

## MLB, MLBPA Fail to Meet Deadline for Creation of International Draft

Written by Maury Brown  
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The long-sought international amateur draft in Major League Baseball will be waiting further. The sides could not reach certain aspects of it by the June 1 deadline that is outlined in the [most recent collective bargaining agreement](#). Without an international draft, the status quo will be retained for the acquisition of prospects outside North America.

A statement by the league said, “The Office of the Commissioner and the Players Association have discussed various issues regarding international amateur players, including the possibility of an international draft. While both parties discussed an international draft, an agreement was not reached on some of the mechanics and procedures related to such a draft. Thus, an international draft will not be implemented in 2014. The parties intend to continue to discuss international amateur talent issues, and the current system of international talent acquisition as described in the Collective Bargaining Agreement will remain in place at this time.”

The union for the players seemed to edge more toward saying there was concerns from the players about the addition of the new draft, not just to mechanics of it.

“At this time, the players are not prepared to accept an international draft,” stated MLBPA Executive Director Michael Weiner. “The MLBPA will continue to discuss with players and the Commissioner’s Office the many issues facing its international members.”

As defined in the latest labor agreement, Michael Weiner, as well as Rob Manfred, the MLB Executive Vice President for Labor and Human Resources where the two served as co-chairs of the International Talent Committee to try and hammer out a draft. Each of them had three additional members of the Committee. Those members included Mets GM Sandy Alderson, Tampa Bay Rays executive vice president Andrew Friedman, and Kim Ng from the Commissioner’s Office. For the MLBPA Weiner was joined by Tony Clark, Stan Javier, and MLBPA senior adviser Rick Shapiro

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The complexities of implementing an international draft are vast. The CBA outlines what the International Talent Committee needs to tackle:

- 1. If there is an international draft, whether international players should be part of a single worldwide draft (including players currently covered by the Rule 4 Draft) or a separate draft (or drafts).*
  
- 2. The appropriate age at which international amateur players should be signed to professional contracts.*
  
- 3. If there are to be multiple drafts, whether players from Puerto Rico should remain in the Rule 4 Draft or instead be part of an international draft.*
  
- 4. The development of appropriate country-by-country plans for playing and development opportunities for players prior to draft eligibility, including expansion of the El Torneo Supremo.*
  
- 5. The development of appropriate plans to provide undrafted or unsigned players (including players age 18 to 21) from Latin America with an opportunity to continue their development, including the creation of a new league or leagues, or the addition of centrally-operated Clubs in the Dominican Summer League (“DSL”).*
  
- 6. Whether and how regulations should be put in place regarding representation of international amateur players (e.g., “independent trainers” and agents).*
  
- 7. Improving the education and acculturation programs of Clubs at their international academies.*
  
- 8. What safeguards should be established in relation to any signing bonus payments made to international amateur players.*

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*9. The laws of the countries from which international players are signed and how those laws should affect the actions of the parties.*

*10. What actions are necessary in order to achieve the negotiation of a revised agreement between MLB and the Mexican League that allows players greater choice of where to play and promotes a fair and open system of player movement.*

*11. What actions are necessary in order to achieve the negotiation of revisions to the protocol agreements with the Korean Professional Baseball League, the Japanese Professional Baseball League, and the Taiwan R.O.C. League to accommodate a draft.*

*12. How Cuban players should be treated under an amateur talent system in light of the legal and political factors that affect their signability.*

A key part of the international draft would have been the implementation of a slotting system such as the current First-Year Player (Rule 4) Draft now sees.

This isn't the first time MLB and the MLBPA have discussed an international draft. As part discussions leading up to, and after [the 2003 CBA](#) was reached, an international draft was discussed with the creation of a "World-Wide Draft Committee." As was the case now, the sides could not get past some of the technical hurdles and talks withered on the vine. Whether that is the case now after missing the June 1 deadline remains to be seen. The current labor agreement between the players and the league expires on December 1, 2016.

better to base their opinions around the strength or weakness of a league's popularity.

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