



A Legislature as a Baseball Team

A legislature is like a baseball team (national league, no designated hitter). Each season the job is about the same. There are some rookies and some veterans, some stars and some utility players. A manager and coaches make hundreds of decisions on strategy every day in an effort to win, but mostly they are not in control of the outcome of the game. The rules remain the same each season, and there is an off-season when trades are made.

The teams are different in different states. Some teams have a history of spitters and bean balls; some teams have a history of fair play. It depends on the culture of the state.

The players all vary in talent and play different positions, but they have one thing in common—they are all in the big leagues. The manager works with what he's got. It is his job to win if possible and if not, to be gracious about losing. Sometimes the fans are enthusiastic and loyal, and sometimes they are sullen and want change. There is not much mystery to the game once you know the rules.

The Art of Legislative Politics
By Tom Loftus
Speaker, Wisconsin State Assembly
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