

## Minutes of VSS Rules Committee Meeting 1/22/24

The meeting was called to order at 6pm.

Rules Committee members attending: Tim Poloski, Fred Valenti, Jerry Biancucci, John Hardy, Matt Kellie, Paul Davies, Mike Smith, Keven Busque, Bill Hettinger (chairing meeting). Missing: Mike Calabro, Bill Gamen

Other attendees: Kevin Conklin (Commissioner), John Murphy (Board), Kari Martin (Ravens Manager)

**Below are the suggestions were submitted by members for review by the rules committee followed by a recommendation to the board or other suggestion for board action.**

### Recommended

**Rule Change Suggested #1:** Mandatory Screen. Pitcher must move behind the screen after pitching but can then come out to field the ball. If pitcher does not move behind screen, they cannot field the ball. (It may take some time for this move to become automatic).

**Purpose:** This rule change is proposed to protect pitchers from being hit with line drives.

**Discussion/Recommendation:** a) The committee discussed whether the screen use should be mandatory or optional. 5 were in favor of a mandatory screen, 3 were in favor of an optional screen. b) All committee members felt the pitcher has the right to field the ball and should be allowed to do so *after* moving behind the screen.

**Rule Change Suggested #3:** Yellow card: Use a yellow card system to warn players during the season. If a player verbally abuses another player, coach, or umpire, they get yellow card. Yellow card gets issued by umpire during game or by commissioner after game. If you get two yellow cards, this becomes a red card. If player touches another player in anger, they get red card. First red card, get suspended a game. Second red card, suspended for the season. Umpire should report yellow cards issued to umpire coordinator.

**Recommendation:** The committee was in favor 8-0 of a process whereby players who, in the opinion of both umpires, commit unsportsmanlike conduct receive a warning that is reported to the commissioner in writing by the umpires. Upon two warnings the player is suspended for a game. Two more warnings it's a season long suspension. The committee could not decide if the warnings expired after a set period of time.

**Rule Change Suggested #4:** A batter cannot be called out before reaching first base on a batted ball that reaches the outfield grass. Runners can be forced or tagged at other bases.

**Recommendation:** The committee was in favor of this rule change 8-0

**Rule Change Suggested #7:** Subs from other teams should wear either the VSS shirt from their regular team, a VSS shirt from the team they are substituting for, or may wear a non-VSS shirt provided it is not the same color as the opposing team. Pool players may wear a VSS shirt from the team they are playing from or a non-VSS shirt provided it is not the same color as the opposing team.

**Recommendation:** the committee recommends a version of this change (8-0) where the sub can wear any shirt provided it is not the color of the opposing team

**Rule Change Suggested #8:** If a manager is anticipating being short players and in good faith invites a pool player to play as a sub, that pool player shall be allowed to play even if one of the team's expected missing players shows up unexpectedly.

**Recommendation:** the committee recommends this change 8-0 with the changes that it can be only as the 12<sup>th</sup> player

**Rule Change Suggested #9:** Section N – Fix the sentence on players leaving during a game: *Managers must notify the umpire before the game about players who anticipate leaving during the game.* Players leaving during a game will not be recorded as an out when the umpire has been notified before the game that the player will be leaving or if the player has been injured. Players ejected will be recorded as outs.

**Recommendation:** 8-0 vote to include the notification of umpires before the game language

**Rule Change Suggested #16:** Volunteer umpires must be paying members of the league.

**Recommendation:** The committee recommends this by vote of 8-0

## Suggestions for the League

**Rule Change Suggested #10:** New players will not be placed on a team unless they have attended a tryout or practice or their skills have been evaluated by the commissioner or board members.

**Recommendation:** The league should change the new player processes to include this.

**Rule Change Suggested #12:** Play two-innings at a time.

Discussion: This rule change is to speed up the games so we can get both games in. The league does not have any data on how many games don't go to completion.

**Recommendation 1:** no rule change

**Recommendation 2:** The league should do the following:

- a) Have the managers report any non 7-inning games to the statistician when they report the scores
- b) Remind the managers and umpires that nobody is behind us on Thursday so all games can go to completion
- c) Coordinate end of the second game to exactly when the other teams need the field
- d) Revisit earlier start times if we have a problem

**Rule Change Suggested #13:** Handicapping lineup differences between teams – two suggestions: a) Teams with more batters in the lineup get one run for each extra batter; b) Each team can only bat the same number players. If a team has more, some sit out and become subs later in the game.

**Recommendation 1:** The committee does not recommend this rule change at this time.

**Recommendation 2:** However, the committee recommends that each team send in the number of players in their lineup when reporting the score to the statistician so the league can gather data on the impact of different size lineups on game results

**Rule Change Suggested #17:** No playing three days in a row when scheduling makeups.

**Recommendation 1:** The committee was against this as a rule as it will make rescheduling days difficult.

**Recommendation 2:** however, the committee suggests that we try to avoid scheduling three days in a row if possible when scheduling makeups

## **Not Recommended/withdrawn**

**Rule Change Suggested #2:** Pitch over the pitching screen: place the pitching screen between mound and plate. Pitcher must pitch over the screen. This also gets the minimum 6' arc on the ball and has the pitcher positioned behind the screen at delivery.

**Recommendation:** This rule change was rejected 8-0 (see rule change #1 for the screen alternative)

**Rule Change Suggested #5:** Rule Change: Runners from home are not allowed.

**Recommendation:** The committee vote was 4-4 on this. Therefore, it is not recommended, but board may wish to consider.

**Rule Change Suggested #6:** *Subs from other teams may only play right field, catcher, or second base.* A substitute pitcher is allowed if the team's regular pitchers are missing. Pool players may play any position.

**Recommendation:** The suggestion on limiting positions was rejected 6-2

**Rule Change Suggested #11:** Radioactive players: The board will identify weak players who cannot consistently hit out of the infield. When these players bat and make an out, it will not count towards the team's outs that inning. They also cannot be out at first if there is a force play at another base. If they reach base safely, they become a regular base-runner and can score or be out at another base or use a pinch runner.

**Recommendation:** "No way." The committee was against this rule change 8-0

**Rule Change Suggested #14:** Play doubleheaders

**Recommendation:** The committee was against playing double headers during the regular season due to the impact on 5:00 players and the impact on players playing elsewhere

**Rule Change Suggested #15:** Get rid of the scoring home plate. Only use the line

**Recommendation:** The committee voted against this 8-0. The plate was in use as it is easier to umpire than the line and the line is often gone by the second game.

**Rule Change Suggested #15:** No one under 55 can be a coach, player or umpire.

Action: This motion was withdrawn.

**Rule Change Suggested #18:** Play a 21 game season.

Recommendation: The committee was against this 7-1.

Meeting adjourned at 7:53pm.