

MINUTES MVUDSS BOARD MEETING 11/4/22

IN ATTENDANCE: S. Baranick (SB); R. Barnhart (RB); J. Hansell (JH); E. Rushing (ER) – via mobile phone; G. Stevenson (GS)

1. Action Items – from last in-person Board meeting 8/8/22

- a. JH - update “Procedure for Player Draft” policy regarding the 12th round of the draft. --- DONE, 8/6
SB - post on league website. --- DONE, 8/13. **Item closed.**
- b. Managers to:
 - (1) provide team name --- DONE, 8/15
 - (2) contact team players and inform them:
 - (a) league website: www.mvudss.org
 - (b) opening day - Monday, August 15 (8:00, 9:30, 11:00)
 - (c) \$45/player league fee due on opening day. Pay Steve Baranick.
 - (d) shirts w/league logo for purchase at approx. \$10/shirt --- need color, # of shirts, sizes
Monday league is not involved in the purchasing of shirts. Pay Chris Yap. --- DONE, 8/15. **Item closed.**
- c. GS - update Player Finder to include local players having byes. This does not, currently, have application, but may have application in the future. GS will review over time. **Item remains open.**

2. AED Training Course

- a. The Board extends its thanks and appreciation to Bob Miller/North County, who conducted AED training at noon on October 24, 2022 for approximately 46 participants. Bob did an excellent job and the session was well received. Bob also checked the AED and indicated it was in proper working order.
- b. A question was asked as to whether the AED unit, itself, needs to get certified. ER indicated that the unit does not get certified, but that individuals can get certified on AED operation, CPR, etc.
- c. JH pointed out that Mike Graves, who had volunteered to be the league's AED Coordinator, has not been able to fulfill this role, and that it's imperative that the league identify someone to fill this slot. He further stated that we need to have the AED checked on a routine basis to check battery, leads, pads, etc., and to maintain a copy of the routine checking. ER indicated that this should be done on a weekly basis. JH pointed out that from an insurance/liability standpoint, we would be better off not having an AED as opposed to having one that is not routinely checked. JH also pointed out that we do have functional forms for an AED coordinator to utilize.
- d. SB will attempt to put a list together of Monday league players with AED experience who might be able to take on the role of AED Coordinator. **Item remains open.**

3. New Umpire

Paul Pena, 53, umpires in the Santee league, is a 50 major player, and was recommended to the league by Robert Carreon. He is semi-retired and lives locally. He umpired his first three games on 10/31/22 and was well received. Welcome to the league, Paul. **Item closed.**

4. Rock Softballs

The league purchased 4 doz. new 44/375 Rock softballs from Red Simmons @ \$60/doz. on 10/3/22. The Board would like to thank Bill Ward for “brokering” this deal. The Board also thanks Jim Ziemer who, on 10/24/22, donated 1 doz. good condition used 44/375 Rock softballs which can be used as game balls and another dozen or so Stote/Dudleys, which will be used for BP balls. **Item closed.**

5. Rule 11. Clarification

There has been some confusion as to the interpretation of this rule as relates to hitting the pitching screen and a “waste foul”. The immediate paragraph below, in *black italics*, represents the current rule. The subsequent two paragraphs, in *red italics*, represents proposed examples to clarify the rule.

All batters start with a 1-1 ball/strike count with a “waste foul” after two strikes. Rule 19 below, regarding a batted ball hitting the pitching screen twice in the same at bat, is not affected by this change; it is still an out.

A couple of examples are cited below:

Example 1: Batter has a 1-1 count, next pitch is a called strike. Now he has 2 strikes with a “waste foul” coming. Next pitch, the batter hits the screen. That became the batter's “waste foul”. Next pitch the batter fouls off. The batter is declared out.

Example 2: Batter has a 1-1 count, hits screen with next pitch. Now the batter has 2 strikes with a “waste foul” coming. Next pitch, the batter hits the screen again. Since the batter hit the screen a second time in the same at bat, the batter is declared out. The “waste foul” is negated in this example.

Without vote, but by unanimous consensus, the Board agreed to add the the two preceding clarifying paragraphs in **red font** to Rule 11. SB will inform all umpires of this change and make the approved modifications to Rule 11 on the league website.

(Subsequent to the Board meeting, SB informed all umpires, and updated the league website.) Item closed.

6. Rule 16. Clarification

SB proposed the slight modification indicated in Rule 16 below, in *italics* with ~~double strike through~~ and **red font** denoting the proposed change to current Rule 16. SB stated, rightfully, the batter makes the decision about moving the pitching screen, and it is not a matter of the umpire “allowing” this to occur.

Sun Affecting Batters Rule - *If, in the sole judgment of the umpire, the sun is adversely affecting the ability of batters to see the ball, ~~the umpire may allow~~ **the batter may require** the pitcher to pitch from up to six feet on either side of the pitching rubber, on the side chosen by the batter. A batter may have a pitcher move according to the prior sentence only one time during a given at bat.*

Without vote, but by unanimous consensus, the Board agreed to make the changes indicated in the previous paragraph, clarifying Rule 16. SB will make the approved modifications to Rule 16 on the league website.

(Subsequent to the Board meeting, SB updated the league website.) Item closed.

7. Commitment Line Rule – Proposed MVUDSS Rule

JH discussed e-mail communication he had in August 2022 with Rick Seifman, SSUSA VP of Umpires and Donna McGuire, SSUSA National Rules Committee Chairwoman, regarding the application and interpretation of the SSUSA commitment line rule during a play JH witnessed at an SSUSA tournament at BLD, Perris in August 2022. The three emails are included as part of these minutes, identified as Attachments 1, 2, and 3. JH stated to the Board that this commitment line incident was one of many he has seen over the years in SSUSA tournaments, local tournaments, and league play. JH stated that his communication to SSUSA was that the wording of their rule(s), and their interpretation were at odds, and that the confusion, and wasted time, that was occurred in this particular tournament occurs many times. JH also stated that his communication to SSUSA was that their existing language needs to be clarified if they will continue to allow this “cat and mouse” game that occurs between a runner and a defensive player relative to the commitment line; or that the language and intent/interpretation of the rule be completely changed. JH prefers the latter. JH indicated that there was a fourth email, from Ms. McGuire, which JH cannot locate, in which Ms. McGuire indicated that JH has given SSUSA something to ponder, and that she would be putting JH's information on the agenda for the Rules Committee meeting in December, 2022. In this Board meeting, ER confirmed that the item has been put on the agenda.

JH indicated to the Board that he was proposing to add a Commitment Line rule to MVUDSS rules, and to do so now. JH stated there is no guarantee that SSUSA will modify/change their rule and that the Monday league should take the lead on clarifying the rule as it sees fit. As such, JH offered the below proposed Commitment Line Rule, in **red italics**.

- a. *Once a runner has touched or crossed the commitment line, the runner MUST:*
- (1) continue to run/advance toward the scoring line/plate;*
 - (2) not stop. If he does so, the umpire will, immediately, declare the runner out. The ball remains live.*
 - (3) not re-cross the commitment line to return to third base. If he does so, the umpire will, immediately, declare the runner out. The ball remains live.*
- b. *Once the runner has touched or crossed the commitment line:*
- (1) the defensive player cannot tag the runner. If he does so, the umpire will, immediately, call the runner safe. The runner need not advance to the scoring line/plate and his run will be scored. The ball remains live.*
 - (2) the defensive player's only play is to touch the strike zone mat with the ball in hand before the runner touches on, or across, the scoring line/plate. The ball remains live.*
- c. *Determining whether the runner has stopped, continues to advance or if the defensive player has correctly/incorrectly tagged the runner is at the sole discretion of the umpire.*

JH motioned and GS seconded that the Board adopt the above proposed Commitment Line Rule.

Motion passed 5-0.

The Board agreed to send an email communication on this new rule to managers, umpires, and all players.

JH to prepare communication. SB will add this rule to the league website.

(Subsequent to the Board meeting, a communication was prepared, an email was sent to managers, players, and umpires on 11/10/22, and SB updated the league website.) **Item closed.**

8. Wet Base/Bag Rule – Proposed MVUDSS Rule.

There is no specific SSUSA rule. Judgment made by SSUSA umpire.

JH stated that since concern for player safety is the highest priority for the MVUDSS Board, since there is no SSUSA rule to provide guidance on this issue, and since we are coming up on the “rainy” season that the MVUDSS Board approve the following Wet Base/Bag Rule.

- a. In the interest of maintaining the safety of players, and with the concurrence of both managers, if bases are wet as result of misty, foggy, rainy (list not all inclusive) conditions, the umpire will allow all runners and defensive players to touch the ground close to the base in order (1) to advance to the next base in the case of the runner or (2) to effect a putout in the case of the defensive player.*
- b. However, the exception to (1) above is if there is a play at a base, both the runner and the fielder **must** touch the base.*
- c. Closeness to the base and determining whether there is a play at the base will be at the sole discretion of the umpire.*
- d. The umpire will recommend the discontinuance of this rule, but must have the concurrence of both managers, and will only be discontinued after the completion (use) of a full inning.*

RB is OK with the proposed policy, except he wants the rule to state that if there is a “play” at a base, both the runner, and defensive player must touch the bag.

JH motioned, and RB seconded, that the Board adopt the above proposed Wet Base/Bag Rule, modified to include the provision offered by RB in the previous paragraph/sentence, and to use the phrase “close to”.

Motion passed 5-0.

JH will prepare a modified rule for inclusion in the MVUDSS rules, and will prepare an email communication to managers and umpires regarding the new rule.

(Subsequent to the Board meeting, a communication was prepared, an email was sent to managers, players, and umpires on 11/10/22, and SB updated the league website.) **Item closed.**

9. Proposed “Manager Assistant Policy” Change

The Manager Assistant Policy was modified in August 2022 to permit a “3” manager to have a “3” assistant. JH included this on the agenda as he believes some Board members might have second thoughts about this change. All Board members were fine with this revision. **Item closed.**

10. Miscellaneous

a. Lineup Cards – JH mentioned that a number of managers were not completing lineup cards. This is league policy and needs to be enforced. The Board has sent frequent communications to managers regarding this issue. RB suggested that a manager be required to give a lineup card to the umpire as well as to the opposing manager. If the manager is using a 2-part lineup form, he will be required to give the umpire and opposing manager a copy. If the manager is using a 3-or more part form, he will be required to give the umpire and opposing manager a copy and retain a copy for himself. It was also agreed that the umpire will hold up the start of a game until lineup cards have been submitted

(Subsequent to the Board meeting, SB sent a text to umpires expressing the last sentence.)

JH will prepare an email communication to managers and umpires on this requirement.

(Subsequent to the Board meeting, a communication was prepared, an email was sent to managers and umpires on 11/11/22, and SB updated the league website.) **Item closed.**

b. Equipment/Screens – JH briefly discussed the need to tighten/repair the legs on the 2 original pitching screens and repair the carry strap on one of the 2 original pitching screens. JH also indicated that the handle on one of the new BP ball bags won't close and needs a “look at”. GS will retrieve the equipment some time during our 2-week Phoenix hiatus to work on and, hopefully, repair before we come back on 11/28/22. **Item remains open.**

c. NCS shirts/buying shirts – JH stated that the handling of the ordering and purchasing team shirts through NCS was completely unacceptable. Many, possibly all, managers were not contacted about which team members wanted shirts, shirt size, etc. Players, in turn, were not contacted. “Extra” shirts were ordered, again, without any thought as to who would pay for these extras. Prices were told to be \$10 but became \$12.75. The Board agreed unanimously, without vote, that in the future, it will not explicitly or tacitly endorse/support the purchase of team shirts. **Item closed.**

11. Terry Shinn

When Terry Shinn (1) is ready to play full-time, he'll be placed on Gold Standard(D)/Eric Morrison replacing Andy Bullington (2). See Agenda Item 14.b below. Joe Jennings', manager Red Raiders (E) request to swap roster opening dates with Morrison so he could replace Bill Gillette (2) with Shinn was denied, unanimously, without vote, by the Board.

Joe Jennings' request to rerate Shinn from a 1 to a 2 because he's not a HR hitter was also denied by the Board (see 14 below).

12. 2022 Fall Season

Projected Balance:

\$278.80 - from 8/5/2022 meeting (assuming 79 local players, 10 players on Sammy's Cafe, 12 on North County)

- \$100.00 - field rental, added a playing date on 12/19/22 (added 2 sessions) - Schedule REV. 1

- \$90.00 - league fees for 2 less players (Hank Alberts, Mike Trusty)

+ \$45.00 - league fees for 1 more player (Don Kingwill)

+ \$50.00 - field rental, added a playing date on 1/2/23 (removed 1 session) - Schedule REV. 2

+ \$77.81 - \$240 to Red Simmons for 4 doz. Rocks instead of \$317.81 to NCS for 6 doz. Dudleys

+ \$50.00 - no umpires' XMAS gifts (normally two \$25 gift cards)

\$311.61

13. Bob Kapeller Memorial Tournament 2023 (BKMT6)

- a. BKMT6 page added to the league website (includes flyer, etc.)
- b. February 22, 2023 with backup date March 1, 2023 --- received OK from Tom Lowry/BLD on 9/30/22
- c. Announcement emailed to SSUSA on 10/1 and posted under SSUSA Recreational Tournaments on 10/6/22
- d. Announcement emailed to tournament team managers, Hemet league, and MVUDSS league players on 10/2/22
- e. Assignments: All - get teams, Ron - umpires, Glenn - HR Derby

14. Roster Changes - REDACT this agenda item only IF NO CHANGES from last board meeting. (Changes, if any, identified in red below.)

a. Dropouts

~~8/15/22: Mike Morrison dropped out of pool, moved/moving to Missouri~~

~~8/22/22: Hank Alberts (6) dropped out of Sons of Arthritis (C)~~

9/4/22: Matt Smith (5) dropped out of Sons of Arthritis (C)

9/26/22: Mike Trusty (5) dropped out of Greyhounds (G)

10/3/22: Andy Bullington (2) from Gold Standard (D) to pool

10/31/22: Bill Gillette (2) dropped out of Red Raiders (E)

b. Roster Openings (in roster opening order):

~~8/22/22: Sons of Arthritis (C) missing a 6~~

9/4/22: Sons of Arthritis (C) missing a 5

9/26/22: Greyhounds (G) missing a 5

10/3/22: Gold Standard (D) missing a 2

10/31/22: Red Raiders (E) missing a 2

8/8/22: Blue Bolts (B) missing a 6

8/8/22: Roadrunners (F) missing a 6

8/8/22: Gold Standard (D) missing a 6

8/8/22: Greyhounds (G) missing a 6

8/8/22: Red Raiders (E) missing a 6

c. New Players

~~9/26/22: Don Kingwill (5) added to Sons of Arthritis (C) replacing Hank Alberts (6)~~

10/3/22: Jack Buss (3) added back to pool --- lives in Prescott, AZ

10/13/22: Mike Coltharp (3) added back to pool --- 12:00 pm games only

d. Waiting List Players (in eligibility order):

7/10/22: Mike Graves (4, drafted as a 4) --- will call when ready to play

8/8/22: Harold Halldorson (1, drafted as a 2) --- will call when ready to play

10/31/22: Terry Shinn (1) --- will call when ready to play

ATTACHMENT 1

On Aug 25, 2022, at 12:41 PM, Joe Hansell <joeshirley@roadrunner.com> wrote:

Mr. Rick Seifman VP Umpires, SSUSA

Dear Mr. Seifman:

At the SSUSA Top Gun Summer Classic last week at Big League Dreams, Perris, CA, I witnessed a play regarding the commitment line that I would like to get your ruling/interpretation. (I have attached, below, a Word version of this email which might be easier for you to follow.

Here (*) are the specifics of the play. I apologize for the length.

*Two outs with runner on first. Batter hits single to OF. Runner on first passes 2nd base, continuing past 3rd base where he is held up by his 3rd base coach. He is about 15 feet past 3rd base starts to come back to 3rd, but the ball is thrown to the third baseman. At this time, the “fun” begins. *The third baseman does not run toward the runner (a mistake), and the runner just holds his position about 15 feet from 3rd base. This went on for about 15 seconds, at which time the runner begins to take slow steps toward the commitment line. The 3rd baseman simply matches each step taken by the runner. The runner also stops once or twice while moving and holding his position. The 3rd baseman does the same. *Finally, the runner gets within 2-3 inches of the commitment line, and stops again. The third baseman had continued to move lock/step with the runner, and also stopped. He was close to the runner, but not close enough to where he could tag the runner. (As an aside, what normally would have been a play that would have been completed in a matter of seconds, this play took, upward, of 1-2 minutes to unfold.) After staring at each other for a number of seconds, the runner finally took a half- step, and put his right foot on the commitment line and just stopped. He made no attempt to further advance toward home plate. He just stared at the 3rd baseman, in effect, daring him to make a tag. *The 3rd baseman just stood in place for 5-10 seconds (he should have thrown the ball to the catcher) and, finally, advanced forward to the runner, and tagged the runner. *The umpire, who was, literally, 2 feet away from all of this “action”, called the runner out. When asked by the offense why the runner was called out, his answer was that the runner’s foot was not over the line, but on the line and was, therefore, subject to being tagged out. (That’s not the proper interpretation of when a runner has crossed a line, be it the commitment or the scoring line, but that was the call the umpire made.)

So, my question to you is, based on Rules 1.15 and 8.8, shown below, relative to Commitment Line, did the umpire make the right call? I believe the umpire made the right call, but for the wrong reason. In both rules, I highlighted, in **BOLD**, that portion of the rule which indicates that once the runner touches, or crosses the commitment line, he **MUST** continue home/advance toward the scoring line. Without saying in so many words, should be interpreted that a runner **CANNOT** do what the runner did in this game. He **CANNOT** stop once his foot touches, or crosses, the commitment line. When language such as **MUST**, or **IS COMMITTED TO**, is used, one can infer that if such action is not taken, some sort of “penalty” must then be applied.

The problem with these rules, as written, if I’m interpreting them correctly, is there is no indication as to the “penalty” if the runner does stop, and does not advance toward the scoring line. [Notwithstanding that lack of](#) clarification, I would rule that once the runner stops (as in the case above), he is no longer advancing toward the scoring line, and, therefore, should be, **automatically**, called out. I think language to this effect can be added to these two SSUSA rules which should clarify the rules and help avoid the very “spectacle” that we had in this game, for future games.

If that interpretation is not the intent of the rules as they are currently written, the rules should be rewritten to clarify what happens when/if a runner stops on, or across, the commitment line and does not advance toward the scoring line. Otherwise, the “circus” and confusion which occurred in this game will occur again.

Again, I apologize for the length, and I look forward to your response/clarification. Respectfully,

Joe Hansell SSUSA Team – So. Cal Gusto

1.15 • COMMITMENT LINE A minimum six (6) foot (1.83 m) commitment line shall be marked across and perpendicular to the foul line and placed thirty feet from home plate. **Once a runner has crossed the commitment line he:** [a] cannot return to third base; [b] **must continue home**; [c] can no long be tagged out by the defensive player; the defensive player must touch the strike zone mat. The ball remains live.

8.8 • COMMITMENT LINE A commitment line thirty feet from the scoring line or scoring plate will be used. Once a runner's foot touches the ground on or past this line, **the runner is committed to advancing to the scoring line** or scoring plate and may no longer be tagged out. EFFECT: Tag of the runner by a defensive player will not be allowed. The runner will be called safe, the ball remains live and the runner is not required to touch the scoring plate or cross the scoring line. NOTE: If a runner re-crosses the commitment line for any reason in an attempt to return to third base, he will be declared out and the ball remains live.

ATTACHMENT 2

On Aug 25, 2022, at 8:11 PM, Donna McGuire <donna@SeniorSoftball.com> wrote:

Hello,

The office forwarded your question to me. Though you aren't the only one who has raised this issue, Dave Dowell has explained repeatedly on the message board that we do not have a penalty if the runner stops or hesitates after crossing the commitment line. Yes, perhaps the wording should be changed. But the intent of the "must" proceed home wording is to make it clear the runner cannot return to third base. In fact, the second rule you cited provides an example that negates "must" proceed home. That is, if the runner is tagged, he is safe and does not need to finish going home.

So according to how we enforce the rule, in the example you gave, the umpire was incorrect. The runner was safe.

If you would like to submit suggested language for tweaking the rule, please feel free to do so. Just send it to me to be put on the agenda for the rules committee when it meets in December.

Thanks for your inquiry.

Donna McGuire SSUSA National Rules Committee Chairwoman

ATTACHMENT 3

On Aug 30, 2022, at 10:07 AM, Joe Hansell <joeshirley@roadrunner.com> wrote:

Ms. McGuire:

Thank you for your prompt response. It is most appreciated. I'm going to assume that you received a copy of my email to Rick Seifman, so I won't, unnecessarily, repeat items from that email. I have no axe to grind here, nor do I have any over-powering need to be right. I simply have my perspective regarding the way in which Rules 1.15 and 8.8 are written and subject to interpretation. In the 13 years in which I have played senior softball, I have seen "confusion" surrounding these rules on many occasions, and because the example I cited in my email was so egregious and time consuming, I felt the need to contact SSUSA. Sounds like Dave Dowell has addressed this issue on numerous occasions.

You indicate below that Dave Dowell says that there is no penalty if the runner stops or hesitates after touching/crossing the commitment line. That's clear enough. I apologize if what I'm, next, about to say appears to be argumentative. I don't mean it to be. You mention that the 2nd rule, 8.8, provides an example which negates "must" proceed home indicating that the runner will be safe if he is tagged and does not need to finish going home. While accurate, declaring the runner safe in this example is simply the result of the defensive player tagging the runner while the runner is at/over the commitment line. This does nothing to clarify the meaning of "must continue home" from 1.15 and "committed to advancing to the scoring line" in 8.8. By any reasonable interpretation, those phrases should mean what they say/imply, that the runner must continue moving toward the scoring line and cannot stop.

Rules which use affirmative words/phrases such as "must" and "committed to advancing..." imply that absent those "acts", there will be a consequence (penalty, if you will) if they are not performed. There is no such consequence indicated in the existing rules, and, notwithstanding Dave's statement that no penalty is to be applied in the absence of these acts, the very wording, suggests otherwise, and is, therefore, misleading and confusing.

You graciously offered that I could submit suggested language to tweak the rule. I actually did so in my original email. It does not seem plausible to me that SSUSA wants the kind of confusion, and game delay, which occurred in the game that I highlighted in my email. So, my suggested language change which, I originally offered to avoid that kind of confusion/delay, is to state that once a runner touches/crosses the commitment line and stops (i.e. doesn't continue to advance toward the scoring line) **he is automatically declared out**. For the most part, the runner is in control of what happens with such a play. Therefore, it's reasonable to me to suggest that the runner suffer the consequence (penalty if you will) of his action/inaction. Apparently, this is not what SSUSA desires, but, IMHO, this would be the easiest, and clearest way to avoid these kind of situations.

If SSUSA will not entertain the above suggested language change, I offer the following suggested language change to 1.15 and 8.8, and that would be to delete any reference to "must continue home" and "...runner is committed to advancing to the scoring line or scoring plate." Suggested changes are indicated below.

1.15 • COMMITMENT LINE A minimum six (6) foot (1.83 m) commitment line shall be marked across and perpendicular to the foul line and placed thirty feet from home plate. Once a runner has crossed the commitment line he: [a] cannot re-cross the commitment line to return to third base - he is automatically out if he does so; [b] must continue home; [c] can no longer be tagged out by the defensive player - **he will be declared safe if tagged**; the defensive player must touch the strike zone mat. The ball remains live.

8.8 • COMMITMENT LINE A commitment line thirty feet from the scoring line or scoring plate will be used. Once a runner's foot touches the ground on or past this line, the runner **is committed to advancing to the scoring line or scoring plate and** may no longer be tagged out. EFFECT: Tag of the runner by a defensive player will not be allowed. He runner will be called safe, the ball remains live and the runner is not required to touch the scoring plate or cross the scoring line. NOTE: If a runner re-crosses the commitment line for any reason in an attempt to return to third base, he will be declared out and the ball remains live.

Respectfully,

Joe Hansell SSUSA Team - So. Cal Gusto