

RotoBaller News Desk

(NFL / MLB / NBA / NHL / PGA / NASCAR / MMA)

Contents:

[NEWS DESK MISSION](#)

[CRITICAL REMINDERS:](#)

[FAQs](#)

1. [How Do I create a news post?](#)
2. [At the End of My Shift, Where Do I Track My News Shift?](#)
3. [How Long Should I Wait Before Posting News?](#)
4. [Where can I find the news feeds on the website?](#)
5. [Where can I see news desk assignments:](#)
6. [If I don't have publish permissions \(i.e. you're not self-publishing\)- where can I find my drafted articles?](#)
7. [News Post Tags - When Should I use the Top Headlines and Breaking News TAGs?](#)
8. [Our Apps - Download the free app, and turn on notifications/alerts in the app \(click the hamburger menu\)](#)
9. [How Much Should You Be Writing as a member of RotoBaller's news desk? \(This does not apply to Shift Writers - for info on Shift Writing, see question 9\)](#)
10. [What is all the info I need to know about Shift Coverage?](#)
11. [Where Can I See a List of All Recently Written News Posts player by player?](#)
12. [What should I prioritize to write about?](#)
13. [What should an in-season news post look like and be about?](#)
14. [Can one news post cover multiple players?](#)
15. [If I have questions not answered here, who do I go to?](#)

[News Posts Checklist for When You're Writing](#)

[Example News Listings](#)

[Grammatical and Writing Quality Things to Keep in Mind](#)

NEWS DESK MISSION

The goal of RotoBaller's newsdesk is to write super-timely, "forward looking" and insightful, up-to-date fantasy news, **which can help a reader make a decision with their team or lineup.**

CRITICAL REMINDERS:

1. **When you write Player News for RotoBaller, keep in mind that your posts represent the whole site, not just your own opinion.** Our news desk should not be as provocative as you would be in a regular full length article, which has more room for editorializing. You should not seek to be super-contrarian in news posts. You should be as straightforward as

possible, providing quality information that helps readers make intelligent fantasy / dfs / betting decisions. Limit sugar-coating or editorial that diminishes the truth. If you're going to add editorial to news posts, It should be to reinforce what we know to be very true.

2. **Please only use credible, reliable sources:** Rumors are not acceptable sources, unless they're coming from "real sources". Please only link to true news sources like reporters, news outlets and publications. Examples: Twitter beat writer, NFL.com, MLB.com, ESPN, Sports Illustrated, local newspapers, etc. Avoid things like: an unverified Twitter account not associated with any news outlets, Rotoworld, Fangraphs, Fantasypros, etc.
3. **Our player news is distributed to many partners around the web, including fantasy games, apps, websites, platforms, etc.** As soon as you hit publish on a news post, that is the exact text / copy that is received by our partners. **Edits you make to a post after it's published are not received by our partners, unfortunately.**
4. Because of this, **you must make every effort to review your news posts before publishing**, and take care to make sure it's spot-on and error free, especially when it comes to spelling player names. Incorrect spelling of player names and careless sloppy mistakes in news posts will not be tolerated.

FAQs

1. **How Do I create a news post?**
 - The [News Desk Submission Form](#) is the only place you should create news posts from.
2. **If I'm on Shift, At the End of My Shift, Where Do I Track My News Shift?**
 - At the end of your news shift, you are required to track your shift in our [News Desk Tracking Doc](#). Simply go to the bottom of the doc, and enter a new row for yourself with relevant information.
 - **Volume:** The expectation is to write 5 posts per hour at a minimum. The avg is 6. It is ok for new writers to be under this target, and work up to it over time.
3. **Where can I find the news feeds on the website?**
 - [MLB feed](#), [NFL feed](#), [NBA feed](#), [NHL Feed](#), [PGA Feed](#)
 - **Note:** If you ever need to edit a post that was just published, simply go to the news feed here, click the post, and click the edit button in the Wordpress toolbar.
4. **If I don't have publish permissions (i.e. you're not self-publishing)- where can I find my drafted articles?**
 - [Click here](#)
5. **News Post Tags - When Should I use the Top Headlines and Breaking News TAGs?**
 - **Top Headlines** - If its a sexy topic/big news/important player - click "**top headlines**" (e.g. Strasburg leaves start early with injury, Yordan Alvarez a late scratch, Buxton hits for the

cycle, Alex Kirilloff is getting called up, unexpected relief pitcher XYZ gets the save instead of expected closer, etc).

- **Breaking News** - If it's a critical player and piece of news then also select "breaking news" (e.g. Trout out for 6-8 weeks with leg injury, Wander Franco getting called up, etc).

6. Our Apps - Download the free app, and turn on notifications/alerts in the app (click the hamburger menu)

- [iPhone NFL](#)
- [Android NFL](#)

7. How Much Should You Be Writing?

- **In General** - This depends on the sport.
- **For Shifts:** The expectation is to write 5 posts per hour at a minimum, but target 6.
- **MLB, NBA, NHL** - 10 - 15 posts per week at a minimum
- **NFL Team Coverage** - 4-5 recaps and 9-10 matchup outlooks a week
- **PGA / NASCAR / MMA** - 5-10 posts per week at a minimum

8. What is all the info I need to know about Shift Coverage?

- **Volume:** The expectation is to write a minimum of 5 posts per hour, ideally between 6-7. It is ok for new writers to be under this target, and work up to it over their first few shifts.
- **Compensation:** For info on the new hourly payment / compensation structure for shift writing, please contact Rishi@RotoBaller.com
- What are the critical resources I need for Shift Writing?
 - USE SLACK!
 - FOR MLB
 - Check the MLBNews Slack channel to ensure you're covering all the news items being dropped in there by the news editors
 - [RotoBaller's MLB News Feed](#) (to prevent dupes)
 - FOR NFL
 - **Check the NFLNews Slack channel to ensure you're covering all the news items being dropped in there by the news editors**
 - Download the Sleeper app. Once in the "Sleeper App," check "trending up" players and ensure we have news coverage for the top 20 players.
 - Check [RotoBaller's NFL News Feed](#) to prevent dupes
 - During special In-game shifts such as the Super Bowl, it's the writer's responsibility is to cover in-game news/injuries and any breaking news that occurs during your shift. For example, if Tom Brady announced his retirement while the Super Bowl was on, it would be an item the writer would need to post during their shift.
- At the end of your shift, [fill out a row in this form](#) - ***this is required for all news shifts***

9. Where Can I See a List of All Recently Written News Posts player by player?

- For MLB, [Use this document](#)
- For NFL, [Use this document](#)

10. What should I prioritize to write about?

Here are the types of news that we should be prioritizing, not only because it gets the most traction (with readers and partners) but also because it's the most important, in order:

- **0) Follow lists from Slack!**
- **1) Injury updates** - The #1 thing you want to make sure you're on top of. If there are injured players on your teams, you should write up any relevant update on the player: i.e. they're out, they're back in the lineup, they're starting rehab, a diagnosis, etc.
- **2) Promotions / Demotions** - Goes without saying, if a player is getting the boot, or getting the promo, it's very important to cover
- **3) Big Performances that weren't covered** - ie a player has a big performance the night before and it wasn't covered yet
- **4) Lineup Changes / Platoons / Depth Chart / Playing Time** - Nothing is harder for a regular fantasy manager to figure out then how much their fringe guy is playing, and what can be expected going forward. Updates like these add a ton of value.
- **5) Uncovered players from the [News Report](#) who deserve a post**
- **6) (Preseason)** - Any general news about players on your team is fair game.
- **7) General Matchup Outlooks** - Even if a player doesn't fall within category 1-3, then a general matchup outlook for an upcoming game is very valuable to readers setting daily lineups.
- **8) Big Changes in Performance** - A player broke out last night, it's big news cause he's been terrible. If a player's trend undergoes a big change, that is type of recap we want to write.
- **9) Amazing Streaks or Slumps** - Bour is smoking hot; German Marquez is consistently overachieving, etc.
- **10) Regular Recaps about a single game that has little "big picture" relevance** - A closer or setup man pitching a successful inning, Votto going 3-for-4 with 1 RBI, Billy Hamilton stealing a base, Bryce Harper going 1-for-4 with a HR, a pitcher throwing a completely meh quality start, etc. If a player is just coasting along with nothing big to report, they don't need an update more than once a week. This is the lowest priority type of update, because it adds the least value.

11. How many players can be covered as the subject of a news post?

- **Just one** - only one full player name should be in the title of a news post. If your news post mentions other players in the title, use just the last name.
- It's ok to mention other full player names in the body of the post.

12. If I have questions not answered here, who do I go to?

- News Desk Editors - contact them in Slack:
 - NFL / MLB - Brad Camara
 - NFL / MLB - Keith Hernandez
 - NBA - Dennis Clausen
 - NAS - Jordan McCabe
 - PGA - Joe Nicely
- Co-Founder and Head of Content for RotoBaller: [Alex Roberts](#)

13. How Long Should I Wait Before Posting Each News Item?

- Please do not submit or publish news posts in "rapid fire". You should wait at least 5 minutes between hitting the Submit/Publish button.
- What that means is you should only have one browser tab open with the news form at a time. Never more than one. Write a post, submit / publish it, then write a new post, etc.

- If you have written up your posts prior to submitting them, and you are in a position to submit them quickly one after the other, then you must wait 2 minutes before hitting the submit/publish button each time.

News Posts Checklist for When You're Writing

1. **Go to the [News Desk Form](#)**
2. **Write your news post** (~75-100 words for in-season)
3. **Article Titles** - Catchy, short, informative, use FULL NAME in title. Most importantly, titles should be a "statement, implication" format. We do not want to simply report what *has happened*, we want to *project what is going to happen in the near future with solid analysis*. Here are some examples of bad / good titles:
 - a. **BAD:** "Starlin Castro goes 3-for-4 in Win vs. Red Sox"
 - b. **GOOD:** "Starlin Castro goes 3-for-4, Remains Buy-Low Candidate"
 - c. **BAD:** "Alex Rodriguez Off to Hot Start"
 - d. **GOOD:** "Alex Rodriguez on Fire: Great Play This Weekend with Three "vs. L" Matchups"
 - e. **BAD:** "Dellin Betances Locks Down Save vs. Jays"
 - f. **GOOD:** "Dellin Betances Locks Down Save; New Favorite for Saves?"
4. **Player Names:** Use FULL NAMES of the player in the title.
5. **Titles:** all words except prepositions (and, the, etc) should be capitalized
6. **Click the MLB or NFL News Button** on the News Desk Form for player news NOT the Player Outlook button
7. **Sources:**
 - a. Sources should be used in every news post except player outlooks. Beat writers on twitter, NFL.com, MLB.com, NHL.com team sites, newspaper articles, etc are good sources.
 - b. **RotoWorld, FantasyPros, and stats sites are not legit sources**. A source should be quotable, and the quote should be included in the news post. RotoWorld is a good example of how this is done.
8. **Read over your article again!**
 - a. **We expect flawless grammar, spelling, punctuation, and analysis etc.** (double or triple check your articles)
 - b. **Content is clean, tasteful, accurate** - check your stats, quotes, etc - and funny
9. **Timeliness** - The goal is to provide **hyper-timely news and fantasy analysis**; Consider your news to potentially be a primary source for lineup decisions.
10. **If you're writing NFL Matchup Outlooks, YOU MUST INCLUDE CONTEXT OF A PLAYER'S OR TEAMMATE'S INJURY**
 - a. Before submitting a matchup outlook, you should know the injury status of the player with 100% certainty
 - b. Even if a player is healthy, if their injury designation was recently removed, this must be noted in the outlook. Here's an example of [this type of outlook](#).
 - c. Check the team's website (e.g. <https://www.chicagobears.com/team/injury-report/>), or the team's main twitter account, or [RotoBaller's Injury Sheet](#) (use "control+F" to easily find a player name) or just google the "player's name + injury" for latest info
 - d. Other injured players on the team may also affect the player you're writing about: e.g. if a QB is questionable, or limited, or doubtful, that's obviously relevant for a WR. [Here's an example of this type of outlook](#).
 - e. If a the player's status is uncertain at the time you're writing an outlook, please include analysis for all potential outcomes (playing or not playing). If a player is not playing, be sure to note which other players will see bumps and who will inherit the vacated snaps.
11. **Click the Save / Publish button**

Example News Listings

- For MLB, follow the Twitter account MLB Trade Rumors, Jeff Passan, Jon Heyman, Robert Murray, Ken Rosenthal, and Jon Morosi. These are great Twitter accounts to follow that keep the writer informed and up to date. For MLB Trade Rumors, the link to use is in the article, don't use MLB Trade Rumors as a source.
- For NFL, follow the Twitter account of NFL Beat Writers Adam Schefter, Ian Rapoport, Tom Pelissero, Albert Breer, and Jeremy Fowler. These are great Twitter accounts to follow that keep the writer informed and up to date. For NFL Beat Writers, these are retweets from beat writers and have a quick summary of the most important news.
- [Rotoworld](#) and [FantasyPros](#) are both very good examples of what we are looking for as far as "fantasy news" coverage during the season. However, our news needs to be more "forward looking", discussing more implications of the news being reported. We don't want to report *what has just happened*, we want to report *what is going to happen*, based on the news being reported.

Grammatical and Writing Quality Things to Keep in Mind

[Refer to our Writers Guide for comprehensive grammar stuff](#)

Highlights:

- Passing lines can be abbreviated as _-for-_ (ex: "Colin Kaepernick went 13-for-26 in Week 3")
- Be sure you're formatting correctly when discussing specific weeks.
 - Ex. "When Mark Ingram went down in week thirteen/week 13...Week 13
 - Correct: Week 13
- The format for numbers should be consistent EXCEPT when discussing specific weeks as mentioned above. Always spell out numbers lower than 10 and write the actual numerals for 10 or more.
 - Ex. "...forty yards on 6 catches..."
 - Correct: "...40 yards on six catches..."
- Avoid asking rhetorical questions.
 - Ex. "Is that the kind of production you want for your quarterback? I think not."
 - Correct: "That isn't the kind of production you want from your quarterback."
- Avoid starting sentences passively.
 - Ex. "Well,..." "Frankly,..." "Now,..." "Yes,..."
 - Ex. "Yes, the Panthers run defense has been great.."
 - Correct: "The Panthers run defense has been great..."
- Be decisive! Avoid wishy-washy phrases.
 - Ex. "Kind of", "mostly", "more-or-less"
- Use hyphens in descriptive phrasing.
 - Ex. "In this high volume passing attack..."
 - Correct: "In this high-volume passing attack..."
- Avoid adding obvious color - it adds nothing to your writing and can be off-putting to the reader.
 - Ex. "Jennings has 19 carries for 24 yards, which is really bad."

- Correct: "Jennings has 19 carries for 24 yards"
- Avoid using players' first names--you aren't best friends with them, and when writing professionally it's best to treat them professionally.
 - Ex. "Julio had 100 yards in Week 9..."
 - Correct: "Jones had 100 yards in Week 9..."
- Make sure your commas are in the right place and are present when necessary.
 - If you're not sure, read the sentence out loud. You can almost always tell where one needs to go.