

CHICAGO BLACK SOX



*"If you are coming to play ball at **The Black Diamond**, you better bring your sticks"*

2023 Instructions


REVISED

Even with plenty of money to spend there were just too many holes to fill. We did not acquire any Top 20 Auction talent so we had to settle on a rebuild strategy for 2023. The team is loaded with prospects that will hopefully pay dividends in future. All that said, there are card values on this team that might give the Sox a competitive chance, but it will likely take some "magic dice" to get us there.

Overview

To win it will be more than the sit back and pound the ball Black Sox teams of the past. There is some pop in the order but this team needs to utilize its speed – both to steal some bases and to take the extra base on the base paths. Hopefully a few timely hits will generate some runs. Starting pitching may be suspect so I will want you to be aggressive in utilizing a fairly decent and a bullpen with plenty of innings. If we are going to make a run at a playoff spot the success of the bullpen will play a pivotal role. Have fun!

Starting Line-ups

Lineup 1, vs. L			Lineup 3, vs. R		Lineup 4, vs. R		THE BLACK DIAMOND
9	Acuna		6	Turner	6	Turner	
6	Turner		9	Acuna	9	Acuna	
3	Olson		DH	Pederson	DH	Pederson	
8	Daza		4	Cronenworth	7	Haniger	
DH	Haniger		8	Daza	4	Cronenworth	
7	Vierling		3	Olson	8	Daza	
4	Cronenworth		7	Freidl	3	Olson	
2	Fortes		5	Flores	5	Flores	
5	Anderson		2	Narvaez	2	Fortes	
Versus: All Lefty Starters		Versus: No one.	Versus: All Righty Starters not listed in Lineup 4.		Versus: Degrom, Mahle, Quantrill, Gallen, Musgrove, Flexen, Kirby, Gilbert, Cabrera, Mikolas, S.Gray, Gausman, Woodruff, Ramirez, and Wainwright.		

WHEN YOUR LEFTY STARTER EXITS THE GAME

Before the 6th: No changes.

During the 6th and 7th: If we have a lead, **Haniger** stays at DH. If trailing PH **Pederson** only if a big at bat (runners on). With a lead of 2 runs or more **Vierling** stays in LF otherwise replace with **Carroll**.

After the 7th: If leading go to Best Defense. If tied or trailing and facing a tough righty set-up or closer, **Pederson** can replace **Daza** (go to LF) and bring **Carroll** in for **Vierling** (if not already there) to CF.



WHEN YOUR RIGHTY STARTER EXITS THE GAME (for a lefty reliever)

Before the 6th: **Freidl** and **Narvaez** should not face a lefty reliever – sub with **Haniger** and **Fortes**. No other changes (**Pederson** stays in).

During the 6th and 7th: Same instruction as before the 6th. Use COMPARE for **Pederson** (DH) with runners on for possible better options if the at bat is meaningful. If no one is on he can stay in.

After the 7th: Best Defense if tied or leading; go to best pinch-hit options if trailing.

Injury, Platoon and Player Usage Guidelines – Lower at-bat guys will be managed in the Home Series

- Catcher: **Narvaez** and **Fortes** share the work. **Narvaez** against the RHP and **Fortes** starts against all LHP, and some RHP where you need to bat Right.
- 1B: **Olson** and he never comes out when he starts. **Flores** backs him up; **Cronenworth** if both are out.
- 2B: **Cronenworth** and he never comes out. **Flores** is the injury backup.
- SS: **Turner** and he never comes out. **Cronenworth** is the injury backup.
- 3B: **Flores** starts against the RHP. **Anderson** starts against the Lefty. **Vierling** is a third option if desperate. **Anderson** is best defense but not enough to really make a difference. The starter will finish the game.
- OF: **Daza** (CF) and he only comes out late if facing a righty closer and there is a better option using COMPARE. **Acuna** (RF) and never comes out. Left is a combination of **Haniger**, **Freidl**, **Vierling** and **Carroll** (late inning or in-game injury replacement). In some circumstances **Pederson** can play left or right as well. A lot of combinations to choose from.
- DH: **Pederson** against the RHP; **Haniger** against the LHP.

Defense Matrix – Best Defense in Bold – Look to use as early as the 7th inning with any lead.

C	1B	2B	SS	3B	LF	CF	RF
Narvaez	Olson	Cronenworth	Turner	Anderson	Carroll	Daza	Acuna
Fortes	Flores	Flores	Cronenworth	Flores	Freidl	Carroll	Vierling
					Vierling	Freidl	Haniger

Pinch Running

- Pinch Running: Not used much but **Carroll**, **Freidl**, **Fortes** or **Anderson** if considering a defensive switch.

Game Strategies

- Base Stealing: A big part of our game. **Turner**, **Acuna**, **Vierling**, **Fortes** and **Carroll**. No one else. Steal 2nd at 70%; 65% with the top two in the order vs the LHP. Steal third at 75% with anyone, situation depending (I give you some rope here).
- Who to H&R and when: Maybe **Cronenworth** against a tough pitcher match-up, but that is about it.
- Sacrifice: Nope.
- Squeeze Plays: Nope.
- Scoring: Same as your team. Run home at 65%; 50% with two outs. If trailing by three runs or more after the 6th, take a more conservative run to home with less than two outs.
- Trailers: To second 55% and above, but to third at 65%. Send the lower percentage trailer only with two outs and we are down by a run or tied, from the 7th inning on.
- Throwing Guidelines: Cut the throw off from the outfield early in the game unless runner is heading home with a safe chance at less than 55%. Let the throw through even if the runner is as high as 65% with two outs and the 8th or 9th hitter is due up.
- Defense: Always get the sure out on Defense Option plays, unless runner represents the go-ahead run and his safe chance is less than 35%. Same with the trailing runners.
- Intentional Walks: Use your best judgment. I do **not** like being too aggressive with this.

THE STARTING ROTATION

LOOK HERE!

YOUR GAMES (to play at your park)					My Games (The Black Diamond)			
Opp.	Game #1	Game #2	Game #3		Game #1	Game #2	Game #3	
BAG	Bassitt	Gibson	Eflin		Greene	Synderg	Eflin	
PBC	Bassitt	Greene	Synderg		Greene	Gibson	Synderg	
SBM	Bassitt	Greene	Contreras		Greene	Gibson	Conteras	
SCT	Bassitt	Gibson	Synderg		Greene	Gibson	Synderg	
CDS	Bassitt	Greene	Synderg		Greene	Synderg	Contreras	
OBB	Bassitt	Greene	Gibson		Greene	Gibson	Contreras	
LVB	Bassitt	Greene	Synderg		Greene	Synderg	Contreras	
UTP	Bassitt	Gibson	Synderg		Greene	Gibson	Synderg	
CHI								
AGN	Bassitt	Gibson	Eflin		Bassitt	Synderg	Eflin	
STL	Bassitt	Greene	Gibson		Bassitt	Gibson	Contreras	
VBS	Bassitt	Greene	Contreras		Bassitt	Gibson	Synderg	
Divisional Games – AWAY GAMES					Divisional Games – Home Games			
Opp.	Game #1	Game #2	Game #3	Game #4	Game #1	Game #2	Game #3	Game #4
AGN	Bassitt	Contreras	Synderg	Gibson	Bassitt	Greene	Synderg	Gibson
STL	Bassitt	Greene	Synderg	Gibson	Bassitt	Greene	Contreras	Gibson
VBS	Bassitt	Greene	Synderg	Gibson	Bassitt	Greene	Synderg	Gibson

Starts: Bassitt (20); Greene (20); Gibson (19); Syndergaard (18); Contreras (9); Eflin (4)

Starting Pitcher Overview

HR's 1-8 are Large Parks; 9-20 are Small Parks

Chris Bassitt (7) 182 IP	The first guy up in all road series – but he is not the #1 starter. I am hoping he gets us into the 6 th a lot of the time – but there is no need to be patient, especially in small parks for lefty hitters. He always comes out in dots, but if he has given up 4-5 runs and it is still a game in the 6 th or later go ahead and pull him.
Hunter Greene (6) 126 IP	The actual #1 Starter. A really good card if it wasn't for all the homers. You can be patient in the large parks but a quicker hook in small ones. Always comes out in dots, but if he has given up 4-5 runs and it is still a game starting the 6 th go ahead and pull him. 6 innings is his typical max. Can pitch the 7 th with a 5 run lead but no further.
Noah Syndergaard (7) 135 IP	5 innings would be great. Only pitches the 6 th with leads of 3 runs or more; pull him once a runner reaches base after that. Always out in dots. Once he gives up 4 or 5 runs go ahead and pull – if before the 5 th go with one of the two early exit guys.
Kyle Gibson (7) 168 IP	5 innings would be great. Only pitches the 6 th with leads of 3 runs or more; pull him once a runner reaches base after that. Always out in dots. Once he gives up 4 or 5 runs go ahead and pull – if before the 5 th go with one of the two early exit guys.
Roansy Contreras (6) 95 IP	Only 3 starts on the road (SBM, VBS, AGN-4) where lefty diamonds will not hurt so much. Always out in dots. Only pitches past the 5 th with leads of 3 runs or more.
Zach Eflin (6) 76 IP	His starts are only against AGN and BAG in Game 3 of the 3-game sets. Always out in dots. Only pitches past the 5 th with leads of 3 runs or more, or if the bullpen is wasted from the first two games.



Managing the Bullpen

Every game will have 7 relievers and over 400 innings of bullpen available. No starter has to stay in until dots. Stick to the pull instructions, above. Early exits, including any starting pitcher injury, will use one of the designated on the Reliever Flow in the chart, below. Any of them can go longer stints and mop-up as necessary. If it becomes a close game again get guidance from the Relief Pitcher Flow chart. The last 3 innings are key – using the “back end 4” almost in any combination (Bard stays as Closer) to get us to the finish line.

The Three Batter Minimum: Use the “next two out of three” rule in the 5th or 6th (with Boxberger or Crismatt) and again in the 7th or 8th with Castillo, Knebel and Alvarado. Please constantly reassess the upcoming matchups every three batters once you are there. It is way okay to go through a bunch of bullpen!

Relief Pitcher Overview

Daniel Bard Closer	Bard is the closer and is in the game in all save situations. He can come into the game in the 8 th or starts the 9 th in all save situations. 2-inning saves are okay, especially if against predominantly RHH lineups, but not the norm.
Jose Alvarado Set-up	Key set-up and an alternate closer. Tough against the RHH. Generally pitches in the 8 th inning but can come into the 7 th for a key at-bat with a favorable match-up. A “1” endurance rating means he goes shorter stints.
Diego Castillo Set-up	Key set-up. Tough against the RHH. Generally pitches in the 7 th inning, into the 8 th if still a very favorable match-up. A “1” endurance rating means he goes shorter stints.
Corey Knebel Set-up and Situational against the LHH	The right-handed lefty. He pitches in the 7 th and 8 th innings where you need a tough on lefty pitcher. I like him as a counter to both Castillo and Alvarado when we have a lead in a close game. I would expect to see all three of these guys as your 7 th and 8 th inning options – maybe using all three as the situation might dictate.
Brad Boxberger Early Set-up and Long	He pitches in innings 5-7 and though he is tougher against the righty hitter he can also pitch against balanced lineups. Crismatt would be the better option against a string of lefty hitters.
Nabil Crismatt Early Set-up and Long	He pitches in innings 5-6 and though he is tougher against the lefty hitter he can also pitch against balanced lineups. Boxberger would be the better option against a string of righty hitters. He is also an early exit pitcher when Eflin or Contreras are unavailable.
Zach Eflin Early, Long and Situational	With 4 starts limiting him to 6 innings should leave him about 52 innings of relief work. He is first in on early exits by the starter against a more righty lineup. He can also be used situationally where you need a short stint of a right get right. He and Contreras serve as late mop up work where the game is out of reach.
Roansy Contreras Early and Long	Roansy will have 9 starts that will not go beyond 5-6 innings. He should have over 40 innings of relief work available as a long man for any early exits against a more lefty lineup. He and Eflin serve as late mop up work where the game is out of reach.

Typical Pitcher Flow

These are the innings the listed pitcher will usually work within – NOT a template where you have to use them as if they were “designated” innings of work. When you start to look to the bullpen, this is your guide. You read it Left to Right, not top to bottom...

Starter	Early Exits	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th
Greene	Eflin, Contreras or Crismatt	The Starter, Crismatt then Boxberger	The Starter, Crismatt then Boxberger	Alvarado, Castillo, or Knebel	Alvarado, Castillo, or Knebel	Bard
Bassitt or Syndergaard	Contreras or Crismatt	The Starter, Crismatt then Boxberger	Crismatt then Boxberger	Alvarado, Castillo, or Knebel	Alvarado, Castillo, or Knebel	Bard
Gibson or Contreras	Eflin or Boxberger	The Starter, Boxberger then Crismatt	Boxberger then Crismatt	Alvarado, Castillo, or Knebel	Alvarado, Castillo, or Knebel	Bard
Eflin	Contreras or Crismatt	The Starter, Crismatt then Boxberger	The Starter, Crismatt then Boxberger	Alvarado, Castillo, or Knebel	Alvarado, Castillo, or Knebel	Bard

The above is your guide while it is still a game – **defined as either trailing by 2 runs or less, or if leading by as many as 3 runs**. You can use your best judgment and a guy can overlap into another inning, but this would be your planning sheet. Make sure you look at the pitcher overview section(s) for further guidance. A starter can go an extra inning if he is “lights out” that day – it just will not happen much. **This flow chart DOES NOT TRUMP the usage instruction in the individual pitcher overview for both starters and relievers**. No starter takes one for the team – I have tons of bullpen to use.

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