

**VSS Proposed Rule Changes for 2023**  
**Rules Committee Recommendations**  
**January 16, 2023**

The rules committee met on January 16, 2023 in the upper room at Sheas: Committee members attending: Bill Hettinger, Tim Poloski, Kevin Conklin, Gail Gertzmacher, John Hardy, Fred Valenti, Keven Busque, Matt Kellie. Absent: Mike Calabro, Rick Krajewski, Mike Bard, Tom Krejewski. Guests: Kari Martin.

**The following summarizes the proposed rule changes recommended by the rules committee:**

**1. Changes to courtesy runner from home.** The committee recommends keeping the existing courtesy runner from home rules in place, except we will stop using the plate and the town painted line and instead put some red tape on the backstop as far back as possible and get some cans of spray lines to mark the starting line and the runner will have to start facing backwards (to mimic the delay in getting out of the box).

Comments: The committee discussed eliminating courtesy runners and using the fall league rule that balls hit to the outfield grass were safe at first and also discussed using the last out as the courtesy runner but rejected both of these in favor of the tape on the fence for the line.

**2. Hit over the fence when using courtesy runner:** If the batter is using a courtesy runner from home and hits the ball over the fence, the courtesy runner stops at first base rule doesn't apply the first time hit over the fence (it's a home run) but does apply for additional balls hit over the fence (it's a single, the runner stops at first). The committee recommends this clarification to the rules.

**3. Changes to clarify playoff seedings language** (someone said it wasn't written down in rules): Regular season champions and playoff seeded determined by winning percentage. Ties count as half win and half loss. The tie breakers for seeding are head-to-head games; run differential in head-to-head games; then coin flip. The committee recommends this clarification to the rules.

**4. Protecting the pitcher/Pitching Screen:** The committee discussed several alternatives for protecting the pitcher including the use of the pitching screen. The committee is not recommending the use of the screen at this time. Instead, the committee recommends pitchers use approved chest protectors and leg protectors and recommends the league purchase two sets of protective equipment per field.

Comments: Prior to the rules committee meeting, league primary and secondary pitchers were sent an email asking for input on the use of the screen. Several provided long emails in favor and several provided long emails against. Others responses were brief and neither for or against. Wallingford uses a screen per town rules but does not require a pitcher to get behind it. Ludlow over 70 uses the screen and requires pitchers to get behind it. The decision of the screen versus safety equipment is the boards at this point.

**Discussed but not recommended:**

5. If the batter hits the ball over the fence with runners on the base and one of the base runners scores as the fifth run, it doesn't count as an over the fence home run towards the one per game. The committee does not recommend this change.

6. Play two innings defensively to speed up the game. The committee does not recommend this change.

7. A courtesy runner can only run once per game. The committee does not recommend this change.

8. Number 1 players cannot use senior bats regardless of age. The committee does not recommend this change.