

MINUTES OF THE IHSA BASEBALL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
September 1, 2022

The IHSA Baseball Advisory Committee met on September 1, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

Committee members present: John Nee, Chicago (St. Rita); Glen Wilson, Huntley; Marcus Rodgers, South Holland (Thornwood); Joe Nichols, Geneseo; Brock Niebuhr, Paxton (P.-Buckley-Loda); Casey Longnecker, Hardin (Calhoun); Ryan Verver, Official; and Sam Knox, IHSA.

Absent committee member: Chris Becker, Highland

**TERMS & CONDITIONS RECOMMENDATIONS**

**1. Item VI. Tournament Structure and Time Schedules A. Time Schedules Note 2)**

**Recommendation:** Starting times for all games will be announced by the local manager, but in the Regional ~~and Sectional~~ Tournaments, games should not be played during school hours.

**Rationale:** The committee feels both Sectional semifinal games should be played on the same day. If the host school has lights on its field, that already happens. However, not all Sectional hosts have lights.

The goal with this proposal is to create a more competitive pitching matchup in the Super Sectional.

Removing “and Sectional” from this part of the Terms and Conditions will allow Sectional hosts without lights to start the first semifinal earlier in the afternoon and still play the second semifinal on the same day.

Currently, if Sectional A doesn’t have lights, it must play one semifinal on Wednesday and one on Thursday. If the team that wins Thursday also wins the Sectional championship on Saturday, its starting pitcher who threw on Thursday likely isn’t allowed to pitch in the Super Sectional on Monday because of the pitch count policy. If Sectional B has lights and plays both semifinals on Wednesday, the team that wins the Sectional championship on Saturday will likely throw its pitcher from Wednesday in the Super Sectional on Monday.

Two different playing schedules in two different Sectionals that lead into the same Super Sectional often means that one team is using its #3 or #4 pitcher while its opponent is able to use its #1 or #2 pitcher based on who threw in the Sectional championship game.

**Died for lack of motion**

**2. Item VIII. Tournament Rules D. Postponement of Games 1)**

**Recommendation:** Add an Exception to rule 4-2-3: In the 6<sup>th</sup> inning or beyond, if the game is tied or the visiting team takes the lead in its half of the inning, the game must be played to completion.

**Rationale:** Rule 4-2-3 is a good rule in the regular season. However, in the postseason, it is important for teams to play a 7-inning game to determine a winner. In rare situations, weather or darkness prevent teams from playing 7 innings. When that happens after the 5<sup>th</sup> inning, and the teams have not had equal times at bat, rule 4-2-3 says the score reverts back to what it was at the end of the last completed inning. In those situations, the rule can sometimes take runs off the board for the visiting team. If the visiting team has tied or taken the lead in its half of the inning, those runs don’t count, and the home team wins.

The committee feels that in these extremely rare situations, the teams should complete the game on the next available day.

Died for lack of motion

### 3. Item IX. Tournament Policies B. Players in Team Uniform C. Players Bench

**Recommendation:** In each of the tournaments, no school shall have in uniform more than twenty-seven (27) active players.

~~A maximum of thirty (30) individuals officially connected with the school shall be permitted to occupy the players' bench.~~

**Rationale:** This proposal maintains the current limit of 27 active players in uniform, but eliminates the maximum number of people on the bench.

This change will allow coaches to make decisions about which players are on the bench in the postseason and at the State Finals. Coaches of teams with larger rosters will be able to include additional players in the postseason who have been a part of the Varsity team all season. This change does not create a competitive advantage since teams are still limited to 27 active players for that game.

The number of State Finals medals will remain the same (34 for each school).

Schools are always allowed to purchase additional medals for team members who didn't receive one at the State Finals.

Died for lack of motion

### 4. Item XI. Officials E. State Final Assignments

**Recommendation:** Assign eight umpires to the State Finals instead of the current twelve. Each umpire will officiate four total games during the weekend (two games each day) as a part of a four-person crew instead of the current two total games (one each day) as a part of a three-person crew. Each umpire will be paid a flat fee of \$578 plus up to two nights lodging at a hotel designated by the IHSA Administrator.

**Rationale:** Assigning four umpires to each game at the State Finals will provide the best experience for our teams. From the umpires' perspective, umpiring in a 4-person crew is much simpler than umpiring in a 3-person crew because base coverage, field coverage, and rotations are more efficient. Assigning eight total umpires will ensure that each umpire has a game behind the plate.

Died for lack of motion

### **ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION / STATE ASSOCIATION ADOPTION:**

**Recommendation:** The committee highly recommends that conferences consider implementing a 2-hour time limit for all non-varsity games. No new inning will start 2 hours after the first pitch of the game. If the score is tied when the game reaches the time limit, the game will end in a tie.

**Rationale:** A 2-hour time limit for non-varsity games will create a better baseball experience for everyone involved. Players, coaches, and umpires are familiar with time limits since most games prior to high school now use a time limit. At a time when umpire retention is a

key factor for all schools, umpires might be more willing to umpire non-varsity games if there is a time limit.

Approved by Consent

**ITEMS OF DISCUSSION:**

1. The committee discussed the 2021 advisory committee recommendations.
2. The committee discussed NFHS rule changes for the 2023 season.
3. The committee discussed the NFHS player/DH rule and possibly submitting a rule change proposal.
4. The committee discussed potential changes to the IHSA state series format.
5. The committee discussed concerns about the reduced number of baseball umpires around the state.

The committee recognized outgoing members John Nee, Chicago (St. Rita) and Casey Longnecker, Hardin (Calhoun).

The meeting adjourned at 1:16 p.m.