

## **Metal or Wood??? That is the question...**

by Prez Ro

**MATTESON** - As I begin let us reflect on the fact that the weather has broken from the cold winter season and kids are making every attempt to enjoy the sun, as well as the sport of baseball. Right now around the States, a growing debate is taking place: metal or wood? I'm not talking about how to build a shed or canopy in the backyard either, even though I'm certain that debate is occurring also. I'm referring to the use of wooden bats vs. metal.

Both sides have positives and negatives. One of the most common disadvantages of switching from metal to wood is cost. Metal bats are much more inexpensive than wooden ones plus they last longer. Wooden bats crack quite frequently during a baseball game (season). Now on the flipside, metal bats are much easier for kids to use. They are evenly weighed and since they do not crack (or shatter), kids do not have to worry about the bat causing additional injuries. The debate of wood vs. metal began many years back, but one story recently comes to mind, where a 14 year old kid was injured pitching during a Pony League game in Barrington, Illinois. A line drive hit off a metal bat struck the kid in the face shattering his nose and orbital lobe, and required several surgeries to repair.

This has been reported in the Chicago Tribune that balls leave metal bats at speeds 15 to 20 percent faster than a wooden bat. The speed, coupled with the bigger "sweet spot" on a metal bat and the slower reactions of children, makes metal bats more dangerous than wood bats.

In order for something to happen, one way or the other, this debate needs to be taken to the State level, or maybe the Federal level. This way, something can be done across the board instead of a band-aid being applied to gunshot wound. Now if a law or policy is passed at the city level, it handicaps city schools against the suburban competition that wouldn't be governed by this ruling. Now, if something is passed at the State level, all schools, in the particular state, will fall under the blanket ruling, but will fall short against out-of-state teams that would not be sanctioned to follow the same rules.

Currently, New York's city council is the only metropolitan to pass a measure to ban metal bats. They passed this measure three years ago.

At the time of this writing, we have not heard back from National Federation of High Schools or Illinois High School Association, but on their sites the use of metal bats is not stated as a (proposed) banned piece of equipment.

It is important to note that since the early 1960's, eight little league pitchers have been killed by a ball coming off a bat, and in six of those cases a wood bat was used.

So, is placing a metal bat in the hands of child today, in order to place baseball, giving a dangerous weapon, unknowingly?

We would love to hear from you on this subject? Interact with us via our fan page at [facebook.com/ASNN365](https://www.facebook.com/ASNN365).