

2024 MHSAA BASEBALL COMMITTEE MINUTES
Thursday, January 18, 2024- 9:30 a.m. – East Lansing

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Chris Adams, Camden
Tony Adams, Norway
Eric Albright, Midland (MIAAA)
Jay Alexander, Detroit
James Becker, Ubyly
Ben Botti, Decatur
Jesse Brinks, Hudsonville
Jeff Calcaterra, Birmingham
Perry Deliyanne, Hanover
Mike Evoy, Detroit
Ben Farkas, Hudsonville
Tom Flynn, Birmingham
Ian Hearn, Ada
Kris Herman, Maple City
Jeff Kosal, Crosswell
Matt Moffett, Cedar Springs
Todd Miller, White Lake
Troy Miller, Jackson

Shayne Mishler, Montrose
Billy Mitchell, Rudyard
Brian Osborne, Howell
Terry Pant, Ottawa Lake
Glenn Samson, Mendon
Karl Schmutz, Saginaw
Kevin Schwedler, Frankenmuth
Matt Seidl, Olivet
Chris Selich, Millington
Alan Shankel, DeWitt
Keith Stephens, Romulus
Todd Szalka, Trenton (MHSBCA)
Brandon Trefil, Fulton
Tom Ward, Ann Arbor
Brian Zdanowski, Greenville

MHSAA STAFF:

Brad Bush (Recorder)

The 2023-24 Baseball Committee meeting began with a review of the MHSAA decision-making process, membership rotation, and the charge of the committee. Agenda items were compiled from correspondence, staff, committee members and the coaches' association. Minutes of the 2022-23 meeting of the Baseball Committee were reviewed. It was noted the one recommendation from last year was rejected by the Representative Council. This proposal for the electronic recording of a pitch count was brought back the committee this year by the coaches' association.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

NFHS AND MHSAA BASEBALL RULES

A review of the 2023 rules changes was discussed. The new pivot foot regulation was seen as a big improvement to the pitching rules. There was good discussion of the 2 major rule changes for the 2024 season. The coach to catcher electronic communication rule was discussed. The vendor and technology options were discussed as well as the details of the rule. The new rule regarding wristbands was discussed as well. This will clarify and codify into rules the wearing of play card wristbands. A review of the points of emphasis occurred. A healthy discussion regarding pace of play was had. It was agreed that the combination of coaches and umpires need to work together to improve the pace of play of the game. It was emphasized that using the 20 second pitch count rule should be the last resort of the umpire when trying to maintain a good pace of play. The conversation of malicious contact centered around the use of a double base at first base. Brad Bush will gather more information nationally to continue this conversation in the future as a possible proposal from the baseball committee. A discussion regarding the 38-game limit and if that should be reduced. The group will look at the average number of regular season games that are being played to look at the possibility of reducing this number in the future.

MHSAA TOURNAMENT

A conversation regarding the trophy presentation at the regional level. The change in how trophies are presented was seen as a positive. It was again emphasized that schools need to enter all of their scores into the MHSAA website to look at the use of MPR in seeding the district in the future. It was

agreed that due to many factors there has not been enough information to make any decisions on whether to use MPR in the future. The hope is that after the 2024 season there will be enough information to decide moving forward if MPR could be used in baseball. Schools will be asked again to input all of their scores into the MHSAA website.

UMPIRE ISSUES

The shortage of umpires was discussed. Troy Miller, the umpire representative, discussed his perspective on the shortage of umpires. Recruiting of new umpires and how everyone can help recruit was a discussion as well. There was a lot of discussion on umpires working short handed and how to address what the pay should be for these umpires. It was agreed that umpires working alone should be paid both game fees. This is a local decision, not one that can be made at the MHSAA level. The MHSAA will provide guidance for local schools.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The main health issue discussed was the pitch count rule and the fall survey. It was agreed to keep the current pitch count rule in place. It was agreed that an emphasis needs to be placed on coach-to-coach communication during and after the game on the number of pitches to eliminate any discrepancies.

5 DIVISION DISCUSSION

A discussion of the possible addition of a 5th division in baseball was had. The details of another division in the tournament, structure, and finals were all concerns. There was support for the concept pending more information. The group felt it was very important to keep the athlete experience at the front of any discussion moving forward.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

1. For the 2025 season, require all schools to submit information by noon of the following day after a game or games the names of all individuals and number of pitches to an agreed upon online source. This could be the MHSAA website or third-party site. This is for varsity competition only. (21-3)