

Commissioner Gallaway

From: Commissioner Gallaway <commissioner@potomacwiffleball.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 04, 2013 2:09 AM
To: managers@potomacwiffleball.org
Subject: URGENT: MANAGERS VOTE ON OVERTURNING THE DECISION OF THE COMMISSIONER
Attachments: Protest and Rejection.pdf
Importance: High

*****NOTE: YOU NEED TO VOTE BY 10 AM ON SUNDAY ON THIS MATTER.*****

Managers –

The Besley Bashers have appealed a decision that I made as Commissioner, putting you in the position to make the final decision.

The rules allow decisions of the Commissioner to be overturned by a 2/3 vote of the Managers of the league.

PWL LEAGUE RULES

Commissioner: The teams shall elect a Commissioner before the Summer Season of each odd numbered year who shall be responsible for the day-to-day management of the league, and shall facilitate any changes to league rules or the settlement of disputes on challenged games. Games shall not be eligible to be challenged based on a judgment call, only the mis-application of the rules. **Any decision of the Commissioner can be overturned by a 2/3 vote of the league teams.**

The decision that they would like overturned is that their protest was not made properly pursuant to the rules, so it cannot be considered.

If you overturn my decision, then I will review their protest.

If you sustain my decision, then the protest will not be reviewed because it was not submitted per the rules.

The facts of the submission of the protest are not in question, to my knowledge.

I will let Colton speak for himself though, if he believes that any of these facts are not accurate.

As a reminder, we are not debating or discussion the content/issues of the actual protest itself. We are ONLY debating and discussion whether or not you are going to order me to break the rules, and consider this protest, even though it was not submitted properly.

FACTS:

- Besley Bashers have requested a review and filed a protest of their game from Week 3 with the Ha'chi Mountaineers.
- I received notice of this protest via email from their manager, Colton Turner, Saturday, May 4, 2013 at 12:43 AM. (email attached)
- The game was not played under protest, and no protest was filed with the umpire prior to the next pitch after the rules violation occurred.
- The rules violation occurred at 59:38 in the video. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1v9B4Lt0qsY&feature=youtu.be>
- No protest was filed, not reference to protest was made at the time of the violation, or before the next pitch.

- The next pitch happened at 1:00:10, without any protest being filed.

The MLB rules regarding protest state:

4.19 PROTESTING GAMES. Each league shall adopt rules governing procedure for protesting a game, when a manager claims that an umpire's decision is in violation of these rules. No protest shall ever be permitted on judgment decisions by the umpire. In all protested games, the decision of the League President shall be final. Even if it is held that the protested decision violated the rules, no replay of the game will be ordered unless in the opinion of the League President the violation adversely affected the protesting team's chances of winning the game.

Rule 4.19 Comment: Whenever a manager protests a game because of alleged misapplication of the rules the protest will not be recognized unless the umpires are notified at the time the play under protest occurs and before the next pitch, play or attempted play. A protest arising on a game-ending play may be filed until 12 noon the following day with the league office.

COMMISSIONERS DECISION:

There are two factors I use to determine if a protest is going to be reviewed.

- 1) Is the protest based on a misapplication of the rules, or was it a judgment call.
- 2) Was the protest filed properly per the rules.

If the protest was a misapplication of the rules, and it was filed timely, I will review the protest.

If it was not, then I will not.

In this case, I 100% agree that this was an issue that was a misapplication of the rules. It is absolutely possible to protest this, because it was a clear rules violation, it was NOT a judgment call.

In this case, I am 100% certain that it was NOT filed properly. It was not filed before the next pitch, per the rules, so the protest cannot be considered.

COMMISSIONER'S POINTS:

- 1) Breaking the rules to fix a problem of the rules being broken is NOT a good precedent.
- 2) I notified and REMINDED all the managers before the season started of the rules around protests.
- 3) The rules are VERY CLEAR on this, it is not ambiguous.
- 4) If we start to allow protest of games days, weeks or months AFTER a game has happened, there is no end to the problems that will be created.
- 5) There are processes in place to FIX problems with the rules violations during a game. If the Besley Bashers had followed those rules, this could have been considered. They did not, so they cannot. They cannot ask us to enforce the rules of the game, while at the same time, breaking the rules of the game.

Please feel free to engage in discussion or additional questions via the listserve.

I would like to resolve this matter quickly, so I would like to ask everyone to vote no later than 10:00 AM Sunday.

I think over 24 hours should be enough time for any discussion of this point on the list.

I will create a ballot on BallotBin, the same system we use for the POTW voting for you to record your vote as a manager. Please look for the email, and let me know if you do not get it.

It will take 14 Managers to vote in favor of overturning my decision to force me to consider the protest.

Thanks,

Chris

Chris Gallaway
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Commissioner Gallaway

From: Commissioner Gallaway <commissioner@potomacwiffleball.org>
Sent: Saturday, May 04, 2013 12:58 AM
To: 'Colton Turner'
Subject: RE: Besley Bashers request review of 4/29 matchup vs. Ha'chii Mountaineers. their last eligible pitcher DQed and was not called

Hey, Colton –

Thanks for bringing this to my attention.

I've got some bad news, but hopefully an explanation that will make sense, and give you a better process moving forward.

Unfortunately, there isn't anything we can do about this at this time.

In order for this to be reviewed, you would have had to file a protest with the umpire, on the field, before the next pitch was thrown.

It sound like you tried to convince the umpire, but if he says you're wrong, and you know you're right, you have to protest the game right then and there. Don't let the game continue until the matter is noted, and the protest is filed. That's the only way for you to get any kind of fix later.

Per the rules:

MLB Rule 4.19 Comment: Whenever a manager protests a game because of alleged misapplication of the rules the protest will not be recognized unless the umpires are notified at the time the play under protest occurs and before the next pitch, play or attempted play. A protest arising on a game-ending play may be filed until 12 noon the following day with the league office.

So, you would have had to inform the umpire that you were putting the game under protest at that time.

If you had filed the protest, I'd be able to review the situation, and appropriately administer a corrective action in your game result.

So, while I sympathize with you, and I apologize for the umpire's error, I can't do anything about the game.

What I will do, is follow-up with the umpire to let him know he missed the situation. And, I will add that to the notes we use for evaluating umpires to work postseason, and future seasons with us.

As far as the scorer, that person's job is to record the events after they happen, so that we can put them on the website. They aren't a decision maker in anything related to the rules or execution of the game. If they see something obviously crazy going on, they'll tend to sound an alarm, but they are only a recorder of data, not an arbiter of the game.

The umpire, from the second both teams give him the lineup card, until the game ends with the last out, is completely in charge of the game. He keeps the counts, he keeps the warnings, he keeps the clock on the 45 minute rule. While the scorekeeper can answer questions he has about score, or things like that, they are not responsible for any of those kinds of things, including warnings, ball/strike counts, time limit, etc. The umpire is the sole guy.

People come up to me, as Commissioner, all day long to ask me about things in the middle of a game, and I always send them to the umpire. Sometimes, an umpire will be confused, or want clarification, and they'll come ask me in the

middle of a game. That's perfectly fine, and I'll always answer rules questions. But, during the game, the umpire, not me, not the Deputy Commissioner, not the scorekeeper, are in CHARGE. And they are the person you have to go to for everything.

Most of them are pretty good. A lot better than when we used to call our own games, and people were terrible. 😊

But, sometimes there are issues, or they forget a rule, or they need to be reminded.

Most of that can be fixed, quickly and easily, by having a conversation with them. If you're sure about a rule, or even THINK you're right about a rule, talk to the umpire. If the umpire isn't 100% sure, ask him to take a second and to go ask me. That's what I'm here for. If he says no, then, tell him you're putting the game under protest. Then he might be more likely to come ask me like you wanted him to begin with.

In this situation, asking me wouldn't have helped, since it was an umpire's MEMORY, not his RULES knowledge that was in question. But, same thing, file the protest, so we can fix it later.

I hope this makes sense, and this helps understand how to best handle the situations in the future.

I sent this out to the managers before Week 1, but wanted to resend it to you below since you guys are rookies.

UMPIRES – they're paid umps, but they're also humans, so don't be too much of an asshole to them. If you believe that an umpire has made a wrong decision based on a RULES misunderstanding, you should go up to the umpire at the time, ask him to clarify, and if you think he's got the rule wrong, ask him to check with the Commissioner. They'll often do this if you're nice about it. I'll be happy to clarify any questions about the rules to the umpires directly, but they'll still be making all decisions. If you believe that the rules were misapplied, and want to file a protest to have it reviewed later, you must do so at the time, before the next pitch is thrown. If you don't, it's not possible to appeal the game or the decision later. You must notify the umpire of your protest. PLEASE NOTE – do not argue, or appeal, judgment calls. Calls that aren't a rules problem, but rather the umpire believes they saw something a certain way. There is no appeal process for those, there is no one beside the umpire on the field who can make the call. Not the scorer, not the commissioner, not the video. The only issue that can be clarified is if there is confusion about a rule. If you have feedback on umpires, we have an evaluation form (attached) so you can provide feedback after the game.)

Hope this makes sense, and you're ok with this.

I'm happy to talk more if needed.

Thanks,

Chris

PS – The thing that you have a week to report are challenges to the scorekeeping. Just in case that wasn't clear. So, for example, you are given a "reached on error" instead of a "single". I'll review the tape, and if I think the scorekeeper got it wrong, I can fix that. Those are "scoring" decisions only, that change the STATS. They can't change the outcome of the game at all. If the umpire says it was a "home run", even if it was 20 feet foul, the scorebook still has to say "home run". We can't change the OUTCOME. We can only change the description of how it happened. Mostly, it's assigning hits vs errors. Or if someone got a single, and advanced to second base on a throw, but they think it was a full double and they made it without the throw, they might challenge the "single" for the "double". It doesn't change what happened in the game, it only changes how we "described" what happened.

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From: Colton Turner [mailto:coltonturner55@gmail.com]

Sent: Saturday, May 04, 2013 12:30 AM

To: Potomac Wiffle

Subject: Besley Bashers request review of 4/29 matchup vs. Ha'chii Mountaineers. their last eligible pitcher DQed and was not called

We (Besley Bashers) won the game played at 12:30 on 4/29 against Ha'chi because all 4 of their pitchers DQed. Their 4th and final pitcher, Ricardo Nieves, entered the game at the 51: 50 mark in the top of the 5th inning mark and threw 4 consecutive balls to Neil Kearns and was warned (clearly by the umpire). In the top of the 6th, after giving up a single to Alex Cohn, Nieves faces Sean Mcvey at the 58:40 and throws a strike followed by 4 balls consecutive balls, and was warned for a second time. I pointed out to the umpire and scorer that it was the 2nd 4 pitch walk and the game was over, but although the umpire clearly gives the second warning, the scorer said it was his first. They went on to win the game.

The tape clearly corroborates my claim. Sorry it took so long to report, but I am glad I got this email in within the week.