

CIAC BASEBALL COMMITTEE MINUTES
October 2, 2017

Members present: Steve Baldwin, John Cross, Rich Hadden Ralph Franco, Scott Martin, Steve Patrina, Anthony Azzara (Chair), Fred Balsamo (Tournament consultant), Ray Faustich (Coordinator of Officials), George Synnott (Tournament Director) and Joe Tonelli (CIAC staff).

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by Chairman Anthony Azzara at 3:00 p.m.

Committee Membership Update – Butch distributed the committee roster and asked the committee to check their contact information and make updates, if necessary.

Minutes – By unanimous consent, the minutes of May 26, 2017 were approved.

Correspondence – Butch apprized the committee that he sent a letter to the principal of Waterford High School regarding props that were a facsimile of a shot gun that team members had in the dugout and were used during tournament games. When an opposing team player struck out, they would point the makeshift gun at the player like they were shooting him, signifying that he was out. We received a report that this occurred in the quarters and Fred contacted the athletic director who indicated that he would speak to the coach and put a stop to it. Although the umpiring crew for the finals did not observe the props during the game, five (5) team members were observed with the fake guns after the game as they were leaving the field. After a discussion, it was suggested that Butch follow-up with the principal to see if the school did anything to address the issue to be sure that it does not happen again. Butch will update the committee at the next meeting.

2017 Tournament Report – Fred reported that it was a very successful tournament. There were many exciting games and the finals drew large crowds. The highlight of the tournament occurred in Class L, where Foran High School, finished below the qualifying standard with a 7-13 record, and entered the tournament as the 32nd team to fill out the bracket and won the state championship. They defeated the number 1 and 2 teams along the way to the crown. Fred pointed out that this year's tournament marked the conclusion of the two-year trial to "fill the brackets". Since the baseball committee unanimously supports the "Fill the brackets" concept, we will seek CIAC Board approval to allow baseball to continue to utilize this concept as part of the qualifying standards in the future.

Pitch Count Update – With the support of the baseball committee, after reviewing the 2017 pitch count rules in Connecticut and throughout the country, we have made the rule more restrictive, starting with the upcoming 2018 season. The revised rule will utilize the same pitch count thresholds that were previously supported by the CIAC baseball committee, the baseball coaches and the sports medicine doctors. However, now there is a maximum pitch count, an inning by inning verification, a post-game certification by the head coaches, and the required online pitch count submissions initiated last year will now include all levels (frosh, JV and varsity). In addition, the pitch counts can now be viewed by all member schools. The adjustments to the pitch count rule, and the CIAC in-season rule that prohibits the baseball players in CT from practicing and/or playing with an outside team during the high school season, will continue to enhance our efforts to protect the welfare of the high school pitchers in Connecticut.

Ten Run Rule – As a result of the pitching rule, and at the urging of the baseball coaches on the committee, the CIAC surveyed the head coaches regarding a ten-run rule, on all levels of play. The results were overwhelming in favor (71%) of incorporating this rule in the CIAC baseball regulations, starting with the upcoming 2018 season. On a motion by John Cross, the motion was passed with one abstention.

Pitchers and Catchers Conditioning Week – On a motion by Steve Baldwin, the committee unanimously recommended that two (2) pitchers be added to the allowable number of pitchers in this conditioning program for

the upcoming 2018 season. Currently, schools are allowed to have eight pitchers and four catchers. By adding the two (2) pitchers, it will assist schools in developing more players that can pitch. This change, combined with the ten-run rule will further enhance the efforts of the committee to serve the best interest of the student-athletes.

2018 Baseball Tournament Packet – The revisions to the packet will be discussed and finalized by the baseball committee at the next meeting.

Tournament Dedication – John Wrenn was unable to attend the meeting, but submitted a report of the nominations he received for the upcoming season. He asked that the committee provide him with additional recommendations by the next meeting. Fred mentioned that Moe Morhardt was so deeply touched by the Tournament Dedication that he actually attended an additional championship game, where the pre-game dedication ceremony was repeated.

Changing of the Guard – Long time tournament director, Fred Balsamo informed the group that this year would be his last tournament, although he will remain on the committee as a consultant. Fred will work with George Synnott on this year's tournament. George is a former baseball coach and high school principal, who now serves as the CIAC Director of Unified Sports. He will assume the duties of tournament director, starting with the 2018 tournament. Also, Ray Faustich, long time baseball committee member and the CIAC state rules interpreter will become the coordinator of officials, taking over for Joe Tonelli, who will continue to serve as the CIAC liaison to the baseball committee.