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Baseball player transfers between Japan and the United States This article is about the player transfer system between MLB and NPB. For the system between MLB and the KBO, see Posting system (ポスティングシステム, posutingu shisutemu)[1] is a baseball player transfer system that operates between Nippon Professional Baseball (NPB) and the Major League Baseball lost star players without compensation, an issue highlighted when NPB stars Hideo Nomo and Alfonso Soriano left to play in MLB after using loopholes to void their existing contracts. A further problem was that NPB players had very little negotiating power if their teams decided to deal them to MLB, as when pitcher Hideki Irabu was traded to an MLB team for which he had no desire to play. In 1998, the Agreement was rewritten to address both problems; the result was dubbed the "posting system". Under this system, when an NPB player is "posted", his NPB team notifies the MLB Commissioner, with the posting fee based on the type of contract a player signs and its value. The fee is a flat 25% of the value of a minor-league contract; for MLB contracts, the fee is based on the value of the contract that the posted player eventually signs. The player agrees on contract terms with a team before the 30-day period has expired, the NPB team receives the posting fee from the signing MLB team as a transfer fee, and the player is free to play in MLB. If no MLB team comes to a contract agreement with the posted player, then no fee is paid, and the player's rights revert to his NPB team. The current process replaced one in which MLB held a silent auction during which MLB teams submitted sealed, uncapped bids in an attempt to win the exclusive negotiating rights with the posted player for a period of 30 days. Once the highest bidding MLB team was determined, the players had been posted using the system. Of these, 12 signed Major League contracts, four signed minor-league contracts, five were unsuccessful in attracting any MLB interest, and two could not come to a contract agreement during the 30-day negotiation period. The five highest-profile players that have been acquired by MLB teams through the posting system are Ichiro Suzuki, Daisuke Matsuzaka Yu Darvish, Masahiro Tanaka, and Shohei Ohtani. The first three attracted high bids of \$13.125 million, \$51.1 million, and \$51.7 million respectively. Tanaka was the first player posted under a revised procedure that was in place from 2013 to 2017; he was posted for the maximum \$20 million allowed under the new rules. Ohtani was the first player posted under the current procedure; his posting fee of \$20 million was grandfathered in under the previous agreement. However, since its implementation the posting system has been criticized by the media and baseball insiders from both countries. History The first instance of a Japanese-born player playing in Major League Baseball was in 1964, when the Nankai Hawks, an NPB team, sent three exchange prospects to the United States to gain experience in MLB's minor league Rookie of the Year while playing for the Fresno Giants (the San Francisco Giants' Class-A team). Giants executives were impressed with his talent and on September 1, 1964 Murakami was promoted, thus becoming the first Japanese player to play in MLB.[2] After Murakami put up good pitching statistics as a reliever, Giants executives sought to exercise a clause in their contract with the Hawks that, they claimed, allowed them to buy up an exchange prospect's contract. NPB officials objected, stating that they had no intention of selling Murakami's contract to the Giants and telling them that Murakami was merely on loan for the 1965 season. Thus, after pitching one more season for the Giants, Murakami returned to Japan to play for the Hawks. This affair led to the 1967 United States - Japanese Player Contract Agreement, also known as the "working agreement, also kno his NPB contract. MLB and NPB officials created the posting system as a combined reaction to three cases in the 1990s, involving NPB players who moved to MLB. The first of these occurred in the winter of 1994 when pitcher Hideo Nomo, with the help of agent Don Nomura, became the second Japanese-born player to play in MLB, 30 years after Murakami. Nomo, who was not yet eligible for free agency in Japan, was advised by Nomura that the Japanese Uniform Players Contract's reserve clause limited the Kintetsu Buffaloes' control over him to Japan only.[5][6] Nomo utilized this loophole by voluntarily retiring from NPB to terminate his contract with the Buffaloes, circumvent its reserve clause and play in MLB. He announced his retirement from NPB in late 1994 and signed with the Los Angeles Dodgers in February 1995, where he won the National League Rookie of the Year award.[5] The following year, the Dodgers signed Nomo to a three-year, \$4.3 million contract.[7] Alfonso Soriano's move to MLB helped prompt the creation of the posting system. In early 1997, after months of negotiations, the San Diego Padres signed a working agreement with the Chiba Lotte Marines that gave the Padres exclusive signing rights to another Nomura client, Hideki Irabu. Although both Irabu and Nomura stated that Irabu would only sign with the New York Yankees, neither the Padres nor the Marines consulted Irabu before finalizing their deal. The Major League Baseball Players Association (MLBPA) sided with Irabu, stating that the arrangement unfairly disregarded a player's expressed wishes. However, MLB's executive council ruled that the Padres had not violated any existing rule, and therefore legally held the rights to Irabu Following this decision, Irabu contemplated a number of different options, including playing in NPB until he became a free agent, and taking the matter to the U.S. judicial system. By May, however, the Padres gave in and traded Irabu to the Yankees, who signed him for \$12.8 million over four years.[8] The final incident occurred in 1998, when Alfonso Soriano was unable to leave the Hiroshima Toyo Carp due to contract restrictions. Soriano disliked the intense Japanese practice schedule, and the Carp denied him a salary increase from \$45,000 (the league's minimum) to \$180,000 per year.[9][10] Like Nomo and Irabu, Soriano hired Nomura to help his situation. After first attempting to void Soriano's NPB contract by unsuccessfully arguing that the player was legally a minor when he signed it Nomura advised him, like Nomo, to retire from NPB and pursue a career in MLB. This prompted Carp executives to file an injunction against Soriano and send letters to MLB teams demanding that they cease all negotiations with him.[11] NPB officials claimed that after the Nomo case they had privately amended the Player Contract to give NPB teams the right to prohibit a player from signing a new contract anywhere after voluntarily retiring.[12] Since MLB officials were not consulted and they did not agree to any changes, MLB Commissioner Bud Selig declared that MLB would recognize Soriano as a free agent on July 13, 1998, and the Carp backed down.[11] He signed a 5-year, \$3.1 million contract with the New York Yankees the same year.[10] Resolution In 1998, Orix BlueWave general manager Shigeyoshi Ino rewrote the 1967 United States - Japanese Player Contract Agreement, when he drafted the "posting system" [13] Selig and NPB Commissioner Hiromori Kawashima signed this new agreement in December 1998.[14] It sought to address each of the problems brought up by the Nomo, Irabu and Soriano cases, by requiring MLB teams to place "bids" for NPB players. These bids became the basis of transfer fees that are paid as compensation to NPB teams whose star players sign with MLB.[15] NPB players are also allowed to negotiate with MLB teams over the terms of their new contracts. Through the 2013 season, the agreement was in effect on a year-to-year basis, terminable at the option of either the MLB Commissioner or the NPB Commissioner provided notice to terminate is given by June 18 of any given year.[16] A new agreement between MLB and NPB, with significantly different rules, was announced on December 16, 2013 and took effect immediately; it continued through the 2016 MLB and NPB seasons.[17] The agreement was extended for an additional season during negotiations for a new agreement. The current posting agreement was reached after the 2017 MLB and NPB seasons. The agreement runs through October 31, 2021, the expiration date of MLB's current collective bargaining agreement. Not all of the provisions applied immediately—for example, the Hokkaido Nippon-Ham Fighters were allowed to set a \$20 million posting fee, the maximum allowed under the previous agreement, for two-way star Shohei Ohtani, whom they posted shortly after approval of the new agreement. Since the end of the 2018 NPB and MLB seasons, posting fee is based on the amount of guaranteed money in the initial contract:[18] 20% of the first \$25 million 17.5% of the next \$25 million 15% of any amount above \$50 million For players who have nine or more years of playing service with NPB are exempt.[19] It does not apply to free agents or to amateur players who have never played in NPB.[20] Mac Suzuki, Micheal Nakamura, Kazuhito Tadano, and Junichi Tazawa are the only Japanese players to have debuted in MLB without having played in NPB.[20][21][22][23] The system does not work in reverse; it does not regulate MLB players, such as Alex Cabrera, who moved to NPB.[24] Process When a player under contract with a Nippon Professional Baseball, he must notify his current team's management and request that they make him available for posting during the next posting period (November 1 -March 1 through the 2013 season, and November 1 - February 1 in the current agreement).[4][17] The NPB team can reject this request, and the player is presented to the MLB Commissioner, who then notifies all MLB teams of the posted player. In the original process, MLB held a
four-day-long silent auction during which interested MLB teams submitted sealed bids in U.S. dollars to the Commissioner's Office. After the allotted four days passed, the Commissioner's Office. After the allotted four days passed, the Commissioner's Office. After the allotted four days passed, the Commissioner's Office. After the allotted four days passed, the Commissioner's Office. After the allotted four days passed, the Commissioner's Office. After the allotted four days passed, the Commissioner's Office. After the allotted four days passed, the Commissioner's Office. After the allotted four days passed, the Commissioner's Office. After the allotted four days passed, the Commissioner's Office. After the allotted four days passed, the Commissioner's Office. After the allotted four days passed, the Commissioner's Office. After the allotted four days passed, the Commissioner's Office. After the allotted four days passed, the Commissioner's Office. 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The player was then free to play for his new MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an MLB team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an Alba team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was not included when calculating an Alba team in the coming season.[16] The transfer fee was agreement with the posted player, then no fee was paid and the rights to the player reverted to his NPB team. A player could request to be posted again in subsequent years, and the previous year. [16] Under the current process, the NPB team notifies the MLB Commissioner of a posting, with the posting fee determined by the value of the contract that a posted player eventually signs with an MLB commissioner announces the posting, the player has 30 days to sign with an MLB commissioner announces the posting, the player has 30 days to sign with an MLB commissioner announces the posting fee determined by the value of the contract that a posted player eventually signs with an MLB commissioner announces the posting fee determined by the value of the contract that a posted player eventually signs with an MLB commissioner announces the posting fee determined by the value of the contract that a posted player eventually signs with an MLB commissioner announces the posting fee determined by the value of the contract that a posted player eventually signs with an MLB commissioner announces the posting fee determined by the value of the contract that a posted player eventually signs with an MLB commissioner announces the posting fee determined by the value of the contract that a posted player eventually signs with an MLB commissioner announces the posting fee determined by the value of the contract that a posted player eventually signs with an MLB commissioner announces the posting fee determined by the value of the contract that a posted player eventually signs with an MLB commissioner announces the posting fee determined by the contract that a posted player eventually signs with an MLB commissioner announces the posting fee determined by the contract that a posted player eventually signs with an MLB commissioner announces the posting fee determined by the contract that a posted player eventually signs with an MLB commissioner announces the posting fee determined by the contract that a posted player eventually signs with an MLB commissioner announces the posting fee determined by the contract that a post of the c rights, the current system allows the posted player to negotiate with any MLB team during the past system, an unsuccessfully posted player can request a posting in a later year, with the process repeated.[17] List of postings Of the 61 Japanese-born players who have played in MLB,[28] 18 have entered the league using the posting system. Since the system's creation in 1998, the 28 players that have experienced a range of success.[4] Of these 28, sixteen were immediately signed to Major League contracts and one player who drew no bids on his first posting was signed to a Major League contracts, three were unable to reach a contract agreement and six were unsuccessful in drawing bids from any Major League clubs (one player failed to draw bids during two separate postings). The following tables outline each posting and its outcome. Successful postings Player Posting date NPB team MLB team Winning bid Date of contractagreement MLB contract Notes Alejandro Díaz February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Cincinnati Reds \$400,001 March 2, 1999 \$0Minor league contract [29] Ichiro Suzuki November 9, 2000 Orix BlueWave Seattle Mariners \$13,125,000 November 30, 2002 Yakult Swallows Los Angeles Dodgers \$11,260,000 February 8, 2002 \$3,075,0004 years, \$12.3 million [33][34][35] Ramón RamírezP February 6, 2003 \$750,0002 years, \$1.5 million [38][39] Norihiro Nakamura January 28, 2005 Orix Buffaloes Los Angeles Dodgers \$0Undisclosedψ February 3, 2005 \$0Minor league contract [40][41] Shinji MoriP December 12, 2006 \$700,0002 years, \$1.4 million [42][43] Daisuke MatsuzakaP November 2, 2006 Seibu Lions Boston Red Sox \$51,111,111.11† December 14, 2006 \$8,666,6666 year, \$52 million [44][45] Akinori Iwamura November 17, 2006 \$4,000,0005 years, \$26,000,194‡ December 17, 2006 \$4,000,0005 years, \$20 million [49][50] Tsuyoshi Nishioka November 17, 2010 Chiba Lotte Marines Minnesota Twins \$5,329,000 December 17, 2010 \$3,000,0003 years, \$9 million [51][52] Norichika Aoki December 17, 2010 \$1,250,0002 years, \$2.5 million [53][54] Yu DarvishP December 8, 2011 Hokkaido Nippon-Ham Fighters Texas Rangers \$51,703,411€ January 18, 2012 \$10,000,0006 years, \$60 million [55][56][57] Masahiro TanakaP December 26, 2013 Tohoku Rakuten Golden Eagles New York Yankees \$20,000,000 January 22, 2014 \$22,142,8577 years, \$155 million [58][59] Kenta MaedaP December 10, 2015 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Los Angeles Dodgers \$20,000,000 January 7, 2016 \$3,120,0008 years, \$25 million [60][61] Shohei Ohtani2W December 1, 2017 Hokkaido Nippon-Ham Fighters Los Angeles Angels \$20,000,000 December 11, 2017 Saitama Seibu Lions San Diego Padres \$500,000 January 6, 2018 \$3,120,0002 years, \$3.8 million [64][65][66] Yusei KikuchiP December 3, 2018 Saitama Seibu Lions Seattle Mariners \$10,275,000µ January 2, 2019 \$14,000,0004 years, \$56 million [67][68] Yoshi Tsutsugo November 18, 2019 Yokohama DeNA BayStars Tampa Bay Rays \$2,400,000 December 16, 2019 \$6,000,0002 years, \$12 million [69][70] Shun YamaguchiP December 18, 2019 Yokohama DeNA BayStars Tampa Bay Rays \$2,400,000 December 16, 2019 \$6,000,0002 years, \$12 million [69][70] Shun YamaguchiP December 18, 2019 Yokohama DeNA BayStars Tampa Bay Rays \$2,400,000 December 16, 2019 \$6,000,0002 years, \$12 million [69][70] Shun YamaguchiP December 18, 2019 Yokohama DeNA BayStars Tampa Bay Rays \$2,400,000 December 16, 2019 \$6,000,0002 years, \$12 million [69][70] Shun YamaguchiP December 18, 2019 Yokohama DeNA BayStars Tampa Bay Rays \$2,400,000 December 16, 2019 \$6,000,0002 years, \$12 million [69][70] Shun YamaguchiP December 18, 2019 Yokohama DeNA BayStars Tampa Bay Rays \$2,400,000 December 16, 2019 \$6,000,0002 years, \$12 million [69][70] Shun YamaguchiP December 18, 2019 Yokohama DeNA BayStars Tampa Bay Rays \$2,400,000 December 16, 2019 \$6,000,0002 years, \$12 million [69][70] Shun YamaguchiP December 18, 2019 Yokohama DeNA BayStars Tampa Bay Rays \$2,400,000 December 16, 2019 \$6,000,0002 years, \$12 million [69][70] Shun YamaguchiP December 18, 2019 Yokohama DeNA BayStars Tampa Bay Rays \$2,400,000 December 16, 2019 \$6,000,0002 years, \$12 million [69][70] Shun YamaguchiP
December 18, 2019 Yokohama DeNA BayStars Tampa Bay Rays \$2,400,000 December 16, 2019 \$6,000,0002 years, \$12 million [69][70] Shun YamaguchiP December 18, 2019 Yokohama DeNA BayStars Tampa Bay Rays \$2,400,000 December 16, 2019 \$6,000,0002 years, \$12 million [69][70] Shun YamaguchiP December 18, 2019 Yokohama DeNA BayStars Tampa Bay Rays 3, 2019 Yomiuri Giants Toronto Blue Jays \$1,270,000 December 27, 2019 \$3,175,0002 years, \$6.35 million [71][72] Kohei AriharaP November 26, 2020 \$3,100,0002 years, \$6.2 million [73][74][75][76] ^§ This was Otsuka's second attempt to play in MLB after an unsuccessful posting the previous year. $^{\psi}$ Though MLB teams traditionally disclosed bid amounts after negotiating rights were won, the Dodgers chose not to publicly reveal their amount.[77] † This specific amount was chosen by Red Sox owner John Henry because he deemed it lucky.[78] † The final three digits, 194, represent Igawa's total strikeout count for his 2006 season.[50] ^ The final four digits represent two significant player numbers—34 was the number that Nolan Ryan, then Rangers principal owner and CEO, wore when he played for the team, and 11 was Darvish's number with the Fighters.[79] ^ The final four digits represent two significant player numbers—34 was the number that Nolan Ryan, then Rangers principal owner and CEO, wore when he played for the team, and 11 was Darvish's number with the Fighters.[79] ^ The final four digits represent two significant player numbers—34 was the number that Nolan Ryan, then Rangers principal owner and CEO, wore when he played for the team, and 11 was Darvish's number with the Fighters.[79] ^ The final four digits represent two significant player numbers—34 was the number that Nolan Ryan, then Rangers principal owner and CEO, wore when he played for the team, and 11 was Darvish's number with the Fighters.[79] ^ The final four digits represent two significant player numbers—34 was the number that Nolan Ryan, then Rangers principal owner and CEO, wore when he played for the team, and 11 was Darvish's number with the Fighters.[79] ^ The final four digits represent two significant player numbers—34 was the number with the Fighters.[79] ^ The final four digits represent two significant players are not of the team, and the number with the fighters.[79] ^ The final four digits represent two significant players are not of the team, and the number with the fighters.[79] ^ The final four digits represent two significant players are not of the team, and the number with the fighters.[79] ^ The final four digits represent two significant players are not of the team, and the number with the final four digits represent two significant players are not of the team, and the number with the final four digits represent two significant players are not of the team, and the number with the final four digits represent the number with the final four digits represent the number with the final four digits represent the number w base contract guarantees three years for \$43 million plus a player option for a fourth year at \$13 million. The Mariners, however, have the right to sign Kikuchi to a four-year, \$66 million-extension after the first three years. If the team option is exercised instead of the player option, the Mariners will instead pay a total of \$18,050,000 to Seibu.[80] [81] ^P This player is a pitcher. ^2W This individual is a two-way player (both a pitcher and position player). Unsuccessful postings Player Posting date NPB team Result Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from an MLB team Result Notes Timo Pérez did not draw any bids from an MLB team Result Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from an MLB team Result Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from an MLB team Result Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from an MLB team Result Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from an MLB team Result Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from an MLB team Result Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from an MLB team Result Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from an MLB team Result Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from an MLB team Result Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from an MLB team Result Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from the New York Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from the New York Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from the New York Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from the New York Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from the New York Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from the New York Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Pérez did not draw any bids from the New York Notes Timo Pérez February 2, 1999 Hiroshima Notes Tim the New York Mets on March 27, 2000. [82][83] Akinori Otsuka December 18, 2002 Kintetsu Buffaloes Otsuka did not draw any bids from an MLB team. He signed with the Chunichi Dragons on March 20, 2003 for ¥95 million (\$800,404 in 2003). [84] Yusaku IrikiP November 22, 2005 Hokkaido Nippon-Ham Fighters Iriki did not draw any bids from an MLB team and was released by the Fighters on December 5, 2005. He was later signed by the New York Mets on January 18, 2006 to a one-year, \$750,000 contract. [85][86] Koji MitsuiP December 18, 2008 Saitama Seibu Lions Mitsui did not draw any bids from an MLB team. He was re-posted the next month. [87] Koji MitsuiP§ January 8, 2009 Saitama Seibu Lions Mitsui again did not draw any bids from an MLB team. He was re-signed by the Lions on January 20, 2009, to a one-year, ¥57 million (\$594,453 in 2009) contract. [88][89] Hisashi IwakumaP November 1, 2010 Tohoku Rakuten Golden Eagles The Oakland A's were awarded exclusive negotiating rights on November 7, 2010, after bidding \$19.1 million. Contract negotiations ended without an agreement and Iwakuma returned to the Eagles. [90][91] Hiroki Sanada did not draw any bids from an MLB team. He was later released by the BayStars. [92] Hiroyuki Nakajima November 28, 2011 Saitama Seibu Lions The New York Yankees were awarded exclusive negotiating rights after bidding \$2.5 million. Contract negotiations ended without an agreement and Nakajima returned to the Lions. [93][94] Tony Barnette Didding \$2.5 million. Contract negotiations ended without an agreement and Nakajima returned to the Lions. Texas Rangers on December 15, 2015 to a two-year, \$3.5 million contract. [95][96] Ryosuke Kikuchi December 3, 2019 Hiroshima Toyo Carp Kikuchi did not secure a contract with any MLB team and instead signed a 4-year contract extension worth ¥1.2 billion (\$10.8 million in 2019) with the Carp on December 27, 2019. [97][98] Haruki Nishikawa December 3, 2020 Hokkaido Nippon Ham Fighters Nishikawa did not secure a deal with any of the MLB teams. [99] Tomoyuki Sugano P December 8, 2020 Yomiuri Giants On January 7, 2021, Sugano's posting period ended and he didn't sign with an MLB team, re-signing with the Giants. [100][101] \(^\s\) This is the only instance that a player has posted more than once in the same posting period. ^P This player is a pitcher. Criticism Since its implementation in late 1998 the posting system has been heavily criticized. Ichiro Suzuki's agent remarked that "the player literally gets zero advantage from [the posting system]... the Japanese teams benefit by holding the players hostage". Don Nomura called the process a "slave auction".[13] Much of the system stems from its forcing NPB players to negotiate their contracts solely with the MLB team that submitted the highest bid. The Japan Times columnist Marty Kuehnert believes that since no other team is allowed to submit competitive counter-offers, negotiations result in salaries below the player's market value. Kuehnert also believes the system fosters a "take-it-or-leave-it" situation; if the team and the player have not finalized contract negotiations by the end of a 30-day period, the team can make a low offer knowing that the player's only other option is to play in Japan for another year.[102] It has been suggested that this is a violation of the Anti-Monopoly Act, a Japanese antitrust law that prohibits parties from signing an international agreement or contract that "contains such matters as constitute an unreasonable restraint of trade or unfair business practices".[103] The Japan Professional Baseball Players Association (JPBPA) was not consulted before the system was implemented by NPB club owners, and did not subsequently ratify it.[104] Since its introduction JPBPA has expressed many concerns, likening the process to "human trafficking".[105] Agreeing that the system takes unfair advantage of NPB players, the MLBPA offered to help JPBPA fight the posting system in court. However, according to one JPBPA official, the Japanese court process is too long and involved; therefore, the "problem can't be helped".[104] Yomiuri Giants club representative Hidetoshi Kiyotake has expressed dislike of the system, because it enables Major League Baseball to poach players from Japan. By using the posting system, he says, Japanese teams make a profit in the short term, but by allowing Japan's best players to be sold to MLB, NPB teams and Japanese baseball suffer in the longer term.[106] When Giants pitcher Koji Uehara asked to be posted in 2005, Kiyotake denied his request,
saying: "We don't recognize the posting system. I've said from the beginning that this is out of the question."[25] In the middle of the 2012-13 posting season, MLB approached NPB seeking to change the way MLB teams bid for the right to negotiate with NPB players. Instead of using a silent auction where the bids are known and teams can knowingly outbid each other. Such a change would likely lower the price of the transfer fees paid to NPB teams. MLB and the players' unions agree that they'd prefer to see the players receive more money for the transfer fees paid to NPB teams. MLB and the players receive more money for the transfer rather than the teams. [107] The Japan Times columnist Jason Coskrey also believed that these talks provided the JPBPA an opportunity to voice their concerns about the posting system and attempt to gain more leverage for themselves during the posting process.[108] The new agreement, as noted, was announced on December 16, 2013, with most of the changes desired by MLB and players from both leagues.[17] 2006-07 controversy The posting system was criticized after the Boston Red Sox paid a total of \$103.1 million to sign pitcher Daisuke Matsuzaka. The posting system was criticized by MLB insiders and by the U.S. media, after the controversial 2006-07 posting period. Before the posting of the period's first player, Daisuke Matsuzaka, in early November 2006, there was speculation that he might draw bids as high as \$30 million—more than twice the previous record bid that Ichiro Suzuki had garnered in 2000-01.[109] After his silent auction was closed, it was revealed that Matsuzaka had drawn a bid of \$51.1 million, shocking American and Japanese baseball executives.[110] The Boston Red Sox's winning bid was more than \$11 million higher than the next largest.[109] With the negotiations between Matsuzaka and the Red Sox at a stalemate as the negotiation period neared its close, The Washington Post's Dave Sheinin questioned both parties' intentions. Sheinin delived that the Red Sox had foreseen the contractual stalemate and had submitted a high bid simply to deny the New York Yankees an opportunity to negotiate with Matsuzaka. However, after Matsuzaka's agent Scott Boras threatened to take Matsuzaka back to NPB if his price was not met, Sheinin theorized that Boras intentionally wanted to hinder contract negotiations.[111] ESPN The Magazine's Tim Kurkjian described the situation as "the most obvious game of chicken ever."[109] Sheinin suggested that should the negotiations fail, Boras could take legal action on the grounds that the requirement of MLB teams artificially depressed the player's compensation. [111] Despite the negotiation difficulties, the Boston Red Sox eventually signed Matsuzaka. The team paid approximately \$103.1 million in total, including the transfer fee and contract, to acquire the pitcher. Kurkjian believes that with fees and contracts this high, small-market teams could not afford to compete with large-market teams for the rights to negotiate with some posted Japanese players. Kurkjian blames the posting system's use of a blind bidding system as the cause of Matsuzaka's "outrageous offer."[109] He also postulates that Matsuzaka's high bid amount helped to inflate the bids for Kei Igawa, Yankees' general manager Brian Cashman told reporters that "the posting system, clearly with what took place this winter, might not necessarily be the best system". Kurkjian claims that other MLB executives already believe that a traditional free agent structure, where the highest bidder wins, would be better than the current system. [109] Cashman and Yankees team president Randy Levine met with NPB team officials in early 2007 to discuss the posting system, among other things. These meetings did not result in any immediate changes.[112] See also Baseball in Japan Transfer in association football Notes ^ The agreement is officially called the "United States - Japanese Player Contract Agreement" (日米間選手 契約に関する協定). In English, the process is most commonly referred to as the "posting system", though it is also sometimes referred to as the "posting agreement". The corresponding Japanese term is most commonly written in katakana as "ポスティングシステム", though "ポスティングシステム", though "ポスティングシステム", though "ポスティングシステム", though "カール・アルマングシステム", though "ポスティングシステム", though "オスティングシステム", though "オスティングシステム", though "オスティングシステム", though "オスティングシステム", though "オスティングシステム", though "オステム", though "オステム" 2001). "Where have you gone, Masanori Murakami?". Major League Baseball. Archived from the original on August 18, 2002. Retrieved November 13, 2008. ^ a b Whiting 2004, pp. 75-80. ^ a b Whiting 2004, pp. 102-112. ^ Klein 2006, p. 137. ^ "Dodgers Sign Nomo To Three-Year Deal". The New York Times. Associated Press. February 23, 1996. Retrieved April 14, 2008. ^ Whiting 2004, pp. 130-134. ^ Klein 2006, p. 138. ^ a b Pearlman, Jeff (August 26, 2002). "He's Arrived". Sports Illustrated. 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