

MINUTES OF THE NATIONAL FASTPITCH COACHES ASSOCIATION RULES AND OFFICIALS COMMITTEE MEETING

December 10, 2008 Marco Island Marriott Beach Resort

Jay Miller, Rules and Officials Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. with nine in attendance. Those attending were committee members Jay Miller, Division I representative; Julie Lenhart, Division III representative and Dennis Mader, Umpires representative. Also in attendance: Kevin Billeau, Umpire; Art Hill, Horizon League umpire assigner and director of umpires for the Rebel Spring Games; Jim Adrian, Washington state coordinator for umpires, assigner for the GNAC and NWAC conferences; Sharon Drysdale, NFCA; Amy Hughes, NFCA; Teresa Smith, NCAA; Dee Abrahamson, NCAA

I. Upcoming NCAA Rule Changes

- a. NCAA Rules committee is soliciting opinions about potential changes to the eight-run rule
- b. A controversial change for 2009 will be the chalk lines to mark the pitching lane for NCAA play. There is no rule change for play, but this is now a visual cue to help umpires enforce the existing rule.
 - i. Miller's team played with the new lines in the fall. It appeared that a 9' line stayed in place much better than the 8' line dictated by the new rule book.
 - ii. Lenhart's team also saw the same results with the line wiped out after one inning of play
 - iii. Hill offered that the visual cue is helpful to the umpires, even if it only stays visible for the first inning
 - iv. Abrahamson offered that a 9' line had been considered but had been overruled in favor of an 8' line to end at the edge of the pitching circle. The hope of the NCAA Rules committee is that pitchers will practice with the lines and learn to stay within the pitching lane with or without the visual cue.
- c. The committee will also solicit input on how the game can continue to be played within a reasonable time frame. Keeping length of game relatively consistent will assist in the publicity of the game, particularly television coverage.
- d. Umpire mechanics for a safe-no-tag play at the plate were discussed.
- e. Since on-field baseball coaches at pro and NCAA levels are now required to wear helmets, helmet requirements are also being discussed for softball
 - i. Abrahamson informed the room that the NCAA committee discussed this issue and chose to not make a change in requirements for adult coaches, but student-athletes coaching the bases must now wear helmets.

- ii. The High School federation has now passed a helmet requirement, as has NCAA baseball. Helmets can be worn at the discretion of the base coaches but are not required.
 - f. Rules regarding incorrect line-up cards were also discussed. A suggestion was made that the NCAA Rules Committee explore standardization of line-up cards.
- II. Adjournment. Miller adjourned the meeting at 4:58 p.m.