

Memorandum

Subject: Baseball/Softball Council Position Paper on Enhancing Safety

Date: November 3, 2004

The Baseball/Softball Council of SGMA wants to promote participation in both baseball and softball by all age groups and genders. We feel in order to do this the game must be interesting, competitive, and safe. The associations, rules bodies, and even the United States Consumer Products Safety Commission have reviewed in depth the safety issue and have concluded that all the available evidence does not show that the incidence of injury in the sports of baseball and softball has increased in recent years. Many of the associations and rules bodies have adopted new regulations directed at maintaining the balance between offense and defense to help insure the competitive nature of the game. Press releases issued from these groups indicate that they are satisfied that they have achieved this objective.

The NCAA sponsors the collection of data pertaining to injuries that occur in all collegiate sports. Baseball and softball are amongst the safest of all collegiate sports in this data and have been at the same level over the last 20 years. Little League and the other youth baseball and softball leagues have records that show the incidence of injury and particularly serious injuries have decreased in recent years.

We think this information is important to us as an industry, to participants, to parents and friends of participants, to coaches, and to schools and sponsoring organizations. All endeavors, typically, have some inherent risk associated with them. Such things as taking a bath, driving a car, or playing any sport are included. Nevertheless, we recognize that attempts to make them all safer within certain constraints should be an ongoing effort. Therefore, we as individuals and companies in the industry want to involve ourselves and support others in developing new, innovative ways to promote the safety of participants in the sport while still protecting the interest of the players and spectators along with maintaining the competitive nature of the game. Some examples of things that have been developed in sports and other activities within these type constraints include batters helmets in baseball and fastpitch softball, face masks in football, helmets in ice hockey, seatbelts and airbags in vehicles, and non-slip surfaces in bathtubs.

Development of further means of enhancing safety for baseball and softball within the specified constraints should come not only from within the manufacturers in the industry, but also from participants, coaches, interested observers, associations, and rules bodies. We pledge to do our part to support any of these ideas that meet the criteria of protecting the interest of participants at all levels, protecting the balance of the game, and further reducing the incidence or severity of injury.

SGMA Baseball/Softball Council