

## Duration: 3-years

**May 23, 1970** – Owners and players agree on a three-year contract. Players again seek an increase in the minimum salary, the right to an binding impartial arbitration for labor disputes and input into workplace-related changes, such as scheduling. During the agreement (April 1-13, 1972), players vote to strike over dispute regarding financing of the pension plan. MLB cancels 86 games, and teams play schedules of 154-156 games in 1972.

## Principals

- **Commissioner Bowie Kuhn** (hired February, 1969 as commissioner pro tem).
- **MLB PRC**: Chief John Gaherin, AL President Joe Cronin, NL President Chub Feeney
- **MLBPA**: Executive Director Marvin Miller, General Counsel Richard Moss.
- **Player reps**: Jack Aker, Maury Wills, Joe Torre, Milt Pappas, Sam McDowell, Willie Mays

## Issues

- **Term**: 1970 – Dec. 31, 1972. The new basic agreement covers the 1970, 1971 and 1972 seasons. All provisions, including new Spring Training payments, are retroactive to the beginning of 1970.
- **Minimum Salary**: The minimum salary increases to \$12,000 for 1970, \$12,750 for 1971, and \$13,500 for 1972.
- **Arbitration**: The arbitration procedure is altered, with an impartial arbitrator handling “nuts and bolts” labor grievances which do not involve “integrity of the game” issues. The commissioner retains his role as final arbiter, after formal hearing, in cases involving “integrity” or “public confidence” in the game. The commissioner had previously been the court of last resort in settling virtually any differences.
- **Pay Cuts**: The maximum salary cut allowed remains 20 percent from the previous year’s salary. The new agreement adds an additional requirement: No player may have his salary cut by more than 30 percent over two years.
- **Severance Pay**: The agreement expands the number of players entitled to severance pay, with players released during Spring Training receiving 30 days’ pay (a first), players released after Opening Day receiving 60 days’ pay (one-third of their salary), and players released after May 15 receiving their full salaries for the year.
- **Right to Representation**: Owners recognize the right of players to hire an agent for contract/salary negotiations with management.

- **Tender Deadline:** The deadline for teams to offer contracts for the following season to unsigned players is January 15.
- **Winners' Shares:** Owners agree to increase by \$250,000 the pool of money paid to players for their clubs' place in the standings and post-season performance. (Players receive money for finishing first, second or third in their division, as well as advancing to or winning the World Series.)
- **Operational Rules:** The 1970 agreement prevents changes in baseball's operational rules, such as waivers, options or scheduling, without prior negotiation and agreement with the union. Owners previously could make changes regarding player benefits unilaterally.
- **Expense Money:** The agreement increases amounts of weekly "Murphy money" stipend during Spring Training and daily meal money in-season.
- **Scheduling:** Start time for "getaway" games moved from 6 p.m. to 5 p.m., when a club has a game in another city the next day. The 162-game schedule remains, however. (Players had lobbied for a return to a 154-game schedule.)
- **Reserve Clause:** The Reserve Clause issue is tabled until Curt Flood's antitrust lawsuit is resolved by the courts. Once Flood's case ends, the issue may be re-opened for negotiation between playing seasons.
- **Pension:** With the pension agreement expiring March 31, 1972, players again seek an increase in contributions from management. (The benefits fund is financed by a \$5.45M allotment from national television revenues from the World Series.) Players vote to strike April 1 over the financing of the pension plan, arguing that the plan's \$900,000 surplus should be distributed to qualified players. MLB cancels 86 games. After a 13-day strike, the owners agree to increase their contribution by \$500,000 annually, to \$5.95 million. The canceled games are not rescheduled, and teams play 154-156 games in 1972, with division titles decided on a strict percentage basis. The players are not paid for the time spent out on strike.