

Basketball Strike

1. Adjective
2. Acronym
3. Noun
4. Plural Noun
5. Verb
6. Plural Noun
7. Verb
8. Verb Ending In Ing
9. Verb Ending In Ing
10. Verb Ending In Ing
11. Verb
12. Adjective
13. Preposition
14. Preposition
15. Adjective
16. Preposition
17. Adverb

Basketball Strike

At 4 p.m. Saturday, two groups of _____^{Adjective}_____ adversaries will gather once more around a hotel conference table and try to settle the _____^{Acronym}_____. _____^{Noun}_____ - if they can only hold off the agitating _____^{Plural}_____ ^{noun}_____ behind them.

This critical meeting will _____^{Verb}_____ against a backdrop of ultimatums, _____^{Plural noun}_____ and posturing by hardliners on both sides. The immense pressure could force N.B.A. and union officials to make a deal, or _____^{Verb}_____ any chance they have, _____^{Verb ending in ing}_____ the 2011-12 season.

"You know, hope springs eternal,"; Billy Hunter, the executive director of the players union, said Thursday.

But that was before disenchanted constituencies of owners and players began _____^{Verb ending in ing}_____ to undermine a deal.

A group of players is _____ Verb ending in ing _____ a drive to _____ Verb _____ the union if it accepts any deal that reduces the players' share of revenue below 52.5 percent.

The league is facing an equal threat from a group of 10 to 14 owners - led by Charlotte's Michael Jordan - who are _____ Adjective _____ to cap the players at 50 percent, according to a person who has spoken _____ Preposition _____ the owners. The hardliners are expected to reiterate that stance when all 29 owners meet Saturday morning in Manhattan, about six hours before the bargaining session.

The negotiations will be guided once more _____ Preposition _____ the federal mediator George H. Cohen, who agreed to return after a _____ Adjective _____ three-day session last month. Cohen reached _____ Preposition _____ to both sides earlier in the week.

Saturday's session will be the 21st since the lockout began, and if talks fail it might be the last for a long time.

The league has already canceled a month of games and is nearing the point where it could postpone the season

_____ Adverb _____.