CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I.

NAME.

This Association shall be called ATHE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF PROFESSIONAL BASE BALL CLUBS. @

ARTICLE II.

OBJECTS.

The objects of this League are:

1st. To encourage, foster, and elevate the game of base ball.

2d. To enact and enforce proper rules for the exhibition and conduct of the game.

3d. To make base ball playing respectable and honorable.

4th. To protect and promote the mutual interests of professional base ball clubs and professional base ball players; and

5th. To establish and regulate the base ball championship of the United States.

ARTICLE III.

MEMBERSHIP.

This League shall consist of the following named Professional Base Ball Clubs, namely:

Athletic B.B. Club of Philadelphia, Pa.

Boston B.B. Club of Boston, Mass.

Chicago B.B. Club of Chicago, Ill.

Cincinnati B.B. Club of Cincinnati, O.

Hartford B.B. Club of Hartford, Conn.

Mutual B.B. Club of Brooklyn, N.Y.

Louisville B.B. Club of Louisville, Ky.

St. Louis B.B. Club of St. Louis, Mo.

And such other professional base ball clubs as may from time to time be elected to membership under the following rules, namely:

1. No club shall be admitted from either of the cities above named other than the clubs mentioned, except in the event that either of such clubs shall lose its membership, and in no event shall there be more than one club from any city.

2. No club shall be admitted from any city whose population is less than seventy-five thousand (75,000), except by unanimous vote of the League.

3. No club shall be admitted unless it shall first have delivered to the Secretary of the League, at least thirty days before the annual meeting, a written application for membership, signed by its President and Secretary, accompanied by documents showing that such club bears the name of the city in which it is located, and that it is regularly organized and officered and (where the State law permits it) chartered, and accompanied also by a pledge that it will keep all its engagements with the clubs members of the League, and that it has not in its employ any player who has been dismissed or expelled by the League or any club member thereof.

4. The voting upon an application for membership shall be by white and black balls. Two black balls shall be sufficient to exclude the applicant, and no club shall be required, under any circumstances, to state how it voted upon such application.

ARTICLE IV.

OFFICERS.

SECTION 1. The affairs of this League shall be conducted and controlled by five Directors, who shall constitute AThe Board,@ who shall hold their office for one year, and shall be chosen at the annual meeting in the following manner: The name of each club shall be plainly written upon a card
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in full view of the delegates present

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by the Secretary; the cards to be of the same size, shape, color, and material. The cards shall then be placed in some suitable receptacle and well shaken together; thereupon five of these cards shall be drawn successively and at random, and the delegates from the five clubs whose names are so drawn shall compose the Board.

SEC. 2. The Board shall elect from their number a President, who shall be the President of the League. He shall preside at all meetings of the Board and of the League, and discharge the usual duties of such an officer. In the event of his absence the Board shall elect a President *pro tem.*

SEC. 3. The Board shall also elect a gentleman of intelligence, honesty, and good repute, who is versed in base ball matters, but who is not, in any manner, connected with the press, and who is not a member of any professional base ball club either in or out of the League, to be the Secretary of the Board and of the League.

The Secretary shall be the Treasurer of the League, and as such shall be the custodian of all the funds of the League, receive all dues, fees, and assessments, pay out such sums as he may be directed to do by the Board or by vote of the League, and render annually a report of his accounts.

He shall have the custody and care of the official records and papers of the League; shall keep a true record of all meetings of the League and the Board; shall issue all official notices and attend to the necessary correspondence; he shall prepare and furnish such reports as may be called for by the Board, and shall be entitled to such books, stationery, blanks, and materials as the actual duties of his office may require.

He shall receive such salary as the League, by vote, shall determine, which salary shall not be less than three hundred dollars ($300), nor more than five hundred dollars ($500) per annum, and shall be reimbursed for all traveling expenses actually incurred by him in the service of the League; and the Board may exact from him such guarantees for the faithful performance of his duties as they may deem for the interest and safety of the League.

At the expiration of his term of office he shall account for and deliver up to the Board all the property and papers which may have come into his hands by virtue of his office.

SEC. 4. In the case of a vacancy in the Board by reason of the death, resignation, or disqualification of any director, the club of which he was a member at the time he was chosen shall designate his successor, and at once notify the Secretary. But if such vacancy is caused by the withdrawal, disbanding, or disqualification of a club represented on the Board, the Board may fill the vacancy by election in the same manner as provided for the election of Directors in Article IV., Section 1, of this Constitution.

No person shall be qualified to act as a director who is not an actual member of the club he represents; nor shall any club, under any circumstances, be represented by more than one person on the Board.

SEC. 5. The Board shall have the general supervision and management of all the affairs and business of the League, and shall be individually answerable to the League for the faithful discharge of their trust.

The Board shall meet annually on the evening of the first Monday in December, at the place where the annual meeting of the League is to be held, but may hold special meetings whenever urgent necessity may require. They shall prepare a detailed report of all their doings, and present the same in writing to the League at its annual meeting, which report shall, if accepted, be filed with the Secretary, together with all official papers, documents, and property which may have come into their possession by virtue of their office.

Any director who shall disclose or publish any of the proceedings of the Board, except officially through the report of the Board, or when called upon by vote of the League, shall forfeit his office.

ARTICLE V.

CLUBS.

SECTION 1. Each club belonging to this League shall have the right to regulate its own affairs, to make its own contracts, to establish its own rules, and to discipline and punish its own players: *Provided*, That nothing shall be done in violation of, or contrary to, this Constitution or the Playing Rules.

No club shall employ as manager, scorer, or player any person who has wilfully violated any provision of this Constitution or of the Playing Rules, or who has been discharged, dismissed, or expelled from any club belonging to this League, or who shall be disqualified from playing with a club under any provision of this Constitution; and any club who shall employ or play in its nine a player disqualified by any provision of this Constitution, shall be at once considered as having forfeited its membership in the League, and all other League clubs must and shall, under penalty of the forfeiture of their membership in the League, abstain from playing any such club for the remainder of the season.

SEC. 2. Every club member of this League shall have exclusive control of the city in which it is located, and of the territory surrounding such city to the extent of five miles in every direction, and no visiting League club shall, under any circumstances B not even with the consent of the local League club B be allowed to play any club in such territory other than the League club therein located.

SEC. 3. The players and managers employed by the clubs belonging to this

League shall be considered and treated as members hereof to the extent of being always amenable to the provisions of this Constitution, and entitled to all its privileges in matters of dispute, grievance, or discipline.

ARTICLE VI.

DUES AND ASSESSMENTS.

SECTION 1. Every club shall pay to the Secretary of the League, on or before the first day of January of each year, the sum of One Hundred Dollars as annual dues, and any club failing to pay said sum by such time shall be considered as having withdrawn from the League.

SEC. 2. In case of necessity thereof the Board may levy a pro rata assessment upon the clubs, to be paid as the Board may direct.

ARTICLE VII.

FORFEITING MEMBERSHIP.

The membership of any club belonging to this League shall be forfeited, if the League, by a two-thirds vote, shall so determine, under the following circumstances, namely:

1st. By disbanding, or by failing or refusing to keep its engagements in regard to games with other clubs.

2d. By failing or refusing to comply with any lawful requirement or order of the Board.

3d. By failing to keep its contracts with its players, either as to engagement or salary, where the player is not at fault.

4th. By wilfully violating any provision of this Constitution, or the Playing Rules adopted hereunder. And no club which has forfeited its membership shall be readmitted except by unanimous vote of the League.

ARTICLE VIII.

DISPUTES AND COMPLAINTS.

SECTION 1. Charges against clubs for conduct which, if proven, would render them liable to a forfeiture of membership under Article VII. of this Constitution, shall be preferred to the Board, who shall hear the evidence in the matter at their annual meeting, and certify their finding to the League at its first succeeding annual meeting, and the League shall, by vote, determine the question of forfeiture of membership: *Provided, however,* That nothing in this Section shall be construed as affecting the provisions of Article V., Section 1, of this Constitution during the playing season.

SEC. 2. The Board shall be the sole tribunal to determine disputes between two or more clubs which involve the interpretation or construction of this Constitution, or any of its Articles. When such a dispute arises, and either club shall signify to the other its desire for the Board to decide the matter, each club shall furnish to the Secretary as soon as possible a written statement of its side of the dispute, with the names of its witnesses, or an agreed statement of facts, if possible, which the Secretary shall docket in the order of its reception, and at the next annual meeting the clubs shall present themselves before the Board with their testimony and the Board shall proceed to try the case impartially and render a true verdict. The Board shall have a right to put the witnesses under oath, and must do so if demanded thereto by either party. No director shall sit on the trial of a cause in which his club is interested, but must retire and permit the others alone to determine the matter. The finding of the Board, in such a case, shall be *final*, and under no circumstances shall be reconsidered, reopened, or inquired into, either by the League or any subsequent Board.

SEC. 3. The Board shall also be the sole tribunal for the hearing of an appeal made by any player who shall have been dismissed, expelled, or otherwise disciplined by his club. The matter shall be proceeded with in the following manner: The player shall file with the Secretary an affidavit signed by himself, in which he shall deny, under oath, that he is guilty of the offence for which he has been disciplined, accompanied by a request that an appeal be allowed him. The Secretary shall notify the club of the affidavit and request for appeal, and at the next annual meeting the club and the player shall appear before the Board with their testimony. The Board shall impartially bear the matter and render their decision, which shall be *final* and forever binding on both club and player. In the event the club appealed from is represented in the Board, that representative shall not be allowed to sit in the matter.

SEC. 4. All differences and disputes arising between clubs, in which the

interpretation, construction, or violation of the Playing Rules is involved, shall be adjusted in the following manner: The complaining club shall file a written statement of its grievance, accompanied with the affidavits of its witnesses, with the Secretary, who (unless the other club has also filed its statement and affidavits, or an agreed case has been prepared) shall immediately notify the defendant club of the fact that a complaint B briefly stating the nature thereof
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has been filed with him, and call for a counter statement with affidavits, which must be furnished to him within fifteen (15) days of the date of the notice.

On receiving the counter statement, or agreed case, or in the event the defendant club does not comply with the call within fifteen (15) days, the Secretary shall notify the President of the matter, who shall appoint three disinterested persons, members of League clubs, as arbitrators, to the first of whom the Secretary shall transmit at once all the papers in the case, securely sealed, notifying him of the remaining arbitrators. Within three days such person shall attach his verdict in writing to the papers and transmit them to the second person, who shall within three days attach his written verdict and transmit them to the third, who, following the rule, shall finally return them to the Secretary, and he shall at once notify each club of the finding. A majority of the arbitrators shall determine the cause, and from their finding there shall be no appeal.

The expenses of all trials and arbitrations shall be equally borne by the parties litigant

ARTICLE IX.

ANNUAL MEETING.

SECTION 1. The annual meeting of the League shall be held on the first Thursday after the first Monday of December of each year, at twelve o=clock, noon, and at such place as shall be determined by vote at the previous annual meeting. The annual meeting shall not be held in (nor within fifty miles of) any city where a club member of the League is located; but shall be held in some easily accessible place, and, as near as may be, equidistant from the several club members.

SEC. 2. At such meeting each club shall be entitled to two representatives, who shall present a certificate from the President or Secretary of their club, showing their authority to act; but no club shall have more than one vote.

A representation of a majority of clubs shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, but a less number may adjourn from time to time until a quorum is obtained.

ARTICLE X.

PLAYING RULES.

The league at its first meeting shall adopt a code of Playing Rules, which may be altered, amended, or abolished at any subsequent annual meeting.

ARTICLE XI

CONTRACTS.

SECTION 1. Contracts hereafter made between the clubs, members of this League, and their players shall be made under and in view of the following provisions:

No club shall be prevented from contracting with a player for the reason that he is already under contract with another club: *Provided,* The service to be rendered under the second contract is not to begin until the expiration of the first contract.

No formal words of contract shall be required. It shall be sufficient if the contract be made in writing, be dated, specify the time, indicate the service, and be signed by the player and some officer or registered agent of the club and one witness.

SEC. 2. It shall be the duty of a club, as soon as it shall have entered into a contract with a player, to file a notification of the same, signed by the club and the player, with the Secretary of the League, who shall endorse thereon the date of its reception, and forthwith notify every other League club of such contract.

SEC. 3. Whenever a club releases a player from his contract, that club shall at once notify the Secretary of the League in writing. In case the release shall have been granted for a cause that does not in any manner reflect upon the character of the player, there must be written upon the notice a statement to that effect, otherwise it shall be inferred from such notice that such player has been in fact dismissed, discharged, or expelled, and he shall not be eligible to make any contract for the remainder of the season with any League club.

A player who has been released from his contract without imputation may engage in any other club twenty days thereafter; but such other club, before engaging him, shall satisfy itself by application to the Secretary, that such release has been given without imputation on the player=s character.

No player who has been dismissed or expelled from a League club shall, at any time thereafter, be allowed to play with any League club (either the one expelling him or any other), unless, upon his appeal to the Board, such dismissal or expulsion shall have been set aside.

SEC. 4. A player whose contract has expired or become void by reason of his club=s disbanding or withdrawing from the League, may engage for the remainder of the season with any other League club, provided such engagement shall not commence within twenty days of such disbanding or withdrawal.

ARTICLE XII.

CHAMPIONSHIP.

SECTION 1. The *Championship of the United States*, established by this League, shall be contended for under the following rules, namely:

No club shall be allowed to enter the lists for the championship until it has paid its annual dues.

The *championship season* shall extend from the 15th day of March to (and including) the 15th day of November, and no game shall count in the championship series unless played during the championship season.

No game played on Sunday shall count in the championship series.

Each club entering the lists shall play ten games with every other club so entering, and if any club shall, *of its own fault*, fail to finish its series with every other club, its games shall not be counted at the close of the season, and such club shall not be eligible to enter the championship lists the ensuing season.

SEC. 2. Each club shall be entitled to have five of its games with every other club played on its own grounds; and when a club shall have first played one or more games, pursuant to agreement, upon its adversary=s grounds, it may require its adversary to play an equal number upon its own ground in return within a reasonable time (not to exceed two months), under penalty of forfeiture of the number of games due:
Provided, however,
That if any game arranged according to the requirements of this rule be prevented by rain, or if a tie or drawn game be played, the visiting club shall not be required to extend its stay, or to again visit such city for the sole purpose of playing off such tie or drawn game, or game prevented by rain.

SEC. 3. Clubs shall be entitled to forfeited games B to count in their series as games won by a score of nine runs to none from other clubs in the following instances, namely:

Any club which has agreed to play with another club upon a day certain, and fails to meet its engagement, shall forfeit the game to the latter club, unless the failure is caused by an unavoidable accident in travelling, or the game is prevented by rain: *Provided, however,* That games shall be postponed upon the death of a player belonging to either of the contesting League clubs, at the request of either club.

Any club which shall appear on the field to play a game with another club, and present in its nine a player who is, or has been within twenty days, a member of any other League club, or who has been dismissed or expelled from any League club, without having been reinstated by the Board, shall forfeit the game to the other club: *Provided,* The other club shall not be in the same fault; and should both clubs be in such fault, and play the game notwithstanding, such game shall not count in the championship series, and games shall further be forfeited as provided in Section 1 of this Article.

SEC. 4. Drawn, tie, and postponed games shall not count in the series in favor of either contestant, but may be played off if sufficient time exist before the close of the season.

The club which shall have won the greatest number of games in the championship series shall be declared the champion club of the United States for the season in which such games were played. In the event two or more clubs shall have won the same number of games, then the club which shall have lost the smallest number shall be declared the champion.

The emblem of the championship shall be a pennant (of the national colors), to cost not less than one hundred dollars ($100). It shall be inscribed with the motto, AChampion Base Ball Club of the United States,
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with the name of the club and the year in which the title was won; and the champion club shall be entitled to fly the pennant until the close of the ensuing season.

SEC. 5. The championship shall be decided in the following manner, namely:

Within twenty-four hours after every match game played for the championship, the home club shall prepare a statement, containing the *full score* of the game, the date, place where played, names of the clubs and of the umpire, and shall forward the same without delay to the Secretary of the League, who shall file the same carefully.

At the close of the season the Secretary shall prepare a tabular statement of the games won and lost by each club, according to the statements so sent him (which statements shall be the sole evidence in the matter), and submit the same, with the statements so sent him, to the Board, who shall make the award.

ARTICLE XIII.

FIELD RULES.

Every club in this League shall be bound by the following Field Rules, and must have the same conspicuously posted or placarded upon its grounds, namely: No club shall allow open betting or pool selling upon its grounds, nor in any building owned or occupied by it. No person shall be allowed upon any part of the field during the progress of a game, in addition to those playing and the umpire, except the managers, scorers, and necessary servants of the two clubs, and such officers of the law as may be present to preserve the peace.

Players in uniform shall not be permitted to seat themselves among the spectators.

The umpire is the sole judge of play, and is entitled to the respect of the spectators, and any person hissing or hooting at, or offering any insult or indignity to him, must be promptly ejected from the grounds.

Every club shall furnish sufficient police force upon its own grounds to preserve order, and in the event of a crowd entering the field during the progress of the game, and interfering with the play in any manner, the visiting club may refuse to play further until the field be cleared; and if the ground be not cleared within fifteen minutes thereafter, the visiting club may claim, and shall be entitled, to the game by a score of nine runs to none (no matter what number of innings have been played).

ARTICLE XIV.

AMENDMENTS.

This Constitution may be altered or amended by a two-thirds vote of the League at any annual meeting.

We the undersigned, *Professional Base Ball Clubs of the United States*, by our representatives in convention assembled, in the city of New York, this second day of February, A.D. 1876, lamenting the abuses which have insidiously crept into the exposition of our National Game, and regretting the unpleasant differences which have arisen among ourselves growing out of an imperfect and unsystematized Code, with a view of relieving ourselves from the incubus of such abuses, of promoting harmony and good fellowship among ourselves, of elevating and fostering our national sport, and of protecting the interests of our players, hereby pledge each other that we will

withdraw at once from the
A
National Association of Professional Base Ball Players,
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, and we hereby announce that we have this day organized
ourselves into a
A
NATIONAL LEAGUE OF PROFESSIONAL BASE BALL CLUBS.
@

ATHLETIC BASE BALL CLUB of Philadelphia, Pa.

By George W. Thompson.

BOSTON BASE BALL CLUB of Boston, Mass.

By N.T. Apollonio, Pres=t.

HARTFORD BASE BALL CLUB of Hartford, Conn.

By M.G. Bulkeley, Pres=t.

MUTUAL BASE BALL CLUB of Brooklyn, N.Y.

By Wm. H. Cammeyer.

CHICAGO BASE BALL CLUB of Chicago, Ill.)

CINCINNATI BASE BALL CLUB of Cincinnati, O.)

LOUISVILLE BASE BALL CLUB of Louisville, Ky.)

ST. LOUIS BASE BALL CLUB of St. Louis, Mo.)

By W.A. Hulbert and Chas. A. Fowle.)