

Getting Started with Rhino Baseball™

Welcome to the world of *Rhino Baseball*, the coolest fantasy baseball software on the planet! This document provides an overview of the major features found in the software, and is highly recommended reading for all new users. You can read this document at any time by accessing your list of *Programs* in Windows and selecting the *Install & Startup Guide* entry found under the *Rhino Software* program folder. Or you can click the *Program Help* tab in Rhino Baseball and open this document directly from the *Rhino Documents* page.

Here's what's contained inside the *Getting Started* guide:

Topic	Page
Installing Rhino Baseball under Microsoft Windows	2
Starting Rhino Baseball	2
Common Questions	3-4
Rhino Baseball Overview	5
The Four Versions of Rhino Baseball	5
Home Window	6
Program Help	6
The Help System	6
Rhino Documents	6
System Setup	6
League Setup	7
Setup League	7
Setup Teams & Rosters	7
League Management	8
Load Player Stats	8
Manage Rosters	8
Manage Transactions	8
Compute Stats	8
Report Management	9
Create Reports	9
Publish Reports	9
View Reports	9
Stats Review	9
Players Stats	9
Team Stats	9
Analysis Tools	10-11
Player Analysis	10
Stats Forecasting	10
Trade Analysis	11
Draft Assistance	11-14
Historical Stats	11
Stats Forecasting	12
Draft Planning	12-13
Draft Tracking	13-14
Database Upkeep	14-15
Core Data Maintenance	14
Mass Updates	14-15
Database Utilities	15
Technical Support	15
Rhino Software License Agreement	16

Installing Rhino Baseball under Microsoft Windows

Minimum System Requirements:

- Pentium 166 MHz processor or better
- Windows 98, ME, 2000, NT, or XP
- 16 MB of RAM (performance will substantially improve with 32 MB of RAM or more)
- 2x CD-ROM drive or better
- 160 MB of free hard disk space (for program, database, demos, and documents)

To Install Rhino Baseball:

- Quit all other applications.
- Insert Rhino Baseball CD into your CD-ROM drive.
- If the program doesn't start automatically, then click the **Start** button on the Windows taskbar, and select **Run** from the menu.
- Type **D:\V65\DISK1\SETUP** and press Enter key. (D = your CD-ROM drive)
- When asked to choose an operating system, select the **32-bit Short Names** option.
- When choosing setup options, select **Typical** install. Choosing *Compact* will not install the demos or database utilities to your hard drive.
- When asked to choose which products to install, check the **Rhino Baseball 6.5** box.
- When asked to insert a disk, type **D:\V65\DISK1** (D = your CD-ROM drive).
- If duplicate files are found during installation, you will be asked how you want to handle them. The best choice is to simply *Skip installing the duplicate files* (they will be copied to the C:\Rhino\Baseball\V65\Install\ folder instead).
- Restart your computer to update your system settings. Click **Start** button, select **Shut Down**, and then select the **Restart Your Computer** option.

Note: *Rhino Viewer* (for viewing & analyzing PSR report files), *PSR-to-HTML Converter* (for converting PSR reports to HTML files) and *Lotus ScreenCam Player* (for playing demos) are also automatically installed when you install *Rhino Baseball*.

Starting Rhino Baseball

- Click the **Start** button on the taskbar, choose **Programs**, choose **Rhino Software**, and then choose **Rhino Baseball 6.5** to launch the program.
- You'll see an opening splash screen. When the animated rhino starts running across the screen you have successfully connected to your database. Click on the rhino to enter the program.

Notes:

- When you start *Rhino Baseball*, the program connects to the **Rhino_B6** database. The database stores the statistics, player info, league rules, roster transactions, and other data used by the program. An icon for the Rhino_B6 database appears on the Windows taskbar when the database is running. When you exit *Rhino Baseball*, you'll be automatically disconnected from the database, and the icon on the taskbar will disappear.
- To create a shortcut icon for Rhino Baseball on your Windows 98/NT/XP desktop do this:
 - Right-click the desktop and select **New**.
 - Select **Shortcut**.
 - Click the **Browse** button and navigate to your **C:\Rhino\Baseball\V65** folder (the folder where you installed Rhino Baseball).
 - Click on **BASEBALL.EXE** from the file list, then click the **Open** button.
 - Click the **Next** button, then the **Finish** button.
- You can create a shortcut to *Rhino Viewer* using the same method just specified for *Rhino Baseball*, except choose **VIEWER.EXE** from the file list.

Common Questions

The following sections answer common questions you'll initially have about Rhino Baseball. Please take the time to read these notes before you start using the program.

Where's the User Manual?

Everything you need to know to use Rhino Baseball is contained within this document and the program's help system. You can quickly access all of the program's help functions by clicking the **Program Help** tab found on the **Home** window. The *Table of Contents*, which can always be accessed by pressing the F1 key, outlines Rhino Baseball's major functions and is great for learning what combination of screens to use to perform a given task. There's also the *Search* function (type a word and find all help topics associated with it) and *Glossary* (containing a list of computer and fantasy baseball terms along with their definitions). All major program windows have a *Quick Help* button that you can click to get step-by-step instructions on how to use that particular window. And you can print any help topic to get a hardcopy of the steps needed to complete a given task.

What are Lotus ScreenCam Movies?

Included with your software are over 40 *Lotus ScreenCam* movies which demonstrate many of the major program functions available in Rhino Baseball. You can play these narrated PC movies by selecting the *Play Demos* option from the Help menu or clicking the *Play Training Demos* button from the Help System tab page. The *ScreenCam Player*, which opens when you play a movie, contains controls that let you pause, stop, rewind, fast forward, and adjust the sound volume. Watching demos is the fastest way to learn how to use Rhino Baseball.

What Stat Categories Can I Use?

Rhino Baseball contains over 100 built-in stat categories. In addition to these predefined statistics, you can define your own stat formulas using the *Formula Builder* function which is available when using the *Stat Definitions* window. This program feature lets you create your own special statistics and track them for both scoring and reporting purposes. To identify the stat categories your fantasy league will use for scoring purposes and which stats will or won't be shown on screens & reports, use the *Scoring Options* function.

Where Do I Get Updated Player Stats?

Final major league player stats from 1994 thru the most recently completed MLB season have been preloaded into your Rhino Baseball database. Recent player stats are provided by Rhino Software, while stats from the 2001 season and earlier are provided courtesy of *Quick Stats*. These historical statistics are useful for preseason player analysis and forecasting, but you'll obviously need current major league stats once the regular season begins. That's where the *Rhino Stats Service* comes in.

A subscription to our stats service enables you to download updated MLB player stats files directly from our web site. New files are posted to our *Baseball Stats Center* every Monday afternoon (the web address is <http://www.rhinosoftware.com/mlbstats.htm>). Each file comes in ZIP format and contains 8 stat files (3 AL-only files, 3 NL-only files, and 2 MLB Combined files) that are designed for easy importing into Rhino Baseball via the program's *Stats Importing* function.

Rhino Baseball can also be setup to import batting and pitching stat files from other 3rd-party stat providers such as *TQ Stats*, as long as their stat files are in plain or tab-delimited Text file format and contain either unique Player IDs or unique Player Names. If you get stats from another source, you'll need to use the *Stat File Layout* function to create file templates that specify the column structure of your stat files. You'll also need to setup Team cross-reference records as well. Both of these tasks must be done prior to importing any stat files. You'll also need to match-up the players from your stat files with players in the Rhino Baseball database during your first import, which is tedious but fortunately only needs to be done once. Obviously you can save yourself a lot of initial setup work if you get your player stats from the *Rhino Stats Service*. But you can use an outside stats provider if desired, and for a small fee, our technical support team can assist you in setting up your database to use another service if necessary.

Can I Compute Daily Stats?

No. The major league player stats that are stored in the Rhino Baseball database are year-to-date (full season) stats. The software can analyze those statistics and compute *weekly* results, but it doesn't have access to the raw game-by-game data needed to calculate daily results. Since the smallest statistical period in Rhino Baseball is one week, roster transactions are also recorded on a weekly basis (or even less frequently for leagues that have biweekly or monthly transactions). Most fantasy sports software for the PC is designed this way, because as a purely practical matter, very few users have the time to manage their fantasy leagues every single day.

How Do I Update Major League Player Info?

The Rhino Baseball Database is initially loaded with major league player information for well over 1600 players. As the season progresses and players change teams or switch positions, you'll want to update the player data to keep it current. You may also want to tweak various player settings that are used when calculating forecasts so you can get projections customized to your tastes. There are numerous books and online sources that provide major league player info, including such popular sites as MLB.com, ESPN, Rotoworld, and Yahoo Sports, just to name a few. An even easier way to keep your database up-to-date is to download a free *MLB Player Info* file right from the Rhino Software web site and import it directly into your database using the *Data Loader* function. Check the bottom of the *Baseball Stats Center* page (where you download player stats from the Rhino Stats Service) for periodic postings of free data files.

How Do I Share Reports with My League Members?

There's a button on the Rhino Baseball toolbar called *Save Report*, and it can be used to save a full-color snapshot of the data or report that you're currently working with. Your data is saved as a *PSR report file* and you can view & manipulate it using the ***Rhino Viewer*** program that comes bundled with Rhino Baseball. In fact, all of the members of your fantasy league are entitled to download a free copy of the *Rhino Viewer* from our web site. Instructions on how to download the Viewer are usually sent via email when your stats service account is setup. So the best way to share tons of terrific looking stat reports with your league mates is to save PSR reports, and then e-mail them to the other team owners. They can then use the Rhino Viewer to sort the reports however they want, create new reports by applying filters to an existing report, print them out, or even export data into Excel format if they want to create spreadsheets based on the report data.

You can also save most data in *HTML web page* format. Unlike PSR reports, HTML web pages are static reports and cannot be manipulated. They also aren't as nice looking as the reports you create in native PSR format. But if you have your own private league web site and want to post fantasy stats reports, roster move summaries, or rosters for everyone to see, then HTML reports are convenient choices. Don't have a web site? Then simply email the web pages to your league mates and they can view them offline using any standard web browser.

Can I Use Rhino Baseball on 2 PC's?

Yes, assuming it's being used solely by you. To use Rhino Baseball on two different computers, such as your home desktop PC and a laptop, you need to follow these steps. First, install the software on your primary computer. You'll also need to get an *Unlock Code* from us to register your software & database and turn it into an unlimited use product. Once that's done, go ahead and install Rhino Baseball on your secondary computer (such as your laptop). Now you must copy the Rhino Baseball Database from your primary computer to your secondary computer. Don't get too scared, it's actually pretty easy to do this. You'll need to create a CD-R (or tape, zip disk, etc.) that contains the ***RHINO_B6.DB*** file (your database) located in the ***C:\Rhino\Baseball\V65*** folder on your primary computer. Then insert the CD-R into your secondary computer and copy the saved database file (*RHINO_B6.DB*) to the ***C:\Rhino\Baseball\V65*** folder on that PC. Voila, that's all there is to it. You can swap copies of your database back and forth between the two computers to keep their data in sync whenever the need arises.

Rhino Baseball Overview

The following is an overview of the major functions available in Rhino Baseball. If you're new to Rhino Baseball, please take the time to read this document. This program is chock-full of functions and it takes some time to learn all its capabilities. This overview provides a good foundation that will help you understand how the program is organized and what it can do.

The Four Versions of Rhino Baseball

There are 4 versions of Rhino Baseball: *Commissioner*, *Draft Planner*, *Draft Magic*, and *Deluxe*. They can be briefly described as follows:

- **Commissioner** = Provides everything you need to setup & manage your fantasy league from importing weekly MLB player stats, to recording roster moves, to calculating team stats and point standings, to generating rosters and stat reports. You can run *multiple* fantasy leagues using Rhino Baseball.
- **Draft Planner** = Provides a robust set of historical stats analysis, stats forecasting, dollar valuation, and draft preparation & planning tools. You can calculate player projections customized to your tastes, setup & analyze your freeze lists, get projected dollar values, and generate cheatsheets to take to the draft. The powerful Draft Assistant and Draft Plan Analyzer functions help you plan a winning strategy to use during your rotisserie baseball auction.
- **Draft Magic** = Includes everything in the Draft Planner version, plus a set of functions to track players taken/available, money spent/available, and analyze player information (such as projected stats, inflation-adjusted dollar values, and player comments) during your live rotisserie baseball auction or draft. In effect, Draft Magic helps you both *before* and *during* your draft.
- **Deluxe** = This is the premier version of Rhino Baseball, which includes everything in the other 3 versions plus some special analytical functions that aren't found in the other programs. These analytical functions include the Trade Analyzer, Player Evaluator, Impact Ratings report, Stock Market Values report, Player Comparison Graphs, and Projected Team Stats & Standings.

When Rhino Baseball is running in trial-mode (before you've unlocked it) or you're using the *Deluxe* version of the software, all of the program's capabilities are available to you.

When using the *Draft Planner*, *Draft Magic*, or *Commissioner* versions of the software, you'll discover that certain program features have been disabled. For example, in the Commissioner version of Rhino Baseball, you won't have access to the stats forecasting and draft planning tools.

If you're ever interested in upgrading your software to the *Deluxe* version of Rhino Baseball (which turns on every program feature), select the *Upgrade to Deluxe* option from the Help menu. That explains the procedure for upgrading your software.

Home Window

Once you've connected to the Rhino Baseball Database and clicked the animated Rhino logo on the opening screen, you'll arrive at the **Home** window. The Home window provides access to all of the major program functions in Rhino Baseball. You'll notice that it contains a vertical series of tabbed pages (such as *League Setup*, *League Management*, *Stats Review*, *Analysis Tools*, etc.). When you click on a tab, you'll see another series of tabbed pages, this time arranged horizontally across the screen. Each of those pages contains a group of related program functions.

To access a program function, simply click its corresponding button. There's a brief description provided for each function next to its button. If you would like to see a more detailed explanation of that function (including access to a demo if one is available), simply *right-click* that function's button.

If you're using Rhino Baseball to manage multiple fantasy leagues, note that the fantasy league which is currently active is indicated in yellow letters on the Home window. If you want to make a different league active, click the **Change League** button to do so.

Finally, note that your name, along with the unique **Serial Number** of your software is shown at the top of the Home window. Now let's review each major tab of the Home window to see what program functions it provides access to.

Program Help

This tab contains three pages: **Help System**, **Rhino Documents**, and **System Setup**.

The **Help System** page provides access to the basic components of the program's help system. This includes the *Table of Contents* window which provides an overview of the features found in Rhino Baseball and step-by-step procedures you can follow to accomplish major tasks. Use the *Search Help Topics* function to find help for a particular topic that you're interested in. Need to know the meaning of a given computer term or fantasy baseball buzzword? Then check out the *Glossary of Terms* for a definition. You can also use the *Bookmarks* function to create quick links to help topics that you frequently reference, including any user-defined help notes.

You can also *Play Training Demos* which show off some of the program's major functions. These demos are short movies (anywhere from 30 seconds to 3 minutes long) that provide a visual example of how a particular screen works. Please note that while there over 40 demos to watch, demos are not available for every feature found in Rhino Baseball. Also be aware that some of the demos are a little outdated, as they were created using earlier versions of the program and the appearance of certain screens may have changed a little. However, those demos still give you a pretty good flavor of how to use a particular function. In the future, we intend to produce an entirely new set of training demos using a slightly different technology.

The **Rhino Documents** page provides access to an assortment of supplementary documents. These include the program's *Read Me* file (containing notes about this program release), the *Getting Started* guide (which you're reading), the *FAQ* (which provides answers to some frequently asked questions), the *Tips for Commissioners* guide (providing tips on how to manage your fantasy league), and the *Rhino Fantasy Baseball Rulebook* (the official rulebook of HARL, run by *Steve Severino*, the creator of Rhino Baseball). And if you have the desire to read through legalese, you can also view the software *License Agreement*.

The **System Setup** page includes functions that enable you to change and view key system settings for Rhino Baseball. You can setup your *E-Mail* program and add entries to your Address Book, adjust your *Printer* settings, and change how the program's *Toolbar* is displayed. If you want, you can create a new directory (folder) on your computer's hard drive using the *Directory Setup* function. This comes in handy for creating a folder for storing your downloaded stat files, and a folder for storing reports that you create with the software. The *System Information* screen offers some details about your computer, and also lets you view the program credits.

League Setup

This tab contains two pages: *Setup League*, and *Setup Teams & Rosters*.

The *Setup League* page includes the functions needed to create your fantasy league and setup its rules. The most basic settings for your league, such as the scoring method, pool of players used, number of players on Active and Reserve rosters, important dates, and so forth are defined in the *League Setup* window. If you need to create your own special stat categories to track on reports, use the *Stat Definitions* function to build the appropriate stat formula. Creating your own stat formulas and ratings is useful for doing advanced sabermetric stats analysis. The *Scoring Options* window is where you select the stat categories that your league uses for scoring purposes, and it's here where you can assign point values to statistics (e.g. HR = 3 pts, RBI = 1 pt) if you play in a fantasy points style league.

The remaining functions let you define *Position Eligibility* rules for your league, specify the *Transaction Fees* to charge for various types of roster moves, and setup the rules related to number of keepers, prize money allocation, and draft pick order. You should not skip using any of these functions because they play a vital role in ensuring that your league is properly setup. Setting up your league is the first task you should perform in Rhino Baseball.

The *Setup Teams & Rosters* page provides access to the functions required to define teams for your fantasy league, generate the free agent pool, and build & validate each team's initial preseason roster. You can also create a league schedule if you're in a league that plays weekly head-to-head games. These tasks should be performed immediately after you've created your fantasy league and setup its rules. When you define teams in *Fantasy Team Setup*, make sure that you give each team a *Short Name* so it can be properly identified on league reports. Also notice that a *Free Agent Pool* team record is automatically created for you. Leave it alone, as all players who aren't on a fantasy team roster are assigned to the free agent pool.

Run the *Free Agent List* function prior to building initial team rosters, so that every player in your league is initially assigned to the free agent pool. Then use the *Roster Builder* to create preseason rosters for every team in your league using a simple drag & drop technique. When building rosters always make sure that the *Roster Move Date* falls on a date *before* Opening Day. Once the season begins, you'll use the *Record Roster Moves* function (found on the *League Management* tab) to add/delete/change players on fantasy team rosters rather than the Roster Builder function. After you've built rosters, use the *Validate Rosters* function to ensure that they adhere to your league rules. Then use *View Rosters* to view, print, or save the rosters report.

League Management

This tab contains four pages: *Load Player Stats*, *Manage Rosters*, *Manage Transactions*, and *Compute Stats*.

The *Load Player Stats* page enables you to download MLB player stat files from the web and import them into the Rhino Baseball database. Start by using the *Download Stats* function to connect to the *Rhino Stats Service* web site and download an up-to-date MLB player stats file. Once you've downloaded the stats file, unzip it so you can work with the batting, pitching, and games-by-position stat files stored inside the ZIP file.

Now you're ready to *Import Stat Files* into your Rhino Baseball database. MLB player stats that you receive from the Rhino Stats Service are year-to-date (full season) stats and are always accumulated through *Sunday* of the given week. When importing a stats file into your database, be sure to set the *Stats Date* to a Sunday date.

You can also maintain player cross-reference records (Xrefs) that get created when stat files are imported (although it's rarely necessary). Downloading and importing stat files is something that league commissioners should do every week before recording roster moves for their league.

The *Manage Rosters* page includes the functions needed to refresh your league's free agent pool, record roster moves for the fantasy teams in your league, and validate & view the resulting rosters. Before doing any of those tasks you can, if necessary, update MLB player data such as changing a player's MLB team or position, or adding a new player to the database. After making any needed MLB player tweaks, use the *Refresh Free Agent List* function to automatically update your league's free agent pool. This ensures all players not already on fantasy team rosters appear as free agents when you start recording roster moves.

Use the *Record Roster Moves* function to record the weekly roster moves (*transactions*) made by teams in your fantasy league. You can make trades, pickup free agents, waive players, and move players between your Active Roster, Reserve List, and Disabled List. You can also update player positions, salaries, and contract info as well. Next, use the *Validate Rosters* function to verify that fantasy teams have the correct number of players at each position, don't have too many players on their Reserve and Disabled Lists, and haven't exceeded Salary Cap limits. If you discover any problems, return to the *Record Roster Moves* window to make the necessary changes.

When you're all done, access the *View Rosters* function to review, print, and save the current rosters report. Updating rosters is a task that should be performed prior to calculating your fantasy league's team stats & standings. Doing this enables you to identify problems (invalid rosters) and catch mistakes (bad roster moves) before those unwanted things get figured into your fantasy league stats.

The *Manage Transactions* page lets you view and edit roster transactions you've made for your fantasy league, and generate reports including the Waiver Wire, Free Agent Picks summary, and Team Spending & Prize Pot summary. You can also make manual adjustments to fantasy team balances (such as the FAD budget, number of free agent picks left, etc.) if needed. In order to compute the correct fantasy stats for your league, you must have valid roster transactions. If you've made a mistake and need to correct one or more roster transactions, fix them using the *Transaction Log* window before calculating your fantasy stats (or if you've already computed stats, calculate a fresh set after fixing any bad roster transactions).

The *Compute Stats* page allows you to calculate team stats, point scores, and standings for your fantasy league. You can also calculate fantasy player stats accumulated by hitters and pitchers for the entire season or a chosen time period (weekly, 2 weeks, monthly, etc.). If your league uses the head-to-head format, you can view game results and divisional standings from this page. Computing team stats & scores is something that commissioners should do each week only after recording the roster moves for their league.

Report Management

This tab contains three pages: *Create Reports*, *Publish Reports*, and *View Reports*.

The *Create Reports* page lets you quickly generate common reports used by most fantasy leagues. Typically, you create reports in PSR file format so that your fellow league members can view them using the Rhino Viewer (a report viewing/analysis program they get for free). You can also convert PSR reports into HTML web pages and create a Links Page containing clickable links to any web reports you've created. Those functions come in handy if you wish to post reports to your league's own private web site. Report creation should be done after you've calculated fantasy league stats and scores, and have generated any new player ratings (such as dollar values or impact ratings).

The *Publish Reports* page lets you take reports that you've created and assemble them into a compressed ZIP file, then e-mail that file to your fellow league members. If your league has its own private web site, you can use FTP software to upload HTML web pages to your web server. Use of the *Zip Reports* function requires that you have *WinZip* software installed, and use of the *Upload Web Pages* function requires you to have FTP software (such as *WS_FTP*, *Cute FTP*, or *FTP Voyager*) already installed on your computer.

The *View Reports* page lets you start the *Rhino Viewer* report viewing program. In addition to the copy of *Rhino Viewer* that comes bundled with Rhino Baseball, your fellow league members may also download a free copy of the Viewer program directly from the Rhino Software web site. This means a league commissioner can send full-color PSR reports to his league mates so they can view, sort, filter, print, search, and manipulate these stat reports in a variety of ways with the powerful yet easy-to-use *Rhino Viewer* software.

Stats Review

This tab contains two pages: *Players Stats* and *Team Stats*.

The *Players Stats* page supplies the functions needed to view Major League player stats, including Top-30 leader boards and 3-year stat averages. The *MLB Player Stats* function is one of the most powerful and useful tools in Rhino Baseball. Use it to view major league batting, pitching, and games-by-position stats for both current and past seasons. In addition to year-to-date stats, you can also generate period-to-date stats for your own selected timeframe (1 week, 3 weeks, etc.), or apply stat filters that let you focus on players who meet your chosen statistical criteria (example: pitchers with 10+ Wins and ERA of 3.85 or less).

The *Fantasy Player Stats* function works in a similar manner as its major league counterpart, except that the stats you're viewing for each player are the fantasy stats he accumulated while on the Active Roster of a team in your fantasy league. Use the *Fantasy Point Ratings* function to calculate and view an assortment of fantasy point ratings (including custom user-defined ratings) for batters & pitchers. This is helpful if your league uses a Fantasy Points scoring system and you need a list of players ranked by their point scores.

The *Team Stats* page provides functions that enable you to view and analyze fantasy team stats, point scores, and league standings. In addition to year-to-date stats, the *Team Stats & Scores* window also lets you calculate and view weekly, biweekly, and monthly stats as well. With the Deluxe version of Rhino Baseball, you can even calculate projected fantasy team stats and point standings here.

One of the real strengths of Rhino Baseball lies in its powerful analytical capabilities. Using the *Team Stats Analyzer* function, examine fantasy team stats to determine weekly and yearly stat goals that a winning fantasy team should shoot for, and evaluate team strengths and weaknesses based on the current standings. Generate easy-to-read color graphs that compare fantasy team point scores over your chosen timeframe using the *Team Graphs* function. For a detailed analysis of each team's point gains/losses in each stat category over a given time period, check out the *Point Score Changes* report. And for those of you in head-to-head leagues, use the Head-to-Head Results window to view game results and season standings for your league.

Analysis Tools

This tab contains three pages: *Player Analysis*, *Stats Forecasting*, and *Trade Analysis*.

The *Player Analysis* page includes functions for calculating a wide range of fantasy player values. These tools help fantasy team GM's evaluate players during the regular season and are great for analyzing trends and uncovering sleepers & undervalued players. If you play in an auction style or salary-cap league, use the *Dollar Values* function to calculate player dollar values tailored for your fantasy league. Dollar values can be based on projections or actual year-to-date stats. If you play in a league that uses a Fantasy Points scoring system, use the *Fantasy Point Ratings* function to view projected or year-to-date point ratings for players in your league.

Rhino Baseball Deluxe users also have access to three excellent analytical tools that are terrific for in-season player evaluation. The *Impact Ratings* function creates a report that shows how much each player helps or hurts the average team in your league's current point standings. This plus/minus player rating is referred to as the *Impact Rating*, and gives extremely accurate readings on which players are truly valuable or highly overrated in your particular fantasy league.

Another cool tool is the *Player Graphs* function which lets you generate full-color graphs that compare the stats production of a selected group of players over a given time span. This is helpful for quickly examining statistical trends of a handful of players in any stat category, and it serves as both a useful pre-draft and in-season analysis tool. Last, but not least, we come to the *Stock Market Values* function. It compares each player's actual year-to-date stats production versus his projected stats to determine if his relative value is rising or falling. The Stock Market Values report also gives Buy/Sell/Hold recommendations for all of the players it analyzes.

The *Stats Forecasting* page contains functions that let you generate projected stats (*forecasts*) for players and fantasy teams. Unlike most fantasy sports software, Rhino Baseball actually contains a built-in *stats forecasting engine*. This means that you can adjust player data and forecasting variables as you see fit, and then generate an updated set of forecasts at any time (both before and during the season). That gives you a powerful degree of control over player analysis that you simply won't find anywhere else. The first step in producing quality forecasts is to make sure your player data is up-to-date. Use the *Update MLB Player Data* function to adjust player info such as expected playing time, role, forecast method, and the number of weeks a player will miss due to a recent injury. These settings play a critical role in stats forecasting, so the more you fine-tune them, the better your forecasts will be. If you love to tinker, use *Adjust Forecast Settings* to change the factors that the forecasting engine considers when computing projections. You can also adjust the weighting percentages that determine how much emphasis is placed on each season in a player's 3-year stats scan.

Once you've made your desired tweaks to player data and forecast engine settings, use the *Compute Player Forecasts* function to calculate a fresh set of stat projections. Preseason forecasts are heavily based on a player's 3-year stats history, while forecasts calculated during the season also take into account the actual stats that a player has accumulated so far that year. For a detailed explanation of how Rhino Baseball creates forecasts, refer to the *Forecasting Engine Overview* topic in the Help system.

If you're using Rhino Baseball Deluxe, you can use the player forecasts you've created to compute projected fantasy team stats & point standings. First, use the *Update Projected Lineups* function to create projected lineups for the fantasy teams in your league. A projected lineup is the group of players that will most often appear on a team's Active Roster during the regular season barring injuries/demotions/trades. Once lineups are set, use the *Compute Team Forecasts* function to calculate projected team stats & standings for your league. This is especially insightful after your league's annual draft is complete, as it shows you how strong or weak your team is expected to be and what statistical areas you should try to improve.

The functions on the *Trade Analysis* page are only available to Rhino Baseball Deluxe users. These decision-support tools supply you with numerical analysis that helps you pull the trigger on good trades while avoiding the bad ones. Both the *Trade Analyzer* and *Player Evaluator* functions are intended for use during the regular season because they take into account actual year-to-date MLB player stats and your fantasy league's current team stats & standings. Before using the *Trade Analyzer*, you must setup some core data that feeds into it if you haven't done so already. First, use the *Update Projected Lineups* function to setup or adjust projected lineups for the teams in your fantasy league. Simply put, projected lineups are each team's ideal starting lineup barring unforeseen injuries, demotions, and trades. Once projected lineups have been updated, calculate a fresh set of fantasy team forecasts. These projections are used by the *Trade Analyzer* when it evaluates proposed trades.

The *Trade Analyzer* function is a really cool decision-support tool that lets you test out a proposed trade scenario and determines the effect that the trade would have on your fantasy league's projected point standings. You can see exactly how many points your team (along with everyone else in the league) would gain or lose in each scoring category if you made the proposed trade. The *Player Evaluator* function is also extremely useful for evaluating trades, drops or adds, and pre-draft keeper decisions. Its approach is different than the *Trade Analyzer* in that it looks at more than just a player's statistical impact on the standings. In addition to stats, the *Player Evaluator* also examines a player's fantasy salary, contract status, age, proneness to injury, position, etc., to determine his relative worth (referred to as *Quality Points*). When evaluating a group of players, this function helps you determine how beneficial a proposed trade or drop/add/freeze scenario would be to your fantasy team in terms of Quality Points gained or lost.

Draft Assistance

This tab contains four pages: *Historical Stats*, *Stats Forecasting*, *Draft Planning*, and *Draft Tracking*.

The *Historical Stats* page provides functions that let you view final MLB batting and pitching stats from past seasons, player averages and 3-year stats scans, ballpark effect stats, and more. As previously described under the *Stats Review* section of this document, the *MLB Player Stats* function can be used to view player stats from both the current and past seasons. Final AL/NL stats from 1994 through the most recently completed season are preloaded into your Rhino Baseball database, so it's easy to research a player's historical performance. You can perform a wide range of database queries to retrieve stats for a specific set of players you're interested in (for example: left-handed hitting OF's younger than 27 years old). And by using *stat filters*, you can find players who meet your chosen statistical criteria (for example: hitters with 25+ HR, 80+ RBI, and a Batting Average of .290 or higher). The *3-Year Stats History* function shows the final stats posted by each player over the past 3 years and includes a 3-year average for those seasons.

The *Split-Season History* function lets you view playing time breakdowns (AB or IP) for players who played for 2 or more MLB teams during the same season. The *Ballpark Effects Stats* window is used to view and update ballpark effects data, which is used by the forecasting engine when calculating player projections. Ballpark effects indicate how much a given major league team's ballpark influences the output of key statistics (such as Batting Average, Runs, Home Runs, etc.). This page also hosts the *MLB Depth Charts* function that lets you review positional depth charts for each MLB team. Players at each position are sorted according to their expected playing time (most to least).

The ***Stats Forecasting*** page is just like the page of the same name on the ***Analysis Tools*** tab. Here you'll find functions that enable you to adjust MLB player data & forecast engine settings, and then generate projected player stats (*forecasts*). Preseason forecasts are based on a player's stats from the past 3 seasons, and other key factors such as his age, experience, home ballpark, injury history, expected playing time, current role, quality of his teammates, and so forth. The beauty of Rhino Baseball's forecasting system is that as things change during Spring Training (such as player injuries, trades, and role & playing time changes) you can tweak the player data and then generate new forecasts which take account this new information. Never again do you have to worry about old, stale forecasts such as those found in fantasy magazines. You can also use the *Projected Stat Leaders* function to produce reports showing the top-30 leaders in any stat category or a cheatsheet listing the top-20 projected leaders in each of your league's scoring categories.

The ***Draft Planning*** page provides functions that help you prepare for your annual fantasy league auction or draft. There are tools to assist you in determining who to freeze (for keeper leagues), how much to bid on players during the auction, and which available players fit your draft budget and give you the best chance to meet your desired statistical goals. These powerful planning tools, which are a core part of the Draft Planner module of Rhino Baseball, should be used before your league's annual player draft. Although these functions are useful for straight-draft leagues, they are especially geared for traditional rotisserie baseball or salary-cap leagues in which players are purchased during an auction. You should spend the necessary time to learn how to use these functions to their full potential because they will provide you with a huge advantage over your competitors on Draft Day.

Before you can develop a good draft strategy (referred to as a *draft plan*) to help you succeed on draft day, you need to first determine who you're going to keep. If you don't play in a keeper league (where a limited number of players can be kept by each team from one season to the next) then you can skip the function we're about to describe. For the rest of you, the *Create Freeze Lists* function lets you specify which players are being kept (*frozen*) by each of the teams in your fantasy league. Initially, you may create freeze lists based on your best-guess of who you think each team owner will keep. Once teams have submitted their official freeze lists to the league commissioner, use this function again to update those lists.

After freeze lists have been created, use the *Compute Dollar Values* function to calculate projected dollar values for the players in your fantasy league. These projected values take into account the effects of *draft inflation*. Inflation occurs when there's excess money to spend on a limited supply of player talent. Rhino Baseball calculates draft inflation based on who was kept on freeze lists and what the raw dollar values are of those players that are available to be drafted. In addition to each player's *Raw Value*, you'll see his *Draft Value* listed on the Dollar Values report. The Draft Value represents how much a player is worth considering the effects of draft inflation for your league.

Also for keeper-league users is the *Analyze Freeze Lists* function. This evaluates fantasy team freeze lists to determine how strong or weak they are. Freeze list strength is based on how much *profit* you've made on players you've frozen (Profit = Value - Salary), how much better each player is compared to others at his position, and how much risk is associated with these particular players (for example, injury prone players are risky bets). The purpose of freeze list analysis is to help you assemble your best possible set of keepers. After using the Freeze List Analyzer you might decide to tweak your freeze list and recalculate new dollar values. That's normal. Draft prep is an iterative process that requires some fine-tuning before you get results that you're completely happy with.

The last major phase of successful draft prep involves identifying players that you want to draft, deciding how much money to spend on them, and determining whether or not that group of players gives you a realistic shot to win your league championship. Using the *Create Draft Plans* function (*Draft Assistant*) is where the fun of draft planning really begins for serious roto geeks.

The *Draft Assistant* lets you formulate a variety of draft strategies, seeing which players fit your draft-day spending budget and what that group of players is projected to produce stats-wise for your team. Each player wish-list & spending budget that you create is called a *draft plan*. You can create as many different draft plans as you like.

Next, use the *Analyze Draft Plans* function to evaluate your set of plans. The *Draft Plan Analyzer* compares your draft plans against statistical goals that you've specified, and determines which plan best meets those goals and will produce enough points to finish 1st in your fantasy league standings.

Finally, the *Draft Cheatsheet* function can be used to generate a list of players that are available to be drafted, with players ranked within their position by Dollar Value or Fantasy Points Rating. This is a handy cheatsheet to print and take to your annual draft.

The ***Draft Tracking*** page includes functions for tracking the progress of your live fantasy baseball auction or draft. By installing the Rhino Baseball software onto your laptop computer and then copying your database (the ***RHINO_B6.DB*** file) from the ***C:\Rhino\Baseball\V65*** folder on your desktop computer to the same folder on your laptop, you're ready to draft. Copying the database in this manner is an easy way to use Rhino Baseball on two computers and keep the data in sync.

Before you can use Rhino Baseball to manage a live auction or run a mock draft, you must use the *Draft Setup* function. This function saves important player data (such as dollar values, ratings, position eligibility, draft comments, availability status, etc.) and fantasy team data (such as money spent & available, players needed, etc.) to the Rhino Baseball database so that it can be quickly accessed during a live or mock draft.

Once your draft data has been setup, you can use the remaining live draft tracking functions to view lists of available & taken players, record draft picks, view draft rosters, view the money spent and remaining for each team, get ranked lists of players who meet your chosen criteria, adjust your draft plans, and see how well you're meeting your stat goals. While these functions are primarily intended to help you quickly access & track information during a real, live draft, they can also be used strictly for fun to run a mock draft.

The main screen that drives the draft action is *Draft Central*. Here you can view the lists of available and taken players (sorted by Dollar Value or Fantasy Point Rating) and filter those lists by position if desired. Clicking a player in either list shows his background info (pro team, status, raw dollar value, optimal bid, fantasy point rating, eligible positions, expected playing time, age, draft comments, etc.) and stats snapshot showing his projections, 3-year averages, and final stats from last season. After you record a draft pick, draft inflation rates are recalculated and the list of available players now shows the new inflation-adjusted Dollar Values and Optimal Bids. You can also view a summary report of the draft which shows the players in the order they were picked along with running team analysis totals.

The *Draft Rosters & Team Spending* function lets you view the rosters and positions filled by every team at any point of your live draft. This window also includes a report showing an analysis of each team's money available, money spent, players still needed, accumulated dollar value and profit earned (or accumulated fantasy points).

The *Draft Researcher* function is a nifty little tool that helps you create ranked lists of players by a wide assortment of criteria. You can create lists of players ranked by a particular stat category (using projected or year-end stats), by value (dollar value, optimal bid, salary, or fantasy points), or by background criteria (age, expected playing time, DL trips, etc.). And you can filter these lists to see players of a certain status (available, toppers, drafted, frozen, etc.), position, fantasy team, or those who match your draft comments (sleeper, injured, all-star, etc.). Need to identify the top available Stolen Base threats left to draft? Want to see the list of drafted outfielders ranked by Salary so you can estimate how much you'll need to pay for a remaining stud outfielder? Need to view the list of Sleeper pitchers ranked by projected Strikeouts? You can quickly perform all sorts of lookups like that using the *Draft Researcher*.

The last function in the set of live draft tracking tools is the *Draft Advisor*. This window lets you view and adjust your primary *draft plan* (player wish-list & spending budget). If a player in your draft plan has already been drafted by someone else, the Advisor can suggest decent alternatives for you to pick. You can also observe how well you're sticking to your spending budget, and how close you are to reaching the statistical goals you've set for your team. It's no secret that the best laid draft plans often change as the draft progresses. The *Draft Advisor* is there to show you how you're doing and help you make sensible adjustments so you can execute a winning draft plan.

Database Upkeep

This tab contains three pages: *Core Data Maintenance*, *Mass Updates*, and *Database Utilities*.

The *Core Data Maintenance* page provides functions for maintaining database records such as MLB player data, MLB team and ballpark data, positions, and stat file layouts and cross-references which are needed during the stats file importing process. Aside from MLB player data, which most users will manually edit and update at some point as they use Rhino Baseball, the other types of core data included here work behind the scenes and are rarely changed.

The *MLB Player Maintenance* function enables you to change the MLB team, position, age, bats/throws, and other basic background data of professional baseball players. You can also adjust those player settings used by the stats forecasting engine such as expected playing time, role, weeks injured, forecast method, etc. If desired, you can enter a Draft Comment for each player, which is conveniently shown by the live draft tracking functions. Although new major league players (who weren't originally in your database) are automatically added to the database when you import weekly stat files, there may be times when you need to manually add new players to the database. For instance, you may play in a rotisserie-ultra style league in which teams have large Reserve Lists comprised of minor league players. If a team selects a minor leaguer that isn't found in your database, you can insert a blank record into the *MLB Player Maintenance* window, type in the player's information, and then save his record to the database.

If you're not getting MLB player stat files from the *Rhino Stats Service*, then you'll need to setup the Rhino Baseball database so that it can import stat files from that other 3rd-party provider. The *Stat File Layout Maintenance* function lets you define the column layout of the stat files you plan to import into your Rhino database. You'll need to setup file layouts for both batting and pitching files. Rhino Baseball cannot import stat files that contain batting & pitching stats mixed together into one common file. You'll also need to use the *Cross-Reference Maintenance* function to create *team cross-reference* records. These records tell Rhino Baseball how to match-up the Team IDs in your stat files with the Team IDs in the Rhino database. Both the stat file layout and cross-reference setup tasks are only performed once, which must be before you attempt to import any stat files into your database. Please remember that if you get your MLB player stats from us (Rhino Stats Service) you DO NOT need to perform either of these setup tasks.

The *Mass Updates* page contains two time-saving functions that update or delete a large set of database records in one fell swoop. First is the *Data Loader* function which enables you to load free data files (that you've downloaded from the Rhino Software web site) directly into your database. These files enable you to automatically update MLB Player Info, Pro Teams, Ballpark stats, Stat File Layouts, and Help system data. Typically, free data files are posted on our web site a couple of times during the preseason. This is especially true of player information files, which contain data updates that are useful when generating fresh player forecasts and sometimes contain new rookies.

The second function is *Mass Change & Delete*, which is a useful tool for quickly updating lots of database records at one time. For example, you can use Mass Delete to remove unwanted data from your database (such as old stats, scores, and ratings), or use Mass Change to reset fantasy team balances to their starting values (FAD budget and free agent picks left), reset the freeze status of players in a keeper league and roll their contracts forward for the coming season. Most *Mass Change & Delete* operations are done during the off-season, when you want to clean up things prior to next season. But if you ever make a mistake when importing player stats (such as importing the wrong stats file or assigning the wrong date to the stats) or need to delete a bad set of fantasy team stats & scores (because you messed up your roster moves), then you will quickly become familiar with the benefits of doing mass deletes.

The *Database Utilities* page give you access to functions that let you create a backup copy of your Rhino Baseball database, configure ODBC data sources, and create personal notes and reminders of upcoming events. The *Notes & Reminders* window is also where to go if you ever encounter a “*serious runtime error*” bug in Rhino Baseball and need to provide the saved error information to our technical support team.

The *Database Backup* function creates a backup copy of your Rhino Baseball database for disaster recovery purposes. Be aware that this function creates a 2nd copy of your database on your PC's hard drive. It's also smart to backup your database file to some type of removable media, such as a CD-R disc or Zip Disk Drive. To do that you must copy the ***RHINO_B6.DB*** file (your database) located in the ***C:\Rhino\Baseball\V65*** folder (where Rhino Baseball is installed) to the CD-R or other removable media that you're backing up to. Doing this on a regular basis will safeguard you and your league from sudden data-loss due to a hard-drive crash or virus.

The *ODBC Database Administration* utility is a Microsoft tool for managing database sources. Its purpose is for managing multi-database setups and doing performance tuning. Use of this utility is not recommended unless you are a database-software professional, as incorrect usage could severely damage your database.

Technical Support

Installation Support: If you have any trouble installing your new software, please call us at **717-728-1133** and ask for our tech support staff. Phone lines are usually open between the hours of 10 AM to 5 PM EST (except for holidays). Software installation support is free.

Web Site: Visit our web site (www.rhinosoftware.com) to get answers to frequently asked questions, browse solutions to common problems, download free data files and software patches, and fill out feedback forms.

E-Mail Support: If you have questions about a specific program function, or need help correcting a data-related problem, please send e-mail to support@rhinosoftware.com and our technical support staff will answer your question within 48 hours.

Phone Support: If you need more immediate help than our e-mail support can provide, then you can use our phone support option. Call us at **717-728-1133** and ask for Technical Support. Phones are open between 10 AM and 5 PM EST (except for holidays). Users calling tech support will be charged \$25 per call, so please have your credit card number ready when the technician gets on the line. New users will NOT be charged for support calls during their first 30 days using the software (although you're limited to no more than 2 free calls; after that you will be charged). Also, you will NOT be charged if you're calling us to report a software bug (the technician must verify that to be the case).

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