

# SPORTS

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## One year to the games

ATLANTA - Olympics organizers have said it until they're as blue in the face as their official mascot, Izzy: the 1996 Atlanta Games will be on time, on budget and the best ever.

Their chance to prove it is now just one year away.

Once the improbable dream of Atlanta lawyer Billy Payne and a few of his pals, the moment of truth is finally coming into view. With 85,000 people filling a brand new stadium, and millions more watching live on prime-time television, Atlanta's torch will be lighted on what figures to be a typically humid evening July 19, 1996.

But visitors to the Atlanta Olympics this time next year will discover that Atlanta hasn't shaken its Southern roots on its fast climb up the corporate ladder. It's legal to marry your cousin. Grown-up men commonly keep little-boy nicknames: Bubba, Billy, Johnny.

## Experts urge drinking water

By **CHUCK SCHOFFNER**  
AP Sports Writer

With oppressive heat hanging over diamonds around Iowa and Nebraska, Alan Beste has a simple word of advice for baseball and softball players. Drink.

A lot and often. "The No. 1 thing is the make sure they have a lot of fluids," said Beste, wellness coordinator for the Iowa High School Athletic Association. "Most people become overheated because they don't take in enough fluid, whether it's water, a sport drink or fruit juice."

The temperature shot past 100 in western Iowa on Wednesday - the state's hottest day in years - and reached the mid to upper 90s elsewhere. The scorching weather comes as tournament action begins in Iowa high school baseball and softball teams wrap up the regular season.

Although most games are played at night, many of the Class 1A baseball games Wednesday began at 5:30, when it's still uncomfortably hot and the sun is still searing the field and dugouts.

Beste said in hot weather, athletes can't drink enough.

"Thirst isn't a good indicator for athletes because they sweat much more than what their thirst mechanism causes them to replace," he said. "If athletes drink just enough to quench their thirst, they only replace about

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**ALAN BESTE**

Wellness Coordinator

half the fluid the body actually loses.

"If you're sitting in an air-conditioned office, drinking enough to satisfy your thirst is OK. But not when you're out there playing."

Beste also advises coaches to give players frequent breaks, in shady areas if possible. Runners and players who are practicing should wear light-colored shirts, he said.

"A lot of times, women will wear sports bras and guys won't wear anything on top, thinking that helps keep

them cooler," Beste said. "But the reality of the situation is that wearing a light-colored shirt probably keeps you cooler than not wearing anything whatsoever. The sun beats down on your skin rather than on your clothing and that makes you hotter."

"Also, a hat or a cap, anything that gives some protection from the sun, reduces the amount of heat the body generates."

At Dunlap, site of two Iowa 1A district games, Boyer Valley coach Bob Dougherty expected to see a run on the hydrant by the third base dugout. The dugouts at the Boyer Valley field aren't covered, but Dougherty thinks that's better than the covered dugouts that used to be there.

"We used to have cement block dugouts and they were so hot," he said. "We took them out when we put a chain-link fence in and we kind of felt there was more air coming through than when we had tops."

"But it'll be warm down there today. There's isn't much shade."

Underwood coach Steve Plummer told his players not to show up for their 7:30 p.m. district game before 6.

"I told them to just stay home," he said. "There's no reason to come a couple hours early to kill yourself before the game. I'm glad we're playing later. That first game is going to be warm. But around 8 o'clock, the sun sets right behind the school and it's not too bad after that."

## Ways to beat the heat

### COOL

Reduce physical activity.

Use air conditioners or electric fans when possible.

Stay in the shade.

Park the car in a shady area and roll down the windows a bit.

Drink plenty of liquids, but avoid alcohol, coffee, tea or other drinks that cause fluid loss.

### COOLER

If you're gonna play, play in a pool.

Why pay for all that electricity when you can spend your money at the movies or the mall?

Don't spend your summer sitting under a tree. Hats, sunglasses and sunscreens are great protection against the sun's harmful rays, and you look cool.

Wherever you decide to park your car, just remember to take all small children and pets with you.

Nobody said you couldn't have a refreshing glass of iced tea or a double tall iced cappuccino.

AP/Bob Bianchini

## Rules to make pastime a short time

So the end of the week finally showed up. It was time to relax. What should I do?

I drove to the Big O to see the Triple A Royals.

Rosenblatt Stadium, what a great place to relax.

I went with someone else, sort of a social event.

I was hoping for a full evening of entertainment for my money.

The game lasted only two hours and 15 minutes.

If Major League baseball owners get their way in the next few weeks, this will be the norm rather than the exception.

The owners decided the game needed to be sped up to combat falling attendance. They called on the expertise of former American League umpire Steve Palermo to help pick up the pace of baseball.

Palermo's career was cut short when he was shot breaking up a robbery a few years ago.

The result is a series of rules changes that were implemented yesterday to help speed up baseball.

At first, these may not seem like a big deal, but they have the potential of altering baseball as we know it.

Batters will no longer be allowed to step out of the batters box between every single pitch. Umpires will be given the discretion to keep things moving between pitchers and batters.

Maybe they will save a little time, but at what expense?

The game as we know it will change. Baseball is a game of timing; the pitcher and batter duel and play a mind game with each other.

Unlike other sports, baseball is not regulated by a clock. The athletes were not competing against time to see how fast they could perform — until now.

The mental aspect will change. It's not a matter of the pitcher out-



### Todd Walkenhorst

smarting the batter, it's how fast you can get the pitch off.

If you want to really regulate the time between pitches, try what the Missouri Valley experimented with in 1989: A pitch clock.

Similar to the shot clock in basketball, 25 seconds were on a pitch clock that sat behind home plate. It began counting down as soon as the batter entered the box. If it reached zero, automatic ball. If the batter stepped out of the box after it started, automatic strike.

Indiana State sports

information's Tom Jones remembers the clocks as more of an annoyance than a benefit.

"The umpires had latitude with the rule," Jones said. "I don't think the umpires were really for it. It did speed up the game, but probably not to the extent expected."

Besides that, there were other problems with the system as well.

"You needed to have someone in the press box to operate a horn that would sound when the clock reached zero," Jones said.

Jones said that their horn sounded like a tornado siren which caused a few more problems.

"Our park was in a residential area," he said. "When it went off the neighbors were alarmed."

The Missouri Valley ditched the idea after one season.

Major League Baseball will trim 40 seconds off of between-inning warm-ups. The idea is to save time, but will television stations actually

eliminate a commercial every half inning? That's nearly ten minutes of commercials a game.

Probably not. The result will most likely be that televised games will come back from breaks with the batter sitting in the batter's box looking at the first pitch. So much for commentary from the announcers. Pretty fan friendly.

Fans go to the ballpark not just to see baseball, but to put the rest of their life on hold for a few hours. The ballpark is a place to escape reality.

Attendance is down at Major League games. More importantly, revenues are down even more.

Major league owners seem far too eager to alter the game again without concern for the fans. Will they ever learn their lesson?

We'll soon see.

Walkenhorst is a senior broadcasting major and Daily Nebraskan sports writer.