

Chapter V

Game formalities

Times at bat — Designated hitter — Protests — Suspended games — Forfeited games — Games terminated on run difference — Statistics — Game formalities — Shutouts

Times at bat

It is appropriate at this point to introduce the concept of “Times at bat” (AB). This is a very important concept for establishing all averages and statistics in general.

We shall begin with “Plate appearances” (PA), which means the number of times the batter comes to the plate to bat. Rule 10.02 of the Official Baseball Rules (OBR), as well as defining the statistics required for each batter and runner, also gives a definition of a Times at Bat: *Number of times batted, except that no time at bat shall be charged when a player*

- (i) *hits a sacrifice bunt (SH) or sacrifice fly (SF);*
- (ii) *is awarded first base on four called balls (BB);*
- (iii) *is hit by a pitched ball (HP);*
- (iv) *is awarded first base because of interference or obstruction (IO).*

In practical terms, this means:

$$AB = PA - (BB + HP + IO + SH + SF)$$

The importance of the Times at Bat can be understood by the fact that it is used, for instance, to calculate the batting average (BAve). Indeed, the batting average of a player is computed from the relationship between hits (H) and times at bat (AB).

In practical terms:

$$BAve = (H/AB)$$

We will discuss the issue of averages in greater depth later.

Designated hitter

According to rule 6.10 of the OBR: *A hitter may be designated to bat for the starting pitcher and all subsequent pitchers in any game without otherwise affecting the status of the pitcher(s) in the game.*

A Designated Hitter for the pitcher must be selected prior to the game and must be included in the line-up cards presented to the Umpire in Chief.

The Designated Hitter named in the starting line-up must come to bat at least one time, unless the opposing club changes pitchers.

It is not mandatory that a club designate a hitter for the pitcher, but failure to do so prior to the game precludes the use of a Designated Hitter for that game. Pinch hitters for a Designated Hitter may be used. Any substitute hitter for a Designated Hitter becomes the Designated Hitter. A replaced Designated Hitter shall not re-enter the game in any capacity.

The Designated Hitter may be used defensively, continuing to bat in the same position in the batting order, but the pitcher must then bat in the place of the substituted defensive player, unless more than one substitution is made, and the manager then must designate their spots in the batting order.

A runner may be substituted for the Designated Hitter and the runner assumes the role of Designated Hitter. A Designated Hitter may not pinch run. A Designated Hitter is “locked” into the batting order.

In the following four cases the Designated Hitter role is terminated for the remainder of the game:

1. Once the game pitcher bats for the Designated Hitter (as pitcher he may only bat in the same position in the line-up as the DH previously occupied);
2. Once the game pitcher is switched from the mound to a defensive position;
3. Once a pinch hitter bats for any player in the batting order and then enters the game to pitch;
4. Once a Designated Hitter assumes a defensive position.

Protests

According to rule 4.19 of the OBR:

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.

Whenever a manager protests a game ... the protest will not be recognised unless the umpires are notified at the time the play under protest occurs and before the next pitch, play or attempted play.

The procedure for protesting the game is in the IBAF Tournament Rules

Suspended games

The rule 4.12 a) of the OBR gives some of the possible reasons why a game may be suspended:

A game shall become a suspended game that must be completed at a future date if the game is terminated for any of the following reasons:

- 1) *A curfew imposed by law;*
- 2) *A time limit permissible under league rules;*
- 3) *Light failure or malfunction of a mechanical field device under control of the home club. (Mechanical field device shall include automatic tarpaulin or water removal equipment.)*
- 4) *Darkness, when a law prevents the lights from being turned on;*
- 5) *Weather, if a regulation game is called while an inning is in progress, and before the inning is completed, the visiting team has scored one or more runs to take the lead, and the home team has not retaken the lead, or*
- 6) *It is a regulation game that is called with the score tied*

The game is considered a regulation game in cases 1) and 2) and, if called due to weather where the following conditions given in rule 4.10 c) of the OBR obtain:

If a game is called, it is a regulation game:

- 1) *If five innings have been completed;*
- 2) *If the home team has scored more runs in four or four and a fraction half-innings than the visiting team has scored in five completed half-innings;*
- 3) *If the home team scores one or more runs in its half of the fifth inning to tie the score.*

If a game is suspended in the circumstances described in rule 4.12 points 3 and 4, rule 4.12 c) states that the match must be resumed from the exact point at which it was stopped.

The completion of a suspended match is the continuation of the original game. The players in the dugouts and the lineups of both teams must be exactly the same as those in effect at the time the game was suspended, and they are subject to the rules governing substitutions. Any player may be replaced by a player who had not taken part in the game before it was suspended.

No player who was replaced before the suspension of the game may return to take part in the game.

Moreover, the note to Rule 4.12 a) states: *Weather and similar conditions – Rules 4.12(a)(1) through 4.12(a)5 - shall take precedence in determining whether a called game shall be a suspended game. If a game is halted by weather, and subsequent light failure or an intervening curfew or time limit prevents its resumption, the game shall not be a suspended game. If a game is halted by light failure and weather and field conditions prevent its resumption, the game shall not be a suspended game. A game can only be considered a suspended game if stopped for any of the six reasons specified in Rule 4.12 (a).*

Example 1: The game is called during the second half of the eighth inning, with the scoring as given below. According to the provisions of the IBAF tournament rules, the game is considered complete and the final score is that which obtained at the end of the seventh inning. The final result is thus 5 to 3 for the home team.

TEAMS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Res.
Visitors	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	2								3
Home Team	0	0	3	0	2	0	0									5

Example 2: The game is called during the second half of the sixth inning, with the score as given below. According to the provisions of the IBAF tournament rules, the game is considered a regulation game, with the score as it stood at the end of the fifth inning. The final result is thus 2 to 1 for the home team.

TEAMS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Res.
Visitors	0	0	1	0	0	3										1
Home Team	1	0	0	1	0											2

Example 3: The game is called during the second half of the sixth inning, with the score standing as shown below. According to the provisions of the IBAF tournament rules, the final result is 2 to 1 for the visiting team.

TEAMS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Res.
Visitors	0	0	1	1	0	4										2
Home Team	0	0	0	1	0	3										1

Example 4: The game is called at the end of the first half of the eighth inning, with the score standing as shown below. According to the provisions of the IBAF tournament rules, the game is won by the home team by 5 runs to 3.

TEAMS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Res.
Visitors	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1								3
Home Team	0	0	3	0	2	0	0									5

Example 5: The game is called at the end of the first half of the seventh inning for darkness. According to the provisions of the IBAF tournament rules, the game will be completed on a date to be decided, and resumed at the exact point at which the original game was suspended.

TEAMS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Res.
Visitors	0	1	1	0	0	0	3									5
Home Team	0	0	0	1	0	0										1

Example 6: The game is called during the second half of the sixth inning with the score standing as shown below. The final result is 3 all. The game is considered a regulation tied game and shall be replayed only if necessary for the final rankings.

TEAMS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Res.
Visitors	1	1	0	0	1	4										3
Home Team	0	1	1	1	0	3										3

It should be noted that, when the score is disregarded, no individual performances noted in the incomplete inning (whether in attack or defense) are taken into consideration for statistical purposes.

Forfeited games

Rule 4.15 of the OBR states: *A game may be forfeited to the opposing team when a team:*

- Fails to appear upon the field, or being upon the field, refuses to start play within five minutes after the umpire has called "Play" at the appointed hour for beginning the game, unless such delayed appearance is, in the umpire's judgement, unavoidable;*
- Employs tactics palpably designed to delay or shorten the game;*
- Refuses to continue play during a game unless the game has been suspended or terminated by the umpire;*
- Fails to resume play, after a suspension, within one minute after the umpire has called "Play";*

- e) *After warning by the umpire, wilfully and persistently violates any rules of the game;*
- f) *Fails to obey within a reasonable time the umpire's order for removal of a player from the game;*
- g) *Fails to appear for the second game of a doubleheader within twenty minutes after the close of the first game unless the umpire-in-chief of the first game shall have extended the time of the intermission.*

Additionally, rule 4.16 states:

A game shall be forfeited to the visiting team if, after it has been suspended, the orders of the umpire to groundskeepers respecting preparation of the field for resumption of play are not complied with.

And finally, according to rule 4.17:

A game shall be forfeited to the opposing team when a team is unable or refuses to place nine players on the field.

In these cases the game is deemed to have been completed and forfeited to the opposing team with a final score of 9 to 0 (Rule 2.00 "Forfeited game").

For a forfeited game to be declared a regulation game, the rules for suspended games apply. Consequently, if a game is declared forfeit before the 5th inning, individual performances do not count towards the results, and only the reason for the forfeited game is recorded.

If, on the other hand, the fifth inning has started, all individual performances must be recorded. In particular, it must be remembered that the "winning" and "losing" pitchers are recorded only if the team that wins the match by forfeit was in the lead at the time the umpire declared the game ended. There are no "winning" or "losing" pitchers if that team was tied or losing. Moreover, the final score will not tally with the interim results, unless the victorious team already stood at 9 to 0.

Games terminated on run difference

A game may be terminated because of a run difference in the results of the two teams.

In the event that a match terminated under the above conditions is in any case a regulation game, all considerations in terms of winning runs and the value of safe hits apply.

Statistics

Rule 10.21 of the OBR gives the formulas for calculating player statistics:

- Batting Average (BAve) : Safe Hits / Times at Bat
[H / AB]
- Slugging Average (SLAve): Total Bases on Safe Hits / Times at Bat
[$(H + (2B \times 2) + (3B \times 3) + (HR \times 4)) / AB$]
- Fielding Average (FAve): (Putouts + Assists) / (Putouts + Assists + Errors)
[$(PO + A) / (PO + A + E)$]
- Pitcher's Earned Runs Average (ERAve): (Earned Runs / Innings Pitched) x Number of innings scheduled for each game
[$(ER / IP) \times 9$]
- Games Won and Lost: (WO/LO): (Games Won / (Games Won + Games Lost))
[$WO / (WO + LO)$]
- On Base Percentage (OBP): (Hits + Bases on Balls + Hit by Pitch) / (Times at Bat + Bases on Balls + Hit By Pitch + Sacrifice Flies)
[$(H + BB + HP) / (AB + BB + HP + SF)$]

NOTE: For the purposes of calculating the on-base PERCENTAGE, ignore being awarded first base on interference or obstruction.

NOTE: The results are rounded up or down to the third decimal place, depending on whether they are greater than or less than 0.0005.

IMPORTANT: In order to be included in the statistics a player must be in good standing with the relevant league authorities.

The final statistic we will consider is **GAMES BEHIND (GB)**, which serves to establish the team's ranking. It is calculated as follows:

The team's Games Won and Lost statistic is used.

The team that is top of the ranking is given a 0; the following formula is applied to the remaining teams:

$$[((\mathbf{W\ first\ team} - \mathbf{W\ team\ }x) + (\mathbf{L\ team\ }x - \mathbf{L\ first\ team})) / 2]$$

Game formalities

The Official Scorer (OS) must arrive at the stadium at least 60 minutes before the start of the game.

At least 30 minutes before the start of the game, the Official Scorer (OS) receives the Provisional Starting Line-up.

The Official Scorer (OS) must complete the score-sheet within 15 minutes after the end of the game and he gives the score-sheet to the Scoring Director of the tournament.

It shall be understood in any case that the Official Scorer (OS) shall comply with all instructions issued each year by the IBAF.

Shutouts

A shutout is a statistic credited to a pitcher who allows no runs in a game. No pitcher shall be credited with pitching a shutout unless he pitches the complete game, or unless he enters the game with none out before the opposing team has scored in the first inning, puts out the side without a run scoring and pitches the rest of the game without allowing a run. When two or more pitchers combine to pitch a shutout, the league statistician shall make a notation to that effect in the league's official pitching records.

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