

MINUTES OF THE IHSA GIRLS SOFTBALL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

September 3, 2008

The IHSA Girls Softball Advisory Committee met at the IHSA Office, Bloomington, Illinois, on Wednesday, September 3, 2008, at 10:00 a.m. Committee members present were: Kelly Coons, Streator (Twp.); Greg Hale, Pinkneyville; Dan Hutchings, Coal City; Mark Janesky, Sidell (Jamaica); Michael Marrese, Chicago (Resurrection); Dwain Nance, Marengo; Greg Neisler, Raymond (Lincolnwood); and Chris Smith, Macomb. Assistant Executive Directors Kurt Gibson and Matt Troha and State Final Manager Debi Neff, East Peoria (H.S.) were also in attendance.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Item VIII – Tournament Rules – D. Postponement of Games

Recommendation: If a game in any regional, sectional, super-sectional tournaments must be postponed prior to the completion of seven innings, or six and a half innings if the home team is ahead, because of rain or wet grounds, or if a game is called by the umpires because of rain, darkness, or other reasons, it is ruled a “suspended game” under provisions of Rule 4-2-3 and shall be continued on the next day, excluding Sunday, from the point of suspension. In these suspended games, the team trailing has the ability to concede the game at the point of suspension.

Rationale: Given the importance of state series contests, the committee believes it is necessary to play contests to their fullest extent (7 innings). This recommendation would require such and allow for a reasonable point of continuation in the event a contest is suspended before seven innings (or six and a half inning if the home team is ahead) is completed.

No action taken

2. IX. Tournament Policies – A. State Final Passes

Recommendation: For the State Final Tournament games, each Super-Sectional winner will receive: 1.) up to twenty-seven (27) passes for its players, coaches, and other team personnel as listed on the *Team Data Form* completed on-line by the school. 2.) one (1) state final event pass to properly licensed medical personnel for each team participating in the state final. The pass would be available for either a licensed athletic trainer or team physician. The individual must be listed on the school’s *Team Data Form*.

Rationale: This language better reflects what current practice is. This recommendation doesn’t reduce the number of available passes to schools; it does, however clarify what information IHSA staff uses in making passes available.

No action taken

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Committee recommends modifying the use of the International Tie Breaker to begin after the seventh inning in those contests or tournaments where it is employed.

Rationale: This recommendation doesn't change any other portion of the state adoption used in previous years, other than the inning where the ITB can begin. Conferences, regular season tournaments, and non-conference opponents must still agree to the ITB's use in the same manner used previously. In making this recommendation, the committee believes there is value on a number of fronts for making this modification. First, this modification will more closely mirror other playing codes that utilize the ITB. Secondly, tournaments using the ITB should have an easier time staying on schedule. Finally, this modification would allow for a possible reduction in the number of innings thrown by pitchers and keep lower level games scheduled to be played after varsity contests on schedule.

Approved by consent

2. The Committee recommends drafting a rules change proposal to the NFHS regarding the placement of on-deck batters.

Rationale: The committee reviewed a proposal from the North Suburban Conference asking that on-deck batters in softball be required to stand in the on-deck circle behind batters in softball games. The committee and the conference believe requiring on-deck batters to stand behind the batter creates a safer environment for the on-deck batter. If approved, IHSA staff will draft the language that will be forwarded onto the NFHS for their consideration in the summer of 2009.

ITEMS OF GENERAL DISCUSSION:

1. The committee reviewed the minutes of the 2007 advisory committee meeting.
2. The committee heard a report from state finals manager Debi Neff regarding the recently-completed state finals. It was noted that the approved recommendation from last year regarding the state final's time schedule worked out well.
3. The Committee discussed the process that would be involved to move the state series from spring to fall. Making this change was also discussed at the Coaches Roundtable last year at the Class 3A and 4A State Finals.
4. The Committee discussed the up-coming rules changes from the NFHS to be in effect for the 2009 season. It was discussed that there is a possibility that rules meetings for softball in 2009 may be conducted on-line. If that does occur, member schools and officials will be notified well in advance of the currently-scheduled meetings.

5. The Committee discussed the concern of the number of forfeits in the softball state series last spring and the impact those have on the competitive balance of the tournaments. It was noted that schools bear the final responsibility in monitoring what tournaments they enter and making sure they withdraw before the established deadlines to prevent inequities from occurring.
6. The Committee discussed the possibility of seed meetings being conducted on-line.
7. The Committee discussed the process of selecting state series sites and how member schools can have input into the selection of those sites.
8. The Committee discussed the need for state series umpires to accurately note what conflicts they may have with member schools to avoid being assigned to contests involving those schools.
9. The Committee discussed the new grouping and seeding policy that will be in use for the 2009 state series, with particular emphasis given to Class 1A and 2A, where schools will be assigned directly to geographic regionals, and not sub-sectionals, in order to minimize travel during the early rounds of the state series. No changes will be made to the grouping and seeding of schools in Class 3A and 4A from last year.
10. The Committee discussed that Class 3A and 4A will be playing regional quarterfinal games on Memorial Day in 2009. In the past, Memorial Day has often been the day of super-sectional contests in Class 1A and 2A, but this year, Memorial Day, which is scheduled for May 25, 2009, will be a day of play in the Class 3A and 4A tournaments.
11. The Committee discussed editing Section II of the Terms and Conditions to better clarify that regional and sectional hosts can play semi-final games in both tournaments on one night, if their facility can accommodate such and they have prior approval from the IHSA Office.