomly. The value for a player is not affected by a bid which is higher than his current value, the player takes the extra LPs bid as a "signing bonus".

7.6 UNSIGNED FREE AGENTS If a player remains on the free agent list without teams signing him his value slowly drops, reflecting his keenness to be picked up by a new team. Eventually a player will decide to retire, though you are usually given warning of this (see 7.4 for an exception). A player about to retire will appear with a "+" sign next to his number, and will retire after the following turn's bids (when a player retires his previous team do not receive any compensation). When a new free

agent is added to the list (i.e. not having been waived by another team) he is automatically assigned a "previous team", so compensation is always awarded to someone when a free agent is signed, reflecting the fact that all free agents will have spent time in someone's farm system.

7.7 INSUFFICIENT LOSING POINTS Normally you cannot make a free agent bid for a player if you do not have sufficient LPs to cover the cost of signing him (including any compensation you may receive for the player you are waiving). If you do try and bid more LPs than you are legally allowed to, the computer will automatically reduce your offer to the highest legal bid.

However, if the cost of signing a player is equal to or less than the LPs which will be recovered by the waiver of the player he will replace (which is only half his value) then the bid will be allowed, even if the team's LP balance is below zero. Such bids can only be made at the minimum value of the free agent concerned. There will usually be some cheap, low quality players available on the free agent list so teams in financial trouble can make bids for players, but they can only sign free agents whose values are up to half those of the players they will replace. Effectively this means that they can sign lesser players to replace their better players, enabling them to reduce their wage bill.

Example: A team's balance is -3 LPs. They can sign a free agent value 14 LP to replace a player value 30 LP, as the net gain is 1 LP (they spend 14 LP on the signing, but recover 15 LP from the waiver). A free agent value 16 LP could not be signed to replace a player value 30 LP as this would entail a further reduction in losing points.

8 TRADING RULES

8.1 INTRODUCTION Teams may conduct "one-for-one" trades of players in their squads using three trading actions - ACCEPT, OFFER and LIST. Trading actions are processed AFTER other special actions (see section 6) but before free agents (see section 7) are signed. You can only trade a player who is on your active or reserve squad.

Trades take place in three stages over the three turns using three special actions. On the first turn a team places a player they wish to trade on the trading list, using a LIST action (see 8.2). On the second turn any team who wish to make an offer for a player on the trading list make an OFFER (see 8.3), offering a player of the same TRADE LEVEL (see 3.22) in exchange for the player previously LISTed. Finally on the third turn the team which originally LISTed the player decides which (if any) of the OFFERs to ACCEPT (see 8.4). All other offers are automatically rejected. A team may only order three of each type of action per turn (i.e. three LISTs, three OFFERs and three ACCEPTs).

The squad restrictions (see 3.1) are checked when OFFER and ACCEPT orders are processed. If a team issues one of these orders which would lead to a violation of their squad restriction then the order will be rejected (note that if an ACCEPTance of a trade by another team violates your squad restrictions then the trade will not be rejected). Only the team issuing the order is restricted.

Notes: The Trading List shows all players who have been LISTed for trade that turn. A player cannot be LISTed for trade on consecutive turns, and if no-one makes an OFFER for him then the LIST on him is cancelled. All OFFERs for a player MUST be made the turn after he is listed and ACCEPTs must be made the turn after an OFFER has been received. Note that the second and third stages of a trade (OFFER and ACCEPT) are processed AFTER a player disappears from the Trading List (the trading list is only used to set the ball rolling). An example of how a trade is conducted follows:

Turn 1 - Atlanta LIST 32. Atlanta no.32 appears on the Trading List.

Turn 2 - Boston OFFER 23 32 AT. Calgary OFFER 14 32 AT. Both Boston and Calgary have offered players to Atlanta in exchange for no.32.

Turn 3 - Atlanta ACCEPT 32 23 BB. Atlanta accept the Boston's offer (and by default reject Calgary's offer). Atlanta's no.32 and Boston's no.23 are automatically traded, each team paying a quarter of their incoming player's value as a signing bonus. Each player takes the same shirt number as the player he has just replaced (so Atlanta's no.32 becomes Boston's no.23 and vice versa).

Notes: Trades involving multiple players and/or draft picks are not practical because it is important to ensure that trades are "fair". In real-life the managers of teams are being paid to run their teams, and getting the rough end of a trade is an occupational hazard. In a PBM game there is far too much scope for managers to do private deals and compromise the development of their team to win quickly (then they simply drop out of the game). Other PBM games have shown that if a system is too flexible then managers will get their friends to take over a team, trade them their best players and then drop out, ruining the game for everyone else. The same applies with draft picks, the essential long-term building block of a team - if trading for picks is allowed then too many managers simply trade their draft picks for players and then drop out having compromised their team's development. The restrictions on Trading Levels are intended to prevent these abuses while allowing a limited degree of trading.

8.2 LIST The special action LIST places a player on the trading list. The shirt number of the player must be given in the NUM box. There is no cost. You cannot LIST a player if he was also LISTed the previous turn (as you will be awaiting OFFERS for him). You cannot LIST a player less than two weeks before the Trading Deadline (as any trade could not be concluded prior to the Trade Deadline).

When you list a player for trade you have the option of specifying a player position you would particularly like to be offered in exchange for your player (to give other managers an idea of what you are looking for). These must be any of the six regular positions.

ACTION [LIST] NUM [23] VALUE [] NAME [CEN]

puts player no.23 on the trading list, hoping to be offered a center in exchange.

8.3 OFFER The special action OFFER is used to offer one of your players in exchange for a player LISTed on the Trading List the previous turn. There is no cost. Your player MUST have the same Trade Level as the other team's player. The shirt number of YOUR player should be given in the NUM box. The shirt number of the other team's player should be given in the VAL box and his team's two letter team-code should be given in the NAME box. You cannot make an offer for a player who was not on the trading list the previous turn.

Note: All OFFERS remain secret to the two teams concerned. Only the team who originally LISTed the player know who have been offered to them, though all teams making offers are informed whether their offers are valid, and subsequently whether they are accepted or rejected.

ACTION [OFFER] NUM [23] VALUE [32] NAME [AT]

offers player no.23 to Atlanta (team code AT) in exchange for no.32.

8.4 ACCEPT The special action ACCEPT is used to accept an OFFER for one of your players which was received the previous turn. The shirt number of YOUR player should be given in the NUM box. The shirt number of the other team's player should be given in the VAL box and his team's two letter team-code should be given in the NAME box. If the ACCEPT is valid then the trade is immediately conducted and the two players swap teams. Each player takes the shirt number and squad position of the player he is replacing. BOTH teams pay the player they sign a quarter of his value as a signing bonus (note that this payment is made even if the team's LP balance drops below zero), though neither player's value increases. Once conducted, all trades are shown on the league actions report.

ACTION [ACCEPT] **NUM** [32] **VALUE** [23] **NAME** [BB]

accepts the offer of Boston's (team code BB) no.23 in exchange for no.32

Notes: You need to be very careful with your trade orders. If you make a mess of an order then it will take you another three turns to reorganize and complete the trade.

Once you OFFER a player in exchange for a trade then you have no control over the completion of the trade. If the other team decides to ACCEPT your offer the trade goes through; you cannot cancel the trade if you have second thoughts.

8.5 TRADING DEADLINE You cannot complete a trade after the trading deadline (see 1.18). To complete a trade before the trading deadline you will have to begin the trading process (with a LIST action) two turns earlier, so LIST actions are not permitted within two turns of the trading deadline.

8.6 WRITING TRADING ORDERS You need to be very careful when writing trading orders. For OFFER and ACCEPT actions you **must** give the team code **and** the shirt number of the other player involved in the trade, and if you fail to do so the action will fail. If you mess up a trade it'll take you a few turns to redo the trade, so make sure you write your orders correctly and clearly.

9 GAME REPORTS

9.1 INTRODUCTION The game reports give you full details of the key aspects of the game. A number of reports are common to all players in the game, brief details of all games, etc. Each team also receives various individual reports, with more detailed information about their team.

9.2 LEAGUE RESULTS Each turn you receive details of the results for all games played in the league that turn. Scores are given period by period, along with the key stats from each game: goal attempts, shots on target, saves made by the goaltender, catches made by the goaltender, goals scored in power play situations and power play opportunities, penalty minutes served, giveaways, loose pucks won, face-offs won and lost, hits made, takeaways made, break-ups and plays defended.

9.3 LEAGUE STANDINGS The league standings are also issued each turn, detailing the divisional rankings, record over the last five games, current winning/losing streak, goals scored and conceded, home and road records, LP balances, numbers of fans, stadium facilities levels, merchandising and trainers levels for each team. During the playoffs the league standings section is replaced by a number of different tables (as it is meaningless at this time). In week 17 (playoff week 1) the regular season head to head records for each team in conference games are shown and in week 18 (playoff week 2) the regular season head to head records for each team in interconference games are shown.

In week 19 (playoff week 3) a number of miscellaneous stats are shown for each team and their opponents: highest goal tally of the season, record in games decided by one goal (not including tied games), scoring by period and a breakdown of numbers of goals scored (times scoring none, one, two, three, four, five and six or more goals). In week 20 (playoff week 4) the full preseason standings are shown (note that some teams won't have played any preseason games at all, while some teams will have been playing preseason games for three turns).

9.4 ACTIONS REPORT The actions report gives details of the schedule for the following turn (with the road team always reported first and the home team second), new injuries suffered and holdouts, free agent signings and the current list of available free agents. Free agents are shown along with their current/previous team, any injury, level and best ability, experience, potential and current value. A "+" sign after a free agent's number indicates he is about to retire (see 7.6).

9.5 STATISTICS A number of statistical reports are also periodically issued, team stats (which give details of goaltending and skating stats for all teams), individual goaltending and individual skating stats, listing the individual leaders throughout the game. The overall leader in each category is shown with the relevant statistic underlined.

9.6 TEAM REPORT Your team report gives full details of all players currently on your roster (level and top skill, experience, potential, aggression or conditioning, trade level, fatigue level, current form rating, season total form, injury, value, wages, skill ratings and squad), depth-charts and lineup changes and full financial details. Details of any free agent bids, special actions, holdouts and injuries suffered the previous turn are also reported.

9.7 GAME REPORTS Game reports in Slapshot give a minute-by-minute of all the key events during the game (reporting everything would be impossible, but the key events can be reported within a two side game report) plus boxscores for the games played by your team that turn.

The boxscores give full details of the statistics for the goaltenders and skaters appearing in your game. Players are shown along with their regular positions, their lines in the regular, power-play and short-handed depth charts (so LW 2 means a player is the left wing on the second line). Each player is shown with his statistics for the game.

Game reports show in chronological order the key events, in each case listing the game time when it happened, the team involved and the player(s) concerned by shirt number and surname. A brief summary of the events reported follows:

9.7.1 Goals Scored Goals scored are shown with the scorer and any assisting players afterwards in brackets. The other skaters on the ice for both teams are also shown. Empty Net, Rebound and solo (unassisted) goals are specifically identified in game reports.

9.7.2 Fouls Individual fouls are reported as minor or major, with the offending player shown along with his victim and the reason for the foul. The end of the consequent penalty is also reported. Delayed penalties are reported similarly, when the penalty is actually assessed, rather than when it occurs.

9.7.3 Shots Saved and Caught Shots saved and caught are reported along with the name of the shooting player. A shot caught means the goaltender retained possession of the puck, a shot saved means he didn't (offering the chance of a rebound). The goaltenders name is not reported (there's only one per team per game, and listing his name countless times would be a waste of space).

9.7.4 Takeaways Takeaways are reported along with the defensive player who took away possession and the offensive player who lost possession.

9.7.5 Giveaways Giveaways are reported along with the offensive player who conceded possession.

9.7.6 Hits Hits are reported along with the defensive player who made the hit and the offensive player who suffered the hit.

9.7.7 Cruising and Hurrying Up It is reported when a team enters Cruise or Hurry Up mode, and also when they leave it (if the game score changes such that they do).

9.7.8 Pulling Goaltenders If a team pulls its goaltender this is reported, along with the skater who replaces the goaltender on the ice. If the goaltender is reinstated in goal this is also reported.

It is impossible/impractical to produce a report which shows everything (passes, loose pucks, face-offs, line-changes are not included) as this would fill countless pages. There are unlikely to be many players who'd want to read dozens and dozens of pages of game report every week, let alone pay for them. However, these reports can now give you a flavour of the game, and allow you to read through a game report and see how the game unfolds.

9.7.9 Goaltenders Starting goaltenders are reported, as well as any change of goaltender and when it occurs.

9.8 SEASON TOTALS Your team's season totals report gives full details of your players' performances for the current season. In addition full details of your team selections and parameter changes are also reported, along with any corrections made by the computer and the reasons for these.

9.9 ROUNDUP AND SCHEDULE The league roundup and schedule are issued at the start of a new season. The roundup gives outline details of each team in your game: all players, including player type, handedness, level and best ability, experience, potential and value. The schedule gives the full fixtures for the regular season.

10 ALLSTAR GAME

10.1 INTRODUCTION Each league may have an Allstar Game run during the second half of the regular season (between weeks nine and fifteen). It cannot be run after week fifteen. To run an Allstar game you'll need to find four managers who are willing to donate one credit each and someone to coordinate the selection of players. Once you have all the credits "promised" then ask your GM for the selection forms to setup the Allstar game for play.

The Allstar game has no effect on the game or on player performances. It is included as an extra option purely to add further flavour to the game and increase enjoyment.

10.2 ALLSTAR SQUADS Allstar squads are comprised of two goaltenders, three left defensemen, three right defensemen, four left wings, four centers and four right wings (so twenty players in total, smaller than a regular squad). Both teams play with the FOURLINES (see 4.3) option set. There are no power play changes and no four on four changes. The short-handed depth chart is made up from the wingers on the regular lines. The starting goaltender plays the first thirty minutes of the game and is then replaced by the second goaltender (so the usual rules for replacing goaltenders are ignored) which ensures that all players selected onto an Allstar squad actually participate in the game.

10.3 ALLSTAR GAME The Allstar game is played and reported, using normal rules, as soon as both squads have been submitted to the GM (you need to ensure the squads are valid, if not the GM will return the selection sheets to you for correction). The report of the Allstar game is sent to all managers in the league. Players do not suffer fatigue or injury if they play in the Allstar game (nor is form affected). Player parameters are set by the computer to ensure maximum player participation.

11 POSTSEASON AND DRAFT

11.1 INTRODUCTION At the end of the regular season the three divisional winners and the five next best teams in each conference move forward to participate in the playoffs. The three divisional winners are ranked 1, 2 and 3 according to their regular season records and the remaining five teams are ranked 4-8 according to their regular season records. In the first round of the playoffs 1 plays 8, 2 plays 7, 3 plays 6 and 4 plays 5. In the second round of the playoffs the highest remaining seed plays the lowest remaining seed and the other two teams play each other (so the teams are reseeded and 1 plays 4 and 2 plays 3). The two winners of these games play each other in the third round for the conference title and the two conference winners play each other in the Slapshot Finals, the fourth round of the playoffs. Tiebreakers for teams with equal records are games won, goals difference (goals scored minus goals conceded), goals scored or the toss of a coin.

The remaining seven teams in each conference move forward into a similar competition called the Consolation Finals and are ranked 1-14 according to their regular season records. In the first round of the Consolation Finals 1 plays 14, 2 plays 13 and so on. In the second round of the Consolation finals the seven winners from the first round are joined by the lowest ranked loser from the main playoffs (known as the "lucky loser") who are ranked as the highest seed.

11.2 PLAYOFF FIXTURES All playoff series are played over the best of seven games, with a 2-2-1-1-1 format (the higher seeded team plays games 1, 2, 5 and 7 at home and games 3, 4 and 6 on the road). All consolation series are played over the best of three games, with a 1-1-1 format (the higher "seeded" team plays games 1 and 3 at home and game 2 on the road). Once any team has clinched a playoff series then no further games are played in the series.

11.3 PLAYOFF ELIMINATION Teams that have been eliminated from their respective playoff series (except the "lucky loser", see 11.1) will have three pre-season (practice) games scheduled against other teams who have also been eliminated. There are no injuries in pre-season, but fatigue is recorded during pre-season. Remember that fatigue is reset to zero before the first regular season game.

11.4 DRAFT The Draft is run at the same time as the playoffs. There are three rounds in the draft. The first round of the draft is run the same turn as the first round of the playoffs, the second round of the draft is run the same turn as the second round of the playoffs and the third round of the draft is run the same turn as the third round of the playoffs. At the end of the regular season the draft order is determined. The fourteen teams who failed to make the playoffs make the first fourteen selections, but their order is determined by a process known as the "lottery". The worst team (according to regular season record, tiebreakers as above) has 14 chances of drawing the first pick, the next worst team has 13 chances and so on down to the best of the fourteen which has just one chance. These teams are then drawn at random to fill the first fourteen positions in the draft order. The sixteen playoff teams draft from fifteenth to thirtieth in reverse order of their regular season records.

Note: This is a simplified version of the real-life lottery system. Also in real-life the draft lasts eleven rounds but in Slapshot we assume that the only useful players will be taken in the first three rounds.

11.5 DRAFT LIST The draft list, containing about one hundred rookies, is issued in week 13 of the regular season. Draftees may be scouted once the list has been issued. During the draft the actions report is replaced by the draft list, draft order and next turn's schedule. The details shown for each rookie are similar to those for free agents, levels, position, value and top skill.

11.6 DRAFTING PLAYERS During the draft each team, in order, signs one "rookie" player to their draft squad. There is **no cost** for signing these players. Your turnsheet will have a number of spaces available for choices equal to your position in the draft order. When your turn comes to draft the computer searches through your list of preferences until it finds an available player. In each round of the draft you **must** select a player. If you really don't want to sign anyone then you are advised to

take the highest value player available and release him as soon as possible, as you pay nothing for signing him and get LPs when you release him and if someone else then signs him.

At the same time as you give your draft selections you should also give a shirt number and name for the player you will select. If you do not give a name for the player then the computer will make up a (not very imaginative) name for you when the player is drafted.

11.7 END OF SEASON ASSESSMENT At the **end** of the playoffs (the turn after the draft is concluded) each of your veteran players is assessed for gain or loss of abilities. Each player normally loses only one point of potential, though he may lose a second point of potential if his abilities improve significantly. If a player has potential to lose then he will generally gain in abilities, particularly if his total form throughout the season was good and if his ego is high, whilst if a player has no potential left to exploit then he will generally lose abilities. However, a player's skills may increase or decrease slightly regardless of his form and potential, reflecting slight swings in ability from one season to the next. These gains and losses may or may not lead to a visible change in a player's levels and/or classes (a player with potential might lose a single ability but this could lead to his level dropping, from the very bottom of one level to the very top of another).

A player's value (which reflects how much he thinks he is worth) will usually also increase at the end of a season. The amount will be dependent upon a player's performances, his ego and whether his abilities have improved, but you may find that a player's value increases after a poor season or when his abilities are declining. All injuries are also cancelled (the player recovers fully during the off-season).

In Slapshot players do not normally retire whilst they are signed. Instead their abilities diminish and their values (and wage demands) increase until their current team decide to release the player. With high experience a veteran may still be very effective once his abilities begin to fade, but eventually he will reach a stage when his high salary can be better employed amongst more talented younger players.

After the end of season player assessment each team's stadium level (see 1.10), fans level (see 1.12) and trainers level (see 1.16) are also reduced. Following these reductions if the team's current LP balance is above 100 LPs then any excess LPs are spent on recruiting new fans (see 1.9) or simply lost.

11.8 DRAFTEES You may promote (see 6.3) or release (see 6.4) draftees during the draft and playoffs (though you are advised to wait until the veteran assessment (see 11.7) has been carried out, even though draftees are not affected), but you cannot promote or activate (see 6.2) a draftee to your active squad whilst any playoff series are still in progress. Remember that you may select players from your draft squad (see 3.17) for pre-season games so you don't need to promote a draftee to try him out.

11.9 RENAMING PLAYERS The final week of the playoffs is also the only turn you are allowed to rename players. Once the end of season player assessment has been carried out (see 11.7) and players have been renamed the roundup and schedule for the new season are issued. Once the roundup has been issued managers will not be allowed to change player names under any circumstance (other managers need to know the numbers and names on their roundups correspond to game reports during the season).

11.10 PRESEASON GAMES There is no full preseason turn in Slapshot prior to the start of the regular season (except the first season). In the final (fourth) round of the playoffs 26 of the 30 teams will be playing preseason games. The final week of the playoffs is immediately followed by the start of the new regular season.

11.11 SQUAD BALANCE Remember that each season you'll be signing two or three new players in the draft (your third pick may not be up to the job) and possibly one or more free agents, so the average "career" of a player will be about eight to ten years. Don't be afraid to "use up" players' potential in coaching, but also don't assume that just because a player has run out of potential he is past it, though that point may be approaching.

12 STATISTICS

12.1 INTRODUCTION Ice Hockey is a statistical game, some obvious and some obscure. Many statistics will appear in Slapshot results, so these statistics, along with brief explanations and their common abbreviations are detailed below. Most of these statistics are “official” statistics, those often reported in real-life. However, there are a number of other statistics which are used in Slapshot.

12.2 GOALTENDER STATISTICS

12.2.1 Games Played (GP) The number of games in which the goaltender has played.

12.2.2 Shots (Sh) The number of shots on target a goaltender has faced.

12.2.3 Goals (G) The number of goals a goaltender has conceded.

12.2.4 Goals Against Average (Avg) The average number of goals a goaltender concedes per sixty minutes played (rather than per game played, a subtle difference).

12.2.5 Saves (Sv) The number of saves a goaltender makes.

12.2.6 Save Percentage (Sv%) Save percentage is actually shown as a decimal fraction, rather than a percentage, though it's referred to as a percentage. It represents the number of saves a goaltender makes divided by the number of shots he has faced.

12.2.7 Wins (W), Ties (T) and Losses (L) The number of games a goaltender's team has won, tied and lost when he started the game. If two goaltenders play for a team in one game then the decision (won/tied/lost) is awarded to whichever goaltender was in goal when the game-winning/tying goal was scored (e.g. if you win 7-4 it's whoever was in goal when the fifth goal was scored). A decision is always awarded even if the game-winning/tying goal was scored when the goaltender had been pulled from the ice (i.e. the game-winning/tying goal was an empty net goal).

12.2.8 Shutouts (SO) The number of times a goaltender had a shutout (or clean-sheet in Soccer parlance) - preventing his opposition from scoring during the game.

12.2.9 Catches (Ca) The number of saves a goaltender makes where he catches (or smothers) the puck, not allowing the puck to rebound into play.

12.2.10 Minutes (Mn) The number of minutes played by a goaltender during a game. For individual goaltenders time when pulled from the ice is NOT counted, for team time totals it is.

12.2.11 Loose Puck Wins (LW) If a goaltender takes possession of a loose puck in his own defensive zone then this is recorded as a loose puck win. The goaltender claims possession and passes the puck to a team-mate.

12.2.12 Empty Net Goals (EN) Empty Net Goals (goals scored with no goaltender in the goal) are recorded against the goaltender who isn't there (somewhat curiously). They aren't used in calculating an individual goaltender's goals per game average nor save percentage (though they are counted when determining decisions, see 12.2.7), but are counted when calculating team goals per game averages.

12.2.13 Goals Scored (GS) The number of goals scored by a goaltender's team-mates while he is in goal (or pulled from the ice) are also recorded.

12.3 SKATER STATISTICS

12.3.1 Games Played (GP) The number of games in which the player has played.

12.3.2 Minutes (Mn) The number of minutes the player has played on the ice.

Note that a player is credited with one minute played even if he is only on the ice for one second. Otherwise the number of minutes credited is simply the number of seconds divided by sixty, so

anything from 1 second to 119 seconds will be translated to one minute for that game. Note also that the team total of minutes won't be simply five times the length of the game. In addition to the "rounding errors" detailed above there will be times in the game when a team only has four players on the ice, so the team total will usually be less than five times the length of the game.

12.3.3 Shifts On Ice (OI) The number of times the player has appeared on the ice. When a player returns to the ice after a time on the bench this counts as a new shift.

12.3.4 Goal Attempts (At) The number of times a player attempted a shot, regardless of whether it was on target or not.

12.3.5 Shots on Target (Sh) The number of times a player made a shot on target.

Shots on Target is the statistic the NHL record for determining the efficiency of a player's shooting, though knowing how often a player hits the target (or fails to hit the target) is probably just as significant a measure of the quality of a player's shooting.

12.3.6 Goals (G) The number of goals a player has scored.

12.3.7 Assists (As) The number of assists a player has been credited with.

Players' scoring is usually ranked by "points", with a player being awarded one point for each goal scored or assist awarded. A player with 11 goals and 16 assists is reported as scoring 27 "points".

12.3.8 Shooting Percentage (Sh%) Shooting percentage is reported as a percentage, and is the number of goals scored divided by the number of shots on target, expressed as a percentage.

12.3.9 Plus Minus (+/-) Plus minus is usually reported as a single number, and represents the differential between goals scored and goals conceded when a player is on the ice (so if a team scores then each player on the ice at the time has his plus minus increased by one) regardless of who actually scored the goal. In Slapshot plus minus is shown as two separate numbers, the plus and the minus. To get the number shown in normally simply take one away from the other.

Plus-minus is not allocated if the goal is scored in a power-play situation (ie the individuals on defence are not "blamed" for conceding a goal when they are short-handed).

12.3.10 Power Play Goals (PG) The number of goals a player scored in power play situations.

12.3.11 Short Handed Goals (SG) The number of goals a player scored in short handed situations.

12.3.12 Game Winning Goals (GW) The number of "game winning" goals a player scored.

A game winning goal is very simply defined as the decisive goal in a game a team won. For example if a team won a game 5-2 then the third goal is defined as being the "game-winner".

12.3.13 Game Tying Goals (GT) The number of "game tying" goals a player scored.

A game tying goal is only awarded if the game is a tie, and each team is awarded a game tying goal (unless of course the game was scoreless).

12.3.14 Penalties (Pn) The number of individual penalties a player has been assessed for.

12.3.15 Penalty Minutes (PM) The number of minutes a player has served in the penalty box.

12.3.16 Giveaways (GA) The number of times a player has given away possession through a simple error of his own making (not involving an opponent doing anything to take it away).

12.3.17 Team Penalties (TP) The number of times a player commits a team penalty, such as offsides, icing and so on (not penalties leading to power-play situations for the opposition).

12.3.18 Loose Wins (LW) The number of times a player has won possession of a loose puck.

This is another unofficial statistic. In Ice Hockey the puck regularly runs loose and neither team can be considered in possession, with players competing to gain possession. A loose win is awarded to whichever player is considered as gaining possession for his team.

12.3.19 Faceoff Wins and Losses (FW and FL) The number of face-offs won and lost by a player (most face-offs are usually contested by a team's center).

12.3.20 Hits (Hi) The number of times a player forces an opponent in possession of the puck to lose possession by checking him (basically knocking him off the puck - forcing the puck to run loose).

12.3.21 Takeways (TA) The number of times a player took the puck away from an opponent.

A takeaways is relatively uncommon, as it involves not only depriving the opponent of possession but also gaining possession in the same move, without the opponent having given possession away. It is more usual to deprive the opponent of possession but only force the puck loose.

12.3.22 Passing (Pass) The number of times a player makes a pass to a team-mate under pressure. It is shown as two numbers, the number of passes completed and the number attempted.

This is another unofficial statistic. It doesn't include routine passes not under pressure, but are passes "in traffic" when the defense is trying to prevent the pass to a team-mate. They are a measure of how accurately a player is able to pass the puck. If the pass is inaccurate, either not reaching the team-mate or not giving the team-mate a chance to take the pass then it is not considered as completed. Many passes are broken up by the defense, so don't expect perfection from your players when passing.

12.3.23 Carrying (Carry) The number of times a player takes the puck past an opponent. It is shown as two numbers, the number of carries achieved and the number attempted.

12.3.24 Break-ups (BU) The number of times a player "breaks-up" opposition possession, whether a pass or a carry, forcing the puck loose.

12.3.25 Plays Defensed (PD) Plays Defensed is the number of times a player prevents the offense from doing what they wanted to, whether it be forcing a player to pass to a team-mate, turn away from goal, decline to shoot, blocking a shot and so on. It's a general measure of defensive performance.

Passing, Carrying, Break-ups and Plays Defensed are all unofficial statistics introduced to try and quantify the basics of the game. Official statistics only deal with the "obvious" plays: hits, giveaways and so on. Whereas the majority of play in a game of Ice Hockey is characterised by trying to manoeuvre into scoring position but being forced to turn away or make a pass by good defensive positioning (hence plays defensed) or by trying to slip a pass into a small gap and failing (hence breakups and passing attempts/completions) and so on.

12.3.26 Shot Opportunities (SO) A shot opportunity is recorded every time an attacking player has possession in the opponents' attacking zone, and therefore a chance to shoot. Most shot opportunities aren't taken, whether because the opportunity isn't good enough, or the defence "breaks it up" or "defences" it (forcing the player to look to try to set up a new opportunity for a team-mate).

Shot opportunities give you a chance to gauge how much offensive pressure you are creating. If you're creating lots of opportunities but not making many attempts on goal then either the defence is doing a good job of shutting you down or you aren't being aggressive enough (either through having too many chances falling to defensemen, or having conservative Attack-Defence ratings).