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# MLB loses fantasy sports appeal



Reuters Photo: Baseballs are seen in a basket at the San Francisco Giants spring training baseball camp...

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WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Major League Baseball and the players association struck out on Monday when the U.S. Supreme Court rejected their appeal of a ruling that sided with a company that uses player statistics for fantasy baseball.

The high court declined to hear the appeal of a lower-court ruling that a St. Louis-based company called C.B.C. Distribution and Marketing Inc. has a free-speech right to use the names and performance statistics of famous athletes.

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Fantasy sports in the United States has become a \$1.5 billion annual industry involving millions of participants, according to court documents in the case. Fantasy leagues involve participants who manage imaginary teams based on the statistics of real players.

C.B.C. sued after it was unable to obtain a license from a subsidiary of Major League Baseball to use players' names in its fantasy baseball games. The players association then intervened in the case, joining Major League Baseball and further asserting a breach-of-contract claim.

A federal judge and then a U.S. appeals court in St. Louis ruled for the company. The high court rejected the appeal by the players and the league without comment.

After the Supreme Court refused to get involved in the dispute, a spokesman for the players union said, "We're considering our options." Officials from Major League Baseball declined to comment.

(Reporting by James Vicini with additional reporting by Ben Klayman in Chicago, Editing by David Wiessler)

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