

# First Pitch Arizona 2016 • Speaker Bios

## **Dave Adler** (*BaseballHQ*)

Dave is Director of Games Analysis for BaseballHQ.com, and has been writing for the site since 2004. He represents BHQ in AL-LABR expert league, winning the title in 2014 by a record-setting 24.5 points. Dave is an astronomer working with the Hubble Space Telescope as well as the next NASA great observatory, the James Webb Space Telescope.

## **Greg Ambrosius** (*National Fantasy Baseball Championship*)

Greg is the founder of the National Fantasy Baseball Championship (NFBC) and is currently the General Manager of Consumer Fantasy Games at STATS LLC. Greg has been the editor of Fantasy Sports Magazine, is a former president of the Fantasy Sports Trade Association (FSTA) and the Fantasy Sports Association (FSA) and a member of the FSTA Hall of Fame and the Fantasy Sports Writers Association Hall of Fame.

## **Andy Andres** (*BaseballHQ*)

Andy Andres teaches Natural Sciences and Mathematics at Boston University, but also developed/taught the highly successful MOOC “Sabermetrics 101: An Introduction to Baseball Analytics” on the edX platform during its two runs in 2014 and 2015. As a Data-caster/Stringer for MLBAM, he is responsible for keeping score of games at Fenway Park for various Internet applications like mlb.com’s Gameday and ESPN’s Gamecast. He has worked for BaseballHQ.com since 2003.

## **Jeff Barton** (*Scoresheet Sports*)

Jeff and Dave Barton started Scoresheet Sports in 1987. Unlike other Rotisserie or fantasy games, Scoresheet Baseball teams play complete simulated head-to-head games, using the current week’s major league stats. Scoresheet Baseball currently has over 5000 teams participating in the current season.

## **Mike Berardino** (*St. Paul Pioneer Press*)

The 2015 season is Mike’s third as the Minnesota Twins beat writer for the Pioneer Press. A native of Miami and a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, he has worked for newspapers in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Augusta, Ga., Durham, N.C., and Charlotte, N.C., as well as Baseball America and Courtside magazines.

## **Chris Blessing** (*BaseballHQ*)

Since 2009, Chris has been covering prospects in the Appalachian League, the South Atlantic League and the Southern League, most recently for BaseballHQ. While scouting Nick Gordon in 2014, Chris helped shatter the world record for largest cowbell ensemble during a Johnson City Cardinals/Elizabethton Twins game. Follow Chris on Twitter @C\_Blessing.

## **Ryan Bloomfield** (*BaseballHQ*)

Ryan wrote the FSWA’s Baseball Article of the Year (online) in 2015, and was a finalist for Baseball Writer of the Year. He writes a weekly Facts/Flukes column for BaseballHQ.com, and has contributed to the Baseball Forecaster and BaseballHQ Radio every year since 2013. As the Director of Social Media for BaseballHQ, Ryan wouldn’t be doing his job if he didn’t ask you to follow @BaseballHQ on Twitter and Facebook — you can find his own musings at @RyanBHQ.

## **Jim Callis** (*MLB.com, MLBpipeline.com*)

Jim has been covering the draft and prospects since 1988, when he began the first of two long stints at Baseball America. He stayed at BA until September 1997, when he joined the publications department of STATS, Inc., and returned to BA in May 2000. In September 2013, he joined MLB Advanced Media, where he writes for MLB.com, MLBpipeline.com and Sports On Earth. Follow him on Twitter @jimcallisMLB.

## **Derek Carty** (*ESPN.com and RotoGrinders.com*)

Derek is a DFS-focused analyst for ESPN and RotoGrinders. He’s a long-time DFS player and the creator of THE BAT, a sophisticated DFS MLB projection system. Prior, Derek was fantasy manager at Baseball Prospectus and the Hardball Times, and he’s the only active fantasy writer to have graduated from MLB’s Scout School. In season-long competition, he’s won six expert league titles, with 17 top-three finishes.

## **Matt Cederholm** (*BaseballHQ*)

Matt has contributed to BaseballHQ since 2010 and has been playing Rotisserie baseball since the moment he picked up his first copy of “Rotisserie League Baseball” in 1987. Outside of fantasy baseball, if there is such a thing, Matt is a financial analyst for the U.S. courts and is pursuing a Ph.D in Economics.

## **Tristan Cockcroft** (*ESPN.com*)

A Senior Writer for ESPN.com and co-host of the Fantasy Focus Baseball podcast, Tristan has analyzed fantasy sports since 1998, specializing in baseball and football. He is a three-time FSWA finalist for fantasy baseball writer of the year and is a member of the FSWA Hall of Fame. Tristan also owns two LABR-NL (2002, 2008) and three Tout Wars (2012-14) experts league titles. Follow Tristan on Twitter @SultanofStat.

## **Jason Collette** (*FanGraphs.com and RotoWire.com*)

Jason has been helping fantasy owners since 2001 at RotoJunkie, Fanball, and currently at RotoWire and FanGraphs and was the 2013 FSWA Fantasy Baseball Writer of the Year (bribes pay off!). He covers the Tampa Bay Rays at TheProcessReport.net. You can hear Jason on Saturdays on the RotoWire SiriusXM Fantasy show throughout the season as well as on The Sleeper and The Bust podcast with Paul Sporer each Sunday. You can follow his work on Twitter at @jasoncollette.

## **Kimball Crossley** (*Toronto Blue Jays*)

Kimball began his career as a sportswriter and is now a professional scout for the Blue Jays organization.

## **Doug Dennis** (*BaseballHQ*)

Doug has been BaseballHQ’s Bullpen Buyers Guide columnist since 1999. In addition, he has written articles for the Baseball Forecaster, USA Today, Sports Weekly, ESPN.com, ESPN the Magazine and he assisted the St. Louis Cardinals with player analysis for two years.

## **Jeff Erickson** (*RotoWire.com and Sirius/XM Radio*)

Jeff is the co-founder and editor of RotoWire Fantasy Sports, which debuted as the industry’s ground-breaking online news service Rotonews back in 1997. He currently hosts the daily Rotowire Fantasy Sports radio show on Sirius/XM Radio.

## **Mike Ferrin** (*MLB Network Radio*)

Mike just completed his first season as pre- and post-game radio host and secondary play-by-play announcer for The Arizona Diamondbacks. He also wrapped up his 9th year with SiriusXM’s MLB Network Radio where he hosts “Power Alley” with former General Manager Jim Duquette and has served as the play-by-play announcer for The SiriusXM All-Star Futures Game and Arizona Fall League.

## **Steve Gardner** (*USA TODAY Sports*)

Steve took over the fantasy baseball column in Sports Weekly from John Hunt in 2006. Since then, he has served as the LABR commissioner and has won three LABR titles (AL 2010, Mixed 2014, AL 2015). He also won NL Tout Wars in 2011 and two FSTA experts leagues (2012, 2015). He received the FSWA award for Baseball Article of the Year in 2014 and is a member of the Baseball Writers Association of America. He is currently the Senior Fantasy Editor for USA TODAY Sports. Follow him on Twitter @SteveAGardner.

## **Brent Hershey** (*BaseballHQ*)

Brent is the General Manager of Content for BaseballHQ.com and serves as co-editor of the Baseball Forecaster and editor of the Minor League Baseball Analyst annuals. He has been writing at BaseballHQ.com since 1998. Follow him on Twitter @BrentHQ.

## **Phil Hertz** (*BaseballHQ*)

Phil has been with BaseballHQ.com since 2003. He has played Rotisserie Baseball since 1985 and has finished in the money in his primary league in all but three seasons. When not pursuing his first love; i.e., baseball, he serves as the Deputy General Counsel for a United States government corporation. He and his wife live in North Bethesda, MD, and travel around the world—but almost always with iPad in hand!

## **Eric Karabell** (*ESPN.com*)

Eric is a senior writer for ESPN.com and co-host of the Fantasy Focus Baseball podcast. He has covered fantasy sports for ESPN since 2001, specializing in baseball and football. He has been honored twice as fantasy sports writer of the year by the Fantasy Sports Writers Association, his blog was named best fantasy baseball series for 2007 and he was inducted into the inaugural FSWA Hall of Fame class in 2010.

## **Peter Kreutzer** (*AskRotoman.com and PattonandCo.com*)

Fantasy baseball players have been Asking Rotoman and reading his columns since 1995. Rotoman is editor-in-chief of an annual Fantasy Baseball Guide, his projections and prices are a part of the Patton \$ Online software, and he is a frequent contributor at pattonandco.com. Please visit his new project at rotomansguide.com.

**Brad Kullman** (*BaseballHQ*)

In a career spanning three decades in MLB, Brad served as both a high-ranking executive and scout, including appointments as interim GM for the Cincinnati Reds on two separate occasions. During his time with the Reds, he supervised the first formal R&D department in MLB. More recently, he has been involved in detailed study of the brain and biomechanics in an effort to quantify what he feels is the next frontier in player evaluation—makeup.

**Clay Link** (*RotoWire.com*)

Clay is the MLB Editor at RotoWire. He can be heard Fridays and Saturdays during baseball season on RotoWire Fantasy Sports Today on SiriusXM Fantasy Sports Radio, and every Thursday on the Prospect Podcast.

**Eric Longenhagen** (*FanGraphs.com*)

Eric is the Lead Prospect Analyst for FanGraphs. He hails from Catasauqua, PA and currently lives in Tempe, AZ. Previously, he worked for the Phillies Triple-A affiliate Baseball Info Solutions, and contributed to prospect coverage at ESPN.com. His previous work can also be found at Sports On Earth, CrashburnAlley, and Prospect Insider.

**Jeff Mans** (*FantasyAlarm.com*)

Jeff Mans is a principal owner of Fantasy Alarm Media and the drive time host of the Fantasy Alarm Show on SiriusXM Fantasy Sports Radio. He is a 27-year veteran of fantasy sports, winning both multiple seasonal championships in baseball and football, and a nine-time daily fantasy sports live finalist and the \$100,000 winner of the 2015 FanDuel Playboy Baseball Championship.

**Gene McCaffrey** (*WiseGuyBaseball.com*)

This McCaffrey guy is the author (since 1996) of Wise Guy Baseball, an annual guide with sophisticated strategies for Roto, DFS, and Salary Cap formats.

**Lawr Michaels** (*Mastersball.com*)

Lawr has written for the STATS Scouting Notebook, CBS Sportsline.com, MSNBC.com, Total Sports, KFFL, MLB.com, and many other sites and periodicals over the past 22 years. In 1996 Lawr founded CREATIVESPORTS, and in 2009 his company merged with Mastersball where he is now a managing partner. Lawr won 2001 and 2009 AL Tout Wars titles with his fluid and unconventional play. Follow Lawr on Twitter @lawrmichaels.

**Ray Murphy** (*BaseballHQ*)

Ray is the General Manager of Administration for BaseballHQ.com and co-editor of the Baseball Forecaster annual. He has been writing at BaseballHQ.com since 1999, he is a three-time league champion in the NFBC Main Event, including 4th-overall finishes in both 2012 and 2016. Ray also won (in a tie) the inaugural LABR mixed league in 2012, and added second-place finishes in 2014 and 2016.

**Alex Patton** (*PattonandCo.com*)

Alex is a pioneer of fantasy baseball analysis and player pricing, and has published nine books. He muses daily at PattonandCo.com, a gathering place for like-minded fanatics. He is a member of the Fantasy Sports Writers Association Hall of Fame.

**Nick Picoro** (*AZCentral.com*)

Nick is in his ninth season on the Diamondbacks beat for The Arizona Republic, azcentral.com and 12 News. An Arizona State graduate, he's been with The Republic since 2004. Follow Nick on Twitter: @nickpicoro.

**Dave Potts** (*RotoGrinders.com*)

Dave is a full-time fantasy baseball player and analyst, and a longtime BaseballHQ.com subscriber. He has used BHQ tools to win at the highest level of both season-long and DFS baseball, including two \$1 million wins in the 2014 FanDuel DFBC and the 2015 DraftKings MLB Main Event. He has also won the Main Event Overall Championship and the Ultimate Auction League in the National Fantasy Baseball Championship.

**Eno Sarris** (*FanGraphs.com*)

Eno is fantasy baseball editor at FanGraphs since 2010, and has more recently begun spending more time in the clubhouse, finding different ways to ask players if their change in performance is sustainable, without asking the players if their change in performance is sustainable. These days, he's into spin rates and exit velocity, because he likes fancy new toys.

**Ron Shandler** (*RonShandler.com and ESPN.com*)

Ron is the founder of BaseballHQ.com and author of the Baseball Forecaster, the longest running publication in the fantasy baseball industry (since 1986). He was the first baseball analyst to develop sabermetric applications for fantasy league play, and he has written for nu-

merous publications and websites. He now writes a weekly column for ESPN.com. Ron owns six national experts league titles and 13 second/third place finishes since 1998. Tweeting random brain flakes @RonShandler.

**Joe Sheehan** (*JoeSheehan.com*)

Joe writes about baseball for Sports Illustrated and self-publishes a subscription newsletter that covers all aspects of the game. An original member of Baseball Prospectus, Joe returns to First Pitch Arizona for the 13th consecutive year. For more information about his newsletter, check out [www.joesheehan.com](http://www.joesheehan.com).

**Paul Sporer** (*FanGraphs.com*)

Paul is a fulltime writer and podcaster at FanGraphs, working on the fantasy side (RotoGraphs) of the site. He hosts the Sleeper and the Bust podcast with Eno Sarris and Jason Collette. He also contributes to ESPN's Daily Notes. He has worked for RotoWire, Baseball Prospectus, and RotoGrinders as well as running his Starting Pitcher Guide since 2006. Follow him on Twitter @sporer.

**Josh Stein** (*San Diego Padres*)

Josh is the assistant general manager of the San Diego Padres, where his primary responsibilities include assisting EVP/GM A.J. Preller in all player acquisitions as well as roster, payroll and budget management. He is involved in all contract negotiations, including coordinating the club's salary arbitration efforts, while also managing the Padres' statistical analysis and video scouting systems. 2016 marks his 14th season with the Padres.

**Jock Thompson** (*BaseballHQ.com*)

Jock has written various columns and performed various tasks for Baseball HQ since 2004, where he is currently the director of news analysis and writes the weekly Keeper League column. He currently resides in Orange County CA.

**Doug Thorburn** (*baseballholics.libsyn.com*)

Doug wears the trifocal lens of a scout, coach and analyst to take pitcher evaluation to the next level. His work can be found at Baseball Prospectus, Rotowire and RotoGrinders. He is the co-host of Baseballholics Anonymous, a year-round podcast that is aimed at those who are obsessed with the game. Doug previously worked with Tom House at the National Pitching Association, where he spearheaded the motion analysis program and co-authored a book titled, Arm Action, Arm Path, and the Perfect Pitch. Twitter: @doug\_thorburn.

**Brian Walton** (*Mastersball.com*)

Brian is one of the managing principals of Mastersball.com, where he writes a weekly column. He also contributes to the Fantasy Baseball Guide while competing in the XFL, Xperts Fantasy League, and he was the 2009 NL Tout Wars champion. His work can also be found daily at TheCardinalNation.com, where he writes about the St. Louis Cardinals and their minor league system.

**Tim Williams** (*PiratesProspects.com*)

Tim is the owner and editor in chief of Pirates Prospects. He started the site in January 2009, and turned it into his full time job during the 2011 season. He also writes the annual Prospect Guide, which is sold through the site. Tim lives in Bradenton, FL, where he provides live coverage all year of Spring Training, mini camp, instructs, the Bradenton Marauders, and the GCL Pirates.

**Derek Van Riper** (*RotoWire.com*)

Derek ("DVR") is the Director of Media for RotoWire.com, where he's been a two-time finalist for the FSWA's Baseball Writer of the Year award, and winner of the Best Baseball Article on the Web (2010) award. Additionally, he won the Tout Wars Mixed Auction League in 2014, and NL LABR in 2015. DVR also co-hosts RotoWire's shows on SiriusXM Fantasy Sports Radio, the weekly Short Hops Podcast with Bernie Pleskoff, as well as the daily Rotowire Fantasy Baseball Podcast. You can follow Derek on Twitter @DerekVanRiper.

**Jeff Zimmerman** (*FanGraphs.com*)

Jeff writes for FanGraphs, The Hardball Times and Royals Review, as well as his own website, Baseball Heat Maps with his brother Darrell. In tandem with Bill Petti, he won the 2013 SABR Analytics Research Award for Contemporary Analysis. Follow him on Twitter @jeffzimmerman.

**Todd Zola** (*Mastersball.com*)

Todd is a Managing Partner at Mastersball.com, focusing on projection and game theory. His work also appears on KFFL.com and he is a frequent guest on SiriusXM Fantasy Sports Radio and Baseball HQ Radio. Todd participates in Tout Wars and the XFL and is a multiple time champion in the National Fantasy Baseball Championship.