

NMAA Baseball Sports Specific Committee Meeting
Friday, May 15th, 2009
7:00 AM



Agenda

- A. Welcome/Introductory Comments
- B. Current Issues at Hand
 - 1. Class A/2A Split in Classification for 2009
 - 2. State Tournament Formats and Seeding/Selection Process
 - a.) Class A/2A
 - b.) Classes 3A-5A
 - c.) Coin Flip (should home team be decided by the higher seed?)
 - 3. State Tournament Facilities
 - 4. Pitching Restrictions
 - a.) Current
 - b.) Possible Pitch Count?
 - 5. Universal District Tiebreakers (passed at March Board Meeting)
 - a.) Do they need to be adjusted?
- C. Other Issues from Committee Members
- D. Final Comments
- E. Adjournment

Baseball Sports Specific Committee Meeting
Notes for May 15, 2009
7:00 AM

The baseball sports specific committee met on Friday, May 15th at Little Anitas Restaurant in Albuquerque. Those present were as follows: Dusty Young, NMAA; Joe Moulton, Capital HS A.D.; Jim Johns, Eldorado HS, Class 5A; Alan Edmonson, Socorro HS, Class 3A; Jimmy Ward, Elida HS, Class 1A; Jim Sayre, NMOA Umpire. Those not present were as follows: Kenny Barreras, APS A.D.; Richard Laughlin, Piedra Vista HS, Class 4A; Eric Gutierrez, Tularosa HS, Class 2A.

Dusty Young opened the meeting with welcoming/introductory comments.

The meeting began with a variety of subjects discussed, summarized as follows:

1. Class A/2A Split for the 2009-2010 School Year
 - Mr. Young informed the group about the desire amongst numerous traditional Class 1A schools to again separate the classes for the upcoming school year (2009-2010)
 - It was also explained that the classes would be separated for the next 4 year block, which takes effect during the 2010-2011 school year. This was easily done due to the fluctuation in schools moving from Class 3A to 2A for this block. 39 schools would have a baseball program and this could easily be split into two classes
 - Mr. Young did explain that the current number of programs within Class A/2A makes it difficult to have separate classes, as each one class could have as little as 13 schools.
 - Mr. Ward (Class A Rep) did state all of the coaches in Class A were for this split to ensure equity amongst each program, as he could see some schools dropping baseball due to non-competitive games with traditional Class 2A schools.
 - The baseball sports specific committee as a whole understands the situation and is in full favor of this action. Suggestions were made by the committee to have one class for district alignment purposes, but then separating into two separate state championships.
 - Mr. Young stated this item would be placed on the June Board Meeting as an action item based on this committees recommendation and the request of numerous 1A schools.

2. State Tournament Formats and Seeding/Selection Process
 - Class A/2A
 - i. Mr. Young stated that the format used for the Class A/2A tournament in 2009 would again be used in 2010. Coach Ward did state that many coaches amongst the class believe this format needs to be adjusted. It is a majority consensus that only district championships should automatically qualify for state, with the remaining 8 teams selected at large. It is also felt that the field should be seeded 1-16 just as Classes 3A-5A. The committees

agreed with this so all classes are consistent across the board. It is believed this will help ensure the best two teams in the state are put on opposite sides of the bracket, whereas the 1st Round Match Ups format used now can have two top teams playing early and not making it to Albuquerque for the quarterfinals.

- Class 3A-5A
 - i. Mr. Young informed the committee that the 2 of 3 series implemented in the first round of 16 would be eliminated at the conclusion of the 2008-2009 school year. This was done as an action taken by the NMAA to cut down on school costs due to the current economy.
 - ii. The committee and coaches across the state understand the situation due to the economy, but do not think this format specific to baseball causes much of an impact. It is felt that although it will not be used in 2009-2010, it should be considered again in the future once the economy gets better. Committee members will be putting together data for the Commission and Board to show how important this series is for baseball, as well as how little it effects an individual school district's budget.
 - iii. Mr. Young stated this is an action taken by the NMAA that will take effect for quite some time, but may again be looked at in the future.
- Seeding and Selection Committees and Processes were again discussed. There is always some controversy in regards to this process, but it is now felt that these committees are doing a better job than in the past. Committee members agreed that districts are now sending more "baseball people" to these meetings who have a better idea on the sport compared to those who served in the past. At large reps have become very important and they believe keeping this neutral but knowledgeable baseball person on the committee is a must. Although the committee has suggested alternative measures in the past (mathematical formulas, regionally assigned members, etc.), it is felt that the A.D.s are doing a fine job and things continue to get better
- Coin Flip for Home/Visitor during the Quarterfinals, Semifinals, Finals
 - i. Mr. Young again asked the committee how they felt with regards to a coin flip deciding who will be home/visitor for the quarters/semis/finals. Some coaches/administrators have asked why the higher seed is not automatically the home team. All coaches amongst the committee feel this is tradition, and a coin flip should determine this part of the tournament.

3. State Tournament Facilities

- Mr. Young spoke briefly of the facilities used during the State Tournament games held in Albuquerque. The committee was asked if the same venues should be used each year or if other schools should get a chance to host. The committee feels that if the schools presently used are willing to let the NMAA use their facilities each year, this should be done as the current sites are the best in the state.

- Mr. Young asked Coach Johns of Eldorado if this posed a burden to his team while EHS prepares to play games in the State Tournament (taking away from practice, BP, etc.). Coach Johns explained he feels all kids in the state should get a chance to play on their facility because they strive to keep it in good shape and are happy to have EHS as a site every year.
- Other fields to possibly use in the future based on the committee's recommendation are Manzano HS, Rio Grande HS, and Cibola HS.

4. Pitching Restrictions

- Mr. Young discussed the current 12 innings per 72 hours pitching rule with the committee that is currently within the NMAA Bylaws. The committee members feel this is still the best way to handle pitching restrictions. Most coaches seem to take very good care of their pitchers throughout the year, especially at the Class 4A-5A levels. Class 3A has showed some concerns with certain pitchers being over used, but it is a trend that has changed over the last few years, especially with the implementation of the 2 of 3 series. This has helped teams create a pitching staff as opposed to using just a couple individuals throughout the year. Class A/2A feel the current rule is fine, especially since most of these schools play fewer games than larger schools.
- Using a possible universal pitch count was brought up by Mr. Young. This idea was again was frowned upon greatly by the committee. A pitch count would for one be hard to track, and two coaches believe kids should already be on a pitch count with their respective coaches. It is a universal feeling amongst high school coaches that arm overuse during the high school season is not a problem at all. But all feel that club/year round baseball is causing some overuse injuries to the youth of New Mexico.

5. Universal District Tiebreakers

- Mr. Young explained that the NMAA Board of Directors passed a universal tiebreaker procedure for all districts to abide by in the sport of baseball. Mr. Young also explained that this tiebreaker was implemented early to help in a few cases this year, and some negative opinions came of the tiebreaker system set up by the Sports Specific Committee during the December meeting.
- Least runs allowed was set to be implemented as the tiebreaker after head to head competition, but although put in place to hopefully prevent schools from running up the score the get a larger run differential, it came about that this may cause schools to in fact score as many runs as possible because if a team gives up 25 (or something like this) then they are almost out of the run in a tiebreakers.
- The committee felt that a simple run differential should be used to determine placement within district, with a +-10 cap. They also felt that if a tie is not broken by this, no other formula should be used and that a coin flip should be the final step in deciding a winner. (No least runs, no using next place district finisher, etc.)

6. Officials/Umpires

- Mr. Sayre of the NMOA led a discussion with the committee concerning the officials world of baseball
- One issue the umpires would like to stress in 2009-2010 is pace of play. It is felt that games have tended to run longer and longer over the years, and simple adjustments in between innings, pregame, etc. can help to shorten this time. The biggest point of emphasis is to make sure teams are on and off the field quickly before innings, pitchers and catchers are being “picked up” to ensure warm up pitches are done quickly, etc. Mr. Sayre also stated it should be the umpires responsibility to keep in between innings warm ups to 1 minute, and not necessarily 5 pitches. If umpires can help manage the game to quicken the pace, game times should shorten as well.
- One issue the coaches brought up to Mr. Sayre was a rule that is hardly used in baseball these days. Coaches feel sometimes umpires eject coaches too quickly, when certain actions can be solved by restricting the coach to the dugout instead of ejecting him. This is something the committee feels can help deter Coaches from doing some of these things in the future because if they get ejected this may just make them upset when a restriction could open there eyes to some things. An analogy given was that in basketball, where a technical foul is issued to the coach for “bad behavior”, then a 2nd T warrants an ejection. The “restriction to the dugout” is a part of the rulebook and should be used more. Mr. Sayre stated he would take this back to the NMOA.

7. Other Issues

- One final issue brought up by both the committee was the new trend in cheering from the dugouts during baseball. Many schools now have chants/cheers similar to softball, which has not really been a part of the game in the past. Most coaches/umpires believe these chants can be unsportsmanlike especially as many are directed towards the other team in a negative way. It is felt that this should be another point of emphasis for coaches and umpires to clean up during the 2009-2010 year.

In summary there were no actual votes taken, simply discussion. The attendees agreed to survey their areas to get appropriate feedback in preparation for the next sports specific meeting to be held this summer at the Annual Coaches Clinic. The agenda for this meeting will be sent at least two weeks before this meeting is to commence.

Mr. Young thanked all that were in attendance and the meeting was adjourned at 9:30am.