

## Baseball Scoring Rules Changes Year by Year Since 1950

Compiled by Stew Thornley

Rule books back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century had more than 50 rules with only a few of them devoted to scoring. For example, the 1891 book had 67 playing rules plus Rule 68 on Scoring and Rule 69 for The Summary. The 1914 book had 83 playing rules with rules 84-86 devoted to scoring. The 1949 book had 69 rules with Rule 70 for The Rules of Scoring and 71 for The Summary, which had 17 sections on what the official scorer had to list and then a section on determining percentages. The 1950 rule book was reorganized into 10 rules with the scoring rules being Rule 10 (Rule 9 starting in 2015).

### 1950

1950 Scoring Rules Committee: Roscoe McGowen, *N. Y. Times*, Chairman; Dan Daniel, *N. Y. World-Telegram*; Halsey Hall, *Minneapolis Star & Tribune*; Charles Young, *Albany Knickerbocker News*; Tom Swope, *Cincinnati Post*

From 1949:

#### THE RULES OF SCORING

Rule 70 –

- The Batsman's Record
- The Scoring of Base Hits
- Sacrifice Hits
- Fielding Records
- Errors
- Stolen Bases
- Definition of Wild Pitch and Passed Ball
- Definition of Run Earned Off Pitcher
- Definition of Runs Batted In

Rule 71 – The Summary

- How to Determine Percentages

The 1950 rules carried on many scoring practices from the past but now addressed and defined them with more specificity. Highlights of the expanded and reorganized scoring rules:

2.21 DOUBLE PLAY and 2.68 TRIPLE PLAY are plays by the defense in which two/three offensive players are legally put out as a result of continuous play.

10.09 DOUBLE PLAY – TRIPLE PLAY: Any two/three successive putouts which take place between the time a ball leaves a pitcher's hand and is returned to him while he is standing in the pitcher's box.

[The definition refers to "continuous play" and the rule to "successive putouts." The rules were later clarified that an error or misplay between putouts would nullify the scoring of a double or triple play.]

The phrase "benefit of the doubt" for batters when making a decision between a hit and an error was first used in the 1950 rule book: Always give the batter the benefit of the doubt. A safe course to follow being to score a hit when exceptionally good fielding of a batted ball fails to result in a putout. However, the word "doubt" regarding batters was found as early as 1884 with Rule 70(3): In case of doubt over this class of hits ["hit with such force"], score a base hit and exempt fielder from error.

“Benefit of the doubt” regarding pitchers was in the rules as early as 1935 with Rule 70, Section 12: The pitcher shall be given the benefit of the doubt whenever fielding errors are made and in determining the base to which a fielder should have been held with perfect support on part of fielders.

10.07(f) FIELDING RECORDS – added to automatic putouts: When a runner is declared out by an umpire for running out of line to avoid being tagged by the ball in the hands of a fielder, the putout should be credited to the fielder whom the runner avoided.

10.08(c) ASSISTS – Situations will arise in which a wild throw shall be scored as an assist and not as an error while on some plays a wild throw shall be scored as an assist and as an error. Examples provided were an overthrow by a catcher on a stolen base with the runner thrown out trying to advance another base; assist, no error for catcher. Runners at first and second, force at second, overthrow on relay, runner from second scores, batter-runner tries for second and thrown out; assist and error for infielder who made the wild relay.

[As with a double/triple play even with an intervening error or misplay, an assist is still given even if it’s on an error or misplay. Eventually the scoring rules treated a play after an error/misplay as a new play for scoring purposes.]

10.10(b) ERRORS – Errors are not charged when a batter is awarded first base because of a base on balls . . . or if a runner, or runners, advance because of a passed ball or a wild pitch except: If a batter swings at a wild pitch for his third strike and thereby is unable to reach first base, it shall be scored as a strikeout and also an error for the pitcher and not a wild pitch; when a catcher muffs a third strike, thereby permitting a batter to reach first base, it shall be scored as an error for the catcher, not a passed ball, and as a strikeout.

10.12 WILD PITCHES – PASSED BALLS no longer included a wild pitch for a pitcher for a batter reaching first after a strikeout (although the rule returned to charging the pitcher with an error).

10.15(b) EARNED RUNS added, “Since a wild pitch on which a batter reaches first base is the pitcher’s fault, solely, even though it is scored as a fielding error, it shall be disregarded as an error and considered as wild pitch in computing earned runs and is the only instance in which an error is so disregarded.” The consideration of wild pitch was for reconstruction purposes only. A wild pitch was not charged to the pitcher in such situations; it was merely to be considered by the official scorer as tantamount to a wild pitch rather than an error so that it would not absolve the pitcher of an error.

10.11 STOLEN BASES – The 1950 rule is more extensive although, like pre-1950 rules, does not address runners being charged with caught stealing, either in the rule for stolen bases or in the summary to be tabulated by the official scorer.

New to 1950 is 10.11(g): If a runner, attempting to steal, is well advanced toward the base he is attempting to steal and a balk is called on the pitcher, credit the runner with a stolen base and do not score the balk unless another runner who is not attempting to steal is advanced by a balk.

Defensive indifference rather than a stolen base contains a lesser description in 10.11(d): No stolen base shall be scored when a runner advances solely because of the defensive team’s indifference to his advancement. 1949 Rule 70, Section 10 was more extensive: No stolen base shall be credited to a runner whose advancing results from the opposing team’s indifference thereto. In other words, when runners are deliberately permitted to circle around the bases because the team at bat cannot conceivably win, there are no stolen bases. If a runner steals a base and the catcher evidently refuses to throw fearing that the runner may score from third, a stolen base should be credited, in fairness to the runner who makes the catcher “show his hand.”

10.14 STRIKEOUTS

When a batter goes out of the game with two strikes against him and the substitute batter completes a strikeout, score it as a strikeout for the first batter. If the substitute batter completes the turn at bat in any other manner, score the action as having been that of the substitute batter.

#### 10.15 EARNED RUNS

At this time a pitcher was still charged with an error rather than a wild pitch (or a catcher with an error rather than a passed ball) if a batter reached base on a strikeout. In 1950 10.15(b) was added: Since a wild pitch on which a batter reaches first base is the pitcher's fault, solely, even though it is scored as a fielding error, it shall be disregarded as an error and considered as wild pitch in computing earned runs and is the only instance in which an error is so disregarded.

#### 10.16 DETERMINING WINNING AND LOSING PITCHER

Wins and losses are credited/charged to the pitcher of record: winning pitcher to the pitcher in the game when his team takes the lead for good, losing pitcher charged with the run that puts his team behind to stay.

A starting pitcher cannot get a in if he does not pitch at least five innings for games of six or more innings or four innings of games of five innings. If cases when the pitcher does not pitch the required innings but his team is ahead and holds the lead, the official scorer will credit the win to the reliever deemed most effective.

Although winning and losing pitchers had not previously been in rule books, the rules adopted in 1950 had been the standard and custom since 1920.

#### 10.18 BATTING CHAMPIONSHIPS

To be eligible for the individual batting championship of any minor league, a player must have appeared in at least two-thirds of the games played by his team. In the major leagues, a player must be credited with at least 400 official "times at bat."

### 1951

Scoring Rules Committee: Roscoe McGowen, *N. Y. Times*, Chairman; Dan Daniel, *N. Y. World-Telegram*; Halsey Hall, *Minneapolis Star & Tribune*; Charles Young, *Albany Knickerbocker News*; Tom Swope, *Cincinnati Post*

10.06 deleted a paragraph on a squeeze play and added: Also score a sacrifice if, with less than two out, the fielders handle a bunted ball without error in attempting to force a preceding runner but fail to do so. Exception: When such an attempt is made to turn a bunt into a forceout of a preceding runner and fails and it is the scorer's judgment that perfect play would not have retired the runner at first base, it shall be scored as a one-base hit and not a sacrifice.

Caught stealing was referenced in 1951 with the addition of 10.08(d): When records are kept of players caught stealing by catchers, credit the catcher with preventing a stolen base each time he traps a runner off any base with a thrown ball and, as a result of such throw, the runner is retired or would have been except for a subsequent error by any fielder, including the catcher. Runners who are retired in run-down plays started by the catcher trapping a runner off any base, or whose base running life is prolonged by an error after they have been trapped off base by the catcher, are to be included among those prevented from stealing by the catcher.

10.10(i) was added: If a batter is awarded first base by an umpire because of interference by the catcher, charge the catcher with an error; if an umpire awards a runner or runners one or more bases because of interference or obstruction by any defensive player, charge the player who committed the interference or obstruction with one error, no matter how many bases the runner or runners are advanced.

10.11(g) was dropped. Deleted section: If a runner, attempting to steal, is well advanced toward the base he is attempting to steal and a balk is called on the pitcher, credit the runner with a stolen base and do not score the balk unless another runner who is not attempting to steal is advanced by a balk.

10.16(c)(5) added a provision for an exception to a relief pitcher who was the pitcher of record but who was “ineffective and brief.” was added in 1951 in 10.16(c)(5).

10.18(b) added, “To be designated as the leader of his league’s pitchers in the minimum average number of earned runs allowed a pitcher is required to pitch at least as many innings as the number of games scheduled for each team in his league. (This would be 154 innings in a major league.)”

## 1952

Scoring Rules Committee: Roscoe McGowen, *N. Y. Times*, Chairman; Dan Daniel, *N. Y. World-Telegram*; Halsey Hall, *Minneapolis Star & Tribune*; Charles Young, *Albany Knickerbocker News*; Tom Swope, *Cincinnati Post*

10.07(f) added to automatic putouts, “when a runner is called out for passing another runner credit the putout to the fielder nearest the spot the violation of 7.08(h) took place.”

10.15(g) specified a base on balls only for charging an outgoing pitcher (based on the count at the time of substitution) for the completion of a plate appearance. In 1940 Rule 70, Section 12 had added, “The preceding pitcher, and not a relieving pitcher, shall be charged with runs scored by any runners on base when such relief pitcher entered the game. The relieving pitcher shall not be charged with his first batsman reaching first base if such batsman had any advantage because of poor pitching by the preceding pitcher. With the count two or three balls and one or no strikes, or three balls and two strikes, charge preceding pitcher if batsman reaches first base, but credit relieving pitcher if batsman retired. With count one or two balls and two strikes, charge relieving pitcher if batsman reaches first base and credit him if batsman is retired.” The rule dictated a preceding pitcher, if he left a reliever in a disadvantageous situation, to be charged with a batter reaching first base without specifying it would apply only of the plate appearance ended in a walk. 10.15(g) in 1952 also added the sentence, “Any other action by such a batter, including a safe hit, being hit by a pitched ball, hitting into a forceout or a fielder’s choice or being safe because of a fielding error shall cause that batter to be charged to the relieving pitcher.”

10.18(a) minimums for a percentage batting championship were changed from a player having appeared in at least two-thirds of the games played by his team (minor leagues only) and having at least 400 times at bat (major leagues) to having at least 2.6 at bats per the number of games scheduled for one club in his league during the season. The 1952 rules added an exception (which lasted for three years and then again starting in 1967) for a player with fewer at bats than the required number whose average could have been the highest if he were charged with the required number of times at bat total.

## 1953

Scoring Rules Committee: Roscoe McGowen, *N. Y. Times*, Chairman; Dan Daniel, *N. Y. World-Telegram*; Sam Levy, *Milwaukee Journal*; Frank Haraway, *Denver Post*; Tom Swope, *Cincinnati Post*

## 1954

Scoring Rules Committee: James T. Gallagher, Chairman; Dan Daniel, *N. Y. World-Telegram & Sun*; Ed McAuley, *Cleveland News*; Tom Swope, *Cincinnati Post*; Halsey Hall, *Minneapolis Star*; Cy Kritzer, *Buffalo Evening News*; Zipp Newman, *Birmingham News*

2.21 for DOUBLE PLAY and the addition of 2.73 for TRIPLE PLAY both added, “provided there is no error between the putouts.”

10.01(c) added a clause that “in no case shall the Scorer’s decision conflict with the playing rules.”

10.06(b) reinstated the sacrifice fly: Also score a sacrifice if, with less than two out, the batter hits a fair fly ball which (1) is caught, and a runner scores after the catch, or (2) is dropped for an error and a runner scores, if in the scorer’s judgment, the runner could have scored after the catch had the fly been caught.

10.06(c) directed official scorers to list sacrifice bunts and sacrifice flies separately in the summary.

10.15(a) specified the “decided advantage” in the count when pitchers are changed. If the count is 2-0, 2-1, 3-0, 3-1, 3-2 and the plate appearance ended in a base on balls, the preceding pitcher is charged with the walk. If the count is 2-2, 1-2, 1-1, 1-0, 0-2, 0-1, the outgoing pitcher is off the hook and a walk, or any other action by the batter, is applied to the incoming pitcher.

10.16(d) added “muffed foul fly” that prolongs an at bat as a reason for an unearned run.

## 1955

Scoring Rules Committee: Tom Swope, *Cincinnati Post*, Chairman; Cy Kritzer, *Buffalo Evening News*; James T. Gallagher

FIELDER’S CHOICE was added to the section on definitions regarding a ground ball with a fielder throwing to a base other than first base in an attempt to retire a preceding runner. It also covered the advance of the batter-runner on a hit or another runner when a fielder attempts to retire a preceding runner.

10.03(c) included “How to Prove a Box Score.”

10.03(d) had a section on when a player bats out of turn, calling for the proper batter to be charged with an at bat if the situation is appealed. If the improper batter had been put out, the play was scored the same way it would have been if the correct batting order had been followed. If the improper batter became a runner, the proper batter is charged with a time at bat with a putout credited to the catcher.

10.03(e) on drawn and forfeited games: All individual and team records of any drawn or forfeited games which has reached or exceeded legal length when ended shall before part of the official averages except that no pitcher shall be credited with a victory or charged with a defeat.

10.04(b), regarding runs batted in, the wording on reverse-force double play – on which a batter cannot get an RBI – was altered.

10.05 and 10.06 for BASE HITS replaced 10.04 from 1954. 10.05(f) was added to when a base hit is scored: When a fielder unsuccessfully attempts to retire a preceding runner, and, in the scorer’s judgment, the batter-runner would not have been retired at first base by perfect fielding. 10.04(i) back through 1950 called for a fielder’s choice and no hit when a fielder unsuccessfully tried to retire a preceding runner, but it did not mention the situation when a batter could be credited with a hit. Although this clarification was not in the restructured rule book in 1950, as early as 1914, Rule 85, Section 4 called for a hit rather than fielder’s choice if the batter could not have been retired at first base.

10.07 – DETERMINING VALUE OF BASE HITS [previously 10.05] was rewritten with some examples included to clarify the rules. 10.07 added a section on game-ending hits; unless a batter ended the game with a home run over the fence, a batter could be credited with only as many bases on his hit as are advanced by the runner who scores the winning run and then only if the batter runs out his hit for as many bases as are advanced. A note directed that this rule be applied even when the batter is theoretically entitled to more bases because of being awarded an automatic” extra-base hit.

10.10 (was 10.08 in 1954) added a note: Mere ineffective contact with the ball shall not be considered an assist. "Deflect" shall mean to slow down or change the direction of the ball and therefor effectively assist in retiring a batter or runner.

10.10(b) added a few more examples of when not to credit a pitcher with an assist as the result of a legal pitch caught by the catcher.

10.10, regarding caught stealing, an exception was added to the rule to not credit the catcher with a caught stealing when he traps a runner off base after fielding a batted ball or any play started by another fielder.

10.11 added a note: Slow handling of the ball which does not involve mechanical misplay shall not be considered an error.

10.11(a) include a muffed foul fly that prolongs the time at bat as a reason for an error, whether the batter subsequently reaches first base or is retired.

10.11(g)(1) called for an error on the pitcher if a fourth ball was wild and resulted in additional advancement of the batter-runner and/or runners beyond the base they would have been entitled to. The pitcher was not charged with a wild pitch on such plays.

10.11(i) added: No error shall be charged against any fielder when he makes a wild throw in attempting to prevent a runner's advance, unless in the scorer's judgment such wild throw permits the runner to advance beyond the base he would have reached had the throw not been wild, or permits any other runner to advance. [Was the intention of this rule to preclude a missed-out error for a bad throw on a non-force play?]

10.17(h) was added to ignore the five-inning minimum for starting pitchers to receive a win in non-championship games such as the All-Star Game.

10.19(c) added qualifications for fielders to be the leader in fielding average at each position). A catcher must have participated as a catcher in at least 90 games (80 games in leagues playing schedules of 140 games or less). An infielder or outfielder must have participated at his position in at least 100 games (90 games in leagues playing schedules of 140 games or less). A pitcher must have pitched in at least as many innings as the number of games scheduled for each club in his league that season.

## **1956**

Scoring Rules Committee: Tom Swope, *Cincinnati Post*, Chairman; Cy Kritzer, *Buffalo Evening News*; James T. Gallagher

## **1957**

Scoring Rules Committee: Tom Swope, *Cincinnati Post*, Chairman; Cy Kritzer, *Buffalo Evening News*; James T. Gallagher

10.01(a) added, "The league president shall appoint an official scorer for each league championship game. The official scorer shall observe the game from a position in the press box." The official scorer had been stationed in the press box for decades; the 1957 rules were the first to mandate it.

10.01(b)(2) added, "If the teams change sides before three men are put out, the scorer shall immediately inform the umpire of the mistake."

10.04(c) added, “Scorer’s judgment must determine whether a run batted in shall be credited for a run which scores when a fielder holds the ball, or throws to a wrong base. Ordinarily, if the runner keeps going, credit a run batted in; if the runner stops and takes off again when he notices the misplay, credit the run as scored on a fielder’s choice.”

To 10.05(b), a note was added: A hit shall be scored if the fielder attempting to handle the ball cannot make a play, even if such fielder deflects the ball from or cuts off another fielder who could have retired a runner.

10.11(g), which had been added in 1955, was deleted. The rule called for an error on the pitcher if a fourth ball was wild and resulted in additional advancement of the batter-runner and/or runners beyond the base they would have been entitled to. The pitcher was not charged with a wild pitch on such plays. The deletion was in tandem with the addition of 10.13(f) to call for a wild pitch or passed ball rather than an error on the pitcher or catcher for a batter reaching first after a strikeout.

10.13(e) added, “No error shall be charged to any fielder who permits a foul fly to fall safe with a runner on third base before two are out, if in the scorer’s judgment the fielder deliberately refuses the catch in order that the runner on third shall not score after the catch.”

10.13(f) called for a wild pitch or passed ball rather than an error on the pitcher or catcher, respectively, if a batter struck out and reached first after a strikeout. The rule reads:

Because the pitcher and catcher handle the ball much more than other fielders, certain misplays on pitched balls are called “wild pitchers” and “passed balls” and are defined elsewhere in this rule. No error shall be charged when a wild pitch or passed ball is scored.

(1) No error shall be charged when the batter is awarded first base on four called balls or because he was touched by a pitched ball, or when he reaches first base as the result of a wild pitch or passed ball.

(i) When the third strike is a wild pitch, permitting the batter to reach first base, score a strikeout and a wild pitch;

(ii) When the third strike is a passed ball, permitting the batter to reach first base, score a strikeout and a passed ball.

(2) No error shall be charged when a runner or runners advance as the result of a passed ball, a wild pitch, or a balk.

(i) When the fourth called ball is a wild pitch or a passed ball, and as a result (a) the batter-runner advances to a base beyond first base; (b) any runner forced to advance by the base on balls, advances more than one base, or (c) any runner, not forced to advance, advances one or more bases, score the base on balls, and also the wild pitch, or passed ball, as the case may be.

(ii) When the catcher recovers the ball after a wild pitch or passed ball on the third strike, and throws out the batter-runner at first base, or tags out the batter-runner, but another runner or runners advance, score the strikeout, the putout and assists, if any, and credit the advance of the other runner or runners as having been made on the play.

10.18(a) emphasized that a wild pitch is the fault of a pitcher “and contributes to an earned run just as a base on balls or a balk.” 10.18(b) emphasized that an error by a pitcher is treated the same as an error by any other fielder in determining earned runs. 10.18(d) was reworded, in part because the previous rule addressed the practice of a pitcher being charged with an error rather than a wild pitch if it allowed a batter to reach first after striking out.

10.18 in 1957 was mainly a matter of rewording provisions that had already been in the rules, which were Rule 10.16 in 1956.

10.19(f) added an exception for a pitcher being credited with a shutout without pitching the complete game. A pitcher could get a shutout by entering the game in the first inning with no out, retiring the side without a run scoring, and pitching the rest of the game.

10.22 The standard for qualifying for a percentage championship in batting was changed in to 3.1 plate appearances times the scheduled number of games, making it 477 plate appearances when the season was 154 games and 502 plate appearances when the season was 162 games.

## 1958

Scoring Rules Committee: Tom Swope, *Cincinnati Post*, Chairman; Cy Kritzer, *Buffalo Evening News*; James T. Gallagher

In 1958, a Note was added to Rule 10.08(d)(2) [now 9.08(d) Comment] regarding an uncaught fly that is deemed deep enough to score a runner from third but that turns into a force out: Score a sacrifice fly if the ball is not caught “but another runner is forced out by reason of the batter becoming a runner.” Even though the 1957 rules had no provision for a sacrifice fly in such a situation, Cleveland official scorer Harry Jones credited Roger Maris with a sacrifice fly on such a play in a Detroit at Cleveland game April 27, 1957.

10.21(e), reworded the method for determining earned-run average.

10.22(c), changed the minimums for fielding championships to at least one-half the number of games scheduled for catchers (had been 90 games, or 80 in leagues playing schedules of 140 games or less) and for other non-pitchers, at least two-thirds of the games scheduled (had been 100 games or 90 in leagues playing schedules of 140 games or less).

## 1959

Scoring Rules Committee: Cy Kritzer, *Buffalo Evening News*, Chairman; Warren W. Brown, *Chicago American*; James T. Gallagher

## 1960

Scoring Rules Committee: Cy Kritzer, *Buffalo Evening News*, Chairman; Warren W. Brown, *Chicago American*; James T. Gallagher

## 1961

Scoring Rules Committee: Allen Lewis, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Chairman; Frank Haraway, *Denver Post*; James T. Gallagher

10.09(d) removed “fair” from “fly ball” for a sacrifice fly, which had required a fair fly ball for a sacrifice fly from the time the rule was reinstated in 1954 through 1960.

## 1962

Scoring Rules Committee: Allen Lewis, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Chairman; Bill Bryson, *Des Moines Register-Tribune*, James T. Gallagher

## 1963

Scoring Rules Committee: Allen Lewis, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Chairman; Joseph W. McKenney, American League; Dave Grote, National League; Carl Lundquist, National Association; Shelley Rolfe, *Richmond Times-Dispatch*

10.03(e)(1) The previous rules addressed regulation games that had been regulation games ended when they were tied or that were forfeited, noting that all individual and team records shall become part of the official



record except that “no pitcher shall be credited with a victory or charged with a defeat.” In 1963 10.03(e)(1) and (2) called for a winning and losing pitcher in regulation games that had been forfeited if the team winning by forfeit had been ahead at the time of the forfeit. It also specified that no records would be counted in a game was forfeited before it became an official game.

10.08(h) added caught stealing to the rule book: A runner shall be charged as “Caught Stealing” if he is put out, or would have been put out by errorless play when he 1. tries to steal, 2. is picked off a base and tries to advance, 3. overslides while stealing. NOTE: Do not charge “Caught Stealing” unless the runner has an opportunity to be credited with a stolen base when the play starts.

10.11(b) Exception added to the section on not crediting an assist to the pitcher on a strikeout: Credit an assist if the pitcher fields an uncaught third strike and makes a throw which results in a putout.

10.13 Note (2) was added: It is not necessary that the fielder touch the ball to be charged with an error. If a ground ball goes through a fielder’s legs or a pop fly falls untouched and in the scorer’s judgment the fielder could have handed the ball with ordinary effort, an error shall be charged.

10.14(a) changed “any fielder” to “the catcher”: No error shall be charged against the catcher when after receiving the pitch, he makes a wild throw attempting to prevent a stolen base unless [there is additional advancement by this or another runner].

10.18(a), regarding earned runs, added a final sentence: For the purpose of this rule, a defensive interference penalty shall be construed as a fielding chance.

## 1964

Scoring Rules Committee: Allen Lewis, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Chairman; Joseph W. McKenney, American League; Dave Grote, National League; Daniel F. O’Brien, National Association; Shelley Rolfe, *Richmond Times-Dispatch*

## 1965

Scoring Rules Committee: Allen Lewis, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Chairman; Joseph W. McKenney, American League; Dave Grote, National League; Daniel F. O’Brien, National Association; George Beahon, *Rochester Democrat & Chronicle*

10.22(c)(3) added an exception that if another pitcher, who has not qualified, has a fielding average as high or higher and has handled more total chances in a lesser number of innings, that pitcher will be the fielding champion.

## 1966

Scoring Rules Committee: Allen Lewis, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Chairman; Joseph W. McKenney, American League; Dave Grote, National League; Daniel F. O’Brien, National Association; George Beahon, *Rochester Democrat & Chronicle*

## 1967

Scoring Rules Committee: Allen Lewis, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Chairman; Bob Holbrook, American League; Dave Grote, National League; Daniel F. O’Brien, National Association; George Beahon, *Rochester Democrat & Chronicle*

10.08(c) added a phrase (in bold) regarding a stolen base for “a runner attempting to steal, **or after being picked off base**, evades being put out in a run-down play and advances to the next base without the aid of an error.”

10.09(d) added, “Do not score a sacrifice bunt when, in the judgment of the scorer, the batter is bunting for a base hit and not solely for the purpose of advancing a runner or runners. Charge the batter with a time at bat. NOTE: In applying the above rule, always give the batter the benefit of the doubt.”

10.13 Note (3) added: “Mental mistakes or misjudgments are not scored as errors unless specifically covered in the rules.”

10.14(d) added a phrase (in bold): “No error shall be charged against any fielder when, after **fumbling a ground ball or** dropping a fly ball, a fly ball, a line drive, or a thrown ball, he recovers the ball in time to force out a runner at any base.”

10.22(a) Exception added regarding the minimum number of plate appearances need to qualify for a batting championship: “However, if there is any player with fewer than the required number of plate appearances whose average would be the highest if he were charged with the required number of plate appearances or official at bats, then that player shall be awarded the batting championship.” [Note: this exception was also in effect in 1952, 1953, and 1954.]

## 1968

Scoring Rules Committee: Allen Lewis, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Chairman; Bob Holbrook, American League; Dave Grote, National League; Daniel F. O’Brien, National Association; George Beahon, *Rochester Democrat & Chronicle*

## 1969

Scoring Rules Committee: Allen Lewis, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Chairman; Bob Holbrook, American League; Dave Grote, National League; Daniel F. O’Brien, National Association; George Beahon, *Rochester Democrat & Chronicle*

10.09(d) added the word “primarily” for not awarding a sacrifice if the scorer was determined that a batter was bunting for a base hit. Now the batter must be judged to be bunting *primarily* for a base hit to be denied a sacrifice.

10.12 regarding double or triple plays. No double or triple play would be scored if an error or misplay intervenes between putouts. Prior to 1969, the word “misplay” was not specified.

10.13(f) added a note regarding obstruction: “Do not charge an error if obstruction does not change the play in the opinion of the scorer.”

10.18 directed scorers to give the pitcher the benefit of the doubt when reconstructing an inning to determine earned and unearned runs with the addition of this sentence in the first paragraph: “In determining earned runs, the inning should be reconstructed without the errors and passed balls, and the benefit of the doubt should always be given to the pitcher in determining which bases would have been reached by errorless play.”

10.18(i) was added to no longer make it possible for a reliever to benefit from an error or passed ball that occurred prior to his entry into the game: “When pitchers are changed during an inning, the relief pitcher shall not have the benefit of previous chances for outs not accepted in determining earned runs. NOTE: It is the intent of this intent of this rule to prevent relief pitchers from not being charged with earned runs for which they are solely responsible.” The rule contained three examples.

Saves were made an official statistic with the addition of 10.20:

- (a) Credit a save to a relief pitcher who enters a game with his team in the lead if he holds the lead the remainder of the game, provided he is not credited with the victory.
- (b) A relief pitcher cannot be credited with a save if he does not finish the game unless he is removed for a pinch-hitter or pinch-runner.
- (c) When more than one relief pitcher qualifies for a save under the provisions of this rule, credit the save to the relief pitcher judged by the scorer to have been the most effective. Only one save can be credited in any game.

## 1970

Scoring Rules Committee: Allen Lewis, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Chairman; Bob Holbrook, American League; Dave Grote, National League; Daniel F. O'Brien, National Association; George Beahon, *Rochester Democrat & Chronicle*

## 1971

Scoring Rules Committee: Allen Lewis, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Chairman; Bob Holbrook, American League; Dave Grote, National League; Daniel F. O'Brien, National Association

## 1972

Scoring Rules Committee: Allen Lewis, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Chairman; Bob Holbrook, American League; Dave Grote, National League; Daniel F. O'Brien, National Association

## 1973

Scoring Rules Committee: Allen Lewis, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Chairman; Bob Holbrook, American League; Dave Grote, National League; Daniel F. O'Brien, National Association

10.24, Guidelines for Cumulative Performance Records, was added:

### (a) CONSECUTIVE HITTING STREAKS

A consecutive hitting streak shall not be terminated if the plate appearance results in a base on balls, hit batsman, defensive interference or a sacrifice bunt. A sacrifice fly shall terminate the streak.

### (b) CONSECUTIVE-GAME HITTING STREAKS.

A consecutive-game hitting streak shall not be terminated if all the player's plate appearances (one or more) result in a base on balls, hit batsman, defensive interference or sacrifice bunt. The streak shall terminate if the player has a sacrifice fly and no hit.

### (c) CONSECUTIVE PLAYING STREAK.

A consecutive-game playing streak shall be extended if the player plays one half-inning on defense, or if he completes a time at bat by reaching base or being put out. A pinch-running appearance only shall not extend the streak. If a player is ejected from a game by an umpire before he can comply with the requirement of this rule, his streak shall continue.

### (d) SUSPENDED GAMES.

For the purpose of this rule, all performances in the completion of a suspended game shall be considered as occurring on the original date of the game.

## 1974

Scoring Rules Committee: Allen Lewis, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Chairman; Bob Holbrook, American League; Dave Grote, National League; Bill Wood, National Association; *Bill Deekins*, Richmond (Va.) *News Leader*

10.20 was amended:

- (a) A pitcher shall be credited with a save when, in entering the game as a relief pitcher, he finds the potential tying or winning run either on base or at the plate or pitches at least three or more effective innings and in either case, preserves the lead.

(b) When more than one relief pitcher qualifies for a save under the provisions of this rule, credit the save to the relief pitcher judged by the scorer to have been the most effective. It is not mandatory to credit a save. Only one save can be credited in any game.

10.23 regarding minimum standards for individual championships including different standards between major league or National Association standards.

### 1975

10.09(e) added “an infielder running in the outfield” as a way that a sacrifice fly could be credited. Prior to 1975, the rules allowed for a sacrifice fly only on a fly ball handled by an outfielder – no mention made of an infielder catching the ball.

10.20 was amended:

Credit a save to a relief pitcher when he meets all three of the following conditions:

- (1) He is the finishing pitcher in a game won by his club; and
- (2) He is not the winning pitcher; and
- (3) He qualifies under one of the following conditions:
  - (a) He enters the game with a lead of no more than three runs and pitches for at least one inning; or
  - (b) He enters the game with the potential tying [*sic*] run either on base, or at bat, or on deck (that is, the potential tying [*sic*] run is wither already on base or is one of the first two batsman he faces); or
  - (c) He pitches effectively for at least three innings.

No more than one save may be credited in each game.

### 1976

Clarifications (not significant changes) were made to 10.16 10.17(b), 10.18, and 10.18(g)(7).

10.21 added “When a player listed in the starting lineup for the visiting club is substituted for before he plays defensively, he shall not receive credit in the defensive statistics (fielding), unless he actually plays that position during a game. All such players, however, shall be credited with one game played (in “batting statistics”) as long as they are announced into the game or listed on the official lineup card.”

10.22(e) regarding computing an earned-run average, added this note: For purposes of earned run average calculations and innings pitched totals, innings pitched shall be rounded off to the nearest whole inning. EXAMPLES: 200-1/3 innings becomes 200; 200-2/3 becomes 201.

### 1977

10.16(b) was added: Intentional base on balls shall be scored when the pitcher makes no attempt to throw the last pitch to the batter into the strike zone but purposely throws the ball wide to the catcher outside the catcher’s box.

### 1978

The NOTES – CASE BOOK – COMMENTS section, which followed the main portion of the rules, was eliminated in 1978 with the approved rulings in this area transferred to Comments to go with each rule in the main section of the rule book.

### 1979

10.01(a) added the underlined clauses in this paragraph: The Official Scorer must make all decisions concerning judgment calls within twenty-four (24) hours after a game has been officially concluded. No judgment decision shall be changed thereafter except, upon immediate application to the League President, the scorer may request a change, citing the reasons for such. In all cases, the official scorer is not permitted to make a scoring decision which is in conflict with the scoring rules.

10.08(h) added that “any move toward the next base shall be considered an attempt to advance” regarding when a caught stealing would be charged and added this note: In those instances where a pitched ball eludes the catcher and the runner is put out trying to advance, no caught stealing shall be charged.

10.18 added this sentence: For the purpose of determining earned runs, an intentional base on balls, regardless of the circumstances, shall be construed in exactly the same manner as any other base on balls.

A rule change adopted in December 1978 to suspend games rather than revert to the last full inning was not reflected in the official rule book until 1980. Although the rule for a suspension rather than a reversion was changed at the 1978 winter meetings, rules required approval by the Players Association, and this may not have been done with this rule to the point that it was not implemented until 1980. (Another rule approved by the Playing Rules Committee in December 1978 – the creation of a game-winning RBI – also did not have immediate approval by the Players Association – although the statistic was used in 1979.)

## 1980

10.04(e) added Game-Winning RBI: The RBI that gives a club the lead it never relinquishes. NOTE: There does not have to be a game-winning RBI in every game and all game-winning RBIs must conform to Rule 10.04 [the rule regarding runs batted in]. Rules changes adopted in December 1978 included the creation of the game-winning RBI. Although it did not have the immediate approval of the Players Association and did not appear in the rule book until 1980, the statistic was used in 1979.

10.19(c)(4) changed the wording of a relief pitcher, even if he becomes the pitcher of record, not getting a win if he was ineffective and brief when a subsequent reliever is effective. The re-worded rule, with strikethrough for a deleted portion and underlining for the new wording: EXCEPTION: Do not credit a victory to a relief pitcher who ~~pitches briefly and ineffectively if~~ is ineffective in a brief appearance, when a succeeding relief pitcher pitches effectively in helping to maintain his team in the lead his team maintain the lead. In such cases, credit the succeeding relief pitcher with the victory.

10.21, Statistics, added a line/paragraph to the end: Any games played to break a divisional tie shall be included in the statistics for that championship season.

10.22(e) added a line at the end of this note: 10.22(e) regarding computing an earned-run average, added this note: For purposes of earned run average calculations and innings pitched totals, innings pitched shall be rounded off to the nearest whole inning. EXAMPLES: 200-1/3 innings becomes 200; 200-2/3 becomes 201. The added line is, “EXCEPTION: Do not apply this rule where a pitcher has only 1/3 of an inning for the entire season. In such cases carry his total for innings pitched as 1/3.”

## 1982

10.22 was changed to no longer have innings pitched, for the purpose of earned-run averages, to be rounded up or down. The new wording: NOTE: Earned-run averages shall be calculated on the basis of total innings pitched including fractional innings. EXAMPLE: 9-1/3 innings pitch and 3 earned runs is an earned-run average of 2.89 (3 ER times 9 divided by 9-1/3 equals 2.89).

10.24(b), regarding consecutive-game hitting streaks, added this line: The player’s individual consecutive-game hitting streak shall be determined by the consecutive games in which the player appears and is not determined by his club’s games”.

## 1983

10.23 added “slugging champion” and “slugging percentage” to go with the batting champion with the highest batting average for those with enough plate appearances to qualify.

#### **1984**

10.22(f) was added to make on-base percentage make it an official statistic: On-base percentage, divide the total of hits, all bases on balls and hit by pitch by the total of at bats, all base on balls, hit by pitch, and sacrifice flies. NOTE: For the purpose of computing on-base percentage, ignore being awarded first base on interference or obstruction.

#### **1985**

10.08(h) added a line to the note for caught stealing, “No caught stealing should be charged when a runner is awarded a base due to obstruction.”

10.20(3)(b) added a clause, “regardless of the count,” on when a pitcher enters a game for whether or not he qualifies for a save. A pitcher may qualify for a save if he enters a game with the potential tying run on base, at bat, or on deck. The addition of “regardless of the count” clarifies a situation in which a pitcher enters and assumes a count that would charge the outgoing pitcher with a walk if the plate appearance ends with a walk. If the tying run is farther away than on deck, but a new pitcher comes in and completes a walk that is charged to a previous pitcher and it then puts the tying run on deck, the incoming pitcher does not qualify for a save for this option.

#### **1989**

10.04(e), the Game-Winning RBI, was deleted from the rule book.

#### **2006**

The 2006 rule book began labeling casebook comments. In addition to listing the rules that were changed in the front of the book, it added a brief description of the change. Changes within the book were no longer bolded or underlined. In the list of changes, it marked with an asterisk those that required approval of the Major League Players Association for implementation at the major league level in the upcoming season.

#### **2007**

2.00 added a definition and comment for “ordinary effort,” a standard set forth frequently in the Official Scoring Rules: ORDINARY EFFORT is the effort that a fielder of average skill at a position in that league or classification of leagues should exhibit on a play, with due consideration given to the condition of the field and weather conditions. Comment: This standard, called for several times in the Official Scoring Rules, . . . , is an objective standard in regard to any particular fielder. In other words, even if a fielder makes his best effort, if that effort falls short of what an average fielder at that position in that league would have made in a situation, the official scorer should charge that fielder with an error.

10.00 revised the index to the individual sections, made style revisions, and added certain cross-references.

10.01(a) clarified that official scorer duties apply to post-season and All-Star games (additional sentence underlined): The League President shall appoint an official scorer for each league championship, post-season or all-star game.

10.01(a) standardized the process for the league review of a scorer’s judgement call and set time limits to file a request for review and submit evidence (such as videotape). Empowered the league to overrule a clearly erroneous judgment call by a scorer.

Added in 2006: A player or club may request that the League President review a judgment call of an official scorer made in a game in which such player or club participated, by notifying the League President in writing or by approved electronic means within 24 hours of the conclusion or suspension of such game, or

within 24 hours of the official scorer's call, in the event the official scorer changes a call within 24 hours after a game concludes or is suspended, as provided in this Rule 10.01(a). The party requesting review shall submit, before the close of the second business day of the league office following the request for review, any written explanation or other evidence (such as videotapes or electronic media) the player or club wishes the League President to consider in reviewing such request. The League President shall not consider any evidence submitted after the time for submission set forth in this Rule 10.01(a). The League President, after considering the evidence submitted and any other evidence he wishes to consider, may request that the official scorer change a judgment call or, if the League President concludes that the judgment of the official scorer had been clearly erroneous, may order a change in a judgment call. No judgment decision shall be changed thereafter. A league may impose a reasonable fee upon a party requesting such review in the event that the judgment call of the official scorer being reviewed is upheld.

10.01(a), 10.01(a) Comment, 10.01(b)(3), 10.02(a)(17), 10.02(a)(18), 10.02(i), 10.02(a)(18), 10.02(i), 10.02(j), 10.02(l), 10.02(l) Comment, and 10.02(m) amended the official score report to "as soon as practicable" after a game and amended certain reporting requirements of the official scorer.

10.02(c)(1), 10.09(a)(2), and 10.10(a)(1) added comments to address fractions of an inning pitched after an appeal play and to cover putouts and assists on appeal plays.

10.03(e) added a comment to address the official 9-0 score of a forfeit: The official scorer shall not consider that, by rule, the score of a forfeited game is 9-0 (see Rule 2.00 (Forfeited Game), notwithstanding the results on the field at the point the game is forfeited.

10.05 combined former rules 10.05 and 10.06, in regard to scoring base hits, into one rule section.

10.06(f) added a comment on determining the value of a base hit on a game-ending play in situations where the winning run may score slightly before the batter-runner reaches an extra base. (The batter-runner may be credited with the base he reaches even if it is slightly after a runner scores a game-ending run.)

10.07(g) added a comment to instruct the official scorer to consider the totality of the circumstances of the game in determining defensive indifference on stolen base attempts.

10.08(a) "Totality of the circumstances" of the at-bat, including the inning, number of outs, and the score, was added to the official scorer's consideration of a sacrifice and if the batter was sacrificing his own chance of a hit by bunting to advance a runner.

10.08(b) replaced "perfect play" standard with "ordinary effort" standard in sacrifice hit scoring rule.

10.09(a)(2) added concept of tagging a base (after catching a batted or thrown ball) to scoring rule in regard to putouts.

10.09(b)(8) clarified that automatic putout for catcher if runner refuses to advance home is not limited to winning run.

10.12 combined former Rules 10.13 and 10.14, in regard to scoring errors, into one section.

10.13 added Comment to clarify that a wild pitch or passed ball should not be charged if the team on defense makes an out before the runners advance.

10.16 and 10.16(a) corrected parenthetical to “exclude” (not “include”) catcher’s interference from errors in inning-reconstructions for purposes of calculating earned runs. Incorporated existing interpretation of treatment of catcher’s interference into Comment.

10.17(b) and 10.17(c) added comments to provide guidance on choosing the “most effective” relief pitcher and judging an “ineffective and brief” appearance by a relief pitcher in determining the winning pitcher.

10.18 separated the scoring rule in regard to shutouts into new rule.

10.19(c) and 10.19(d)(3) added a requirement for a relief pitcher to be credited with at least 1/3 of an inning pitched to be eligible for a save. Eliminated the requirement of “effectiveness” if a relief pitcher pitches three or more innings in finishing a game to qualify for a save.

10.21(e) clarified that fractions of an inning are counted for a pitcher in determining ERA.

10.22(a) and 10.22(b) Comment amended rules relating to qualification for individual statistical championships. Added on-base percentage to batting and slugging in the minimum-plate-appearance rule. Added the 2.7-plate-appearance-per-game concept in National Association leagues to the rule. Addressed fractions of an inning in minimum qualifications for pitcher championships.

10.23(a) added obstruction to the list of events – base on balls, hit batsman, defensive interference, or a sacrifice bunt – that preserves a consecutive-game hitting streak.

10.04, 10.05, 10.09, 10.10, 10.12, 10.13, and 10.21(d) added general definitions of RBI, base hit, putout, assist, error, passed ball, and chances.

10.12(a)(1), 10.12(a)(6), 10.16(a), 10.22(a), 10.22(b), 10.2(a)(17) [*sic* – should be 10.02(a)(17), 10.07(h), 10.20 added examples in Comments to provide clarification in regard to charging errors, calculating earned runs, adding plate appearances in determining individual batting championships, determining minimum innings pitched for individual pitching championships, charging batters with grounding into double plays, charging caught stealing and crediting games played.

## 2012

Amended Rule 10.01(a) with regard to the process by which a player or Club may request the review of an official scorer’s decision.

The official scorer shall make all decisions concerning judgment calls within 24 hours after a game concludes or is suspended. A Major League player or club may request that the Executive Vice President for Baseball Operations review a judgment call of an official scorer made in a game in which such player or club participated, by notifying the Office of the Commissioner in writing or by approved electronic means within 72 hours of the conclusion or suspension of such game, or within 72 hours of the official scorer’s call, in the event the official scorer changes a call within 24 hours after a game concludes or is suspended, as provided in this Rule 10.01(a). The Executive Vice President for Baseball Operations shall have access to all relevant and available video and, after considering any evidence he wishes to consider, may order a change in a judgment call if he determines that the judgment of the official scorer was clearly erroneous. No judgment decision shall be changed thereafter. If the Executive Vice President for Baseball Operations determines that a player or club has abused the appeals process by repeatedly filing frivolous appeals, or acting in bad faith, he may, after providing a warning, impose reasonable sanctions on the club or player. A Minor League player or club may request that the League President review a judgment call of an official scorer in accordance with league rules. A player or club may request that the League President review a judgment call of an official scorer made in a game in which such player or club participated, by notifying the League



~~President in writing or by approved electronic means within 24 hours of the conclusion or suspension of such game, or within 24 hours of the official scorer's call, in the event the official scorer changes a call within 24 hours after a game concludes or is suspended, as provided in this Rule 10.01(a). The party requesting review shall submit, before the close of the second business day of the league office following the request for review, any written explanation or other evidence (such as videotapes or electronic media) the player or club wishes the League President to consider in reviewing such request. The League President shall not consider any evidence submitted after the time for submission set forth in this Rule 10.01(a). The League President, after considering the evidence submitted and any other evidence he wishes to consider, may request that the official scorer change a judgment call or, if the League President concludes that the judgment of the official scorer had been clearly erroneous, may order a change in a judgment call. No judgment decision shall be changed thereafter. A league may impose a reasonable fee upon a party requesting such review in the event that the judgment call of the official scorer being reviewed is upheld.~~

The section highlighted in yellow in the above paragraph replaced the language that was struck in the section that follows in the 2012 rules. As part of a new collective bargaining agreement reached in 2011, players now have the right to appeal a scorer's judgment call through the player's agent and the Players Association.

## **2015**

The rule book was reorganized with The Official Scorer changing from Rule 10.00 to Rule 9.00

## **2017**

Amended Rule 9.14(d) regarding how the official scorer shall score an intentional walk when the defensive manager informs the umpire that a batter will be intentionally walked without the pitcher pitching four balls to the batter.

## **2019**

- Amended Scoring Rule 9.01(a) in several places regarding the Official Scorer.
- Amended Scoring Rule 9.01(c) regarding interaction between the Official Scorer and various personnel.

9.01(a) requires the official scorer to have a position in the press box "in permanent assigned seating, as designated by the home club, in a seat adjacent to league Official Data collection staff [datacaster, BOSS operator]." The official scorer shall communicate judgment decisions "first to league Official Data Collection staff, and second to staff and media personnel" in the press box and broadcasting booths.

"Upon conclusion of an event in the field requiring a scorer's judgment, the Official School will first make a 'preliminary' judgment call, generally using best efforts to do so in a timely fashion in-line with the general pace of play, and no later than the next plate appearance." Within 24 hours after a game concludes or is suspended, "the Official Scorer will, at his or her discretion, render such preliminary judgments as 'final,' or revise the initial judgment to become a final judgment."

9.01(c), regarding the official scorer to report any indignity expressed, added "media personnel" to the list of people (manager, player, club employee, club officer) to those who cannot express such indignities.

## **2020**

- References to game protests were removed from Rule 3.02(c) Comment, Rule 9.01(b)(3), Rule 9.01(b)(3) Comment, and General Instructions to Umpires.

## **2025**

Regarding 9.12(c) and the instructions for the official scorer on interference or obstruction, a "shift violation restriction" was added.

