Effects of "Blaserunning" decree on shame

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ABSTRACT *We consider whether the "Blaserunning" decree in the ILB Season 3 election, which awards 0.1 runs for a team that successfully steals a base, impacts the number of games resulting in shame. We apply this rule to past games and find a 21.6% decrease in games where the away team is shamed.*

SHAME AND BLASERUNNING

In blaseball, the *shame phase* was the first major difference between its ruleset and that of reality league baseball. The Blaseball Official Rulebook[3] defines it:

> If the home team scores the winning run in the bottom of the final inning, the away team must complete the game in shame, despite being mathematically eliminated.

For example, if the Magic is playing at the Tacos and the score is tied entering the bottom of the 9th inning, the Tacos can win the game by scoring a run, thus shaming the Magic. This is different from reality league baseball, where scoring a run results in a walk-off win; instead, the game finishes when three outs are earned.

ILB voters may vote for "Blaserunning" in the Season 3 election, described simply as "Stolen Bases are worth 0.1 Runs." There is some margin for misunderstanding here: will the scoreboard[4] actually show decimal values for runs? Or does an extra integer run get added when a team reaches 10 steals? For this analysis, we choose to interpret this proposed rule as introducing fractional runs to the league.

In order to help determine the impact of "excitement" that this proposed rule change introduces to the league, we analyze its impact on shame. Shame is a uniquely exciting part of blaseball's rules: #watchparty on the official Discord becomes extremely active when a team is shamed.

METHODOLOGY

Our sample consists of 982 game logs where the last out is present. Logs start in the middle of Season 2, and a number of games have incomplete logs due to various issues[5].

■ **Table 1 Season 2 standings under Blaserunning rules**

Good League		Evil League	
Steaks	72–27	Tigers	63–36
Firefighters	61–38	Pies	61–38
Flowers	52–47	Jazz Hands	56–43
Shoe Thieves	49–50	Moist Talkers	55–44
Magic	49–50	Crabs	49–50
Fridays	45–54	Wild Wings	48–51
Tacos	44–55	Spies	46–53
Millennials	44–55	Garages	46–53
Breath Mints	41–58	Dalé	43–56
Lovers	29–70	Sunbeams	37–62

In the sample, we searched for stolen bases and re-scored games in game logs (etaoin 2020a), then determined whether those games ended in shame (etaoin 2020b).

RESULTS

In this sample, 97 games (9.9%) resulted in shame under original rules. Under the new Blaserunning rule, 76 games (7.8%) resulted in shame: 25 games that originally resulted in shame no longer did so, and 4 games ended in shame that originally did not. All but one of these games ended in the ninth inning. Rescored games are listed in Table 2.

Out of the 25 affected games, 13 result in the other team winning; seven of these occurred in the latter half of Season 2 (where data is available). After retabulating Season 2 results with these changes[6]

1 This author contributed the majority of this work, and would like to thank ILB members for their valuable feedback and review.
2 This author contributed to the typesetting and layout of the work.
3 It is Forbidden.
4 This research does not discuss implications for stadium scoreboard operators.
5 Some data from Season 3 was lost due to siestas, blasphemy, and so, so many birds.

6 The Shoe Thieves and Magic are tied in this retabulation, but the Shoe Thieves win the tiebreaker.

(see Table 1), we find that the Breckenridge Jazz Hands would have been awarded the third seed in the Evil League instead of the Canada Moist Talkers. This change to the standings is likely moot, as both ultimately faced the Philly Pies in the playoffs and lost.

This retabulation however does *not* take into account games that originally ended in shame and still ended in shame, or games that originally did not end in shame and still did not end in shame, where the result was reversed by the decree.

ANALYSIS

The shame phase is popular among ILB viewers, and the proposed Blaserunning decree reduces the number of games resulting in shame in our sample by 21.6%.

SIBR does not endorse voting for or against specific decrees, as that is up to the individual voters — but it is the opinion of the authors that its intended purpose to add excitement to games may be misguided[7].

FUTURE WORK

This initial research indicates a decrease in the the number of innings played beyond the ninth inning in ILB games, and future work could identify the extent to which this change is significant.

Future work could identify changes with the combination of Enhanced Shame, a Season 2 decree that did not pass, and Blaserunning.

Researchers may also wish to perform a superior retabulation of the Season 2 standings with the Blaserunning rule applied to the latter half of the season for which we have data.

REFERENCES

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etaoin, i., 2020b shame.py. GitHub. https://github.com/Society-for-Internet-Blaseball-Research/papers/blob/magic/blaserunning-and-shame/shame.py.

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[7] The commissioner is doing a great job.

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■ Table 2 Games where shame was reversed under Blaserunning rules

			Original rules				Blaserunning rules				Result
Day	**Away**	**Home**	Inning	Away	Home	Shame	Inning	Away	Home	Shame	**flipped**
2–44	Flowers	Lovers	Bot 13	7.0	9.0	True	Bot 9	6.2	6.0	False	**True**
2–46	Magic	Firefighters	Bot 11	5.0	7.0	True	Top 9	5.0	5.1	False	False
2–49	Moist Talkers	Tigers	Bot 10	3.0	4.0	True	Top 9	3.0	3.1	False	False
2–50	Steaks	Millennials	Bot 15	6.0	7.0	True	Top 9	6.0	6.1	False	False
2–51	Dalé	Wild Wings	Bot 12	5.0	4.0	False	Bot 10	4.0	4.1	True	**True**
2–55	Crabs	Tigers	Bot 10	3.0	4.0	True	Top 9	3.0	3.1	False	False
2–61	Dalé	Spies	Bot 10	4.0	5.0	True	Top 9	3.0	3.1	False	False
2–65	Tacos	Firefighters	Bot 9	6.0	9.0	True	Top 9	6.0	6.1	False	False
2–68	Fridays	Flowers	Bot 13	7.0	9.0	True	Bot 9	7.2	7.1	False	**True**
2–70	Crabs	Garages	Bot 9	5.0	6.0	True	Top 9	5.0	5.1	False	False
2–71	Jazz Hands	Dalé	Bot 12	6.0	8.0	True	Bot 9	2.2	2.0	False	**True**
2–77	Flowers	Fridays	Bot 12	4.0	6.0	True	Bot 9	3.1	3.0	False	**True**
2–81	Firefighters	Tacos	Bot 10	7.0	10.0	True	Bot 9	7.1	7.0	False	**True**
2–83	Wild Wings	Moist Talkers	Bot 10	2.0	3.0	True	Top 9	2.0	2.1	False	False
2–94	Shoe Thieves	Lovers	Bot 12	6.0	3.0	False	Bot 9	3.0	3.1	True	**True**
2–96	Dalé	Sunbeams	Bot 10	1.0	2.0	True	Top 9	1.0	1.1	False	False
2–96	Wild Wings	Spies	Bot 12	2.0	6.0	True	Top 9	2.0	2.3	False	False
2–98	Crabs	Pies	Bot 11	2.0	3.0	True	Top 9	2.0	2.1	False	False
3–6	Jazz Hands	Dalé	Bot 9	3.0	4.0	True	Top 9	3.0	3.1	False	False
3–6	Tigers	Pies	Bot 14	3.0	6.0	True	Top 9	3.0	3.1	False	False
3–6	Firefighters	Tacos	Bot 12	3.0	9.0	True	Bot 9	3.1	3.0	False	**True**
3–10	Firefighters	Lovers	Bot 11	11.0	12.0	True	Top 9	10.0	10.1	False	False
3–11	Breath Mints	Flowers	Bot 11	6.0	10.0	True	Bot 9	6.3	6.1	False	**True**
3–17	Jazz Hands	Garages	Bot 9	4.0	5.0	True	Top 9	4.0	4.1	False	False
3–18	Wild Wings	Magic	Bot 11	2.0	3.0	True	Top 9	2.0	2.1	False	False
3–21	Pies	Moist Talkers	Bot 10	2.0	5.0	True	Bot 9	2.1	2.0	False	**True**
3–21	Shoe Thieves	Fridays	Bot 11	8.0	7.0	False	Bot 9	6.0	6.1	True	**True**
3–23	Steaks	Fridays	Bot 10	8.0	7.0	False	Bot 9	7.0	7.1	True	**True**
3–34	Steaks	Breath Mints	Bot 10	2.0	5.0	True	Bot 9	2.1	2.0	False	**True**