

**SPORTSJUDGE.COM**  
**COURT OF FANTASY BASEBALL**

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<b>COMMISSIONER P.K.</b>	:	Date: June 2, 2007
	:	League Type: 9-TEAM NL-ONLY 5X5
Petitioner,	:	Dispute: TRADE REVIEW
	:	
- against -	:	
	:	<b>TRADE BETWEEN CARTMAN &amp;</b>
<b>CARTMAN &amp; THE ATLANTA SECESSIONS</b>	:	<b>SECESSIONS IS REJECTED</b>
	:	<b>PURSUANT TO LANGUAGE IN THE</b>
Respondents	:	<b>LEAGUE CONSTITUTION</b>
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Petitioner Commissioner P.K. brings this claim in the COURT OF FANTASY BASEBALL, seeking determination about whether the proposed trade of Lance Berkman (1B, Hou) and Chris R. Young (SP, SD) from Cartman to Atlanta Secessions for Derek Lee (1B, CHC) and Shawn Green (RF, NYM) shall be approved or rejected, pursuant to the league's constitution (the "Constitution"), which is amongst the most hostile imaginable when it comes to allowing trades.

Ultimately, this Court rejects the proposed trade pursuant to the trade-hostile language of the league Constitution. This is because Chris Young's statistics are significantly better than those of Shawn Green, as well as because Mr. Green has moderate risk of losing his starting outfield position with the New York Mets to the team's well-regarded reserve, Endy Chavez. While this trade is not at all egregious, the league Constitution requires that "[t]he arbitrator should lean toward rejecting any trade that he feels might possibly be inequitable." Here, there is insufficient evidence to rebut the presumption that this trade might be inequitable.

For purposes of this opinion, it is presumed that Derek Lee and Lance Berkman are roughly equivalent players, with a slight edge going to Mr. Lee in the categories of batting average and stolen bases. Our analysis, therefore, turns entirely on the parties' respective arguments regarding Mr. Green, Mr. Young, and the league Constitution.

Full analysis is as follows:

**Basic Concepts of Fantasy Dispute Resolution**

To begin, it is important to explain a few key concepts of fantasy-sports dispute resolution. First, in reviewing any trade, that trade should be analyzed as of time that trade is consummated – here, Saturday 5/26 at 10:35 a.m. Any events that emerge subsequently shall have no bearing on evaluating the trade. Therefore, while it is difficult to ignore subsequent facts, SportsJudge.com makes a good-faith attempt to do just that.

Second, as a general rule, any fantasy baseball trade shall be upheld as long as the trade adequately benefits both teams. (*See* Public Opinion No. 101, *Big Red Rockers v. Big City Bombers*). However, where a league constitution provides alternative criteria for reviewing a trade, the alternative criteria supersedes the general rule. Here, the league Constitution provides superseding language, which states, in pertinent part that: (1) “[o]nly trades that are **clearly** equitable will be permitted”, (2) “[t]rades that leave an impression of even marginally pushing the envelope shall be rejected” and (3) “[t]he arbitrator should lean towards rejecting any trade that he feels may possibly be inequitable.” (League Constitution) (emphasis supplied). While the first of these three clauses does little to alter the general rule in favor of upholding trades,<sup>1</sup> the latter two clauses combine to create a strong presumption against allowing trades. Moreover, the Constitution expressly prohibits using the argument that “this is the best trade I could find” in favor of upholding a deal – meaning that the unique dynamics of the current trading market, and the particularized needs of a given team, are entirely beyond the scope of the arbitrator’s permitted analysis.

### The Arguments

Subject to the Constitution, as well as generally accepted rules of trade review, team owners in this league have raised three purported arguments for why SportsJudge.com should not approve the proposed trade.

First, Cartman argues that the trade is unconstitutional because the co-owner that made the trade did not have authority from his co-owners to do so. [REDACTED]

Second, multiple teams argue that this trade is unconstitutional because it turns out that Shawn Green has a broken foot, and there was some evidence of this injury at the time the trade was made. [REDACTED]

Finally, two teams argue that this trade is unconstitutional because Chris Young’s statistics are significantly better than those of Shawn Green. After both a quantitative and qualitative review of the respective players’ statistics over both a 1-year and 3-year period, SportsJudge.com finds the difference in statistics between the players is at least moderate. Mr. Young is clearly among the top-10 starting pitchers in the National League (for example, Mr. Young in 2007 is no. 4 in E.R.A. and No. 9 in strikeouts); meanwhile Mr. Green is not even top-30 amongst N.L. hitters (although in 2007 Mr. Green ranks no. 9 in batting average, he ranks no. 32 in stolen bases, no. 48 in runs scored, and outside of the top 50 in both home runs and RBI). In addition, while Mr. Young is firmly entrenched in the San Diego Padres’ pitching rotation, Mr. Green’s hold on the New York Mets starting right-field job, at best, is tenuous. Even before Mr. Green’s injury, reports had begun to indicate that the defensively sound Endy Chavez might begin to take some at-bats away from Mr. Green.

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<sup>1</sup> According to Dictionary.com, the word “equitable” simply means “reasonable”. (*See* <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/equitable>).

Applying the Constitution's provisions related to trade review, as discussed above, SportsJudge.com concludes that this statistical difference between Mr. Young and Mr. Green, coupled with the risk that Mr. Green might lose his full-time job as a starting outfielder (a risk that existed even before Mr. Green became injured), is sufficient to reject this trade. Indeed, it is true that based upon the league rosters and standings, the Atlanta Secessions have a comparative need for pitching, and Cartman has a comparative need for hitting. In fact, based on the provided statistics, Cartman is ranked No. 2 of 9 teams in pitching, and No. 8 of 9 teams in hitting. As a matter of general course, it is not unreasonable for Cartman to pay more than fair market value to fulfill his desperate need for offense – especially given that another one of the team's outfielders, Moises Alou, is already on the disabled list. Nevertheless, the Constitution prevents an arbitrator from considering exactly this type of argument, as it states explicitly that the “this is the best trade I could find argument” is not a factor that an arbitrator may consider in analyzing a trade. Further, the Constitution requires an arbitrator to “lean toward rejecting any trade that he feels may possibly be inequitable” – a standard that creates a broad presumption of trade invalidity.

### **Holding**

Based on the foregoing, this court rejects the proposed trade of Lance Berkman (1B, Hou) and Chris R. Young (SP, SD) from Cartman to Atlanta Secessions for Derek Lee (1B, CHC) and Shawn Green (RF, NYM).

Please note that while this trade would have been approved pursuant to our default rules, this trade fails to meet the strict standard written into to your league's Constitution.

Respectfully submitted,  
The SportsJudge.com Team