The 2025 NCBL Annual Kick-Off Meeting Minutes

Sunday, April 27, 2025
Nepean Sportsplex - Hall F

Teams Absent (1): Barons

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1. Call to Order - Meeting called to order at exactly 12:36pm.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting - The minutes of the NCBL Spring Meeting on Sunday, February 23, 2025 were approved without change.

*(moved by Secretary Bond, seconded by Bandits, **carried**)*

3. Financials - 2025 Proposed Budget Approval - The 2025 proposed budget was included in the information package handout, with fees per team being $6,050, $6,000, $5,725, and $5,300 in Tiers 1 through 4 respectively. Commissioner Beelen noted that the *umpire assigning costs* was mistakenly included in the indirect expenses when it's actually a direct expense, and it will be corrected in the final version. It was also noted that each team will now only have 3 tickets to the year end banquet included in their league fees, and no longer 4.

*(moved by Treasurer Cornell via Commissioner Beelen, seconded by Padres, **carried**)*

4. Financials - Fee Payments - The 2025 Fee Payment schedule was included in the information package handout, specifying what each team needs to pay to the league, and when. Commissioner Beelen noted that any team with questions about their fines can contact Joe Beelen directly..

5. Schedules - The 2025 schedule is complete, with each team's individual schedule included in the information package handout. This year, the Commissioner was able to get all regular season games played by the end of July, with rainouts planned for the first two weeks of August at the latest. The Commissioner noted that the new field in Barrhaven (Cappamore) has not yet been handed over to the City by the developer, so it is not currently available for bookings, but it could be an option later in the year.

6. Procedures and Protocols for the Season - The updated document with instructions for how to open the gates and/or turn on the lights at all the fields, what to do when there's a rainout, and general pre-game, in-game, and post-game procedures, will be posted on the NCBL site soon. Commissioner Beelen, on behalf of the in absentia Registrar Beelen, had a few reminders for the teams:

- Make sure all players complete the registration form and sign their waivers ASAP.
- Do not take the Heritage key home with you, make sure to put it back on the lock by the gate right away.
- If using the EH Rule in Tiers 2 or 3, or the More Batters Rule in Tier 4, you cannot reduce the numbers of batters in the batting order once the game starts. If someone has to leave, is hurt, or ejected, and there is nobody on the bench that can replace them, an automatic out will apply. If using the EH Rule, the EH can play defense if there's an ejection or injury, but the automatic out would still apply for the missing spot in the order.

7. By-Law Revisions: Adopting the Extra Hitter Rule in Tier 2 - Previously, the EH Rule could only be used in Tier 3. A proposal was made to allow the use of the EH Rule in Tier 2, specifically in the regular season. After many years of rejection, this proposal was finally approved.

*(moved by Blue Jays, seconded by Padres, **carried**)*

8. By-Law Revisions: Adopting the More Batters Rule in Tier 3 - Previously, the More Batters Rule could only be used in Tier 4. A proposal was made to allow the use of the More Batters Rule in Tier 3, specifically in the regular season, but no Tier 3 team would second the proposal, so there was no vote.

*(moved by Gladiators, no seconder, **no vote**)*

9. By-Law Revisions: Emergency Spare Adjustments - The league voted on 2 adjustments to the current Emergency Spare guidelines:

- A spare who is brought out for a game **must** now play at least 3 defensive innings **and** have at least 2 plate appearances. The exception is for an emergency spare who pitches and does not want to play another defensive position when removed from the mound. Notwithstanding the minimum requirements, the spirit of the emergency spare option is that the spare should be treated with respect at all times and allowed to play as much of the game as possible (DBAAH)
- The league voted to eliminate any use of Emergency Spares in the playoffs.

*(moved by Commissioner Beelen, seconded by Bandits, **carried**)*

10. By-Law Revisions: Adopting the MLB Slide Rule Definition - The league voted to implement the MLB slide rule definition re: sliding into one of the 3 bases on a force play.

- When sliding into a base in an attempt to break up a double play, a runner has to make a "bona fide slide." Such is defined as the runner making contact with the ground before reaching the base, being able to reach the base with a hand or foot, being able to remain on the base at the completion of the slide (except at home plate) and not changing his path for the purpose of initiating contact with a fielder. The slide rule prohibits runners from using a "roll block" or attempting to initiate contact with the fielder by elevating and kicking his leg above the fielder's knee, throwing his arm or his upper body or grabbing the fielder. When a violation of the slide rule occurs, the offending runner and the batter-runner will be called out.
- Accidental contact can occur in the course of a permissible slide, and a runner will not be called for interference if contact is caused by a fielder being in the runner's legal pathway to the base.

*(moved by Umpire-in-Chief Keeping, seconded by Battalion, **carried**)*

11. By-Law Revisions: Implementing and Enforcing of Timing Between Pitches - The league voted to implement penalties for delay of game by either a pitcher or batter when appropriate:

- Pitchers are limited to 20 seconds between pitches and the batter must not unduly delay in getting into the batter's box. When the umpire is made aware of potential infractions by the opposing team's manager, or if the umpire notices on his own, the umpire will mentally time the pitcher or observe the batter. If an infraction is observed, the umpire will first warn the pitcher or batter. On a 2nd and subsequent infraction, a ball will be called for an infraction by the pitcher and a strike will be called for an infraction by the batter.

*(moved by Umpire-in-Chief Keeping, seconded by Bandits, **carried**)*
[part of the same vote in as #12]

12. By-Law Revisions: Modifying the Pitches Between Innings Rule - To keep the game moving at a steady pace, the league agreed to modify the Pitches Between Inning Rule from always a max of 7, to:

- Pitchers shall be limited to 5 pitches between innings and 7 pitches when a pitcher first goes to the mound, unless weather and the umpire's discretion dictate more. The pitch limits include pitches thrown to a warm-up catcher.

*(moved by Umpire-in-Chief Keeping, seconded by Bandits, **carried**)*
[part of the same vote in as #11]

13. By-Law Revisions: Applying to Remove a Team's Red/Yellow Status - The league voted to add the following wording to By-Law 6.12:

> *However, after one full season without an ejection, a team who has a probationary red or yellow status may apply to have this status removed by the Operation Committee. Removal of the status is at the sole discretion of the Committee. However, removal of the status for the team does not affect any player status.*
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> *(moved by OPSCOM Member Giles, seconded by Red Sox, **carried**)*

14. The State of the Umpires Address - Umpire-in-Chief Mark Keeping took the stage for his tri-annual State-of-the-Umpires Address, which included the following highlights:

- There could be as many as 5-6 new umpires in the rotation this year.
- The new umpire patches are in (and were on display), thanks to the league for the support.
- Asked if teams are going to call a game, to try and do so early, but not too early, if possible.
- Asked that teams have extra balls ready when needed (beyond the standard 3 new and 2 used given to the umpires before the game).
- Be kind.

15. Other Business: Multi-Team Exemptions - Joe Beelen *(coaching Brewers, playing for Los Vampiros)* requested approval to be involved with more than one NCBL team.

*(moved by Brewers, seconded by Cubs, **carried**)*

16. Other Business: Baseball Canada Sale - The Baseball Canada used equipment sale is back this year, taking place on May 1st (11am-5pm) and May 2nd (11am-3pm) @ 2212 Gladwin Cres., Unit A7. Items for sale include: Used bats, spikes, catchers equipment, pants, and Baseball Canada merchandise.

17. Other Business: The Steve Gilroy Closer Award - The league voted to create a new annual award, the Steve Gilroy Closer Award, presented to the player(s) league-wide with the most saves each season.

(moved by Braves, seconded by Brewers, **carried**)

18. Other Business: Tier 1 Rep for Social Media Committee - Graeme Nichols has stepped down from his position as the Tier 1 representative on the Social Media Committee; if any Tier 1 player is interested in being his replacement, please email SMC Chair Joe Beelen.

19. Other Business: Tier 4 Rep for Operations Committee - Adam Lowry has stepped down from his position as the Tier 4 representative on the Operations Committee; if any Tier 4 player is interested in being his replacement, please email NCBL Commissioner Bill Beelen.

20. Distribution of Baseballs and Lineup Cards - The teams paid their league fees with installment cheques *(or an e-Transfer)* in exchange for baseballs and lineup cards.

21. Adjournment - Meeting adjourned at exactly 1:44pm.

ACTION ITEMS FOR THE 2026 ANNUAL WINTER MEETING:

- Discuss the possibility and logistics of purchasing tarps for the fields that may need them.
