



ANTI-SANDBAGGING MEASURES



In any handicapped sport some degree of sandbagging is inevitable. Sandbagging is the unethical practice of keeping one's skill level lower than it should be by missing balls on purpose or even by losing on purpose. This results in more innings (turns). The APA handicap system, *The Equalizersm*, is probably the most protected handicap system in the sports world.

The Equalizersm handicap and scoring system employs three types of safeguards against sandbagging:

SYSTEM SAFEGUARDS

System Safeguards are built into the system and don't require the implementation of any rules or judgments in order for them to be effective. System safeguards include:

- A mathematical formula that calculates your handicap – This formula takes into account several factors when determining your skill level. A sophisticated computer software program has been developed to assist your League Operator and ensure skill levels are calculated accurately.
- Deliberate misses (defensive shots) don't count – If all deliberate misses were marked, there would be no successful sandbagging. It is usually quite obvious when a player is sandbagging. Occasionally, a coach can be heard telling their player to miss a few times to run the innings up. Report this type of activity to your League Operator immediately. League Operators have been asked to raise every member of a team that engages in this practice at least one skill level.

RULE SAFEGUARDS

There are several rules in the APA Team Manual that help prevent sandbagging. These rule safeguards contrast with the system safeguards because they must be quoted to work. If you see a player or team in violation of any of these rules, you must notify your League Operator. The rules will be enforced which will maximize their effectiveness as a system safeguard.

JUDGMENTAL SAFEGUARDS

No matter how ingenious and complex anti-cheating systems are, there are always equally ingenious people who conspire to cheat the system. In the final analysis, a properly run "jury system" will get the job done. The APA has asked all League Operators to form a Handicap Advisory Committee (HAC). The HAC may be comprised of some members of the Board of Governors and should consist of the best players in your area. They are occasionally asked to review rosters and provide feedback on players whose skill levels do not reflect their true ability. It has repeatedly been proven that a good HAC will virtually eliminate sandbagging. Refer to the "How Your Handicap Advisory Committee Works" handout for more details.

Remember, in order for sandbagging to take place, **BOTH** players must fail to follow the rules. The shooter must deliberately cheat and the opponent must fail to mark the deliberate misses on the scoresheet. In actuality, every player on both teams must be negligent to some degree. It is hard to design a system more secure than one that requires the deliberate sabotaging by one team, and the negligence of the other team, in order for sandbagging to occur.

The security and accuracy of the handicap system is in your hands. This doesn't mean that it requires your constant attention. The system will work perfectly if none of the players pay any attention to how it works and just concentrate on playing the game. The APA is ever vigilant to new anti-sandbagging possibilities and will never evade responsibility for improving the system. But, in the final analysis, no system will work if the participants are constantly applying themselves to undermining it. If every player would simply play their game to the best of their ability and let the handicap system take care of itself, handicap problems would not exist.