

Fantasy Hockey Site Review: CBS

Written by Glen Hoos

Sunday, 08 July 2012 08:04 - Last Updated Monday, 09 July 2012 10:24



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Note: This is the third in a series of reviews of the most popular online fantasy hockey league websites. All the sites have their strengths. The intention of these reviews is not to favour one site over another, but to provide a resource for league commissioners to determine which site will best meet the needs of their league. All sites are evaluated on the same criteria to provide for easy comparison, with a letter grade assigned to each factor. The opinions of the reviewer do not necessarily reflect those of Dobber Hockey.

Prior Reviews:

[ESPN](#)

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CBS Site Review By: Steve Laidlaw

User-Friendliness: B

For the most part, CBS is one of the most user-friendly providers I have used. In terms of personal team management, the add/drop system is as good as any provider, as is the waiver system. Trading and trade blocks are very simple. There is an option to either broadcast your trade block update to the entire league via email alert, or without alert if just minor changes are being made. This is a great feature for those who are trade-addicted.

For day-to-day management of rosters, the lack of a drag-and-drop option can be bothersome to some, but it is not something I personally have an issue with. I do enjoy that you can set your lineups well ahead of time and that on the lineup screen CBS provides each player's schedule for the week ahead, which makes planning easier. There are also daily alerts on the main screen notifying you when lineups lock, so you are alerted to early games ahead of time.

For commissioners, it takes a little bit longer to acquaint yourself with the website. For instance, there are several commissioner tools that are not particularly easy to find or navigate. In particular, in H2H pools there is a requirement for commissioners to set the playoff matchups themselves. This is an added bit of work you won't find with many other providers, and both remembering to do this each week and remembering how can be quite tedious.

Scoring and Stats: B

CBS allows for a variety of different scoring systems. All the generic pool types are covered (points only, head-to-head, rotisserie) but they also allow for unique takes on each format. For instance, I play in some points-based head-to-head leagues where you accrue points in each head-to-head matchup based on a variety of different scoring categories. So rather than the person who wins the most categories each week winning the pool, the winner is instead decided by who accrues the most fantasy points.

In terms of scoring categories provided, the CBS selection is probably one of the most extensive you will find, even allowing you to track niche stats like major and minor penalties, shootout goals, first period goals, hat tricks, shorthanded time on ice and many others.

The Draft: A

There really isn't anything to complain about with regard to the draft on CBS. It allows for online and offline drafting as well as autodrafting. They also provide pre-draft rankings. I can't recall if they allow for mock drafting but I am pretty certain they do.

A really nice touch is that CBS allows for in-draft trading of both picks and players, which is a unique feature I have not encountered with any other providers.

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Keeper League Compatibility: B

Depending on your league settings, you may find CBS either highly compatible or highly incompatible. The single best aspect of CBS for keeper leagues is that the site is available for use year round so there is absolutely no need for an alternate site for tracking anything. As a result, there is no need to even import the previous season's rosters; they are simply always available. CBS also provides an extensive league history area where you can track the standings of each and every season of your league, as well as dole out awards each season.

The main drawback to CBS keeper leagues is that after your inaugural draft CBS does not track draft picks so any draft pick trading must be done by the league.

Depending on whether you have a full keeper or a partial keeper, the lack of draft pick trading may be highly restrictive.

Farm Teams: D

CBS does not actually have a farm team setting. What must be done is to instead expand the IR to incorporate the size of the farm roster as well. It is a simple change that requires only minor tracking but does allow for abuse if you are not diligent. There is also a serious issue with regard to minor league players. Until players sign an NHL contract, they are not listed at all in the CBS system. CBS does allow you to create placeholders for these players, but this is an added nuisance and it also requires additional tracking, especially since most owners are not diligent in checking for these placeholders when the player is signed and becomes listed in the CBS database.

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Salary Cap Leagues: F

They do support salary cap leagues, but the actual system is pretty terrible. The first issue is that you have to manually input all the salaries yourself which is a pretty unreasonable undertaking. The second is that CBS does not seem to enforce the rules of the salary cap. It's basically one big pointless charade. I would recommend another site for your cap leagues or at least do not waste the time of inputting all the salaries into CBS since they don't enforce the rules anyhow.

Playoff Pools: F

CBS does not offer playoff pools.

Customization: B

CBS is pretty flexible with regard to just about everything you could want to do in your pool. As terrible as it is for salary cap leagues, CBS does still allow for it and you can set your cap limits where ever you like. Farm team eligibility is similar: not actually built into the system, but you can customize the system to allow for it to exist and because you are not actually bound by CBS. You can set the games played limits wherever you like.

As mentioned in the stats section, stats are very flexible, as are roster sizes and the trade deadline. You can even determine when playoffs are, which is a feature many sites do not provide.

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Positions are as flexible as you like. The commissioner has the power to edit the position of any player. The issue is that this player is locked into that position because CBS does not allow for multiposition eligibility. I find this to be a positive thing however, because it evens the playing field. Going into the season, you know exactly where each player will be playing, whereas other providers are far too giving with their positional eligibility. It is somewhat problematic that CBS is very slow with regard to changing position eligibility in the offseason. For instance, Jeff Skinner was a center in the CBS database this season.

Fun Features: A

CBS is great for fun features. You can upload team and league logos and there is an extensive league history section where you can track stats, records and hand out awards. The message board is linked to your email account in such a way that you need not actually access the site to respond to the league or individual owners. This makes for some great trash talk/league discussion. CBS also allows you to create your own articles to post on the league page and also create your own league polls for addressing league issues.

Resources: D

CBS is probably the last place I would go for fantasy hockey information. They do provide articles and injury updates and insights; the whole nine yards, really. I just have much better resources and find their information is either coming way too late or often the information is incorrect. Also, as a fantasy writer myself, I find their fantasy writing to be very bland and obvious. Maybe that is what most of the population is looking for, but I am looking for deeper insights.

I would also point out that in terms of doing your own research, the CBS website is not very handy. Their player profiles are among the worst I have seen and their lists such as free agents

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are just not very easy to use in terms of ranking players based on production.

Responsiveness: B

I have never actually had to email CBS about any issues because all of my issues have been answered by their extensive FAQ section. I feel that not even needing to interact with someone to sort out issues is certainly the most efficient way of conducting business.

Cost: D

For the most part the cost is worth it, but it is quite expensive, ranging from upwards of \$100 US per year. Start-up costs are even more expensive.

Overall (Keeper Leagues): B

I definitely feel like CBS is a worthwhile investment for a specific type of keeper league. The overall feel of the website is very user-friendly, and if you are committed to a long term dynasty league, then the cost of the service is more than worth it. The bigger your league the better with CBS, because it helps spread the cost around and adds to the professional feel that the CBS site exudes.

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Overall (One-year Leagues): E

I would not recommend this for one year leagues or for salary cap leagues however so CBS is more of a niche website.