

Scoring Director Report - 2018 FISU World University Baseball Championships

Tournament

The World University Championships (WUC) are single sport tournaments sanctioned by the *Fédération Internationale du Sport Universitaire* (FISU). The WUC Baseball tournament in 2018 was held in Chiayi City, Taiwan (Chinese Taipei) from Friday July 6th to Sunday July 15th, and included 8 national teams of university students born between January 1st, 1993 and December 31st, 2000 competing in a total of 24 games (6 games each) over a span of 10 days, with one rest day in the schedule. All games were held at the Chiayi City Baseball Stadium. There were gold, silver, and bronze team medals awarded, but no individual player awards. The event was organised in accordance with the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) tournament regulations for U23, with three phases: Round Robin, Super Round/Consolation Round, Finals. The 8 teams competing were as follows:

- Australia
- Chinese Taipei
- Czech Republic
- Hong Kong
- Japan
- Russia
- South Korea
- United States of America

Rules

The rules governing the competition were the Major League Baseball (MLB) Official Baseball Rules 2018, WBSC U23 Tournament Regulations 2016, FISU regulations, and local ground rules.

Local Organising Committee (LOC)

The Chinese Taipei University Sports Federation (CTUSF) and Chinese Taipei Baseball Association (CTBA) were the organisers of the event, with Ms Fran LEE and Ms Hannah WANG of the CTUSF shouldering the bulk of pre-tournament logistics and day to day organisation during the tournament.

Technical Officials

The FISU Technical Delegate was Mr Giuseppe GUILIZZONI. The Technical Director was Mr Koji ASO (JPN), the Umpire Director was Mr Brett ROBSON (AUS), and the Scoring Director was Ms Connie STOYAKOVICH (AUS). There were both International and Local Technical Officials in the panels of Technical Commissioners, Umpires and Scorers. FISU also sent a Sport Assistant, Mr Brian CARRER.

Scoring Panel

The scoring panel for this event was comprised of 6 scorers coming from two nations. There were 4 local scorers, but 2 of these were considered International Technical Officials (ITO), according to the list provided by the LOC.

International Scorers

Pak Wah "Pit" WONG (HKG)
Cindy CHAN (HKG)
Hsin-Chang HUANG (TPE)
Cheng-Hsien LEE (TPE)

Local Scorers

Chih-Ching NAN (TPE)
Wen-Chih HO (TPE)

Official Hotels

The officials were all housed at the Nice Prince Hotel, less than 15 minutes by bus from the stadium. The teams were all housed at the Yuh-Tong Hotel, about 2 minutes by bus from the stadium. The LOC set up their tournament office at the Yuh-Tong Hotel. Both hotels were very high standard.

Preparation and Communication

There seemed to be some breakdown in communication regarding the appointment of international scorers for this event. The first notice that I received was an email on 9th May from the LOC saying "Following WBSC and FISU's email, you are appointed as ITO (international technical official) ..." and then asking for my passport and departure airport. This was also the case with three other international scorers whom I spoke with, and unfortunately two of them were unable to make the

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trip. I had not received an email from the WBSC or FISU before this email from the LOC, but fortunately I was available to accept this appointment.

Leading up to departure day, I had received information about my flights, my hotel, my uniform, and the transfer procedure upon arrival at the airport, but I still hadn't heard from anyone regarding who the scoring director or other scorers would be. I figured that I would find that out after I got to Chiayi, and prepared myself for game scoring.

At dinner on the night I arrived I got an email from Anna Maria PAINI (Chair of the WBSC Scoring Commission) telling me that I was to be the tournament's scoring director. This was quite a surprise, but I was assured the job would be relatively simple, as there would be another company ("ATOS") doing the live scoring and daily reports, and I would only need to assign the scorers to each game and check the data from ATOS for accuracy after each game. This was the procedure that the international scorers followed at the Universiade held the previous year in Taipei.

Except that ATOS was not servicing this event! After technical meetings and many questions to the LOC the next day, I began to understand that our scoring panel was responsible for everything normally required at a WBSC event. This was quite a challenge, as I had only brought my new laptop – which was not yet set up for scoring with the Stat Crew TASBS program, and Pit had his laptop with TASBS installed. I also had no preparation for the website or the daily reports. And the LOC didn't seem to know anything about live scoring (play-by-play), so the website was not set up for this at all.

Very fortunately I had brought with me a disc with the scoring software (TASBS) and a disc for Windows 32bit Operating System so I could set up my laptop for running TASBS in a Virtual Machine (a necessity when the laptop is a 64bit OS). Pit was a great help with getting all this installed and running the night before game 1, and Cindy and I got all the player rosters input to the TASBS directory for scoring the event in the computer. We also got all the paper scoresheet forms photocopied and sorted out for the next day, and I had assigned the scoring panel for the games on day 1. All this was done after a lovely opening gala dinner banquet at the official team hotel, the Yuh-Tong.

Once we had game 1 scored and checked, and after the box score was distributed to the teams, it was apparent that I needed to sort out the posting of the box scores and statistics on the event website with the LOC. Pit and I walked the short distance from the stadium to the Yuh-Tong, where the LOC had the tournament office, and we explained to Hannah how we needed access to an FTP folder, and the website needed to link to the CONFSTAT.HTM file in that folder so the public could view all the tournament data.

We were put in touch with the website host company, who set this up, but there was a constant struggle throughout the whole tournament being able to access the FTP site when I wasn't at the venue. After the last game of each day the scorers had to pack up and leave on the bus with all the other officials, and then do their checking back at the hotel – and the IP address kept changing at the hotel business centre where we usually did our work, thus blocking my access to the FTP site if that IP address wasn't in the "white list" of trusted IP addresses, and leaving me frozen out until business hours the next day. This was very frustrating, but we did get the website updated as promptly as possible with all the game and statistical data each day.

Another two items of reporting that I took on from day 1 was the FISU results spreadsheet, and the TV broadcaster statistics spreadsheet. These were not too difficult for me as I have a good working knowledge of Windows Excel, but I did need access to my laptop – and it was being used at times for game scoring. So I requested another laptop from the LOC for my use, but it was then set up as the game scoring computer with a Virtual Machine and the TASBS software and I got my laptop back to use full-time. I was so glad I had those discs with me – and so grateful to Pit for his technical skill!

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Things were falling into place by day 2, but I was then asked to provide the Daily Reports that are standard at WBSC events – and I had no template for this, nor much experience with the procedure. After struggling to get this set up, I sent an email to Anna Maria Paini, explaining how things were not as she had expected, and that I needed her help. I am very grateful for her wonderful assistance with this task, as she worked late into the night getting it started for me so that by the middle of day 3 there was a Daily Report for all the technical and team officials. The daily reports each day were especially tailored to this event, which came after some advice and collaboration with Mr Guilizzoni of FISU. They were kept briefer than the usual WBSC daily report (i.e., team stats were not printed in it, but the URL link to them was included). My final daily report included almost all of the information that a standard WBSC final daily report would have.

I also had a request from one TC to include the standings tables on the event website (not done by the LOC), but as this was only requested on the final day – a Sunday – it wouldn't be possible as the website hosts weren't working on the weekend. I composed a one page PDF with all the information, and got input from Cindy and Pit on the formatting for this, but it was Pit who figured out the solution to linking it on the website without the help of the website hosts. Pit used HTML code to put a clickable button on the top of our stats pages that linked to the PDF standings document which we could upload to the FTP folder. Great teamwork all around!

Resources

The extra laptop we were loaned by the LOC was very handy, although I did need to purchase an adapter for it. It had a 3-pin plug, but all the outlets in the scorer's room were 2-pin. There was also a printer/scanner set up in the scoring room at the stadium, which was great. There was no local mobile phone provided to me, but I was able to use WhatsApp and email to communicate with everyone, as long as I was at the stadium or the hotel so I was in WiFi range. There was no ethernet cable for the internet, but the WiFi was good every day until the final day, when I couldn't get on – and then when I did get on to a new network, my IP address changed again, and this froze me out of the FTP folder (very frustrating!). Luckily for us Pit was able to get into the FTP, and we got our data uploaded in a timely fashion. I also purchased some plastic file boxes for keeping our scoresheet forms neat and tidy in the scorer's room.

Logistics comments

I feel the LOC did a good job with transport arrangements, as everyone seemed to get where they needed to go with a minimum of fuss. It was not a problem for the scorers to pack up and finish checking back at the hotel after the last game of the day – it was only an issue for FTP access with the changing IP address.

The hotels were very nice, and the proximity of the team hotel to the stadium was quite handy for them. The LOC office was set up at the team hotel, which had some drawbacks for the officials, but nothing major. I was grateful for the business centre on the ground floor of my hotel, as the scorers used it quite a lot.

There were a couple of issues for the officials with the accommodation arrangements, the main one being the sharing of rooms (2 persons to a room). It can be a difficult situation when the two people are on different schedules, and sometimes it is hard to relax or to do any work in the room when the other person is trying to sleep.

The other issue we officials had was with the hotel restaurant's closing time. Even though the dinner vouchers had a closing time of 21:30pm printed on them, all the food was cleared from the buffet each night at 21:00pm, meaning we arrived one night at 21:10pm and weren't going to get any dinner. This was rectified after many calls back and forth with the LOC at the other hotel, but late dinners were not something they had planned for in advance.

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Also unplanned for was the laundering of officials' uniforms. We were all issued 2 shirts and 1 hat, but with the extreme humidity each day the shirts needed washing each night. By the third day the LOC had distributed laundry bags to everyone's room, and were collecting and laundering shirts each night.

Scoring Assignments

As there was only one game venue being used, the logistics for scoring assignments was made easier than if multiple venues were used. Game assignments were divided as equally as possible, with consideration that Pit and Cindy should do more than just only Data Entry for the entire tournament, and also that the two International Scorers from TPE (Hsin-Chang HUANG and Cheng-Hsien LEE) were stronger than the two Local scorers.

There were 3 scorers at every game, with the medal games having 4 scorers. There was also one game in the middle of the tournament with 4 scorers on the panel, as one of the local scorers would have had no games that day otherwise, and the extra practice for him was beneficial.

Scoring Assignments – total games

Scorers	HS	AS	DE	Total	#4 scorer
CHAN Cindy	2	1	11	14	1
HUANG Hsin-Chang	7	4		11	
LEE Cheng-Hsien	8	3		11	
NAN Chih-Ching	3	8		11	1
HO Wen-Chih	3	8		11	
WONG Pak Wah	1		13	14	1
Totals	24	24	24	72	3

Scorers – set up

The room used for scoring was the better of two options offered on the day before the tournament. The actual Press Box at the top of the grandstand was being used by the broadcast company (Fox Sports), and so the scorers and technical commissioners were assigned to two rooms at field level directly behind home plate. The first room (closer to the plate) was larger and had a long counter (work surface) right behind the glass, but the view was not good enough for the scorers as it would mean looking uphill to see the diamond, and having an obstructed view behind the plate umpire, and the catcher and batter on some plays. It also included stepped rows of theatre-style seating, which would be used by other officials during games, thus making it more noisy and distracting than optimal.

The room that I chose for the scorers to use was the scoreboard and Public Address announcer's room, directly behind the first room. It had a full glass front, a door to close it off from noise, and would have no traffic going through it. The room was at a slightly higher level than the first room, and it was spacious enough to fit a 3-person scoring panel (plus an extra person with a little squeezing) and the 3 volunteers on the PA and scoreboard. I also used it for my "office", sitting at a trestle table behind and at a right angle to the scorers, and I was on hand for every game but one during the event. Our set up wasn't ideal, but we got the LOC to raise the table up another 10 centimetres with some bricks and then used office chairs at full height and footrests. The worst issue with the room was the glare during night games. There were no desk lamps, and the overhead lights in both rooms meant double the reflections in the glass, worsening the vision of the scorers. We did have a good view of the TV monitor in the front room though, which was helpful for watching instant replays during televised games. The proximity to all the TC's and the Umpires' Director in the first room was also beneficial.

Scorers - comments

Only the scorers from Hong Kong and the Scoring Director could assist with the data entry on The Automated Scorebook (TASBS). Although all 4 of the TPE scorers were trained in the WBSC scoring method, the two named as ITO's (HUANG and LEE) were more fluent, and kept up better. In the first couple of days, checking and correcting took a long time after some of the games, but with the great assistance of Cindy and Pit, this got better as the days progressed. By the end of the tournament, Cheng-Hsien LEE – the best of the TPE scorers – expressed interest in learning to use TASBS, so he now has a copy of the software (license from Queensland Baseball Scorers), which he can use for training purposes. Pit will help him set up a computer for this.

Scoring – comments

No major issues or problems occurred with scoring rules interpretations or judgement calls during the tournament, but there were a couple of questions and comments discussed, as follows:

- Called game:

In the Round Robin phase, the JPN@USA game had to be called in the top of the 8th inning due to weather. The visiting team (JPN) was in the lead by 4 runs, but as it was a regulation game with no runs scoring after the 3rd inning, there was no need to suspend the game (per OBR 7.02(a)). There were 4 batters faced with one out and no runs in the uncompleted half inning, but the plays that occurred in this inning were not deleted from the scoresheet or data entry, although there was a question raised about this.

According to the MLB OBR 7.01(g)(4), a called game ends at the moment the umpire terminates play, and OBR 9.03(e)(1) states that “if a regulation game is called, the official scorer shall include the record of all individual and team actions up to the moment the game ends, as defined in Rule 7.01.”

On pages 6-7 and 6-8 in the Miscellaneous chapter of the WBSC Scorers’ Manual 2016, the examples and text show that the runs and plays in the uncompleted inning of a called game are disregarded “according to the provisions of the WBSC Baseball Division tournament rules”.

On checking the only WBSC rules document available – the U23 Tournament Regulations 2016 – this provision could not be found, and so the MLB rule was followed, and all plays stood. This decision did not affect any tournament outcome as there was no tie-breaking required to formulate the following Super Round draw, nor were there any individual awards given for batting, fielding or pitching in the tournament. Only individual player statistics were marginally affected (the partial half inning included 1 out, 1 error, 1 walk and 1 single).

Mr Giuseppe Guilizzoni has taken a copy of the two pages in the scoring manual to raise this question with the WBSC.

- Tie breaking and 8-team format:

Although we did not have to apply the tie-breaking rules to compile the draws for the second or third phases (Super/Consolation Rounds and Finals), it was looking like we might have to do this to break a 3-way tie. It was discussed by some officials that for an 8-team tournament it would be better to use semi-finals before the finals (1st vs 4th and 2nd vs 3rd in the Super and the Consolation groups). The tournament could be scheduled over 10 days at 2 venues, with 2 games per day at each venue, plus 2 rest days. This may avoid needing to use the tie-breaking rules.

Final comments

I am very grateful for the opportunity to gain more experience and form new friendships during this wonderful event. I worked hard to perform my duties well, and to deal with any issues honestly and with integrity. I hope that I will have more opportunities to work as an official scorer at international baseball tournaments in the future.