

# FASTBALL 45 FEEDBACK

Thank you to all those that took the time to provide feedback on the inaugural FASTBALL 45 National League.

All feedback will be tabled for the review committee with the aim of helping to further shape and evolve the FASTBALL 45 product.

We have received some outstanding feedback to date including a few gems for consideration. In addition, there are a number of themes that have come through which we feel would be good to provide context to.

## **45mins**

Softball NZ and Sky have an agreement of 2 hours' film and broadcast time. The 120mins allocation allows for a 45min game, interviews and commercial breaks (1 hour) which is then repeated. Therefore, the clock is the clock and we have been unable to extend the length of the game either by time or outs. So rules and procedures need to be considered carefully to ensure they are meaningful and are in the best interests of the game and our objectives.

The following themes are either a challenge or ideas we are unable to get across the line.

## **Completing the Last Inning**

Completing the last inning is the biggest bugbear with this format, and an area we have not been able to resolve, as yet. The declaration does help, and is a tool we encourage coaches to use in order to help close out the inning.

## **TV Review (TMO)**

At the conclusion of the FASTBALL 45 Grand Finals we discussed with Sky Sport the possibilities of a slow motion replay and review system.

Although the concept is a fantastic initiative, the number of cameras available to our production is an issue. Sky only utilised one slow motion camera throughout the 4 weekends of play. The camera was located behind home plate and was only used during the Grand Finals in Auckland. International rugby games utilise 8 super slow motion cameras located at key areas of the field i.e. the corner flags where slow motion replays are most needed.

In order to provide consistency and value, Sky would need multiple cameras available at all Regional Qualifiers and Grand Finals. Furthermore, a review process would only slow up the game and reduce the possibility of completing games within time.

## **International Walk**

An international walk is the quickest, and most effective way to avoid a pitcher throwing to a hitter. If the International Walk was removed it would force pitchers to throw around hitters providing them nothing to hit, slowing up the game, and potentially seeing wild pitches given there is less of a target to throw to. So although, it would be great to see pitchers throwing against team's best hitters, it's not

enforceable and therefore the reason the international walk is an advantage to our game.

### **Home Run Derby**

Implementing a home run derby to decide the winner of a tied game is an exciting proposition but one that would require logistics, time with no guaranteed outcome.

### **Double Points for HRs**

Although the home run is a feature of our sport, swinging for the fence is not the intention of FASTBALL 45. FASTBALL is based on the short game, contact hitting and aggressive base running. Encouraging the long ball will only discourage teams from playing the short game. This is the reason why a successful squeeze was awarded 2 points, and not the home run.

### **Regional Qualifier Format**

Yes, it would be great to have a full round robin played during a Regional Qualifier to determine an outright winner. This concept was strongly discussed when considering format options. However, the reality is that a full round robin consumes a high number of officials not only during a game but over the course of a qualifier. The other key reason we prefer only the 6 Sky Sport games to be played is that we want all teams and officials to be charged, on point and primed for the TV production. If teams were to play a game/s before they take centre stage they may have injured or tired players and unable deliver optimum results.