



BASEBALL

***2023 and 2024
Baseball Rules Book***



IF

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NCAA

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**2023 AND 2024
NCAA
BASEBALL
RULES**

NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION



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Preface

The NCAA Baseball Rules have been designated as either administrative rules or conduct rules. Typically, administrative rules are those dealing with preparation for the contest. The conduct rules are those that have to do directly with the playing of the contest. Some administrative rules (as indicated) may be altered by the mutual consent of the competing institutions. Others (as indicated) are unalterable. No conduct rule may be changed by mutual consent. All NCAA member institutions hosting varsity games are required to conduct their intercollegiate contests according to these rules. NCAA member institutions playing games at nonmember institutions may play by the rules of the host school. In the NCAA Baseball Rules, the administrative rules that may be altered by mutual consent of the competing institutions are:

Rule 1: Sections 2-b, 3-d, 4, 5, 7, 15, 16.

Rule 3: Sections 4, 5.

Rule 4: Sections 5, 8.

Rule 5: Section 9.

The administrative rules that may not be altered are:

Rule 1: Sections 3-a, 3-b, 3-c, 6, 8, 9.

Rule 3: Sections 1, 2, 3, 6-a, 6-b.

Rule 4: Sections 2, 3, 4.

Rule 10: Sections 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.

All of the other rules are conduct rules and may not be altered.

NCAA Baseball Rules Committee

The chart below lists the members of the committee who voted on and approved the rules included in this edition of the book. This information is being included for historical purposes.

Name	Institution	Term Expiration
Doug Aiken, chair	Chapman University	Aug. 31, 2023*
Travis Beausoleil	Mitchell College	Aug. 31, 2025
Mark Brew	Lee University	Aug. 31, 2023
Randy Bruns	Secretary-Rules Editor	Aug. 31, 2027
Larry Gallo, Jr.	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	Aug. 31, 2024
Michael Kennedy	Elon University	Aug. 31, 2023
William O'Conner	Xavier University	Aug. 31, 2025
Chris Standiford	Gonzaga University	Aug. 31, 2022
Todd Wilkinson	Barton College	Aug. 31, 2024

*Eligible for reappointment.

For a complete and current listing of the NCAA Baseball Rules Committee, please go to: www.ncaa.org/playingrules.

The committee invites NCAA head coaches or other interested parties to submit rules-change proposals for the committee to consider at its annual meeting in July. Proposals may be submitted online at <http://www.ncaa.org/championships/playing-rules/playing-rules-proposal-form>. All rules-change proposals are at the discretion of the committee.

Those seeking interpretations of rules may contact:

Randy Bruns
NCAA Baseball
Secretary-Rules Editor
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Major Rules Changes for 2023 and 2024

The figures below refer to rule and section, respectively. Each changed or altered segment is identified in the rules by a *screened background*.

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Major Editorial Changes

The following are editorial changes to the playing rules. Although the editorial changes are minor, it is the rules committee's intent to inform umpires, coaches, administrators and players of all changes in the rules book.

2023 and 2024 Editorial Changes		Page
Rule		
5-2-f Note 2	One type of communication device to bullpen	<u>45</u>
5-5-c	Clarified penalty for DH not coming to bat at least one time and becoming runner	<u>46</u>
7-2-Penalty	Clarified penalty for DH not coming to bat at least one time	<u>64</u>
7-11-l	Clarified batter's legal position in batter's box	<u>69</u>
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8-3-o Note 4	Awarding of bases to multiple runners	<u>76</u>
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Code of Ethics

Baseball as a game has been played at the colleges and universities of this country for more than 140 years. Only the highest standards of sportsmanship and conduct are expected of players, coaches and others associated with the game.

Coaching/Players' Ethics

1. It is the coaches' duty to be in control of their players at all times in order to prevent any unsportsmanlike act toward opponents, officials or spectators.
2. Coaches are expected to comply wholeheartedly with the intent and spirit of the rules. The deliberate teaching of players to violate the rules is indefensible.
3. Coaches must teach their players to respect the dignity of the game, officials, opponents and the institutions that they represent.
4. Coaches must confine their discussion with the game officials to the interpretations of the rules and not challenge umpire decisions involving judgment.
5. "Bench jockeying" will not be allowed. Coaches are to prohibit bench jockeying, which would include personal and malicious remarks, cursing and obscene language toward opponents, umpires or spectators.
6. Coaches must refrain from any personal action that might arouse players or spectators to unsportsmanlike behavior.
7. Coaches must expect from the umpires a courteous and dignified attitude toward players and themselves.
8. Coaches must seek help from school administrators in controlling unruly students and spectators.

NCAA Baseball Umpire Program

For information regarding the NCAA Baseball Umpire Program, visit <https://plus.refquest.com/registration/login>, or contact:

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georgedrouches@gmail.com (email)

RULE 1

The Game, Playing Field and Equipment

An Approved Ruling (A.R.) or Note is an official decision of the NCAA Baseball Rules Committee [hereafter “rules committee”] regarding a specific rule or part of a rule. It serves to illustrate the spirit and application of the rules. Approved Rulings or Notes follow the rules they amplify.

The Game

SECTION 1. Baseball is a game made up of two teams of nine players each. The team at bat is known as the offensive team, and its objective is to have its batters become base runners and its runners to advance legally, touching all bases. When this is done, a run is scored.

The team in the field is known as the defensive team, and its objective is to prevent offensive players from becoming base runners and advancing around the bases. When three offensive players are legally put out, the teams change from the offensive to the defensive and from defensive to offensive.

The object of each team is to score more runs than its opponents. The winner of the game shall be the team that scores, in accordance with these rules, the greater number of runs at the conclusion of a regulation game.

In college baseball, the two teams represent their respective institutions and play the game in conformity with the rules that follow.

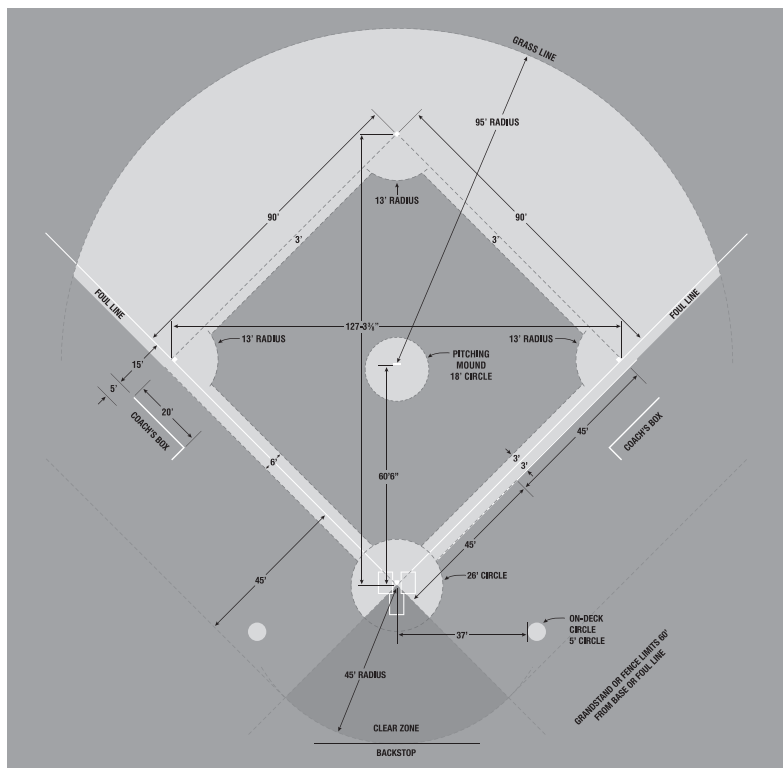
The Playing Field

Infield, Outfield Dimensions

SECTION 2. a. The infield shall be a 90-foot square. Note in the diagram in this section that the center of second base is one corner of the 90-foot square and the measurement to first and third bases is to the back edge of each base. All measurements are to be made from the apex or back point of home plate. The outfield shall be the area between two foul lines formed by extending the two outer sides of the square.

b. The recommended distances for outfield fences are 330 feet from the apex of home plate to each foul pole; 375 feet in both right- and left-center field; 400 feet in straightaway center field. If the distance to the foul pole is less than 330 feet, the fence should be rounded out to the recommended distances in right- and left-center field and straightaway center field, if possible. The foul poles shall be painted fluorescent yellow for new construction and for repainting of existing foul poles.

Note: This requirement will apply only to college baseball facilities owned by NCAA member institutions.



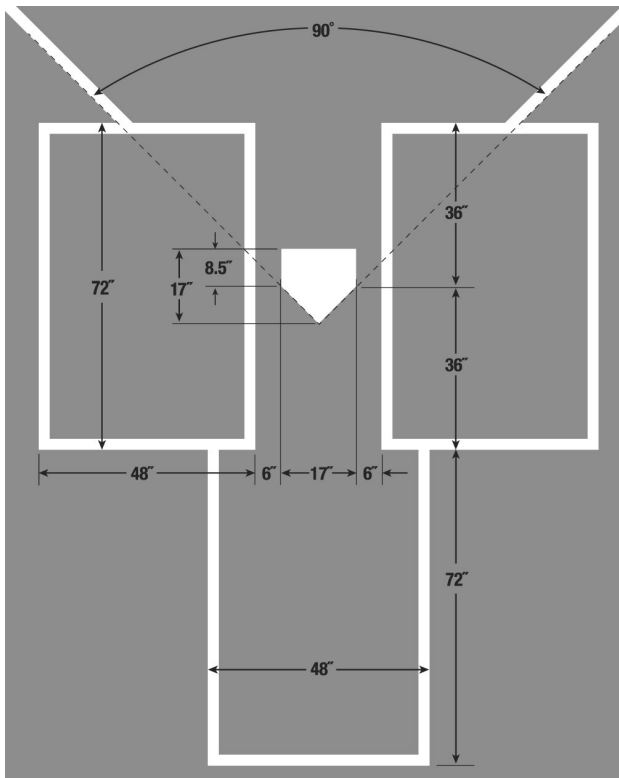
- c. It is highly recommended that the outfield be enclosed completely by a solid and secure outfield fence. If possible, a permanent fence should be at least 6 feet high and preferably 8 feet high.
- 1) If a snow fence must be used, the posts must be placed on the outside of the fence, and the top of each post must be below the top of the fence. The top of the snow fence should be bonded with 1-by-4-inch boards on both sides and flush with the top of the fence. Snow fences are potentially dangerous, and their use is discouraged.
 - 2) The flexible nylon windscreen-type fence is neither solid nor secure and presents a problem when determining if a ball is caught within the field of play. In such a case, caught within the field of play shall mean that the defensive player must have possession of the ball (legal catch) while inside the boundary of the fence. The catch cannot be made legally while the player's foot is stepping on, over or against the fence. All other rules pertaining to a legal catch shall be the same as Rule 2, definition of a catch.

Note: A defensive player may touch or lean against the fence with the body or hands and make a legal catch even though the fence is pushed back, but may not push back or down with either foot. This rule also pertains to an out-of-bounds fence.

- d. All college baseball facilities shall have a regulation bullpen for both teams constructed to the exact measurements of the mound on the playing field (see 4-3-e).
- e. It is recommended that padding be placed on all hard surfaces (backstops, sideline and outfield fences) that a player is likely to collide with during play.

Boxes—Batters', Catcher's, Etc.

SECTION 3. Batters' boxes, catcher's box, coaches' boxes, next batter's box and the 3-foot first base restraining line shall be laid out in accordance with the diagram. All lines must be marked with chalk or nonburning white material and must be 2 to 3 inches in width. The line is inside the diamond proper at first and third base. The outside edge of the line should correspond with the outside edge of the base.



- a. Before a contest, it is mandatory to line all four sides of the 4-foot-by-6-foot batter's box as shown in the diagram above. At the time of the pitch, the batter shall have both feet inside the batter's box.
- b. It is mandatory that the catcher's box be lined as shown in the diagram above.
- c. It is mandatory to line or differentiate both coaches' boxes 20 feet by 5 feet and 15 feet from the foul line as shown in the diagram on page 11. At the time of the pitch, the base coach may not be closer to the foul line than the

inside edge of the coaches' box and no closer to home plate than the front edge of the box.

PENALTY—Warning on the first offense; an additional violation shall result in the coach being ejected.

- d. It is recommended that the first and third base lines be skinned 15 inches inside of the base line (no more than 36 inches) and 36 inches outside of each base line.

Surface Drainage

SECTION 4. For natural surface drainage, it is recommended that the entire playing area be graded two-thirds of one percent starting at the edge of the pitcher's plate (excluding the mound) to the sideline boundaries of the field. The top of the pitcher's plate must be 10 inches higher than the level of home plate.

New Fields

SECTION 5. All new fields should be oriented with consideration to the following factors: protection of players (hitter, catcher, pitcher and others in that order); comfort of spectators; season of use (March-June); latitude (north to south); east-west geographical location within time zone; prevailing winds; daylight saving time; background; and obstacles or barriers.

When constructing a baseball diamond, first designate a point for the rear tip of home plate. Secondly, with the aid of the above guidelines, locate the desired direction of second base. Using a steel tape or strong cord, measure 127 feet, 33/8 inches in this direction. This is the center of second base. With the tape still in this position, locate the pitcher's plate 60 feet, 6 inches from home plate toward second base. With the tape still fastened to the rear point of home plate, measure 90 feet toward first base and scribe a short arc. Also measure 90 feet toward third base and scribe a short arc. Now fasten the tape at the center of second base and measure 90 feet toward first and third base, respectively. Scribe a short arc each time. First and third bases are located where the respective arcs intersect.

- a. It is recommended that a warning track be constructed in front of the outfield fence, backstop and dugout areas. The warning track should be a minimum of 15 feet in width.
- b. It is recommended that the distance from home plate to the backstop be 45 feet and the distance from the base line to the sideline boundary be 60 feet and extended to a point down the line as deep as the skinned portion of the infield. At this point, the sideline fences are to be extended at an angle to a minimum point of 30 feet outside each foul pole. These distances would be used on each side of the field.
- c. It is recommended that bullpens be set up outside the playing area and located so that relief pitchers will be throwing in the same direction as when they throw from the mound on the playing field and that each bullpen have a minimum of two mounds constructed to the exact measurements of the mound on the playing field.

Each bullpen must be large enough to allow two pitchers to warm up at the same time and must be equipped with the regulation-size home plates and pitcher's plates.

- d. All new fields should meet the specifications set forth in 1-2-a and 1-2-b.
- e. The "on-deck" circle, where distance is restricted, should be located a minimum of 30 feet from home plate, in line with the front edge of the

dugout. The recommended distance is 37 feet. The on-deck position shall not be within a triangle created by an extension of the first base and third base foul lines. The on-deck position should be in the near vicinity of the dugout (see 5-2-c).

Home Plate

SECTION 6. Home plate is a five-sided slab of whitened rubber or similar material. One edge is 17 inches long, two are 8½ inches and two are 12 inches. It shall be set in the ground so that the two 12-inch edges coincide with the diamond lines extending to home plate from first base and third base and with the 17-inch edge facing the pitcher. The top edges of home plate shall be beveled; and the plate shall be fixed in the ground, level with the ground surface.

Note: It is permissible for home plate to be a white painted area with these exact dimensions on a field where the entire home plate area is covered by artificial turf.

First, Second and Third Bases

SECTION 7. First, second and third bases shall be white canvas bags, or suitable rubberized material, securely fastened to the ground. Each bag shall be 15 inches square, filled with soft material to a thickness of 3 to 5 inches.

Note: Competition at a non-institutionally owned baseball facility with bases that are 18-inches square is permissible.

- a. A release-type base may be used for NCAA competition.
- b. The double first base may be used only during regular-season competition.
- c. Games may be played at non-institutionally owned baseball facilities with bases that are 18-inches square, without the need for a waiver, if 15-inch bases are not available for use.

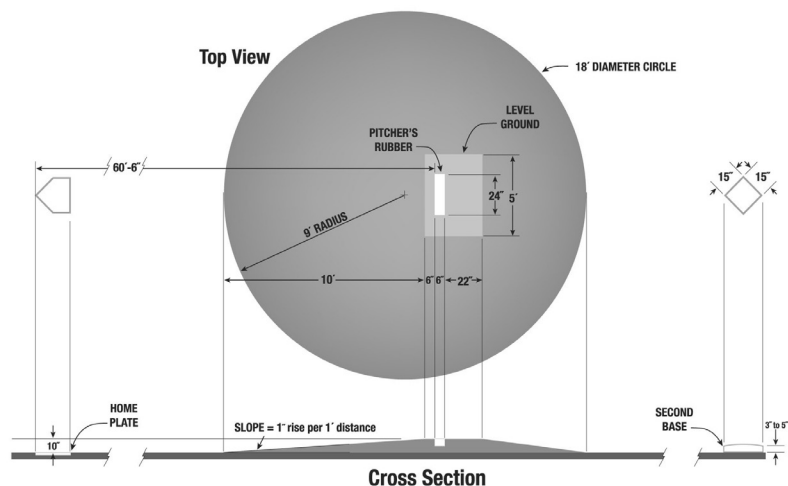
Pitcher's Plate

SECTION 8. The pitcher's plate is a rectangular whitened rubber slab, 24 inches by 6 inches, set in the ground with the nearer edge at a distance of 60 feet 6 inches from the back point of home plate.

Pitcher's Mound

SECTION 9. a. The top of the pitcher's plate must be 10 inches above the top surface of home plate. The 10-inch height can be measured easily by the use of a line level. There should be a gradual slope of 1 inch per foot from a point 6 inches in front of the pitcher's plate to a point 6 feet toward home plate. From this point, the mound should slope and blend into the grade of the rest of the playing surface.

- b. The top of the pitcher's mound should be level with the top of the pitcher's plate, extending from the point 6 inches in front of the pitcher's plate to 22 inches behind the pitcher's plate and 18 inches from each end of the pitcher's plate. This gives a level area 5 feet wide and 34 inches deep that includes the 6-inch width of the pitcher's plate.
- c. Maintenance of the pitching mound, before and during games, should be the responsibility of the home management. Unburnt brick clay, plastic blue or gray clay mixed with some of the existing soil is recommended for reconditioning worn out spots. It is recommended that the home management provide foul weather covers for the home-plate and mound areas.
- d. Portable pitcher's mounds are legal. Both teams must agree on their use before the visitors arrive at the game site.



Equipment

SECTION 10. The rules committee is responsible for formulating the official playing rules for the sport.

Only equipment that meets specifications published in the NCAA Baseball Rules may be used in intercollegiate competition. The rules committee is responsible for interpretations of NCAA rules and for compliance with those rules.

The rules committee suggests that manufacturers planning innovative changes in baseball equipment submit the equipment to the rules committee for review before production.

The Ball

SECTION 11. The ball is a sphere weighing not less than 5 nor more than $5\frac{1}{4}$ ounces avoirdupois and measuring not less than 9 inches nor more than $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches in circumference. It shall be formed by yarn wound around a small core of rubber, cork or combination of both and covered by two pieces of white horsehide or cowhide tightly stitched together. The coefficient of restitution (COR) of a baseball cannot exceed .555.

- The home team shall present one dozen game baseballs to the umpires to be rubbed up to remove the gloss before the game starts. Enough balls should be rubbed up so that a glossy ball is not used in the game. Moistened river silt makes an excellent material to remove the gloss from baseballs.
- Before the game, the umpire-in-chief shall determine whether game balls meet those specifications. During the contest, any umpire may judge the fitness of the ball for play.
- No player shall intentionally damage or discolor the ball.

PENALTY for c.—The umpire shall demand the ball, warn the player and if the practice continues, remove the player from the game.

The Bat

SECTION 12. a. Wood bat.

- 1) The bat must be a smooth, rounded stick not more than $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches in diameter at its thickest part nor more than 42 inches in length.
- 2) There must be a direct line from the center of the knob to the center of the large end.
- 3) Any material to improve the grip may be used for a distance not to exceed 18 inches from the end of the handle.
- 4) An indentation in the end of the bat up to 1 inch in depth is permitted (cupped bats).
- 5) All bats other than one-piece solid wood must be certified in accordance with the NCAA certification program.

b. Nonwood bat.

- 1) The entire hitting area of the bat must be round with a constant radius at any point and the finish of the hitting area must be smooth.
- 2) There must be a direct line from the center of the knob to the center of the large end.
- 3) The maximum length is 36 inches and the maximum diameter is $2\frac{5}{8}$ inches.
- 4) The knob and end plug (if applicable) must be firmly attached.
- 5) A bat may not weigh, numerically, more than three units less than the length of the bat (e.g., a 34-inch-long bat cannot weigh less than 31 ounces).
- 6) A nonwood bat must have an approved, coded certification mark on the barrel of the bat signifying the bat is legal for NCAA competition.
- 7) The bat barrel color must be of a predominantly contrasting color to the color of the baseball between the 18-inch mark to the end cap.

PENALTY for a. and b.—A bat without the proper bat testing sticker, that has been altered to improve performance, or that has become flattened or illegal due to continued use after bat testing has been completed is an illegal bat. If such an illegal bat is detected before the first pitch, the batter shall be called out and the bat shall be removed from the game. If an illegal bat is detected after the first pitch, legal or illegal, the batter shall be declared out, and base runners shall not advance as a result of a batted ball. The bat shall be removed from the contest.

- c. There shall be no external attachment(s) to any part of the bat. A leather, rubber or taped grip is permitted to be placed on the bat handle.
- d. There shall be no data collection or transmission devices externally attached or embedded within any part of the baseball bat.
- e. It is mandatory that all bats have an identification mark 18 inches from the end of the handle. No foreign substance that will in any way discolor the ball may be added to the surface of the bat beyond 18 inches from the end of the handle.
- f. For game and practice use, all nonwood bats must have a leather, rubber or taped grip securely attached to the bat handle.

PENALTY for e. and f.—If the bat is not marked 18 inches from the knob, or has pine tar or a foreign substance beyond the 18-inch mark, the bat must be removed from the game and the player warned. If the practice continues, the player is to be ejected from the game. If a bat's handle

should become loose and the bat must be removed from the game, the same practice is to be followed. Neither of these infractions is cause for calling the batter out.

- g. Bat testing. The NCAA Baseball Rules require all nonwood bats used during competition be reviewed by baseball bat testing conducted prior to each regular season series or single date of competition. A bat must satisfy all sections of the bat testing process to be compliant for competition. Bats failing any section of the testing protocol shall be surrendered to game management and be retained for the duration of the game, series or tournament for being unacceptable for play. The purpose of this testing is to ensure that legal equipment is used in competition. Rule 4.4.c requires that coaches confirm that their team is playing with legal equipment. All bats used during competition must appear on the NCAA Approved Bat List, pass the barrel ring test and barrel compression testing.

Gloves or Mitts

SECTION 13. a. The catcher may wear a glove or mitt of any dimension.

- b. The first base player's's glove or mitt must not be more than 13 inches long or 8 inches wide. The webbing shall not be constructed so as to form a net type of trap. The length measurement of any glove/mitt shall be from the bottom edge or heel straight up across the palm. The width measurement for the first base player's's mitt shall be from the center of the base section between the thumb and the first finger to the outside edge of the little finger. The crotch area for the first base player's's mitt shall not exceed 5 inches in length, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches in width at the top and $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches at the base.
- c. Every player except the catcher and first base player is restricted to the use of a fielder's glove not more than 13 inches long nor more than 8 inches wide. For the fielder's glove, the measurement shall be from the base of the inside seam of the first finger to the outside edge of the little finger. These measurements shall not exceed $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches in width at the top and $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches at the base.

PENALTIES for a., b., and c.—

- (1) **A violator shall be given reasonable time to correct the situation. If it is not done, the violator shall be ejected from the game.**
- (2) **If a play is made with illegal equipment, the offensive team has the choice of taking the play or having the play voided with the pitch being made again (see 8-6-b).**

- d. The pitcher's glove may not be white or gray, exclusive of piping, nor, in the judgment of the umpire, be distracting in any way.

PENALTY for d.— A violator shall be given reasonable time to correct the situation. If it is not done, the violator shall be ejected from the game.

Uniforms

SECTION 14. The uniforms of all participating players and coaches of the team shall be of the same color and style.

It is required that each team have two sets of uniform jerseys of contrasting colors. It is the responsibility of the visiting team to wear a contrasting uniform color to the jersey worn by the home team. It is recommended that both teams wear the full pregame or regular-game uniforms when entering the playing field.

- a. All uniforms must include numbers on the back of the shirt. These numbers shall be at least 6 inches in height.

- b. Except for the standard shoe plate or toe plate, no player shall attach anything to the sole or heel of the shoe. Shoes with pointed metal spikes similar to golf or track shoes shall not be worn.
- c. Polished metal or glass buttons shall not be used on a uniform. If a pitcher wears a helmet, it must have a nonglossy finish.
- d. Any part of an undershirt exposed to view shall be of the same solid color other than white. Sleeve lengths may vary for each individual, but each player must wear sleeves of approximately the same length (torn or ragged sleeves are prohibited). Compression-type sleeves, if worn by a pitcher, must be covered by an undershirt or worn on both arms. A uniform shall not contain a pattern that imitates or suggests the shape of a baseball.
- e. A player or coach may wear a jacket under the uniform top if it is the same color as the team's undershirts. Only a pitcher may wear a jacket as an outer garment while as a base runner. When worn, it is to be buttoned or zipped. A pitcher may wear a jacket under the uniform top while batting. No other player is permitted to wear a jacket as the outer garment while serving as a base runner, a batter or a defensive player.
- f. When coaching the bases, the uniform game jersey must be worn. If a team jacket or windshirt is worn, it must include the team's official logo and be consistent with the team's uniform color and apparel. If both coaches opt to wear a jacket, the jackets must be uniform. At all other times, coaches are allowed to wear a team-issued jacket or windshirt.
- g. It is required that base coaches wear a helmet. Play will not continue until compliance with this rule is met. It is recommended that the helmet meet NOCSAE standards.
- h. A player or coach must wear a team hat on the field.
- i. In accordance with NCAA Bylaw 12.5.4-(b):
 - 1) An institution's uniform or an item of apparel (e.g., team jersey, socks) that is worn by a student-athlete while representing the institution in intercollegiate baseball may contain only a single manufacturer's or distributor's logo or trademark on the outside of the apparel (regardless of the visibility of the logo or trademark). The logo or trademark must be contained within a four-sided geometrical figure (e.g., rectangle, square, parallelogram) that does not exceed $2\frac{1}{4}$ square inches. The item of apparel may contain more than one manufacturer's or distributor's logo or trademark on the inside of the apparel, provided the logo or trademark is not visible.
 - 2) A single manufacturer's or distributor's logo or trademark, not to exceed $2\frac{1}{4}$ square inches, may appear on both the jersey and pants of a student-athlete's uniform.
 - 3) If an institution's uniform or any item of apparel worn by a student-athlete in competition contains washing instructions on the outside of the apparel or on a patch that also includes the manufacturer's or distributor's logo or trademark, the entire patch must be contained within a four-sided, geometrical figure (e.g., rectangle, square, parallelogram) that does not exceed $2\frac{1}{4}$ square inches.
 - 4) The restriction on the size of a manufacturer's or distributor's logo or trademark is applicable to all apparel worn by student-athletes during the conduct of the institution's competition, which includes any pregame or

postgame activities (e.g., postgame celebrations on the field, pregame or postgame press conferences) involving student-athletes.

- j. An institution's uniform that is worn by a student-athlete while representing the institution in intercollegiate baseball may contain a commemorative or memorial patch (e.g., name, mascot, nicknames, logos and marks intended to celebrate or memorialize persons, events or other causes). The patch must not exceed 4 square inches and must be placed on the front or sleeve of the uniform and may not interfere with any required markings. While not all team members are required to wear the patch, the patch must be identical for those who choose to wear the patch. As authorized by the institution or conference, other names or words intended to celebrate or memorialize persons, events or other causes may be located on the back of the uniform where the player name is traditionally located. The names or words may vary by team member.

Protective Equipment

SECTION 15. a. Batter's Helmet. It is required that every player wear a double earflap protective helmet while batting, on deck and running bases. No player will be allowed to bat or run the bases without wearing such a helmet. All batting helmets must bear the manufacturer's certification indicating satisfaction of NOCSAE test standards. Helmets that are cracked, split or broken shall not be worn. Tape of any kind on the helmet is not allowed and must be removed from the game. For speeding up play, it is recommended that the base runner continue to wear the same helmet worn while batting. It is required that all designated nonroster (other than a coach and player) bat/ball person(s) wear a double earflap protective helmet while performing their duties.

PENALTY—If an umpire observes a player wearing an illegal helmet before coming to bat, while at bat or while on base, the umpire shall instruct the player to change to a legal helmet without penalty. If the player refuses to change helmets, the player shall be ejected from the contest.

- b. Catcher's Helmet, Face Mask and Throat Guard. It is required that all catchers shall wear a protective helmet and face mask when fielding their position, warming up a pitcher (i.e., between innings) or catching in the bullpen. It is recommended that all catcher's helmets bear the manufacturer's certification indicating satisfaction of NOCSAE test standards. It is required that all catchers have a built-in or attachable throat guard on their masks.
- c. Catcher's Chest Protector. It is required that all catchers must use a chest protector certified to the NOCSAE commotio cordis protective device standard at the time of manufacture, or they must wear an alternative protective device certified to the NOCSAE commotio cordis protective device standard at the time of manufacture.

PENALTY for b. and c.—The player shall not be allowed to catch but shall not be ejected from the contest.

- d. Elbow Pads. (1) A player is permitted to wear one (1) elbow protection pad that does not exceed 10 inches in length, as measured when the pad is lying flat.
- 2) A nylon pad shall surround the shell of any elbow protection equipment.
- 3) No player may wear a nonstandard elbow protection pad, or any pad designed to protect the upper or lower arm, unless the player has an

existing elbow or other arm injury and the team carries with it the following documentation:

- a) A letter identifying the player and describing the nature of the injury and describing the proposed elbow protection pad;
 - b) A physician's report diagnosing the injury; and
 - c) A physician's determination of length of time the protective pad will be necessary.
- e. Hard Casts. Any hard cast must be padded and covered.

Dugouts and Scoreboard

Dugouts (Players' Benches)

SECTION 16. Players' benches for both teams must be furnished by the home team. It is recommended that these benches be enclosed at either end, at the rear and overhead, or that appropriate dugouts be a part of each new field, and that the center of each dugout be located on the sideline boundary at a point equal distance from home plate and first base and home plate and third base [45 feet]. Facilities for collegiate baseball shall have protective fencing or netting on the field side of the dugout at a height not less than three feet from the field level. It is recommended immediately and required effective Jan. 1, 2024, for Division I and Jan. 1, 2025, for Divisions II and III.

- a. All personnel of both teams must be in their team's dugout area or bullpen and remain there until the ball has been declared dead or the side has been retired. This excludes the batter, the on-deck batter, base runners, base coaches and the nine defensive players (see 5-2-c).
- b. If a facility has limited dugout space and it is necessary for personnel to be outside of the dugout, a clearly visible out-of-bounds line should be added at both bench areas to identify the dead-ball area. All personnel shall remain in this area until the ball has been declared dead. No extensions to dugouts will be allowed on the home plate side of either dugout. Any dead-ball area on the home plate side of any dugout that is used for ball persons is not to be occupied by any uniformed player, coach or other team personnel during play.
- c. During a game, no one except eligible players in uniform, coaches, managers, athletic trainers, physicians, scorekeepers and bat persons shall occupy a team's dugout or bullpen. Any violation of this rule should be brought to the umpire's attention and should be reported to the conference or proper disciplinary authority.
- d. All loose equipment (e.g., bats, gloves, chairs, etc.) must be kept in the dugout or in a clearly marked dead-ball area. If a pitched, batted or thrown ball touches equipment that is in live-ball territory, the ball remains live.

Scoreboard

SECTION 17. It is recommended that a scoreboard that shows balls, strikes, outs and line score be located in such a position on the field so that it can be seen easily by both teams and spectators. Scoreboards shall not be placed in line with the batter's background sector of vision.

RULE 2

Definitions

Abandonment

SECTION 1. The act of any runner who leaves the base path, after reaching first base, heading for the dugout or defensive position believing there is no further play.

Appeal

SECTION 2. The act of a player or coach claiming a violation of the rules by the opposing team or misinterpretation of them by the umpires. An appeal may be any act that unmistakably indicates an appeal. For specific appeals see: bat (1-12), base coach (3-3), checked swing (3-6-f), batting out of order (7-11-a) and runner (8-1-a and 8-6). For appeal procedure, see 8-6-b.

Balk

SECTION 3. An illegal act by the pitcher with a runner or runners on base entitling all runners to advance one base (see 9-3).

Ball

SECTION 4. A pitch or partial delivery that does not enter the strike zone in flight and meets one of five criteria (see 7-5).

Base

SECTION 5. One of four points that must be touched by a runner in order to score a run; more usually applied to the canvas or rubberized bags except for the rubber home plate (see 1-6, 1-7 and 8-1).

Base Coach

SECTION 6. A team member or a coach, in proper uniform, who is stationed in the coach's box at first or third base.

Base on Balls

SECTION 7. An award of first base granted to a batter who, during the time at bat, receives four pitches outside the strike zone (see 7-5) or following a signal from the defensive team's head coach to the umpire that the coach intends to intentionally walk the batter.

Batter

SECTION 8. The offensive player positioned in the batter's box.

Batter's Box

SECTION 9. The area within which the batter is positioned when at bat.

Batter-Runner

SECTION 10. A term that identifies the offensive player who has just finished the time at bat and is either put out or becomes a runner before the play ends.

Battery

SECTION 11. The pitcher and catcher.

Bench or Dugout

SECTION 12. The area reserved for team personnel in proper uniform engaged in the game.

Bullpen

SECTION 13. The area in foul or dead-ball territory, generally between the dugout and outfield fence, where substitute pitchers, catchers and other players warm up. It must contain two regulation pitching plates and home plates and should have seating for four to six players. Facilities should be comparable for both home and visiting teams. Pitchers should be warmed up in the designated bullpen area, not in another facility or location out of sight and sound of the playing field.

Bunt

SECTION 14. A legally batted ball, not swung at but intentionally met with the bat and tapped within the infield (see 7-9).

Called Game

SECTION 15. One in which, for any reason, the umpire-in-chief terminates play.

Catch

SECTION 16. The act of a fielder in getting secure possession in the hand or glove of a ball in flight and firmly holding it, providing the fielder does not use the cap, protector, pocket or any other part of the uniform in getting possession.

In establishing the validity of the catch, the fielder shall demonstrate complete control of the ball and that the release of the ball is voluntary and intentional. Only two circumstances may be interpreted as creating a voluntary and intentional release.

- 1) When the momentum of the catch is complete; i.e., the fielder has reversed direction and is running the ball back toward the infield or;
 - 2) When the fielder is reaching for the ball to make a throw.
- a. It is not a catch if, simultaneously with or immediately after contact with the ball, the fielder collides with a player or fence or falls down and, as a result, drops the ball.
 - b. It is not a catch if a fielder touches a fly ball that then hits a member of the offensive team or an umpire and then is caught by that fielder or another defensive player.
 - c. If the fielder has made the catch and drops the ball while in the act of making a throw (i.e., reaching for the ball in the glove) after the catch, the ball shall be judged to have been caught.
 - d. It is not a legal catch if either foot is touching dead-ball territory when the catch is made (see 6-1-d-4).

Catcher

SECTION 17. The fielder who takes a position behind home plate.

Catcher's Box

SECTION 18. The area within which the catcher shall stand with at least one foot until the pitcher begins the pitching motion. (see 1-3-b).

Dead Ball

SECTION 19. A ball not in play because play legally has been suspended temporarily.

Defense

SECTION 20. The team or any player of the team not at bat and in the field.

Designated Hitter

SECTION 21. A player who may be designated to bat for the pitcher only (see 7-2).

Disqualified Player

SECTION 22. A player who no longer is eligible to participate in the game but who has not been ejected (e.g., a player who leaves the lineup because of injury or substitution, except for following a concussion protocol - see 5-5-k).

Double Forfeit

SECTION 23. If both teams are equally at fault and the situation is so out of control that the umpires believe the contest cannot be safely continued, or if neither team has enough eligible players available to continue the game, a double forfeit shall be called.

Double Play

SECTION 24. A play by the defense in which two offensive players are put out as a result of continuous action, providing there is no error between the putouts.

Doubleheader

SECTION 25. Two regularly scheduled or rescheduled games played in immediate succession by the same two teams (see 5-7).

Ejection and Post-Participation Ejection

SECTION 26. The immediate removal (or disqualification) of a player or coach from any further participation from the ongoing or current game. The game officials have the authority to eject a player, coach or team representative for misconduct or unsportsmanlike conduct. The offending individual must leave the field and dugout area immediately and is not allowed to communicate with the teams or umpires. The ejected individual must remain out of sight and sound for the remainder of the contest (see 3-6-d, Note 2).

Umpires must file an ejection report with the offending team's conference administrator and/or athletics director, if applicable. Conferences are encouraged to adopt a reporting policy to satisfy this rule. A post-participation ejection is applicable to the next scheduled contest(s).

- a. If a game is protested (before or after an ejection), regardless of the outcome of the protest, the ejection(s) shall be counted and suspensions served, if applicable.
- b. If a situation occurs after the last out of a contest and such conduct would result in an ejection during the normal course of play, the umpire(s) shall issue a post-participation ejection. This ejection shall be served in the team's next contest. If the ejected person is an assistant coach, player or other team personnel, the umpire shall inform the head coach of the ejection, either personally or through the home team game management administrator on site. If the head coach is ejected, the umpire shall inform the coach and/or the game management administrator on site of the head coach's ejection. The umpire must contact the supervisor or assigner immediately after the contest to report any post-participation ejection. Conferences may impose further penalties if necessary (see Appendix D for full procedures).
- c. A post-participation ejection penalty is served in the same manner as any other ejection (see Appendix D).

- d. If a player is ejected after removal from the game, they shall serve a post-participation ejection.
- e. Whenever a pitcher is ejected for disputing an umpire's decision or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language directed at an opponent or umpire (including a post-participation ejection), the suspension will be for a total of four (4) games. This applies whether the ejection occurs while the player is serving as the current game pitcher or after having been removed from the game and their last listed position was that of a pitcher. If a player is removed as pitcher but remains in the game in another capacity such as a designated hitter or at a defensive position and is then ejected, the suspension penalty is one additional game.
- f. When an assistant coach, a player (other than a pitcher) or team personnel other than the head coach is ejected for disputing an umpire's decision or for unsportsmanlike conduct or language directed at an opponent or umpire (including a post-participation ejection), they will receive a one-game suspension in addition to the present game ejection. There will be a three-game suspension for subsequent ejections in the same season. The individual institution will see that all suspensions are served. Assistant coaches and players may not leave their position on the field or dugout area to appeal any play on the field. Head coaches are ultimately responsible for their team's actions on the field. Although there is a difference between a discussion and an argument, participants, other than the head coach, shall not be the ones to represent their team in communication with the umpire(s).
- g. When the head coach has been ejected and is replaced by a substitute head coach, the substitute head coach has all the duties, rights and responsibilities of the original head coach. However, should the substitute head coach be ejected, they shall serve a one-game suspension in addition to their ejection.
- h. No team personnel may continue to argue or to continue to excessively express themselves with prolonged actions or offensive language after an ejection.

PENALTY for h—An additional two-game suspension.

- i. When applying the suspension rule, penalties shall be served during the team's next previously scheduled and completed contest(s). If a previously scheduled game has been postponed or halted, that make-up game against the originally scheduled opponent shall count as a regularly scheduled contest. Games may not be added after the incident in order to fulfill the requirements of this rule.
- j. If serving multiple suspensions (from a fight or for any penalty) would cause a school difficulty in fielding a team for its next game or games, the institution may request that the suspensions be staggered by its conference office. If the team is an independent, the secretary-rules editor may be contacted for this purpose (see Rule 5-16, Note 2).

Type of Offense	Offender	Consequence for First Offense	Consequence for Second Offense	Consequence for Third Offense	Rule Ref.
Unsportsmanlike conduct or language directed toward an umpire or an opponent	Assistant coach, player or team personnel	Ejection from present contest plus a one game suspension	Ejection from present contest plus a three- game suspension by the same individual in the same season	Same as second offense	2-26-f
Unsportsmanlike conduct or language directed toward an umpire or an opponent	Head coach	Ejection from present contest - no suspension	Same as first offense.	Same as first offense	2-26-f
Unsportsmanlike conduct or language directed toward an umpire or an opponent	Player whose last listed position is that of a pitcher	Ejection from present contest plus a four- game suspension	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	2-26-e
Game Misconduct – Removing team from the field; refusing to continue	Head coach	Ejection from the present contest plus a two- game (2) suspension	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	5-15-b
Prolonged or continued arguing, offensive language or excessive expressions directed at an umpire or game official after an ejection	Any participant	Two- game suspension added to the present accumulative total for applicable suspension penalties	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	2-26-h; 5-15-a (4)
Fighting	Any participant	Ejection plus a four- game suspension	Ejection plus a suspension from the team's next five contests	Ejection plus a suspension for the remainder of the season, including postseason competition	5-16-a
Leaving dugout or bullpen at the time of a potential altercation or fight	Player(s) or team personnel (excluding coaches)	Ejection from present contest plus a one- game suspension	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	5-16-c
Leaving position to participate in a fight	Any participant	Four- game suspension after the ejection	Suspended for the remainder of the season	N/A	5-1 6-c; Penalty (1), (5)
Physical abuse of participants or umpires	Any participant includes head coach	Ejection plus a four- game suspension	Ejection plus a suspension from the team's nex five games	Ejection plus a suspension for the remainder o the season, including postseason competition	5-16-b
Intentionally throwing at a batter	Pitcher, or pitcher and head coach	Ejection plus a four- game suspension. The head coach is not ejected if no warning is given. If a warning has been given, the head coach is ejected from that game and suspended for one game.	Ejection plus an eight- game suspension. The head coach is not ejected if no warning has been given. If a warning has been given, the head coach is ejected and suspended for one game.	Ejection plus a suspension for the remainder of the season, including postseason. If no warning is given, the head coach is not ejected. If a warning is issued, the head coach is ejected and suspended for one game.	5-16-d, (1), (2), (3)

Type of Offense	Offender	Consequence for First Offense	Consequence for Second Offense	Consequence for Third Offense	Rule Ref.
Verbal abuse/bench jockeying	Any participant or game personnel other than head coach	After a warning, offender is ejected for that game plus a one game suspension	When verbal abuse/bench jockeying continues, head coach is ejected (no suspension). All others ejection plus one game suspension.	Same as second offense	5-17
Failure to leave sight and sound of the playing field and grandstands after an ejection	Any participant	Three-game suspension added to any penalties already accumulated	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	3-6-d, Note 2 and 3
Collision rule	Player	Ejection from the present contest One game suspension	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	8-7
Ejection for tobacco use	Player or team personnel and head coach	Ejected from present contest, one game suspension for everyone other than the head coach	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	3-11
Post-participation ejection for unsportsmanlike conduct	Assistant coach, player (other than pitcher) or team personnel	Ejection from next contest plus a one game suspension. These two games will be added to any other applicable penalties for other offenses.	Ejection from next scheduled contest plus a three-game suspension for a total of four games. These four games will be added to any other applicable penalties for other offenses.	Same as second offense	2-26-c; Appendix D
Post-participation ejection	Head coach	Ejected from team's next game – No Suspension	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	2-26-c; Appendix D
Post-participation ejection for a pitcher	Player whose last listed position is that of a pitcher	A total suspension of four games	Same as first offense	Same as first offense	2-26-e
Possession or use of any foreign substance or moisture applied to the hand or fingers, or do anything to deface the ball.	Pitcher	Ejection plus a four-game suspension.	Ejections plus a four-game suspension.	Ejection plus a four-game suspension.	9-2-e

Note 1: It is the responsibility of the institutions Head Coach and Director of Athletics to administer and enforce any suspension penalties.

Note 2: Suspension penalties, regardless of the number, shall be served during the offending team's next scheduled contest(s). Post-participation ejections and any applicable suspension penalties shall also be served during the offending team's next scheduled contest(s). Conferences and institutions may choose to implement additional penalties for misconduct.

Note 3: A listing of ejection and suspension procedures is contained in Appendix D.

Fair Ball

SECTION 27. A fair ball is a legally batted ball that:

- a. Settles on fair ground between home plate and first base or between home plate and third base;
- b. Is on or over fair ground when bounding to the outfield past first or third base;
- c. First falls on fair ground on or beyond first or third base;
- d. First touches a player, umpire or any piece of equipment while over fair territory. A batted ball that hits the pitcher's plate and rebounds untouched to foul territory between first and home or third and home is a foul ball.

Note: A fair fly must be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line and not as to whether the fielder is on fair or foul ground at the time the ball is first touched.

- e. Touches a base in fair territory unless previously touched by a fielder or runner while the ball was in foul territory; or
- f. Passes out of the playing field in flight while over fair territory.

Note: If a batted ball hits the top of the fence while in fair territory and then bounces over the fence, it is a home run.

Fair Territory

SECTION 28. That part of the playing field within and including the first- and third-base lines from home plate to the bottom of the playing-field fence and perpendicularly upwards. Both foul lines are in fair territory.

Fielder

SECTION 29. A defensive player.

Fielder's Choice

SECTION 30. The act of a fielder who, in playing a fair ground ball, attempts to or does retire another base runner rather than throwing to first base to put out the batter-runner.

Flagrant Collision

SECTION 31. A collision between a base runner and a fielder in which the runner maliciously attempts to dislodge the ball (see 8-7).

Fly Ball

SECTION 32. A batted ball that goes high in the air directly off the bat.

Force Play

SECTION 33. A play in which a runner legally loses the right to occupy a base by reason of the batter becoming a runner.

Note: On a dropped third strike, when the batter is not entitled to run to first base, any advancing runner must be tagged to be declared out. This is not a force play situation.

Forfeited Game

SECTION 34. A game declared ended and awarded to the offended team by the umpire-in-chief (see 5-12 and 10-28).

Foul Ball

SECTION 35. A batted ball that:

- a. Settles on foul ground between home plate and first base or between home plate and third base;
- b. Bounds past first or third base on or over foul ground;

- c. First falls on foul ground beyond first or third base;
- d. While on or over foul ground, touches an umpire, a player or any object other than the playing surface;
- e. Hits the batter in the batter's box, or hits the dirt or home plate and then hits the batter or the bat, which is in the hand or hands of the batter, while in the batter's box; or
- f. Hits the pitcher's plate and rebounds into foul territory between home plate and first or third base, without touching a fielder.

Note: A ball is to be judged fair or foul with respect to its position relative to the foul lines and not with respect to the position of the fielder at the time of contact.

Foul Territory

SECTION 36. That part of the playing field outside the first- and third-base lines extended to the fence and perpendicularly upwards.

Foul Tip

SECTION 37. A batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to the catcher and is legally caught by the catcher. It is not a foul tip unless it is caught and any foul tip that is caught is a strike, and the ball is in play.

Ground Ball

SECTION 38. A batted ball that rolls or bounces close to the ground.

Half Swing

SECTION 39. An attempt by the batter to stop the forward motion of the bat while swinging, which puts the batter in jeopardy of a strike being called. The half swing shall be called a strike if the barrel head of the bat passes the batter's front hip. This does not apply to a bunt attempt when the batter pulls the bat back.

Halted Game

SECTION 40. A game that is stopped at any time after its start and is to be completed at a later date (see 5-9).

Note: As it applies to a halted game, the game starts when the umpire-in-chief calls "play" (see Rules 3-7-a and 5-1).

Home Team

SECTION 41. The team on whose field the game is played. If the game is played on neutral grounds, the home team shall be determined by mutual agreement.

Illegal Bat

SECTION 42. A bat that does not display the BBCOR certification mark, an approved sticker from bat testing, or in the umpire's judgment or upon appeal of the opposing team, has been altered so as to affect the distance factor, or cause an unusual reaction on the baseball. This includes wooden bats that are filled, flat-surfaced, nailed, hollowed, grooved or covered with a substance such as paraffin, wax, etc., and metal bats that are flat-surfaced or have had the polyurethane core removed or altered. (PENALTY—Rule 1-12.)

Illegal Pitch

SECTION 43. A pitch delivered to the batter without the pitcher's pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate or the pitcher making a quick return pitch. With no runner(s) on base, it is a ball; with a runner(s) on base, it is a balk (see 9-1-d; 9-2-a; and 9-3-i).

Illegally Batted Ball

SECTION 44. A ball hit, fair or foul, by the batter when either one or both of the batter's feet are upon the ground entirely outside the lines of the batter's box or when touching home plate, or a ball hit with an illegal bat (see 1-12-a, b and 7-10).

In Flight

SECTION 45. Any batted, thrown or pitched ball that has not touched the ground or some object other than a player.

Infield

SECTION 46. That area within the 90-foot square bounded by home plate, first, second and third bases.

Infield Area

SECTION 47. That portion of the field included in an arc between the left- and right-field foul lines approximately 160 feet from home plate.

Infield Fly

SECTION 48. A fair fly ball (not including a line drive or an attempted bunt) that can be caught by an infielder with ordinary effort, when first and second or first, second and third bases are occupied before two are out. The pitcher, catcher and any outfielder who is positioned in the infield on the play shall be considered infielders for the purpose of this rule. In the case of a declared infield fly, the ball is live and runners may advance at their own risk. If a declared infield fly becomes a foul ball, it is treated the same as any foul.

Note: If a player intentionally drops a fair ball, the ball remains in play despite the provisions of 7-11-q. The infield fly rule takes precedence.

Infielder

SECTION 49. Fielders (usually four) who occupy positions between the pitcher's mound and the three outfielders (usually between or somewhat behind the bases).

Inning

SECTION 50. That portion of a game within which the teams alternate on offense and defense and in which there are three putouts for each team. Each team's time at bat is a half-inning.

Interference

SECTION 51. An act that hinders or prevents a player from making a play.

- a) Offensive interference is an act by the team at bat which interferes with, obstructs, impedes, hinders, or confuses any fielder attempting to make a play.
- b) Defensive interference is an act by a fielder (usually the catcher) that hinders or prevents a batter from hitting a pitch.
- c) Umpire's interference occurs (1) when a plate umpire hinders, impedes, or prevents a catcher's throw attempting to prevent a stolen base or retire a runner on a pick-off play, or (2) when a fair ball touches an umpire on fair territory before passing a fielder.
- d) Nongame personnel or spectator interference occurs when nongame personnel (someone other than players, coaches or umpires) or a spectator (or an object thrown by the spectator) hinders a player's attempt to make a play on a live ball, by going onto the playing field, or reaching out of the stands and over the playing field.

See specific rule sections for action to be taken: batter (6-2-d, 6-3-b, 7-11-f, k, l and n, 8-2-e, 8-5-l and p); batter-runner (7-11-l, m, o, p and q, 8-2-g, 8-5-e, o, p and q); runner (6-2-e and g, 6-4-b, 7-11-r and s, 8-2-g, 8-3-f and g, 8-5-d and k); coach (6-2-c, 8-3-j, 8-5-f and g); nongame personnel (4-8, 6-4-a, 7-11-t, 8-3-n); offensive team (5-2-d, 8-5-h and q); umpire (6-2-f, 6-3-a).

Note 1: If the umpire declares the batter, batter-runner or a runner out for interference, all other runners shall return to the last base that was touched legally at the time of the interference, unless otherwise provided by these rules. The ball is dead.

Note 2: If the batter-runner has not touched first base at the time of interference, all runners shall return to the base last occupied at the time of the pitch. If there was an intervening play made on another runner, all runners shall return to the base last touched at the time of interference.

Note 3: If a fielder has a chance to field a batted ball, but misplays it and while attempting to recover it, the ball is in the fielder's immediate reach and the fielder is contacted by the base runner attempting to reach a base, interference shall be called.

Note 4: If a fielder has a chance to field a batted ball, but misplays it and must chase after the ball, the fielder must avoid the runner. If contact occurs, obstruction shall be called.

Note 5: If a fielder chases after a deflected batted ball ahead of a runner's arrival and is in the act of picking up the ball (fielding) when contact is made by an offensive player, interference is the call. If the fielder is chasing after the deflected batted ball and contact is made between the two players, obstruction should be the call.

Note 6: No preceding or succeeding runner shall advance on an interference play and a runner is considered to occupy a base until they have legally attained the next succeeding base.

Last Time By

SECTION 52. If the runner retouches a base or bases in advancing to the awarded base, or in returning to the original base occupied at the time of the pitch, the runner's failure to touch a base in returning is corrected under the theory that touching the base the last time by corrects any previous error.

Note: When a runner touches a base after an award, this touching corrects any previous base-running infraction.

Live Ball

SECTION 53. After the pitcher engages the pitcher's plate with possession of the ball and the batter has assumed their position in the batter's box, the umpire calls or signals "Play" (see 6-6).

Misconduct

SECTION 54. Misconduct is any act of dishonesty, unsportsmanlike conduct or unprofessional behavior that discredits the contest, the institutions or intercollegiate athletics.

Obstruction

SECTION 55. The act of a fielder who, while not in possession of the ball and not in the act of fielding the ball, impedes the progress of any runner.

Note: If a fielder is about to receive a thrown ball and if the ball is in flight directly toward and near enough to the fielder so they must occupy their position to receive the ball, the fielder may be considered to be "in the act of fielding a ball." It is entirely up to the judgment of the umpire as to whether a fielder is in the act of fielding a ball. After a

fielder has made an attempt to field a ball and missed, they can no longer be in the "act of fielding" the ball. For example: An infielder dives at a ground ball and the ball passes them. If the fielder continues to lie on the ground and delays the progress of the runner, they very likely have obstructed the runner.

See specific rule sections for action to be taken: catcher (8-2-e); fielder (8-3-e, f); visual obstruction (8-3-f).

Offense (Offensive)

SECTION 56. The team at bat.

Official Warning

SECTION 57. An "Official Warning" is a warning from an umpire that carries the words, "This is your official warning. If you continue, you will leave me no option but to eject you." Slang terms such as, but not limited to, "knock it off;" "that's enough;" "don't say anything else;" or "I've heard enough" do not constitute an official warning.

Out

SECTION 58. A declaration by the umpire that a player who is trying for a base is not entitled to that base.

Outfielder

SECTION 59. Fielders (usually three) who occupy positions most distant from home plate between the infielders and the outfield fence.

Overslide

SECTION 60. The act of an offensive player who slides with such momentum that contact is lost with the base.

Pickoff

SECTION 61. When a pitcher or catcher throws to a base between pitches in an attempt to retire a runner who is either leading off or about to begin stealing the next base, or to keep a runner close to the base.

Pinch Hitter

SECTION 62. An eligible substitute player who is not listed in the lineup and bats for a player listed in the lineup.

Note: With a 10-player lineup, the pitcher only may pinch hit for the designated hitter.

Pinch Runner

SECTION 63. An eligible substitute player who is not listed in the lineup and who runs for a player who has reached base.

Pitch

SECTION 64. The ball delivered by the pitcher to the batter while in contact with the pitcher's plate.

Pitcher

SECTION 65. The fielder designated to deliver the pitch to the batter.

Pitcher's Pivot Foot

SECTION 66. The foot in contact with the pitching plate when the pitcher is in the act of delivering the ball.

Play

SECTION 67.

a. The order given by the umpire to begin the game or resume play.

- b. A play or attempted play shall be interpreted as a legitimate effort by a defensive player who has possession of the ball to retire a runner. This may include an actual attempt to tag a runner, a fielder running toward a base with the ball in an attempt to force or tag a runner, or actually throwing to another defensive player in an attempt to retire a runner. The fact that the runner is not out is not relevant. A fake or a feint to throw shall not be deemed a play or an attempted play.

Quick Pitch

SECTION 68. An illegal pitch made with the obvious intent to catch the batter off balance (see 9-2-a).

Run Down

SECTION 69. The act of the defense in an attempt to put out a runner between bases.

Runner

SECTION 70. An offensive player who is advancing to, returning to or touching a base.

Safe

SECTION 71. A declaration by the umpire that a runner who is trying for a base is entitled to that base by virtue of reaching it before being tagged or forced out.

Set Position

SECTION 72. One of the two legal pitching positions, usually used with runners on base (see 9-1-b).

Squeeze Play

SECTION 73. A play whereby a team, with a runner on third base, attempts to score that runner by means of a bunt.

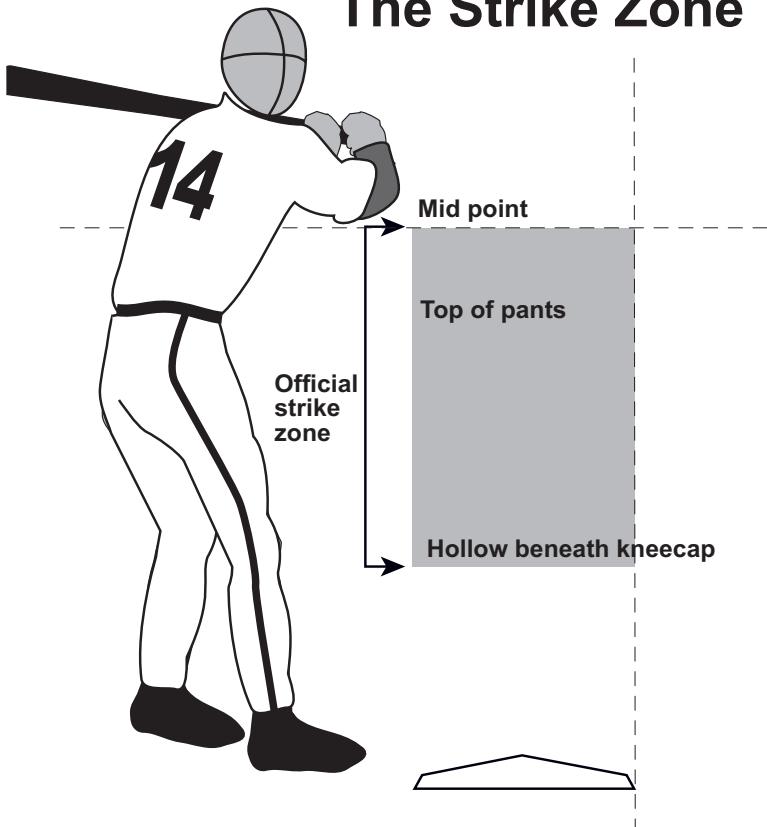
Strike

SECTION 74. A legal pitch that can be called for one of nine (9) criteria (see 7-4).

Strike Zone

SECTION 75. The area over home plate from the bottom of the kneecaps to the midpoint between the top of the shoulders and the top of the uniform pants. The strike zone shall be determined from the batter's stance as the batter is prepared to swing at a pitched ball (see diagram below).

The Strike Zone



Substitute

SECTION 76. A substitute is an eligible roster player who is not one of the nine or ten eligible players in the game and has not been withdrawn or disqualified.

Suspension

SECTION 77. The prohibition of a player or coach from participating in a future contest(s). A game must be played to its completion before it counts toward a suspension. A game that is scheduled, but not played due to weather, power failure, etc., shall not be used to satisfy a suspension(s). If the penalty is not satisfied during the current season, it shall be assessed at the beginning of the next official NCAA spring season.

A suspended person must follow the same penalties as those in an ejection (e.g., removed from sight and sound of the contest). Additionally, a suspended person cannot:

- a. Be dressed in game uniform;
- b. Communicate with any team personnel or umpires;
- c. Take part in any pregame activities at the site of competition; and

d. Be in the stadium or on the field once pregame activities have started.

Note: See Appendix D for additional information.

e. Procedures for enforcing penalties are as follows:

- (1) After an ejection and suspension, the offending individual must leave the field and dugout area immediately and is not allowed to communicate with team members or the umpires.
- (2) Suspended personnel shall not be in uniform, allowed in any team area or perform any team duty while serving their suspensions.
- (3) It is the responsibility of the institution's head coach and director of athletics to administer and enforce the suspension penalty. If a suspended player or coach is found to have participated in a game during the prescribed suspension, the game will be forfeited by the offending team.
- (4) When a penalty occurs during the team's last game of the season, the penalty will be assessed at the beginning of the next official NCAA spring season.
- (5) An umpire has jurisdiction to impose penalties for fighting from the beginning of the game until the umpires have left the playing area (stadium) after the final game of the day.
- (6) The ejecting umpire must file a suspension-report form with the secretary-rules editor, the offending team's athletics director, and a conference administrator, if applicable.
- (7) Conferences and institutions may choose to implement additional penalties for fighting or physical abuse.
- (8) Suspended game personnel shall serve the suspension penalties immediately. There shall be no appeal of the penalty.

Note 1: When applying the suspension rule, penalties shall be served for the team's next previously scheduled and completed contest(s). If a previously scheduled game has been postponed or halted, that make-up game against the originally scheduled opponent shall count as a regularly scheduled contest. If the next scheduled competition is the completion of a halted game from earlier in the season for which the individual was eligible, they may participate in the completion of the halted game and will serve the suspension during the next previously scheduled complete game(s). Games may not be added after the incident in order to fulfill the requirements of this rule.

Note 2: If serving multiple suspensions from a fight would cause a school difficulty in fielding a team for its next game or games, the institution may request that the suspensions be staggered by the conference office. If the team is an independent, the secretary-rules editor may be contacted for this purpose.

Tag

SECTION 78. The action of a fielder in touching a base with any part of the body while holding the ball securely and firmly in the hand or glove or touching a runner with the ball or with the glove while holding the ball (not including hanging laces alone) securely and firmly in that hand or glove. For the purposes of this definition any jewelry being worn by a player (e.g., necklaces, bracelets, etc.) shall not constitute a part of the player's body. However, equipment attached to a player's belt or tucked into a player's pocket is considered part of the player's uniform. The fielder shall maintain or regain control of their body and if they drop the ball due to their lack of body control or control of the ball, it is not a tag. A voluntary and intentional release is substantive proof of complete control.

Note: A ball stuck in a fielder's glove remains alive. If the fielder tosses the ball/glove combination to another fielder in time to complete a tag of a base or runner in advance of the base and the ball/glove combination is held securely, the runner or batter-runner is out.

Ten-Run Rule

SECTION 79. By conference rule, or mutual consent of both coaches before the contest, a game may be stopped only after seven innings if one team is ahead by at least 10 runs.

Each team must play an equal number of innings unless shortened because the home team needs none or only part of its half of the final inning.

Throw

SECTION 80. The act of hurling the ball, with various degrees of velocity, toward a given object, usually a teammate. A pitch is not a throw.

Time

SECTION 81. The interruption of play by any umpire, calling or signaling the ball dead.

Time of the Pitch

SECTION 82. The time of the pitch is (1) in the wind up position, when the pitcher makes any movement habitually connected with the delivery to the plate, or (2) in the set position, when the pitcher begins the natural movement associated with the pitcher's delivery of the ball after the pitcher has come set with both hands together in front of their body.

Touch

SECTION 83. The contacting of any part of an opposing player's or umpire's body, clothing or equipment (but not any jewelry (e.g., necklaces, bracelets, etc.) worn by a player).

Note: Equipment shall be considered worn by a player or umpire if it is in contact with its intended place on the person.

Triple Play

SECTION 84. A continuous play by the defense in which three players are put out without an error between the putouts.

Windup

SECTION 85. One of two legal pitching positions, usually made with no runners on base (see 9-1-a).

RULE 3

Game Personnel and Their Duties

Head Coach

SECTION 1. A head coach is a person employed or appointed by an institution to be responsible for the team's actions on the field (usually the head coach also is responsible for the team's actions off the field) and to represent the team in communications with the umpire and the opposing team. A player may be designated as head coach in the event the head coach is absent.

- a. The head coach may delegate specific duties prescribed by the rules to a player or assistant coach, and any action of such designated representatives shall be official. The head coach always shall be responsible for the team's conduct, observance of the official rules and deference to the umpire.
- b. If a head coach leaves the field, a player or assistant coach shall be designated as the substitute; and such substitute coach shall have the duties, rights and responsibilities of the head coach. If the head coach fails or refuses to designate a substitute before leaving, the umpire-in-chief shall designate a team member as substitute head coach.

Assistant Coach

SECTION 2. An assistant coach is a person who assists the head coach. The assistant coach is ineligible to compete as a player.

Assistant coaches may not leave their position, dugout or bullpen area to appeal any play on the field.

PENALTY—Ejection from the game after a warning.

Note: When the head coach has been ejected and is replaced by a substitute head coach, the substitute head coach has all the duties, rights and responsibilities of the head coach. However, should the substitute head coach be ejected, they shall serve a one-game suspension in addition to their ejection.

Base Coach

SECTION 3. A base coach is an eligible team member, head coach or assistant coach who occupies the coach's box at first or third base to direct the batter or runner.

- a. A base coach must be in the same type and color of uniform, including the team outer (warm-up) jacket, as the team's players.
- b. At the time of the pitch, the base coach may not be closer to the foul line than the inside edge of the coaches' box and no closer to home plate than the front edge of the box (see also Rule 2-6, Base Coach). A coach may leave the coach's box to signal the player to slide or advance or return to a base as long as the individual does not interfere with the play.
- c. Base coaches may address only their team members.

- d. A base coach may not use language that will reflect negatively upon the players, umpires or spectators.

PENALTY for b., c. and d.—Ejection from game after a warning.

- e. A base coach may not physically assist a runner in returning to or leaving the base.

Note: Other runners may make outs or advance on the bases.

- f. A base coach may not leave the box or act in a manner to draw a throw by a fielder or distract the pitcher.

PENALTY for e. and f.—A delayed dead ball shall be called. At the conclusion of the play, the assisted runner shall be declared out.

Team Manager

SECTION 4. Team managers are individuals whose duties are designated by the head coach.

Official Scorer

SECTION 5. A representative of the home team, league or conference should be designated as the official scorer. This person shall keep the records as designated in the official scorebook. It is recommended that the official scorer be seated in the press box or stands and ensure that the home and visitor's scorebooks agree.

Umpires

SECTION 6. Game officials are the umpire-in-chief (plate umpire) and one, two, three or five field umpires.

Note: The minimum number of umpires required to begin a game is two (2). A game may be completed with one (1) umpire if necessary due to injury, illness or extenuating circumstances.

- a. Any umpire has the authority to order a player, coach or team attendant to do or refrain from doing anything that affects the administering of these rules and to enforce prescribed penalties.

Note: Umpires should arrive at the game site at least 60 minutes before game time and notify the home team. Umpires, and the home team coach, should have a current NCAA rules book available at the game site.

- b. Each umpire is an approved official of the institution, league or conference and is authorized and required to enforce each SECTION of these rules. Further, the individual is obliged to conduct the game under conditions conducive to the highest standards of good sportsmanship. Each umpire has the authority to rule on any point not specifically covered in these rules.
- c. The institution, league or conference shall recommend that umpires be dressed uniformly. Any logos or insignias not related to collegiate baseball (e.g., professional baseball) are not permissible on any part of the umpire's uniform.

PENALTY for c.—Umpires in violation of this rule shall be reported to and punished by the proper disciplinary authority.

- d. Any umpire shall eject any player, coach, manager or trainer for violations of the Coaches' and Players' Code of Ethics (see page 8). Conferences and institutions may choose to implement additional penalties (see Appendix D).

Note 1: The umpire first may warn any violator or team before ejecting the individual(s) from the game.

Note 2: If any person is ejected from the game, the individual shall leave the field immediately. The person must be removed from sight and sound of the contest. Sight and sound shall mean that the ejected person(s) cannot view the contest, cannot communicate with their team nor be where the umpires may hear him. It may still be possible for the ejected person(s) to be able to hear the sounds of the game; however, they must have left the confines of the playing field and the grandstands.

Note 3: The ejected individual is not allowed to return to the dugout, field or grandstands until the umpiring crew has been escorted to its dressing area by security or game management.

PENALTY for Note 2 and Note 3—A three-game suspension, in addition to the ejection or post-game ejection will apply to any individual in violation of this rule.

Note 4: Any umpire may eject any player, coach or other team personnel if the violation warrants an ejection.

PENALTY for Note 4—The offending person, other than the head coach, is suspended for one game. If game management or security personnel cannot restore order and the game resumed in a reasonable amount of time, the game will be suspended until order is restored (see 2-26, 5-15 and 5-16 for suspension penalties).

Note 5: If a person is ejected in the first game of a doubleheader and the ejection carries a suspension, the person shall serve the suspension in the second game.

- e. If there is a reasonable doubt about some decision being in conflict with the rules, the head coach has the right to appeal an umpire's decision and seek its reversal. To ask a question about a call on the field, the head coach may only meet the calling umpire at the midpoint of their respective foul line. To ask a question about a call at the plate or when making a line-up change, the head coach may not enter the dirt circle around home plate. Coaches are not entitled to a second opinion simply because they dispute a call (see Appendix E, item d).

Note: After a request for an umpire conference has been granted, coaches are not allowed to continue to argue a call once the final decision has been made. If a call is reversed, coaches are entitled to an explanation.

PENALTY—Ejection.

- f. When asked by a coach or player, the plate umpire must seek a decision from the appropriate base umpire regarding the "half swing." Such appeal may only be made when the plate umpire has called the pitch a ball. Appeals on a half swing must be made before the next pitch, or any play or attempted play. If the half swing occurs during a play which ends a half-inning, the appeal must be made before all infielders of the defensive team leave fair territory. Baserunners must be alert to the possibility that the base umpire on appeal from the plate umpire may reverse the call of a ball to the call of a strike, in which event the runner is in jeopardy of being out by the catcher's throw. Also, a catcher must be alert in a base stealing situation if a ball call is reversed to a strike by the base umpire upon appeal from the plate umpire. The ball is in play on appeal on a half swing.

Note 1: Balls, strikes, half swings or decisions about hit-by-pitch situations are not to be argued. After a warning, any player or coach who continues to argue balls, strikes, half swings or a hit-by-pitch situation shall be ejected from the game. Umpires shall record the warning.

Note 2: If a coach leaves the dugout or their position to argue a ball or strike call (including a half swing or hit-by-pitch), the coach may be ejected without warning.

- g. No umpire shall criticize or interfere with another umpire's decision, unless asked by the one making it; however, if there is a misinterpretation of a rule, it should be brought to the attention of the umpire-in-chief.
- h. No umpire may be replaced in a game unless the individual becomes ill or injured.
- i. When two or more umpires render different decisions on the same play, the umpire-in-chief shall consult with all the umpires away from all players and coaches. The umpire-in-chief shall determine which decision shall be accepted.
- j. Players and coaches are prohibited from deliberately erasing the batter's box or other lines. Umpires must stop the individual from erasing the lines.

Note: The umpire has authority to require the batter to stand in a proper batting position. The umpire may require the grounds crew to reline the box. After a warning, individuals who repeatedly commit this infraction may be ejected.

- k. Umpire jurisdiction in regard to personal confrontations and unsportsmanlike conduct directed toward them begins when the umpires enter the game site and ends when the umpires have left the game site.

Umpire-in-Chief

SECTION 7. The umpire-in-chief has sole authority to forfeit a game, and has jurisdiction over any rules matters not assigned to the field umpire in 3-8. The umpire-in-chief's duties include those covered in 3-6 and also the following:

- a. Call or indicate "Play" to start the game, "Time" when the ball becomes dead and "Play" when play is resumed;
- b. Call and count all balls and strikes (see 3-6-f) and give a clear visual and verbal indication of all strikes;
- c. Make all decisions on the batter;
- d. Determine fair and foul balls;
- e. Announce each substitution or have this announced through the public-address system;
- f. Have the lights turned on when necessary for safety reasons. Whenever possible, this should be done at the beginning of an inning;
- g. Call the game when conditions become unfit for play and when the last out is made;
- h. Eject a player, coach or team member;
- i. Clear the bench. "Clear the bench" means the affected participants must leave the dugout area; however, these participants remain eligible to participate in the contest.
- j. Penalize for rule infractions; and
- k. Forfeit the game for prescribed infractions by spectators, players, coaches or other persons subject to these rules (see 5-12).

Field Umpire

SECTION 8. A field or base umpire may take any position desired and shall aid the umpire-in-chief in administering the rules.

- a. The base umpire shall make all decisions on the bases except those reserved to the umpire-in-chief, and shall have concurrent jurisdiction with the umpire-in-chief in calling time, balks, foul balls, defacement or discoloration of the ball by the pitcher, use of an illegal pitch, when a fly is caught or in ejecting

any player for unsportsmanlike conduct or infractions as prescribed by the rules.

- b. If there is only one field umpire, this individual shall make all decisions at first and second base and such decisions at third base as cannot be made more conveniently by the umpire-in-chief.
- c. If additional field umpires are used, they are referred to as base umpires; and their normal positions are behind third and second bases. They have concurrent jurisdiction with the first-base umpire.
- d. Umpires shall require coaches and all personnel to remain in the dugout or dead-ball territory while the ball is in play. No coach or team personnel shall leave the dugout until the ball is dead.

PENALTY—For the first offense, a warning shall be issued. For the second offense, ejection of an offender.

Medical Personnel

SECTION 9. Aggressive treatment of open wounds or skin lesions should be followed. In particular, whenever an athletics participant suffers a laceration or wound where oozing or bleeding occurs, the practice or game should be stopped at the earliest possible time, and the athlete should leave the field of play and be given appropriate medical treatment. During pregame practice, the athlete should not return to the field of play without the approval of medical personnel. If, during a game, the athlete can be treated without undue delay, play shall be stopped until the athlete has received treatment and is cleared to play by medical personnel. However, if the bleeding requires extensive treatment, a substitute shall replace the injured player.

Note: In a situation where a player is bleeding, a decision to substitute for the player must be made within 10 minutes from the time play is stopped. A substitute player must begin warming up immediately when play is stopped because of this injury. If the player is the pitcher, this shall be treated as an injury (the relief pitcher is given adequate time to warm-up).

Game Administrator

SECTION 10. a. It is strongly recommended that the host institution assign a representative to handle game management issues outside of the playing surface (see Rule 5-2-f). The game administrator should make contact with the visiting coach and umpires before the start of the contest.

- b. It is recommended that the host institution provide a dressing facility and appropriate security for umpires before, during and after the game.

Tobacco Rule

SECTION 11. The use of all tobacco products by student-athletes and game personnel (e.g., coaches, umpires, athletic trainers, managers) is prohibited at the site of the game competition.

PENALTY—Disqualification of the offending individual and head coach for the remainder of the contest. Team personnel other than the head coach will also serve a one game suspension. Umpires are instructed to take a zero-tolerance policy in this area. The umpires' jurisdiction begins with regard to this rule upon their arrival on the field or dugout in uniform. Umpires who use tobacco before, during or after a game in the vicinity of the site shall be reported to and punished by the proper disciplinary authority.

RULE 4

Pregame Procedures

Umpire's Duties

SECTION 1. Before the start of the game, the umpire-in-chief and/or umpire crew shall:

- a. Check the condition of the field and inspect all playing lines and markers for proper location and adequate visibility.

PENALTY—If the field dimensions, equipment and facilities are illegal, the game is subject to forfeit if conditions are not corrected in a reasonable length of time.

- b. Receive from the home team and rub up a minimum of one dozen baseballs that meet the specifications of 1-11. Additional balls will be furnished thereafter by a home-team representative.
- c. Always have at least two alternate balls to put in play when needed. Such balls shall be put in play when:
 - 1) A ball has been hit out of the playing field;
 - 2) A ball has been rejected because it is discolored, scuffed or otherwise unsuitable for play; or
 - 3) The pitcher requests a different ball. The game should not be delayed to retrieve a particular ball that may have been fouled away from the playing area.

Note: Use of Alternate Baseballs - The umpire should be the sole judge of whether the ball should be checked and should certainly do so if the ball has bounced off equipment or a fence/wall, if it appears 'discolored, scuffed or otherwise unsuitable for play,' or if the pitcher requests a different ball as stated. Umpires do not need to routinely check the ball each time a ground ball is hit to the infield or each pitch that is not cleanly caught by the catcher. Weather and field conditions should be a factor in deciding when to check the ball.

Fitness of Field

SECTION 2. a. The coach and the director of athletics (or representative) of the host institution shall decide whether a game shall not be started because of unsatisfactory conditions of weather or playing field, except for the second game of a doubleheader.

- b. Should bad weather or unfit conditions prevail during a game, the umpire-in-chief may consult with the game administrator to determine suspension, resumption or termination of play. In the case of lightning, the game administrator and umpire-in-chief shall follow lightning guidelines in the appendix section.
- c. The umpire-in-chief of the first game shall be the sole judge as to whether playing conditions permit the start of a second game of a doubleheader.

Pregame Practice

SECTION 3. a. If batting practice is scheduled and the field is deemed playable, the visiting team must be allowed a minimum of 30 minutes of batting practice on the game field, assuming normal (satisfactory) weather and field conditions.

b. A pitching screen must be provided by the home team. It can be either of an “h” or inverted “t” structure. Its highest point should be a minimum of 72 inches high and 48 inches wide. Visitors should be notified in advance if a screen is not available.

c. It is recommended that the home team provide a batting cage.

d. It is recommended that a screen 8 feet high and 6 feet wide be provided for the first-base area during batting practice.

e. Each bullpen must be provided with a minimum of two mounds with regulation pitching plates and home plates and be in satisfactory condition for pregame warm-up for the visiting team. If the visiting pitching mound is not comparable to the home team’s mound, the visiting team’s starting pitcher shall be allowed to prepare for the game on the home team’s practice mound starting approximately 20 minutes before game time.

Note: The visiting team’s head coach first must appeal to the home team’s head coach for a correction of the condition of the practice mound. If this does not resolve the problem, then the visiting head coach can ask the umpire-in-chief for time (not to exceed 20 minutes) to prepare the starting pitcher for the game. This warm-up time shall be within the final 30 minutes before game time.

Pregame Meeting

SECTION 4. Ten minutes before the scheduled starting time, the umpire-in-chief shall conduct the pregame meeting with the representatives of the opposing teams. The head coach, during the first game of a weekend series or any nonconference game, must attend the pregame plate conference. During this meeting, the umpire-in-chief shall:

a. Receive from the home team and visiting team their respective batting orders, in duplicate. The umpire will determine that the copies are identical, keep one copy and give the other copy to the opposing team’s representative. The umpire now is officially in charge of the game, and the lineups are official;

Note: If a team’s lineup does not include all nine players (and the pitcher if a designated hitter is used), the umpire should call this to the attention of the coach. If a player’s jersey number does not match the number on the official lineup, the umpire shall ensure that the number on all cards is corrected. Lineup cards are required to list the batting order by names. Numbers are a courtesy. There is no penalty.

b. Review the ground rules and any rules questions asked by the coaches; and

c. Receive confirmation from the head coach or representative that playing equipment meets NCAA rules and regulations.

Ground Rules

SECTION 5. A local ground rule may be adopted where unusual conditions prevail if agreeable with the visiting team. No ground rule shall conflict with the official playing rules. Where the teams do not agree, ground rules shall be determined by the umpires. It is recommended that ground rules be posted in each dugout.

Team First in Field

SECTION 6. The members of the home team shall take their positions in the field at the start of a game.

Authorized Personnel on Field

SECTION 7. Only the following people shall be allowed on the playing field: players, coaches in uniform, athletic trainers, umpires, team managers, bat persons, authorized news media (at the discretion of the home team) and authorized home-field attendants.

Note: Only players, coaches and ball/bat persons are to be dressed in the team's game uniform. All others shall be dressed appropriately for their specific team responsibilities.

Nongame Personnel Interference

SECTION 8. If there is interference with a live batted or thrown ball by anyone other than players, coaches or umpires, the umpire shall rule as to its being intentional or unintentional.

- a. If it is intentional, the ball shall be declared dead at the moment of the interference, and the umpire shall award the offended team appropriate compensation that, in their opinion, would have resulted had interference not taken place.
 - 1) It is intentional interference if a coach, bat person, photographer or home-field attendant fields, kicks or pushes a ball, regardless of possible motives.
 - 2) The umpire shall declare intentional interference and award just compensation, be it an out, extra bases, etc., if a spectator intentionally reaches out of the stands or goes out onto the playing field. The ball is dead immediately.
- b. If it is unintentional interference, the ball is live and in play. It is unintentional interference if a base coach, bat person, photographer, etc., tries to evade the ball and it touches the individual or if it touches such person without the person being aware the ball was coming.
- c. It is not interference if, as the player is going outside the playing field during a play, a spectator interferes with a possible catch in the stands or over a fence.

Crowd Control

SECTION 9. The responsibility for crowd control rests with the director of athletics or designated representative of the host institution. The designated representative shall be prepared to use the public-address system at the first sign of unsportsmanlike crowd behavior and request cooperation in maintaining proper playing conditions. Profanity, racial comments or other intimidating actions directed at officials, student-athletes, coaches or other team representatives will not be tolerated. Individuals making such remarks may be removed from the site of competition.

Bat Barrel Compression Testing

SECTION 10. Baseball bat barrel compression testing shall be conducted prior to each regular season series or single date of competition. All bats used in competition must pass the barrel ring test and barrel compression testing. Barrel compression minimum standards for bats produced with specific materials are developed by the certification laboratory and included in Appendix G.

RULE 5

The Game— Its Beginning and Ending

Starting the Game

SECTION 1. The game begins when the umpire-in-chief calls “Play.” The game shall start on time unless the home team gives previous notice that the game has been postponed or will be delayed in starting. (Pregame practice will be eliminated if necessary due to late arrival, wet grounds, etc.)

Positions of the Offensive Team

SECTION 2. The offensive team shall:

- Follow the original batting order throughout the game unless a player is substituted for another one;
- Position a base coach in the coaches’ boxes at first base and third base during its time at bat; and
- Have all personnel except the base coaches, batter, runner(s) and “on-deck” batter in the dugout, bullpen or dead-ball area.

Note: During a pitching change, umpires are instructed to pay particular attention to enforcing the provisions of 5-2-c.

- After a home run, no offensive team member, other than the base coaches, shall touch the batter-runner before home plate has been touched. Team personnel, except for preceding base runners and the on-deck batter, shall not leave the warning track area in front of the dugout (a recommended minimum area of 15 feet) to congratulate the batter-runner and other base runners. After a home run, scoring play or at the end of an inning, teams shall not bring celebratory props onto the field of play. Any such props must remain in the dugout.

PENALTY for c. and d.—After a warning for the first offense, ejection from the contest of one of the offending players.

- No uniformed team members or coaches shall stand near or behind home plate, or behind the backstop while the pitcher is throwing warm-up pitches or pitching to a batter. The on-deck batter is prohibited from being within a triangle created by an extension of the first and third base foul lines. The on-deck batter must be in the vicinity of their team’s dugout.

PENALTY for e.—The umpire first should warn the offender(s), and if the violator(s) do not immediately move away, the individual(s) shall be ejected from the game. If ejected, the individual(s) shall not communicate with eligible team representatives.

- Nonuniformed team personnel may sit in the stands for the purpose of charting pitches, using radar guns or videotaping a contest. Games and individuals shall not be videotaped from the team’s dugout. Any information

shall not be transmitted to the playing field or to team personnel. A team may film or videotape its own game but not games involving other teams.

The use of manned video cameras is restricted to the area behind home plate — defined as that area from the outfield cutout behind first base to the outfield cutout behind third base. Filming from beyond this area toward the outfield or any point beyond the outfield fence or wall is not permitted — with the exception of television cameras for the broadcast of a game, including internet broadcasts and video boards. Monitors for viewing live or taped video during a game are prohibited from the dugout or bench area, and all adjacent areas (i.e., athletic training rooms, locker rooms, etc.).

Note 1: Video and communication equipment used to transmit information between coaches, coaches and players, scouts or other team personnel shall not be allowed for intercollegiate competition. Video or electronic data used for scouting, training or teaching purposes may be recorded from any unmanned camera location. No video or electronic data may be transmitted from manned or unmanned sources for scouting, training or coaching purposes during the contest. An exclusively one-way electronic communication device from the dugout to the field for the purpose of relaying the pitch or play call is permitted. The use of an in-ear communication device shall be limited to the defensive position of the catcher.

Note 2: The use of one type of device (telephones, cellular phones, walkie-talkies, etc.) is permitted for two-way communication between a team's dugout or bench and bullpen.

Note 3: Televisions and any live broadcast (e.g., Internet streaming) shall be turned off in the dugout and clubhouse during a game.

Note 4: In-stadium pitch-speed monitors may be used in all games.

PENALTY for f.—The umpire first should warn the violator(s). If the violator(s) does not immediately comply with the rule, the individual(s) shall be removed from the stands or shall receive a post-participation ejection.

Team Offensive Interference

SECTION 3. No offensive team members, either in or out of the lineup, shall physically or verbally hinder, confuse or impede any defensive player who is attempting to make a play.

Note 1: If the batter or runner continues to advance or returns or attempts to return to the runner's last legally occupied base after being put out, that act alone shall not be considered as confusing, hindering or impeding the fielders.

Note 2: A runner who has been obstructed remains subject to team offensive interference penalties.

PENALTY—(1) The umpire shall call offensive interference and call out the runner on whom the play was attempted, or would have been attempted.

2) If a runner or batter-runner, who has been put out or obstructed, hinders or impedes any following play being made on a runner, such runner shall be declared out because of a teammate's interference.

Positions of the Defensive Team

SECTION 4. At the start of or during a game, all players of the defensive team except the catcher must be in fair territory when the ball is put in play. Being in fair territory means that a defensive player must have at least one foot placed in fair territory.

- a. The catcher must have at least one foot within the catcher's box until the pitcher begins the pitching motion;

PENALTY for a.—It is an illegal pitch if no one is on base and a balk if a runner(s) is on base.

- b. The pitcher must be in a legal position while delivering the ball to the batter (see 9-1-a and 9-1-b).
 c. Other than the pitcher and catcher, all other fielders may position themselves anywhere in fair territory.

PENALTY for c.—If a fielder (other than the catcher) is in foul territory, the umpire should not put the ball in play. If the umpire inadvertently does so, there is no penalty (this is not a balk), nor does the defense lose its chance to appeal on the same runner once the ball is properly put back into play. Any play, if it benefits the defense, shall be nullified. If it is an appeal play, all fielders (other than the catcher) must be in fair territory to start an appeal after "Time" has been called. A fielder may go into foul territory to back up an appeal after the ball has been put into play.

- d. All personnel except the nine defensive players on the field must remain in the dugout or bullpen (see 5-2-c PENALTY).

Substitutions

SECTION 5. a. Each team shall have nine eligible players in the game at all times.

- b. Any pitcher may be replaced after the first opposing batter (or the batter's substitute) has been put out or has advanced to first base or the side has been retired. In case of injury or illness, a pitcher may be replaced immediately (see 9-4-c-1).

Note 1: When a pitcher is removed as a pitcher but remains in the game, the individual may return to the mound only once (see 7-2-b-Note 2, 9-4-b and 9-4-e) if not in conflict with 9-4-b.

Note 2: A substitute becomes a player when they have been reported to the umpire-in-chief and the new player is written into the umpire-in-chief's lineup card.

Note 3: If a pitcher is brought into the game but has not faced one batter (or retired the side) when the game is stopped for weather, such pitcher may, but is not required to, continue pitching when the game is resumed.

Note 4: No player removed for a substitute before the suspension of play may return to the lineup when the game is resumed.

- c. Any player other than the pitcher or designated hitter may be substituted for at any time when the ball is dead, and the substituted player must take the place of the replaced player in the team's batting order. If another batter is inadvertently allowed to bat for the DH who has not come to bat at least one time, the guidelines in Rule 7-11-a should be followed as this is similar to batting out of order. The proper batter (the originally listed DH) may replace the improper batter before the batter becomes a runner or is put out and assume the current count. If the improper batter becomes a baserunner or is put out and an appeal is made to the umpire-in-chief before a pitch to the next batter of either team, the proper batter is declared out and all runners return to bases held before the action by the improper batter. However, any advances by a runner(s) such as a stolen base, balk, wild pitch or passed ball while the improper batter is at bat are legal. If a proper appeal is not made,

the improper batter becomes the proper batter (now the DH) and the results of the time at bat become official.

Note: If the pitcher is removed from the game as a pitcher, but will remain in the game and bat for the DH, that change must be announced at the time the pitcher is removed.

- d. The designated hitter may enter the game on defense once but must bat in the original position in the lineup. The pitcher must then bat in the position vacated by the player leaving the game (see 7-2-b-5).
- e. If two or more substitute players of the defensive team enter the game simultaneously, the coach or a representative immediately shall designate to the umpire-in-chief the position of each in the team's batting order. If this is not done immediately, the umpire shall place them in the batting order.
- f. A base runner shall not be replaced by another player whose name appears or has appeared in the batting order for that game.

PENALTY for f.—If the illegal pinch runner is on base when appealed, the player is declared out and is disqualified from the game. If the runner has scored a run and the appeal is made before the first pitch to the next batter, the player is declared out, the run is canceled and the player is disqualified from the game. Any advancement by other runners is legal. If the illegal pinch runner is the third out, no succeeding runners can score.

- g. After having been notified or confirmed by the head coach or another coach in uniform of the team making the substitution, the umpire shall record any substitutions on the lineup card and then announce immediately or cause to be announced any substitutions. Should there be no announcement of substitution, the substitute becomes a legal player when:
 - 1) A runner takes the place of another base runner;
 - 2) A pitcher engages the pitcher's plate;
 - 3) A fielder reaches the position usually occupied by the fielder being replaced and play commences; or
 - 4) A batter enters the batter's box.

Note: Any play made by, or on, any of the above-mentioned unreported substitutes shall be legal. There is no penalty.

- h. If a player substitutes for an injured teammate, other than the pitcher, the individual shall be allowed five warm-up throws.
- i. A withdrawn player may sit on the bench, warm up pitchers and act as a base coach.
- j. Should a withdrawn (disqualified) player reenter the game:
 - 1) If on offense, whether as a batter or a runner, upon discovery by the opposing team or an umpire, the player immediately shall be declared out and disqualified from the game. If the player should score a run before the discovery, an appeal must be made to the umpire-in-chief before the first pitch to the next batter of either team. This appeal would invalidate the action of the ineligible player;
 - 2) If on defense, the disqualified player shall be replaced immediately upon discovery by the opposing team or an umpire. If a play should precede the discovery, and the discovery is appealed to the umpire-in-chief before the first pitch to the next batter of either team, the team on offense has the option to let the play stand or require the batter to bat again, with the ball-strike count before the last pitch; or

- 3) Any player for whom a withdrawn player substitutes may not reenter the game.
- k. Reentry. A player who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion (see Appendix H) must be immediately removed and receive appropriate medical evaluation. The player may not return until cleared by the appropriate medical personnel.
- 1) While the evaluation is taking place, the injured player, whether a starter or a substitute, may be replaced by any eligible player who has not yet participated in the game.
 - 2) If the injured player is cleared to resume participation, the player may reenter in their original lineup spot only. A player may only reenter the game one time. The temporary replacement player may again participate in the game as a substitute in the same lineup spot only.
- Note: A pitcher reentering the game following the concussion protocol shall be given a maximum of eight warm up pitches (see 9-2-i).*
- 3) If the injured player resumes participation and is later substituted with a player other than the temporary replacement, the temporary replacement may return to the game only in the same spot in the lineup.
 - 4) If a temporary replacement player is substituted for (pinch runner, pinch hitter or defensive substitution), that player may not reenter the game.
 - 5) If a temporary replacement player is removed for a concussion evaluation, that player may only reenter in that position in the lineup.
 - 6) If a team has no remaining eligible players, a starter or substitute who has previously participated in the game may replace the injured player.

Object of the Game

- SECTION 6. a. The offensive team's objective is to have its batters become runners and its runners advance to home plate.
- b. The defensive team's objective is to prevent offensive players from becoming runners and to prevent their advance around the bases.
- c. When a batter becomes a runner and touches all bases legally, the individual shall score one run for that team.

Exception—A run is not scored if a runner touches home plate while the third out is made on:

- 1) The batter or proper batter-runner before the player touches first base;
- 2) Any runner who is forced out; or
- 3) A preceding runner who is declared out because the individual failed to touch one of the bases.

Note 1: Once a runner legally has scored, the run cannot be nullified by subsequent action of the runner, such as, but not limited to, trying to return to third base in the belief that the base had been left too soon or missed. Exception—If the base runner is safe at home but interferes with the catcher on a force play, the run shall not be allowed (see 8-4-c PENALTY).

Note 2: If there is one out with runners on third base and first or second base and a fly ball is caught, the runner on third base scores IF the individual tags up and touches home plate before the ball reaches the base of the other runner who had left too soon. This is not a force play.

- d. When three offensive players legally are put out, their team takes the field and the opposing team becomes the offensive team.

- e. The objective of each team is to score more runs than its opponent.

Doubleheader

SECTION 7. a. A doubleheader must include the same two teams and may be scheduled as two nine-inning games, a seven and a nine, or two seven-inning games. The first game of a doubleheader must be completed before the second game may start.

- b. The second game shall start 20 minutes after completion of the first game. If a longer time period is necessary, the umpire-in-chief will announce this to both head coaches. The maximum time should be 30 minutes.
- c. If a rescheduled (not halted) game is scheduled as part of a doubleheader, it shall be the second game played. If it is the completion of a halted game, it shall be the first game played.

Example 1—Team A plays a seven-inning game with Team B. Team B then plays a seven-inning game with Team C immediately after the first game. Team A then plays a seven-inning game with Team C immediately after the second game. Do these games count as regulation games? **Ruling:** No. Doubleheaders are defined as consecutive games between the same two teams.

Example 2—Team A plays a seven-inning game with Team B. Team A plays a nine-inning game with Team C immediately after the first game. Team C then plays a seven-inning game with Team B after the second game. Are these regulation games? **Ruling:** Only the game between Team A and Team C (second game) is a regulation game.

Example 3—Team A plays two seven-inning games consecutively with Team B. Team C then plays Team D in two seven-inning games consecutively. Are these regulation games? **Ruling:** Yes.

Example 4—Two conference teams are playing a doubleheader with both games scheduled as seven-inning contests. Conference rules stipulate that the halted-game rule is in effect. In the second game, the teams play to the completion of the fifth inning with one team ahead by a 12-2 score, when the game is called on account of darkness, as there are no lights at the facility. The final game of the series is scheduled for the next day as a nine-inning game. **Ruling:** The final two innings are played the next day before the nine-inning game.

Example 5—Two teams have a doubleheader scheduled as two seven-inning games. The second game was stopped because of a time-limit conflict at the facility with two outs in the top of the sixth inning with the score 9-3 in favor of the home team. Is this a regulation game? **Ruling:** No. A time limit at the facility is not an accepted reason to end a contest.

Example 6—Two teams have a doubleheader scheduled as two seven-inning games. The first game is scheduled to start at 10 a.m. and the second game to start at 6 p.m. Does this format satisfy the doubleheader rule for seven-inning games? **Ruling:** No. Doubleheaders must be played consecutively within 30 minutes of each other, according to Rule 5-7-b. If the above games are nine innings, they would be considered regulation games.

Example 7—Two teams have a doubleheader scheduled, the first game as a seven-inning game and the second as a nine-inning game. The second game is called due to rain or darkness. Is the first game that was completed a regulation game? **Ruling:** Yes. Both teams intended to play both games. By the doubleheader rules, a seven-inning game followed by a nine-inning game is legal. These teams should not be penalized due to rain or darkness.

- d. A scheduled stand-alone seven-inning game shall be prohibited.

- e. A seven-inning game that was originally scheduled as a part of a doubleheader, and was never started or had been halted or suspended, may be completed as a seven-inning game for a future time. Note: Allows for collaboration between umpires, home game management and the visiting team, which provides them with the flexibility of never starting or having to halt the game once it has been started. All three entities must be present when this decision is made.

Regulation Game

SECTION 8. a. A regulation game shall be nine innings unless:

- 1) Extended because of a tied score (see 5-8-d);
- 2) Shortened because (a) the home team needs none or only part of its half of the ninth inning or (b) the umpire calls the game after satisfying either "b" or "c" below or 5-10 (Tie Game); or
- 3) Seven-inning games have been scheduled for a doubleheader by conference rule or mutual agreement (see 5-7-d).

Note: If a seven-inning game has been scheduled, the rules applying to the ninth inning shall be applied to the seventh inning.

- b. It shall be a regulation game if called by the umpire at any time after five innings have been completed, and the score shall be that of the last equal inning played, except that in the following circumstances the score of the game shall be the total number of runs that each team has scored:
- 1) If the team second at bat has scored more runs at the end of its fourth inning than the team first at bat has scored in five completed innings;
 - 2) If the team second at bat has scored in an unequal number of innings more runs than the team first at bat; or
 - 3) If the team second at bat is at bat when the game is called and has scored during the incomplete inning the same number of runs or more runs than the team first at bat.
 - 4) By conference rule, or mutual consent of both coaches before the beginning of the contest, a game may be stopped after seven innings if one team is ahead by at least 10 runs.

Each team must play an equal number of innings unless shortened because the home team needs none or only part of its half of the final inning.

- c. It is a regulation game if it is called by the umpire for any cause that puts patrons or players in peril such as for darkness, inclement weather, a facility problem or crowd behavior, provided the conditions in 5-8-b have been met. If a game is delayed due to inclement weather, a facility problem, etc., a reasonable amount of time (not less than 30 minutes) must elapse before the game is called.
- d. If the score is tied at the end of nine innings, play shall be continued until one team has scored more runs than the other in an equal number of innings, except that if the last team at bat scores the winning run before the third player is out in any inning after the ninth, the game shall terminate and be a regulation game.

By conference rule or mutual agreement prior to the start of the game, teams may start each extra half-inning (10th inning of a 9-inning game or 8th inning of a 7-inning game) with a runner on 2nd base. The player starting the extra inning as the runner at 2nd base is the player (or their substitute) in the batting order immediately before the first batter of the extra inning.

Note: When the winning run is scored in the last half-inning of a regulation game, or in the last half-inning of an extra inning, as the result of a base on balls, hit batter or any other play with the bases full which forces the batter and all other runners to advance without liability of being put out, the umpire shall not declare the game ended until the runner forced to advance from third has touched home plate and the batter-runner has touched first base. An exception will be made if fans rush onto the field and physically prevent the runner from touching home plate or the batter-runner from touching first base. In such cases, the umpires shall award the runner the necessary bases with no appeal allowed.

- e. It is a regulation game when the umpires leave the field of play. If, however, there shall be an appeal situation, it is the responsibility of the team to make such an appeal to an umpire before the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory on their way to the dugout and the catcher has cleared the dirt circle.
- f. Speed-up, optional substitution, or any other optional rules may not be used for official NCAA contests or NCAA championships since they are considered conduct rules. By definition (see Preface), conduct rules are those rules that have to do directly with the playing of the contest. No conduct rule may be changed by mutual consent or agreement.
- g. Conferences are allowed to establish their own travel guidelines/restrictions for the get-away or travel day of a series regardless of the mode of transportation. In the case of nonconference games, institutions must agree before the game and preferably in the game contract to avoid confusion.

Example 1—The last game of a three-game series begins at 10 a.m. According to conference policy, no inning may start after 3 p.m. due to commercial air travel restrictions. At 3:10 p.m., the visiting team leads the home team 10-9 at the end of seven completed innings. **Ruling:** Umpires shall call the game with the visiting team declared the winner.

Example 2—Same scenario as Example A, but due to rain, the game does not start until 1 p.m. At 3:10 p.m., the home team leads 7-5 at the end of four and one-half innings. **Ruling:** Umpires shall call the game with the home team declared the winner. The conditions of a regulation game have been met as noted in Rule 5-8.

Example 3—In a nonconference contest, two teams agree before the game to use the visiting team's travel policy, either in writing or at the home plate meeting before the game. Using the scenario in Example 1, is this a regulation game? **Ruling:** Yes. Conferences and institutions are encouraged to include any travel policies in their game contract well in advance of the contest, if possible.

Halted Game

SECTION 9. a. A game that has been stopped at any time after its start because of inclement weather, darkness, light failure or curfew may be continued by mutual agreement reached before the start of the contest by the competing institutions, or according to conference or tournament policy, to a predetermined point of completion. Any such game must meet the conditions of Rule 5-8 to be considered a regulation game. A halted game is for special conditions and is not intended to supersede the conditions of a regulation game.

- b. A halted game must resume play at exactly the point of being halted, with the lineups and batting orders of both teams exactly the same, subject to the rules of substitution; any player (or pitcher) who played, or was announced

- as a substitute before the game was halted, must be in the lineup when play resumes or be ineligible for the remainder of the game.
- c. The Halted-Game Procedure also may be used in nonconference games, but this agreement clearly should be understood and mutually be agreed upon by the coaches and directors of athletics of the competing institutions before the start of the contest. When the Halted-Game Procedure is agreed upon prior to the start of a nonconference contest and the contest cannot be finished; the unfinished game becomes "no contest" if the game has not met the conditions of a regulation game.
 - d. If a league, conference or tournament committee wishes not to be bound by the tie-game rule and wishes to complete a regulation tie game from the point at which the game was halted, it may do so by stating so when formally opting to use the halted-game rule. Otherwise, a game stopped with the score tied is considered a tie game, not a halted game.
 - e. When a halted game is part of a doubleheader, it shall be the first game, and the second game shall be the regularly scheduled game for that date; if a doubleheader is scheduled, it shall be the first game of three games.

Tie Game

SECTION 10. a. A regulation tie game shall be declared by the umpire-in-chief:

- 1) If the score is tied when play is terminated after five or more equal innings;
or
- 2) If the team that went to bat second is at bat when play is terminated and has scored during the uncompleted inning the same number of runs as the other team.

- b. Any regulation game called by the umpire with the score tied shall be declared a "tie" game.

Note: All individual and team averages from a tie game shall be incorporated into the official playing record.

No Game

SECTION 11. "No game" shall be declared by the umpire if play is terminated before five innings have been completed by each team.

Exception 1—If the team last at bat is at bat in the last half of the fifth inning and equals, before the completion of that inning, the score of the side first at bat, the umpire shall declare the contest legally tied.

If the team last at bat has made more runs at the end of its fourth inning, or before the completion of its fifth inning, than the team first at bat has made in five completed innings, the umpire shall award the game to the team second at bat; and it shall count as a legal game.

Exception 2—Teams previously have agreed to play by the halted-game rule (see 5-9).

Forfeited Game

SECTION 12. A game shall be forfeited only as a last resort in favor of the team not at fault in the following cases:

- a. If a team fails to appear upon the field or, being upon the field, refuses to begin a game for which it is scheduled or assigned within five minutes after the umpire has called "Play," unless such delay in appearing or in commencing the game is unavoidable.
- b. If, after the game has begun, one side refuses to continue to play.

- c. If, after play has been suspended by the umpire, one side fails to resume playing in one minute after the umpire has called "Play."
- d. If a team employs tactics obviously designed to delay or shorten the game.
- e. If, after a warning by the umpire, any one of the rules of the game is willfully and persistently violated. This includes crowd behavior that puts players or patrons in peril.
- f. If the order for the removal of a player, coach or team personnel is not obeyed, the game is suspended until the order of removal is corrected (see 3-6-d).
- g. If, because of the removal of players from the game by the umpire or for any cause, there are fewer than nine players on either team.
- h. If both teams are equally at fault and the situation is so out of control that the contest cannot be safely continued, or if neither team has enough eligible players available to continue the game, a double forfeit shall be called.

PENALTY—Players suspended for leaving their position and participating in a fight shall serve a four-game suspension. If a team does not have enough eligible players available to continue the game, the team shall forfeit the next four contests.

Note: If the umpire-in-chief declares the game forfeited, the umpire shall submit a written report to the conference office, the athletics directors at both institutions and the NCAA staff liaison to the Baseball Rules Committee (see 10-28).

Protested Game

SECTION 13. a. For regular-season contests, each conference should adopt a procedure for protesting a game when a coach claims that an umpire's decision is in violation of these rules. Decisions on a protest involving nonconference teams shall be resolved by the secretary-rules editor of the rules committee. No protest ever shall be permitted on judgment decisions by the umpire.

- b. Any protest by the coach of a competing team must be made at the time of the action or incident that caused the protest and before play is resumed. If the game ends (legal contest) in a protestable situation, the offended team has until all infielders have left fair territory and the catcher has cleared the dirt circle to voice its protest intentions. All protests must be made to the umpire-in-chief. All efforts must be made to resolve the protest at the time of the protested play.
- c. When a coach claims that an umpire's decision violates NCAA rules, the umpire-in-chief must: (1) allow the coach the right to file a protest; (2) announce to each coach, to the official scorer and to the public-address announcer that the game is being played under protest; and (3) note and record the game situation at the time of the protest.
- d. No replay of any part of a game will be allowed, even if the protest is proven to be legitimate, if the play in question did not directly affect the outcome of the game.
- e. If the protest is proven to be legitimate and could have had a bearing upon the game, then it is upheld and play resumes from the point of the protest.

Note: For nonconference games, it is the responsibility of the two competing teams to arrange for the completion of the game or declare such game "no contest."

- f. Once ejected, a head coach may not protest a game situation. If a protest is to be lodged, it must be done by the substitute head coach.

No Contest

SECTION 14. a. There shall be no forfeit of a contest until the umpire or other appropriate contest official has assumed jurisdiction of the contest in accordance with the applicable playing rules.

b. When a team does not appear (e.g., due to weather conditions, accidents, breakdown of vehicles, illness or catastrophic causes), a forfeit is not recorded. An institution shall not, for statistical purposes, declare a forfeit for nonfulfillment of a contract. Such instances shall be considered as "no contest."

Game Misconduct

SECTION 15.

a. Unsportsmanlike-Conduct Rule. No coach, player or team personnel shall at any time, whether from the bench, the coaches' box, the playing field or elsewhere:

- 1) Incite or attempt to incite, by word, sign or actions that dispute an umpire's decision and potentially incites a demonstration by spectators;
- 2) Call "Time" or employ any other word or phrase or commit any act while the ball is in play for the obvious purpose of trying to make the pitcher commit a balk or disrupt the pitcher's delivery. If a balk or illegal pitch is committed or if the pitch is called a "ball," the call shall be nullified;
- 3) Take a position in the batter's line of vision, and with deliberate unsportsmanlike intent, act in a manner to distract the batter.

PENALTY for (1), (2), (3)—The offender shall be ejected from the contest. After an ejection, an additional one-game suspension is added.

- 4) No team personnel may continue to argue or to continue to excessively express themselves with prolonged actions or offensive language after an ejection.

PENALTY for 4)—An additional two-game suspension is added to any other penalties (see 2-26-h).

- 5) In the case of a National Anthem standoff between the two teams, any umpire shall eject any player, coach or team personnel for violations of the Coaching and Players' Code of Ethics.

PENALTY for (5) The umpire-in-chief is to warn the head coach of the offending team(s) that should any player or team personnel not return to the dugout area immediately after the playing of the National Anthem, the head coach and offending person(s) will be ejected immediately. Note: This is a sportsmanship issue.

b. Coaches-Misconduct Rule. Misconduct is any act of unsportsmanlike conduct or unprofessional behavior that discredits intercollegiate athletics or the game.

Specifically, a coach shall not remove the team from the field or refuse to continue play due to a dispute with game officials.

PENALTY—The coach shall be suspended for the team's next two scheduled contests. The umpire-in-chief is responsible for reporting this act to the institution's director of athletics, the conference commissioner, if applicable, and the NCAA staff liaison to the Baseball Rules Committee.

Conferences and institutions may choose to implement additional penalties for misconduct.

Fight Rule

SECTION 16. There is no place in college baseball for physical abuse of officials or fighting among opponents. A fight rule penalizes offending team representatives (e.g., players, coaches, team personnel) for physical abuse or fighting. However, coaches must understand that they are responsible for the actions of their players. Cooperation is needed from players, coaches, administrators and game officials to prevent fighting and physical abuse.

The penalties for this rule must be enforced during both fall and spring baseball competition. When applying this rule, penalties shall carry over from fall to spring, and from regular-season to postseason competition, and from past season to the upcoming season.

Further, suspended player(s) shall be prohibited from any communication or contact, direct or indirect, with the team, coaches and/or bench personnel from the start of the contest to its completion — including all extra innings.

- a. **Fighting**—Any physical abuse of an opponent, including attempting to strike with the arms, hands, legs, feet or equipment in a combative manner, or intentionally spitting at an opponent.
- b. **Physical Abuse of Game Officials or Umpires**—Any threat of physical intimidation or harm to include pushing, shoving, contact, kicking dirt on an umpire, spitting, spraying, throwing at or attempting to make physical contact.

PENALTY for a. and b.—If a player, coach or team representative is ejected from a contest because of physically abusing an umpire or fighting an opponent, the following shall be enforced:

- (1) For the first offense by an individual, ejection plus suspension from the team's next four contests.
 - (2) For a second offense by an individual in the same season, ejection plus suspension from the team's next five contests.
 - (3) For a third offense by an individual in the same season, ejection and suspension for the remainder of the season, including postseason competition.
- c. **Team Personnel Leaving Position**—Team personnel leaving their position to potentially participate in a verbal altercation or a physical confrontation (e.g., pushing, shoving, bumping) or a fight (see 5-16-a) shall include players, coaches and team personnel.

The position of various team members is determined by where the individual is located (e.g., dugout, bullpen, coaching box, on base, at bat, defensive position) at the time a confrontational situation develops.

PENALTY—(1) Any team personnel (other than coaches) who leave the dugout or bullpen to enter the field at the time of a potential altercation or fight shall be ejected and suspended for one game. All team personnel (including coaches) who leave their positions and participate in a fight shall be ejected and suspended for the team's next four contests.

Note 1: A player involved in a fight while remaining at their position on the field and judged to have been acting in self-defense and not contributing to the fight shall not be ejected or suspended.

Note 2: If a player or coach makes physical contact with another player in an obvious attempt to prevent a fight or confrontation, that individual shall not be ejected or suspended.

- (2) A batter or runner who initiates a fight by charging or pursuing the pitcher shall receive a four-game suspension.
- (3) A pitcher who leaves the pitcher's mound and initiates a fight shall receive a four-game suspension.
- (4) If a fight occurs while other players are involved in a play (i.e., run-down play, back-up situation, etc.), those nearby or backing up the play must not become physically involved as this will constitute a violation of this rule. The penalty is ejection and a four-game suspension. Umpires may use video footage, if available, to correctly identify persons who were involved in a fight. This review should occur immediately after the incident.

Note 1: If a confrontation or fight develops, the head coach and assistant coaches are expected to leave their positions to bring their players under control. Coaches should not involve themselves in physically restraining personnel from an opposing team.

Note 2: If serving multiple suspensions from a fight would cause a school difficulty in fielding a team for its next game or games, the institution may request that the suspensions be staggered by the conference office. If the team is independent, the secretary-rules editor may be contacted for this purpose.

- (5) The penalty for a second offense of this rule is suspension for the remainder of the season, including postseason competition.

d. Pitcher Intentionally Throwing at a Batter—If a pitcher is ejected for intentionally throwing at a batter, the following penalties shall be enforced (see 9-2-g provisions):

- 1) For the first offense by the individual, ejection plus suspension from the team's next four regularly scheduled contests.
- 2) For a second offense by the individual in the same season, ejection plus suspension from the team's next eight regularly scheduled contests.
- 3) For a third offense by the individual in the same season, ejection plus suspension for the remainder of the season, including postseason competition.
- 4) If the coach has been warned during or before the contest, the coach also shall be ejected and suspended for the next regularly scheduled contest (one game).

Note 1: The suspended pitcher shall not be allowed to participate in any manner during the suspension.

Note 2: If a pitcher has been ejected while pitching, the substitute shall be allowed an adequate time to warm up, similar to the time allowed when an injured pitcher is replaced.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct

SECTION 17. Game personnel shall not use language that will, in any manner, refer to or reflect negatively upon opposing players, coaches, umpires or spectators. Any orchestrated activities by any player or dugout personnel

designed to distract, intimidate or disconcert the opposing team or reflect poor sportsmanship shall not be allowed. This includes activities such as:

- Negative comments directed at an opponent, umpire or spectator.
- Bench jockeying.
- Bat flips near or toward an opponent or umpire.
- Use of props or signs directed at an opponent or umpiring decision.

PENALTY—The umpire shall warn the offending individual and the coach one time. If the unsportsmanlike conduct continues after the warning, the offender shall be ejected. If the unsportsmanlike conduct continues after the first ejection, the head coach shall be ejected along with any other offending personnel.

RULE 6

Ball in Play, Out of Play

Live-Ball

SECTION 1. a. After the umpire calls “Play,” the ball is alive and in play and remains alive and in play until, for legal cause, or at the umpires’ call of “Time” suspending play, the ball becomes dead. While the ball is dead, no player may be put out, no bases may be run and no runs may be scored, except that runners may advance one or more bases as the result of acts that occurred while the ball was alive (such as, but not limited to, a balk, an overthrow, interference, a home run or other fair hit out of the playing field).

Note 1: Umpires must not permit the promiscuous calling of “Time” by players and coaches when it is an obvious tactic to delay the game.

Note 2: The umpire shall not call time until a play has been completed. After a base on balls, the umpire shall not call time until the runner has stopped at first base.

- b. If a thrown ball accidentally strikes a coach in foul territory, or a pitched or thrown ball strikes an umpire, the ball remains in play (see 8-3-i and j).
- c. If a fair-hit ball passes by all infielders or it is touched by a fielder and then touches a runner or an umpire, the ball is in play and the runner is not out. If said ball should touch the runner or umpire while still in flight, thereafter it shall be considered a ground ball. It cannot be caught as a fly ball.
- d. If a fielder, after making a legal catch, steps or falls into any dead-ball area, the ball is dead and each runner shall advance one base, without liability to be put out, from their last legally touched base at the time the fielder entered such dead-ball area.

Note: If a fielder reaches into a dugout, bullpen or dead-ball area to catch a foul fly ball and an opponent interferes with the attempted catch, the batter shall be declared out and no runners shall advance.

- 1) For a legal catch, a fielder must catch and have secure possession of the ball before touching dead-ball area with either foot or falling into a dead-ball area. A fielder may enter the dead-ball area as long as the player reenters live ball territory at the time of the catch.
- 2) A fielder is considered not to have fallen and the ball is live if the individual is assisted (held) from falling down or stepping into a dugout or dead-ball area by game personnel or spectators.
- 3) If the fielder makes a legal catch and goes through or over any fence or into a dead-ball area, the ball is dead even if the fielder lands feet first. The batter is out and, if not the third out of an inning, runner(s) may advance one base from the last legally touched base.
- 4) All lines used as out-of-play boundaries are considered in live-ball territory.

- e. If a detached batting helmet accidentally is hit with a live ball, the ball remains in play (see 6-2-h).
- f. If the live ball should come apart in a game, it is in play until the action is completed.
- g. If a thrown or batted ball that remains in live-ball territory accidentally hits a spectator, authorized on-field personnel or animal, the ball is live.
Note: If a pitched ball in flight between the pitcher and home plate strikes a bird in flight or other animal on the playing field, the pitch is nullified, and play shall be resumed with the previous count.
- h. If a fair-hit ball touches an umpire after it passes a fielder other than the pitcher, or is touched by a fielder, including the pitcher, the ball is in play.
- i. Subject to local ground rules, a batted ball that strikes a power line, tree limb or other overhead object in the field of play remains live.

Immediate Dead Ball—Runners Return

SECTION 2. The ball becomes dead and base runners return when:

- a. A foul is hit that is not caught. Runners return and the umpire shall not put the ball in play until all runners have retouched their bases;
- b. A ball is illegally batted (see 1-12-b PENALTY and 7-10);
- c. A coach intentionally interferes with a thrown ball (see Rule 2 - Interference and 8-3-j);
- d. If a batter swings and misses a pitch and carries the bat all the way around and, in the umpire's judgment, unintentionally hits the catcher or the ball in back of them in the backswing, it shall be called a strike only (not interference). The ball will be dead, however, and no runner shall advance on the play.
 - 1) If the follow-through hits the catcher and occurs in a situation where the batter normally would become a runner because of a third strike not held by the catcher, the ball shall be dead and the batter declared out. No runner shall advance.
 - 2) If the catcher is in the act of making a throw to retire a runner and the batter is in the batter's box and their normal follow-through unintentionally strikes the catcher or the ball while the catcher is in the act of throwing, "Time" is called and runners return (unless the catcher's initial throw directly retires the runner).
- e. A fair ball touches a runner in fair territory before touching any infielder including the pitcher or an umpire and before passing an infielder (other than the pitcher) who has a chance to make a play on the ball. The runner who is touched by the fair ball is out, and no other runner may advance or score, except when forced.

Note: If a fair ball goes through or by an infielder and touches a runner immediately in back of them or touches the runner after having been deflected by any fielder including the pitcher, the umpire shall not declare the runner out for being touched by a batted ball. This refers to a ball that passes through the infielder's legs, or by the immediate vicinity, and strikes the runner directly behind the infielder. In making such a decision, the umpire must be convinced that the ball passed through, or by, the infielder and that no other infielder had a chance to make a play on the ball.

PENALTY for e.—The ball is dead and the runner hit by the batted ball is declared out. The batter is awarded first base with a single. Remaining runners advance if forced.

- f. A fair ball touches an umpire before touching a fielder and before passing a fielder other than the pitcher;

PENALTY for f.—The ball is dead and the batter is awarded first base with a single. Runner(s) advance if forced.

Note: If a fair ball touches an umpire after having passed a fielder other than the pitcher, or having been touched by a fielder, including the pitcher, the ball is in play.

- g. Interference is called on another runner; or

Note: If the umpire declares the batter, batter-runner or a runner out for offensive interference, all other runners shall return to the last base that was legally attained at the time of the interference.

- h. If any runner intentionally interferes with a batted or thrown ball with a helmet or other personal equipment, the ball is dead, the runner is out, and any runner in advance of the interference shall return to the base last occupied at the time of interference. The batter-runner is awarded first base.
- i. If a fielder reaches into a dugout, bullpen or dead-ball area to catch a foul fly ball and an opponent interferes with the attempted catch, the batter shall be declared out and no runners shall advance.

Delayed Dead Ball—Runners Return or Advance

SECTION 3. The ball becomes dead and base runners return when:

- a. The plate umpire interferes with the catcher's attempt to throw anywhere;

Note: The interference shall be disregarded if the catcher's throw directly retires the runner.

- b. The batter interferes with the catcher's fielding or throwing by stepping out of the batter's box or making any other movement that hinders the catcher's play at home plate.

PENALTIES for b.—(1) The batter is out (see 7-11-f [with exceptions]);

(2) If the batter strikes out, the runner is also out; and

(3) If the catcher makes a play and the runner attempting to advance or return to their original base is put out directly on the catcher's initial throw and the batter does not strike out, the batter is not out and the interference is disregarded. The ball remains live and other runners may advance. If there is an attempt by the catcher to throw and the attempt is aborted due to any illegal action by the offense, the ball becomes dead immediately, the batter is out and all runners return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch.

- c. The batter-runner is obstructed after safely reaching first base. The umpire shall call, "That's obstruction," but shall allow the play to continue until all play has ceased. Award bases, if any, that will nullify the act of obstruction.

- d. Batter-runner is obstructed before reaching first base. There are three situations to consider:

1) Batter-runner is obstructed on a ground ball to an infielder.

PENALTY—The ball is dead and the batter-runner is awarded first base.

2) Batter-runner is obstructed on an infield line drive or pop-up.

PENALTY—Umpire calls, "That's obstruction," but leaves the ball in play. If the ball is caught, the batter is out. If the ball is dropped, award bases.

3) Batter-runner is obstructed on a ball hit to the outfield.

PENALTY—The umpire shall point and call “That’s obstruction.” The umpire shall let the play continue until all play has ceased, call time and award bases that are justified in Rule 2, if any. If a runner(s) advances beyond what the umpire would have granted and is put out, the runner(s) is out.

Immediate Dead Ball—Runners Advance

SECTION 4. The ball becomes dead and base runners advance one base without liability to be put out when:

- a. A spectator or any other individual intentionally interferes with any thrown or batted ball;

PENALTY—The ball is dead at the moment of interference and the umpire shall impose such penalties as to nullify the act of interference.

- b. Any legal pitch hits a runner trying to score;
- c. A pitched ball touches a batter or a batter’s clothing while in the legal batting position. Runners, if forced, advance (see 8-2-d); or
- d. A pitched ball lodges in the umpire’s or catcher’s equipment other than the catcher’s glove and remains out of play, or goes over, through or wedges in the field fence or padding (see 8-3-k).
- e. When a fielder, after making a legal catch, steps or falls into any out-of-play area. All other runners shall advance one base from their last legally touched base at the time the fielder entered such out-of-play area.

Dead Ball—Play Suspended

SECTION 5. Time shall be called by the umpire and play is suspended when:

- a. Weather, ground conditions or light conditions are judged unfit for play;
- b. A player or spectator is ejected from the playing field;
- c. An unusual circumstance interferes with the normal progress of the game, such as any crowd action, animal, ball or other object on the field (see 6-4-a PENALTY);
- d. An umpire or player is injured, except that if injury occurs during a live ball, time shall not be called until no further advance or putout is possible; If a player is injured and cannot proceed to the awarded base(s), a substitute runner may be used to complete the play.
- e. A player or coach requests time for a substitution, a charged offensive or defensive conference, for equipment changes, or for similar cause.
- f. A coach or player is granted a timeout for an offensive or defensive conference. Each team shall be allowed three (3) offensive and (6) defensive conferences per game, no more than three (3) of which may include a coach. If the game goes into extra innings, the team will receive one (1) extra defensive conference and one (1) extra offensive conference plus any unused conferences from the first nine innings. A coach may be involved in any “extra” conference added to be used during extra innings.

Note: Offensive conferences may be used consecutively in the same inning.

- 1) Umpires shall record offensive and defensive conferences and notify the coach when each conference is charged.
- 2) After the maximum number of offensive and defensive conferences have been used, the umpire shall warn the coach before penalizing the offending team.

PENALTY for (2)—The player(s) involved in the conference must be substituted for at the time of the offense.

- 3) Offensive and defensive conferences not previously used may be used in extra innings.
 - 4) Offensive conferences shall not be charged during a defensive team's timeout for a pitching change. Any runners who leave their positions during the pitching change must return to their bases prior to the last warm-up pitch so play is not delayed or risk being charged with an offensive conference. Batters or base runners may not leave their positions during a charged defensive conference unless they also request an offensive charged conference.
- g. The umpire wishes to examine the ball; or
 - h. The plate umpire holds up a hand instructing the pitcher not to pitch until the batter or umpire is ready. The ball is dead and no other play shall be allowed until the umpire declares, "Play" or uses some other appropriate signal such as a point toward the pitcher to indicate "Play" and that the ball is live. When a batter is getting set, the umpire shall keep one hand up to the pitcher to indicate that the ball is dead.

When Play Resumes

SECTION 6. After a dead ball, play resumes when the pitcher engages the pitching plate with possession of the ball, the batter assumes their position in the batter's box, and the umpire calls or signals "Play."

RULE 7

Batting

A Batter

SECTION 1. a. Each player of the side at bat shall become a batter and must take a position within the batter's box in the order that the name appears in the team's batting order.

Note: Umpires shall encourage the on-deck hitter to take a position in the batter's box quickly after the previous batter reaches base or is put out.

b. A batter shall not leave their position in the batter's box after the pitcher comes to the set position or starts the windup unless permission is granted by the umpire.

Note: Umpires may grant a batter's request for "Time" once the batter is in the batter's box, but the umpire should only do so for legitimate reasons. Coaches shall not be allowed to argue when an umpire refuses to grant time to a batter per Rule 7-1-b. The penalty is a warning, then an ejection.

PENALTY for b—If the pitcher pitches, the umpire shall call "ball" or "strike," as the case may be. The batter leaves the batter's box at the risk of having a strike delivered, unless "Time" is requested and granted from the umpire. If the pitch is made, the ball is live.

c. If the batter refuses to take their position in the batter's box during the time at bat, the umpire shall call a strike. The ball shall remain live. The batter is declared out after the third strike.

d. Batter's-Box Rule. This rule is designed to speed up play by controlling the actions of the batter between pitches.

1) The batter must keep at least one foot in the batter's box throughout the time at bat.

Exceptions—A batter may leave the batter's box but not the dirt area surrounding home plate when:

a) The batter swings at a pitch.

b) The batter is forced off balance or out of the box by the pitch.

c) A member of either team requests and is granted time.

d) A defensive player attempts a play on a runner at any base.

e) A batter feints a bunt.

f) A wild pitch or passed ball occurs.

g) The pitcher leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound after receiving the ball.

h) The catcher leaves the position to give defensive signals.

PENALTY for (1)—If the batter intentionally leaves the batter's box and delays play, and none of these exceptions applies, the plate umpire shall award a strike without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch. The ball is dead and no runners may advance.

- 2) The batter may leave the batter's box and the dirt area when time is granted for the purpose of:
 - a) Making a substitution.
 - b) A charged offensive conference.
 - c) A defensive timeout for a pitching change.
 - d) An injury or potential injury.
- e. If the batter's-box penalty is applied, and the batter then refuses to reenter the batter's box, the umpire shall award an additional strike. The ball remains dead and no runners may advance.
- f. A batter's legal position in the box shall be defined as having both feet completely within the box (lines are part of the box).

Note: Umpires are to enforce this rule as written. If the line of the batter's box has been erased, the umpire shall require that upon the batter's initial stance, both feet are no closer than 6 inches from the inside edge of home plate.

PENALTY—Require the batter to move to a proper position.

Designated Hitter

SECTION 2. a. The designated hitter (DH) is a player designated to bat for the starting pitcher and all subsequent pitchers.

b. Basic principles:

- 1) A hitter may be designated to bat for the starting pitcher and all subsequent pitchers in any game without otherwise affecting the status of the pitcher(s) in the game. A DH for the pitcher, if any, must be selected prior to the game and must be included in the starting lineup cards presented to the umpire-in-chief. If a head coach lists 10 players in the team's lineup card, but fails to indicate one as the DH, and an umpire or either head coach (or designee of either head coach who presents the team's lineup card) notices the error, the umpire-in-chief shall direct the head coach who had made the omission to designate which of the nine players, other than the pitcher, will be the DH. It is important for the umpire-in-chief and representatives from both teams verify that the lineups presented at the pregame meeting are correct.
- 2) The DH named in the starting lineup must come to bat at least one time, unless the opposing team changes pitchers or the DH becomes ill or injured before the player's spot in the lineup comes to bat.

PENALTY for 2. If another batter is inadvertently allowed to bat for the DH who has not come to bat at least one time, the following guidelines, similar to those in Rule 7-11-a, should be followed as this situation is similar to batting out of order.

The proper batter (originally listed DH) may replace the improper batter before the batter becomes a runner or is put out and assume the current count. If the improper batter becomes a runner or is put out and an appeal is made before the next pitch, the original DH is declared out and all runners return to bases occupied before the action by the improper batter. Any advances by runners due to a stolen base, balk, wild pitch or passed ball are legal. The original DH may remain in the game and the improper batter remains an eligible substitute. If a proper appeal is not made, the improper batter becomes the DH and the result of the time at bat becomes official.

- 3) It is not mandatory that a team designate a hitter for the pitcher. If the starting pitcher is listed in the batting order, the pitcher automatically becomes the DH. In this case, the pitcher is to be considered as two players, both the pitcher and DH (P/DH) and can be substituted for as such
- 4) Pinch hitters for a DH may be used. Any substitute hitter for a DH becomes the DH. A replaced DH (including a P/DH who has been replaced as DH) shall not reenter the game in any other capacity.
- 5) The DH may be used on defense, continuing to bat in the same position in the batting order, but the pitcher must then bat in the place of the substituted defensive player, unless more than one substitution is made, and the head coach then must designate their spots in the batting order.
- 6) A runner may be substituted for the DH and the runner assumes the role of DH. A DH may not pinch run.
- 7) A DH is “locked” into the batting order. No multiple substitutions may be made that will alter the batting rotation of the DH.
- 8) Once the game pitcher is switched from the mound to a position on defense, the DH role shall be terminated for that team for the remainder of the game.
- 9) Once a pinch hitter bats for any player in the batting order and then enters the game to pitch, the DH role shall be terminated for that team for the remainder of the game.
- 10) The game pitcher may pinch hit or pinch run only for the DH and become the P/DH.
- 11) If a head coach lists 10 players in their team’s lineup card, but fails to indicate one as the DH and the opposing head coach brings the failure to list a DH to the attention of the umpire-in-chief after the game starts, then
 - a) The listed player who has not assumed a position on defense is the DH, if the team has taken the field on defense, or
 - b) If the team has not yet taken the field on defense, the head coach of that team shall indicate which player should have been listed as the DH.
- 12) Once a DH assumes a position on defense other than pitcher (i.e., becoming the P/DH), the DH role shall be terminated for that team for the remainder of the game.
- 13) A substitute for the DH need not be announced until it is the DH’s turn to bat.
- 14) If a player on defense goes to the mound (i.e., replaces the pitcher), the DH role shall be terminated for that team for the remainder of the game. The DH may assume the defensive player’s position in the field.
- 15) The DH may not sit in the bullpen unless serving as a catcher in the bullpen.

Note 1: When the P/DH is replaced as the DH, the individual may remain in the game as a pitcher. However, the P/DH cannot subsequently move to a defensive position and cannot return as the DH. Once a player leaves the offensive lineup, they cannot return.

Note 2: If a game pitcher is switched from the mound to a defensive position, this move shall terminate the DH’s role for the remainder of the game. The pitcher just removed from the mound may bat in the DH’s spot in the batting order; or, if more than one defensive change is made, the pitcher (not a P/DH) may bat in

place of any one of the substituted players (head coach shall designate the place in the batting order to the umpire). The player may return as a pitcher once unless the pitcher was removed as pitcher on a second trip during the same inning or after the third charged defensive conference involving a coach.

Example: Home team relief pitcher Jones pitched the top of the ninth inning. Jones was not playing as a P/DH. For the top of the tenth inning, Jones moved to first base and relief pitcher Smith entered the game as the pitcher. Jones was placed in the eighth spot in the order where the first base player Carter was hitting, and Smith was slotted into the third spot for the DH Anderson.

Note 3: At the time of a pitching change, the coach shall indicate to the plate umpire the playing status of the removed player. Once the coach has reached the dugout, the coach may not move the replaced pitcher (or P/DH) to a defensive position or have the replaced pitcher remain as DH.

First Batter Each Inning

SECTION 3. After the first inning, the first batter in each inning shall be the player whose name follows that of the last batter who completes a full turn at bat in the preceding inning.

A Strike

SECTION 4. A strike is:

- a. A legal pitch struck at by the batter without the ball touching the bat;
- b. A legal pitch that enters the strike zone (see definition and diagram in Rule 2) in flight and is not struck at;

Note 1: The plate umpire should determine if the pitch is a strike in relationship to the batter's normal position as the pitch crosses home plate. Any part of the ball passing over any part of the plate, from the bottom of the kneecaps to the midpoint between the top of the shoulders and the top of the uniform pants, is a strike. The pitch should be judged to be a strike or a ball as it crosses home plate, not where it is caught by the catcher.

Note 2: If a pitched ball strikes the ground in front of the batter and the batter swings at it, the ball is in play if hit and a strike if missed.

- c. A legal pitch that becomes a foul not caught on the fly when the batter has fewer than two strikes;
- d. An attempt to bunt that results in a foul not legally caught;
- e. A legal pitch that is in the strike zone and that touches the batter, regardless of whether the batter swings or not (the ball is immediately dead, the pitch is a strike, no runners may advance, and the batter is not awarded first base);
- f. A foul tip;
- g. Awarded after the batter fails to take a position in the batter's box immediately after ordered by the umpire and the 20-second limit expires (see 7-1-c and 7-1-e);
- h. Awarded if the batter deliberately steps back in the box or swings in such a manner to attempt to create catcher's interference. If the swing hits the catcher or the mitt, the batter shall be called out. All base runners shall return to the base occupied at the time of the pitch; and
- i. Awarded if the batter is judged to intentionally make a movement to be hit by a pitch, regardless of where the pitch is located; or allows himself to be

intentionally hit by a pitch that is not thrown within the boundaries of the batter's box unless it was not possible to avoid being hit.

A Ball

SECTION 5. A ball is:

- a. A pitched ball at which the batter does not strike and which does not enter the strike zone on the fly;
- b. Called by the umpire when the pitcher takes more than two pumping motions with their arms before delivering the ball when the bases are unoccupied;
- c. Called by the umpire when the pitcher makes an illegal pitch or a quick return pitch with the bases unoccupied, unless the batter safely reaches base;
- d. Called by the umpire when the pitcher takes the signal from an illegal position; or
- e. Called by the umpire when the pitcher fails to begin the motion preceding each pitch within 20 seconds (see 9-2-c).

Fair Ball

SECTION 6. A fair ball is a legally batted ball that:

- a. Settles on fair ground between home plate and first base or between home plate and third base;
- b. Is on or over fair ground when bounding to the outfield past first or third base;
- c. First falls on fair ground on or beyond first or third base;
- d. First touches a player, umpire or any piece of equipment while over fair territory. A batted ball that hits the pitcher's plate and rebounds untouched to foul territory between first and home or third and home is a foul ball.

Note: A fair fly must be judged according to the relative position of the ball and the foul line and not as to whether the fielder is on fair or foul ground at the time the ball is first touched.

- e. Touches a base in fair territory unless previously touched by a fielder or runner while the ball was in foul territory; or
- f. Passes out of the playing field in flight while over fair territory.

Note: If a batted ball hits the top of the fence while in fair territory and then bounces over the fence, it is a home run.

Foul Ball

SECTION 7. A foul ball is a legally batted ball that:

- a. Settles on foul ground between home plate and first base or between home plate and third base;
- b. Bounds past first or third base on or over foul ground;
- c. First falls on foul ground beyond first or third base;
- d. While on or over foul ground, touches an umpire, a player or any object other than the playing surface;
- e. Hits the batter in the batter's box, or hits the dirt or home plate and then hits the batter or the bat, which is in the hand or hands of the batter, while in the batter's box; or
- f. Hits the pitcher's plate and rebounds into foul territory between home plate and first or third base, without touching a fielder.

Foul Tip

SECTION 8. A batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to the catcher and is legally caught by the catcher. It is not a foul tip unless it is caught by the catcher and any foul tip that is caught is a strike, and the ball is in play (see 2-37).

Bunt

SECTION 9. A bunt is a legally batted ball not swung at but intentionally met with the bat and tapped within the infield by the batter. If the attempt to bunt results in a foul ball not legally caught, it is a strike.

Illegally Batted Ball

SECTION 10. An illegally batted ball is:

- a. A ball hit, fair or foul, by the batter when either one or both of the batter's feet are upon the ground entirely outside the lines of the batter's box or when touching home plate; or

Note: If the pitch is swung at and missed, a strike shall be called.

- b. A ball hit with a bat that does not conform with 1-12-a and b.

PENALTY—The batter is out (Exception: 1-12-c PENALTY).

When Batter or Batter-Runner Is Out

SECTION 11. A batter is out when:

- a. On appeal by the opposing team, the individual fails to bat in the proper turn and another batter completes a time at bat in that place;
 - 1) The proper batter may replace the improper batter before the batter becomes a runner or is put out, and any balls and strikes shall be counted against the proper batter.
 - 2) If the improper batter becomes a base runner or is put out and an appeal is made to the umpire-in-chief before a pitch to the next batter of either team, or a play or attempted play, the proper batter is declared out and all runners return to bases held before action by the improper batter. However, any advances by a runner(s), (e.g., stolen base, balk, wild pitch, passed ball) while the improper batter is at bat are legal. If the proper batter is declared out, the next person in the lineup shall be the batter.
 - 3) If a proper appeal is not made, the improper batter becomes the proper batter and the results of the time at bat become official.
 - 4) When the action of the improper batter becomes official, the batting order resumes with the following batter.
 - 5) If the defensive team has ignored an improper batter who now is on base when the "official" turn at bat arrives, the individual shall be passed over and the next person in the lineup shall be the proper batter.

Note: The umpires, official scorer or public-address announcer shall not call attention to the improper batter. If this occurs, the umpire-in-chief shall warn the official scorer and/or the public-address announcer that on the next infraction the offending person will be removed from the position.

- b. After a third strike not caught or after the player hits a fair ball, the individual or first base is tagged before reaching that base;
- c. The individual hits a fair or foul fly other than a foul tip, and the ball is caught legally by a fielder;
- d. The individual bats the ball illegally or attempts to use an illegal bat (see 1-12-a and b PENALTY);

- e. The individual steps from one batter's box to the other while the pitcher is in position ready to pitch;
- f. The batter intentionally or unintentionally interferes with the catcher's fielding or throwing by stepping out of the batter's box or making any other movement that hinders a defensive player's action at home plate;

PENALTY for f.—The batter is out and all runners return to their bases at the time of the pitch.

Exceptions—

- 1) If the runner is advancing to home plate and there are fewer than two outs, the runner, instead of the batter, is out.
- 2) The batter is not out if any runner attempting to advance or return to a base is put out directly on the catcher's initial throw, or if the runner trying to score is called out for batter's interference.
- 3) If the batter also should strike out on the play, it is a double play.
- 4) If a batter-runner and a catcher fielding a batted ball make contact, no call shall be made unless either player intentionally interferes with the play.

Note: A batter's actions must be intentional for there to be interference during a catcher's return throw to the pitcher. If it is unintentional and the return throw to the pitcher hits the batter or their bat while the batter is in the batter's box, the ball remains live and in play. If the batter does nothing intentional and no runners are attempting to advance, and the catcher's return throw to the pitcher hits the batter or their bat while the batter is legally out of the batter's box, it is not interference. The ball is immediately dead and all runners return without penalty.

- g. A third strike legally is caught by the catcher (see Rule 2—Foul Tip);
- h. A third strike is not caught, provided a runner occupies first base and there is not more than one out;

Note: It is interference by a batter or a runner when, after a third strike that is not caught by the catcher, the batter-runner clearly hinders the catcher in their attempt to field the ball. Such batter-runner is out, the ball is dead, and all other runners return to the bases they occupied at the time of the pitch. If a pitch that is not caught remains in the vicinity of home plate and it is inadvertently deflected by the batter or umpire, that ball is a dead ball and the runners should return to the bases they occupied at the time of the pitch (but if the pitch was strike three, the batter is out). If the pitched ball deflects off the catcher or umpire and subsequently touches the batter-runner, it is not considered interference unless, in the judgment of the umpire, the batter-runner clearly hinders the catcher in their attempt to field the ball.

- i. A bunt on the third strike is a foul ball;
- j. An infield fly is declared (see Rule 2—Infield Fly);
- k. The individual attempts to hit a third strike and is touched by the ball (the ball is dead);
- l. A batted fair ball touches the batter-runner outside of the batter's legal position in the batter's box before touching a fielder;

Note: The batter's legal position shall be with both feet within the batter's box. The lines defining the box are within the batter's box.

- m. After hitting or bunting a fair ball, a bat still in the batter's hand(s) hits the ball a second time in fair territory after they have left the batter's box. The ball is dead and no runners may advance. If the batter-runner drops the bat and the ball rolls against the bat in fair territory and there was no intent to interfere with the course of the ball, the ball is live and in play;

- n. A whole bat is thrown into fair or foul territory, whether intentionally or not, and it interferes with a defensive player attempting to make a play immediately after the batter becomes a batter-runner. Interference shall be called;

Note 1: The batter, after hitting a ball or becoming a batter-runner, has some responsibility about where they throw their bat so that it does not interfere with a defensive player making a play on the ball. However, once that initial play in the area of home plate is over, it would be unfair to punish the batter if the defense throws a ball toward home plate to attempt another play and F2 or another fielder steps on the bat.

Note 2: It is not interference and the ball remains in play if the bat breaks and a part of it is hit by the batted ball in fair territory or a part of it hits a runner or a fielder. If a part of this bat or a whole bat is touched by the batted ball in foul territory, it is a foul ball;

- o. After hitting or bunting a foul ball, the batter-runner intentionally deflects the course of the ball that has a chance of becoming fair; or clearly hinders the catcher's attempt to field a third strike. The ball is dead, the batter is out and no runner may advance;
- p. In running the last half of the distance from home plate to first base while the ball is being fielded to first base, the batter-runner runs outside the 3-foot restraining line or inside the foul line and, in so doing, interferes with the fielder taking the throw at first base, except that the batter may go outside these lines to avoid a fielder attempting to field a batted ball;

Note 1: If the batter-runner is running illegally to first base and their being outside the lane alters the throw of a fielder, hinders or alters a fielder's opportunity to field the throw, or the batter-runner is hit by the throw that has been made in an attempt to make a play, it shall be called interference and the batter-runner is to be called out. Exception—The batter-runner is permitted to exit the three-foot running lane by means of a step, stride, reach or slide in the immediate vicinity of first base and for the sole purpose of touching first or attempting to avoid a tag. They may exit the running lane on their last stride or step if they have been running legally within the running lane up to that point.

Note 2: The batter-runner is considered outside this 3-foot lane if either foot is outside either line.

Note 3: On a tag play between home plate and first base, a batter-runner may retreat toward home plate to evade a tag, but shall be declared out after touching or passing home plate, or leaving the base line. The ball remains live. Obstruction on a batter-runner retreating toward home plate must be intentional.

- q. With fewer than two outs and first, first and second, first and third or first, second and third bases occupied, an infielder intentionally drops a batted or bunted fair fly ball or line drive. The ball is dead, and the runner or runners shall return to their original base or bases;

Note: In this situation, the batter is not out if the infielder permits the ball to drop untouched to the ground, except when the infield fly rule applies. If a declared infield fly is dropped intentionally or allowed to fall untouched, the batter is out, the ball is live and in play, and the runners may advance at their own risk. They do not need to retouch their bases.

- r. In a force situation, a preceding runner intentionally interferes with the play of a fielder who is attempting to catch a thrown ball or to throw the ball in an attempt to complete any play (see 8-5-d);
- s. With two outs, a runner on third base and two strikes on the batter, the runner attempts to steal home plate on a legal pitch and the ball hits the runner in the batter's strike zone. The umpire shall call "Strike three"; the batter is out; the run shall not count. With fewer than two outs, the umpire shall call "Strike three"; the ball is dead; the run counts. All other runners return to the base(s) occupied at the time of the pitch unless they were stealing with the pitch;
- t. Spectator interference clearly prevents a fielder from catching a fly ball, if inside the playing field;
- u. A batter who does not realize their situation on a third strike not caught and who is not in the process of running to first base, shall be declared out once they leave the dirt circle surrounding home plate heading toward their dugout; or
- v. If the batter hits, or attempts to hit, a throw made to home plate by the pitcher who is not in contact with the pitching plate, and is attempting to retire a runner stealing home, interference shall be called and the ball is dead.

PENALTY for v.—With two outs, the batter is out. With fewer than two outs, the runner shall be out.

RULE 8

Base Running

Legal Order of Bases

SECTION 1. a. The runner must touch each base in legal order (first, second, third and home) and, when obliged to return while the ball is in play, must retouch the base or bases in reverse order.

PENALTY—For failure to touch a base advancing or returning: The runner is out if touched by the ball in the hands of a fielder before returning to each untouched base. If the base missed was one to which the runner was forced, the runner is out when tagged or if the ball is held by a fielder on any base the runner failed to touch (including home plate) (see 8-6-a-4).

- b. A base runner having acquired legal title to a base cannot run bases in reverse order to either confuse the fielders or make a travesty of the game. A runner violating this rule is out.
- c. If a runner is in a run down between bases and the following runner occupies the same base the first runner has left, the second runner cannot be put out while occupying said base. If the first runner, however, returns safely to the base last touched and both runners then are occupying the same base, the second runner is out, if touched with the ball and there is no force.

Note: No runner shall advance on an interference play called on another runner. A runner is considered to occupy a base until they have legally reached and touched the next base.

- d. The failure of a preceding runner to touch or retouch a base (and who is therefore declared out) shall not affect the status of a following runner who touches each base in proper order, except that, after two are out, a following runner cannot score a run when a preceding runner is declared out for failing to touch a base.

Batter Becomes Base Runner

SECTION 2. The batter becomes a base runner:

- a. Instantly after the individual makes a fair hit;
- b. Instantly after four balls have been called by the umpire or if awarded an intentional base on balls. The umpire shall call time, the ball is dead, and the umpire shall award the batter first base and advance any other runner(s) forced to advance by the batter being walked;
- c. Instantly after a dropped third strike, unless there is a runner on first and fewer than two outs;
- d. When hit by a pitched ball at which the individual is not attempting to strike, the ball is immediately dead;
 - 1) A batter may not make a movement to intentionally get hit by the pitch, regardless of the location of the pitch. The batter must also avoid being hit

whenever possible, unless the pitch is within the batter's box occupied by the batter. If the batter's action is deemed intentional, then:

- a) If the ball is in the strike zone when it touches the batter, or if the batter moves to intentionally get hit or freezes to allow a pitch that is not within the batter's box to hit them, the ball is dead, it shall be called a strike and the batter is not awarded first base.
- b) If the ball is within the batter's box occupied by the batter and the batter makes no movement to intentionally get hit by the pitch, the batter is awarded first base. In other words, a batter who freezes inside the batter's box and who is hit by the pitch shall be awarded first base.
- 2) If the pitch is ball four, the batter shall be awarded first base and credited for being hit by the pitch (the ball is immediately dead).
- e. If any defensive player interferes with the batter's swing or prevents the individual from striking at a pitched ball;

Note: If a batter, during preliminary warm-up swings, hits the catcher or the catcher's mitt during the backswing, the umpire immediately should call time, and not interference. The pitch or swing should not be allowed since the batter's concentration or rhythm could be affected.

- 1) If play continues following the interference, the offensive team may elect to ignore the interference and accept the result of play. However, if the batter reaches first base and all other runners advance at least one base, the interference is ignored.

Note: A batter-runner or runner who misses the first base to which they are advancing and who is called out on appeal shall be considered as having advanced one base for the purpose of this rule.

- 2) Any runner attempting to steal on a catcher's interference with the batter's swing shall be awarded the base the runner is attempting to reach. If a runner is not attempting to steal on the catcher's interference, the individual is not entitled to the next base, unless forced to advance because of the batter being awarded first base.

Exception—If there is catcher's interference on a squeeze play or a steal of home, the batter is awarded first base, the run scores and all other runners advance one base on the balk created by the interference.

- f. If a fair ball strikes an umpire on fair ground before the ball has touched a fielder or passed a fielder other than the pitcher, the ball becomes dead. Runners advance if forced. If a fair-hit ball strikes the umpire in foul territory, the ball remains in play;
- g. If a fair ball touches a base runner in fair territory before the ball has touched or passed all infielders, other than the pitcher, the ball is dead, the runner is out and the batter-runner is awarded first base; or
- h. If a fielder interferes intentionally with a batted fair ball with detached player equipment, or with a batted foul ball that might become fair, each runner is awarded three bases. The ball remains live.

Entitled to Bases

SECTION 3. The base runner shall be entitled to an unoccupied base if the individual touches it before being put out. The base runner is entitled to this base until put out or the individual may be advanced one or more bases under the following conditions:

- a. If forced to vacate the base because of a following runner;

Note: With two outs, if a runner is awarded home but does not touch the plate before a following runner is put out for the third out, the run scores unless the batter-runner was declared out before reaching first base or any other runner was declared out before reaching the base to which they were forced.

- b. If forced to vacate the base because the batter was awarded that base;
- c. If the batter hits a fair ball that touches another base runner or an umpire before it has been touched by or has passed a fielder, providing the runner is forced to advance;
- d. If the umpire calls a balk;
- e. If obstruction by a fielder is committed:
 - 1) Against a runner on which a play is being made;

PENALTY—The umpire shall point and call “That’s obstruction,” and call “Time.” The ball is dead immediately. All runners shall advance, without liability to be put out, to the bases they would have reached, in the umpire’s judgment, if there had been no obstruction. The obstructed runner shall be awarded at least one base beyond the base they had last legally touched before the obstruction. Any preceding runners, forced to advance by the award of bases as penalty for obstruction, shall advance without liability to be put out.

Examples of this first type of obstruction:

- a) *Runner is obstructed during a rundown.*
- b) *Runner is obstructed as a pitcher or other fielder is making a direct throw to a base in an attempt to retire that runner.*
- c) *Batter-runner is obstructed before reaching first base on a ground ball to an infielder.*
- d) *Any other example where a play is being made directly on the runner at the moment the runner is obstructed.*

Note 1: When a play is being made on an obstructed runner, the ball is dead immediately when the signal is given; however, should a thrown ball be in flight at the moment obstruction occurs, the runners are to be awarded such bases on wild throws as they would have been awarded had not the obstruction occurred. For example, on a play where a runner was trapped between second and third and obstructed by the third base player going into third base while the throw is in flight from the shortstop, if such throw goes out of play the obstructed runner is to be awarded home base. Any other runners on base would also be awarded two bases from the base they last legally touched before the obstruction occurred.

Note 2: On a play at the plate or any base, the catcher or any defensive player must clearly have possession of the ball or be in the act of fielding before blocking the base with any part of the defensive player’s body. The base line belongs to the runner and the fielder should be there only when fielding a ball or when they already have the ball in their hand or glove.

- 2) Against a runner on which a play is NOT being made;

PENALTY—The umpire shall point and call “That’s obstruction.” Play shall proceed until no further action is possible, then call “Time” and impose such penalties, if any, as in the umpire’s judgment will nullify the act of obstruction. The crew may confer in order to determine what a reasonable award should be had obstruction not occurred.

Examples of this second type of obstruction:

- a) Batter-runner is obstructed in rounding first base on a base hit while the ball is in the outfield.
- b) Batter-runner is obstructed before reaching first base on a ball hit to the outfield.
- c) Runner from first steals second; catcher's throw is wild and goes into centerfield; runner is obstructed in attempting to advance to third base. Ball is loose in the outfield when obstruction occurs.
- d) Runner from second is obstructed while rounding third base on a hit to the outfield.
- e) Any other example where no play is being made directly on the runner at the moment that they are obstructed.

Note: If a runner is obstructed under this second section of the obstruction rule, play shall continue until its completion, even if it results in a play being made on the previously obstructed runner. If the play results in that runner being tagged out before they reach the base they would have been awarded, the umpire shall call "Time" at the moment the runner is tagged out. The umpire shall then impose such penalties that would nullify the obstruction.

- f. Visual obstruction by a defensive player may be called if a fielder interferes intentionally with a base runner's opportunity to see the ball on a defensive play.

PENALTY for f.—The umpire shall point and call "That's obstruction." The umpire shall let the play continue until all play has ceased, call "Time" and award any bases that are justified in Rule 8-3-e-2. If a runner(s) advances beyond what the umpire would have granted and is put out, the runner(s) is out. The offender's team shall be warned, and a second offense by that team shall result in the ejection of the offending player because of an unsportsmanlike act.

- g. If a fielder intentionally touches a fair ball with a cap, glove, mask, helmet or any part of the uniform while detached from its proper place on the body, the runners are awarded bases, which shall be determined by where the runners were at the time of the illegal touching. The call is a delayed dead ball and the runners may advance further at their own risk.
 - 1) If it is a fair batted ball or foul ball with a chance of becoming fair, the individual shall be entitled to three bases.
 - 2) If it is a thrown ball, the individual shall be entitled to two bases.
 - 3) If it is a pitch, the individual shall be entitled to one base. The bases to be awarded shall be determined by where the runners were at the time of the touch. In all cases, the runners may advance further at their own risk.
 - 4) The call is a delayed dead ball. Any attempt to advance beyond those bases that would be awarded is at the runner's own risk.
 - 5) If it is a foul ball that has no chance of becoming fair, it shall be ruled foul and there is no penalty.
- h. If a fair ball goes over the fence in flight or is prevented from going over by being touched by a spectator or by a fielder's detached equipment, all runners, including the batter, are entitled to score;

Note: If a batted ball hits the top of the fence while in fair territory and then bounces over the fence, it is a home run.
- i. If a thrown or pitched ball strikes an umpire, the ball is in play and the base runner or runners are entitled to all the bases they can make;

- j. If a thrown ball strikes a base coach on foul ground, the ball is in play. If the coach interfered intentionally with such a thrown ball, the runner is out and any other runners must return to the last base touched;
- k. Each runner is awarded one base if a pitch or any throw (e.g., a pick-off attempt) by the pitcher from a pitching position on the pitching plate goes into the stands, bench or other dead-ball territory, is intentionally touched by a spectator or lodges in an umpire's or catcher's equipment other than a glove;
- l. If a fair batted or thrown ball becomes lodged in a player's uniform, the ball shall be declared dead and bases awarded at the umpire's discretion;
- m. For fields with fences, if a fielder legally catches a batted ball, and then jumps over or falls over or through the fence and retains the ball, the batter is out and the ball becomes dead. All runners advance one base. If a fair ball is dropped outside the fence, it becomes a home run. This same dead-ball ruling applies to fly balls into any deadball areas;
- n. When a spectator or any other individual interferes intentionally with any thrown or batted ball, the ball is dead at the moment of interference and the umpire shall impose such penalties as will nullify the act of interference (see 6-4-a);
- o. Each runner is entitled to two bases:
 - 1) If a fair ball bounces over or passes through a fence, unless local ground rules stipulate otherwise (see 4-5).
 - 2) If a fair ball bounces or is deflected into foul territory outside the playing field and goes into the stands or spectator area; or if it goes through or under a field fence, through or under a scoreboard or through or under shrubbery or vines on the fence; or if it sticks in such fence, scoreboard, shrubbery or vines, or goes into a deadball area such as a bench or bullpen area or behind a field tarp per local ground rules.
 - 3) If a live thrown ball goes into the stands or dead-ball area, spectators or a players' bench, lodges in the equipment of an umpire, or sticks in the fence, shrubbery, etc., and provided it is not thrown by a pitcher from the pitching plate, the ball is dead.

Note 1: If the thrown ball is the first play by an infielder, the position of the runners at the time of the pitch shall determine the awarding of bases. Exception—If all runners, including the batter-runner, advance one base before the time of the throw (meaning the release of the ball), the bases awarded shall be measured from the time of the throw, not the time of the pitch. If the throw is made by an outfielder, award bases to all runners from the time of the throw.

Note 2: For the purpose of this rule, the act of fielding the ball or a faked or feinted throw is not considered a play; a "play" must be a legitimate attempt by a fielder to retire a runner.

Note 3: Any runner who reaches or passes the base the runner would have received on an award is considered to have advanced to that base even if subsequently declared out for not touching the base.

Note 4: When multiple runners are to be awarded two bases, the following runner will be awarded only one base if the award of two bases would place them at the same base as the preceding runner.

- 4) If, during an attempt to field a wild pitch, passed ball, or wild throw on a pick-off attempt, the catcher or any other fielder deflects the ball into a

dead-ball territory, the runner(s) shall be awarded two bases from the bases occupied at the time of the pitch.

Note: If the ball has stopped rolling or it is clear that the ball will not roll into dead ball territory and a new impetus is applied to the ball by a defensive player, the awards are two bases from the time of the pitch.

- 5) If any batted or thrown ball is intentionally kicked, thrown, deflected or carried into a dead-ball territory, the runner(s) shall be awarded two bases from the time of the act.
- p. If, on an attempted squeeze play or steal of home plate, the catcher steps on or in front of home plate without possession of the ball or touches the batter or the bat, the pitcher shall be charged with a balk and the catcher with interference.

PENALTY—The ball becomes dead, the batter shall be awarded first base on the interference, the run scores and all other runners advance one base.

- q. If any base is dislodged from its position during a play, a runner shall be considered as touching or occupying the base if the runner touches or occupies the point originally marked by the dislodged base.

Force-Play-Slide Rule

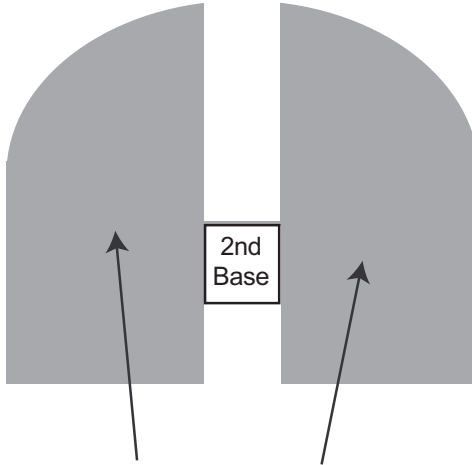
SECTION 4. The intent of the force-play-slide rule is to ensure the safety of all players. This is a safety and an interference rule. Whether the defense could have completed the double play has no bearing on the applicability of this rule. This rule pertains to a force-play situation at any base, regardless of the number of outs, except it does not apply to the batter-runner at first base.

- a. On any force play, the runner, in the vicinity of the base, must slide on the ground before the base and in a direct line between the two bases. It is permissible for the slider's momentum to carry them through the base in the baseline extended (see diagram).

Exception—A runner need not slide directly into a base as long as the runner slides or runs in a direction away from the fielder to avoid making contact or altering the play of the fielder. The umpire may use judgement due to the unusual nature of a play such as when a runner does not slide and is safe at the base before the throw arrives or slides directly to a base from a position not in a direct line between bases, as long as there is no issue with safety or interference. Interference shall not be called.

- 1) "On the ground" means either a headfirst slide or a slide with one leg and buttock on the ground before the base.
- 2) "Directly into a base" means the runner's entire body (feet, legs, trunk and arms) must stay in a straight line between the bases.

**Force-play-slide rule diagram
(2nd Base Example)**



Fielder is protected in gray area.

1st Base



- b. Contact with a fielder is legal and interference shall not be called if the runner makes a legal slide directly to the base and in the baseline extended (see diagram). If contact occurs on top of the base as a result of a “pop-up” slide, this contact is legal.
- c. Actions by a runner are illegal and interference shall be called if:
- 1) The runner slides or runs out of the base line in the direction of the fielder;
 - 2) The runner uses a rolling or cross-body slide and either makes contact with or alters the play of a fielder;
 - 3) The runner’s raised leg makes contact higher than the fielder’s knee when in a standing position;
 - 4) The runner slashes or kicks the fielder with either leg; or
 - 5) The runner illegally slides toward or contacts the fielder even if the fielder makes no attempt to throw to complete a play.

PENALTY for 1-4—1) With less than two outs, the batter-runner, as well as the interfering runner, shall be declared out and no other runner(s) shall advance.

2) With two outs, the interfering runner shall be declared out and no other runner(s) shall advance.

3) If the runner's slide or collision is flagrant, the runner shall be ejected from the contest.

Note 1: If the bases are loaded with no outs, a double-play attempt is made, and interference is called, all other runners must return to their original bases.

Note 2: On a force play, with a two-man umpiring system, if the plate umpire does not have a potential play at the plate, they should move toward the base to observe the runner going into second or third base. In this situation, the base umpire must follow the throw and may not see the true effect of the lead runner's action.

When Runners Are Out

SECTION 5. A runner is out when:

- a. In running to any base, while trying to avoid being tagged out, the runner runs more than three feet left or right from a direct line between the base and the runner's location at the time a play is being made;

Exception—It is not an infraction if a fielder attempting to field a batted ball is in the runner's proper path and the runner runs behind the fielder to avoid interference.

- b. After reaching first base safely, the runner leaves the baseline in an obvious move to continue an attempt to advance to the next base and is tagged;
- c. Any runner after reaching a base safely who leaves the base path heading for their dugout or defensive position, believing that there is no further play, if the umpire judges the act of the runner to be considered abandoning their efforts to run the bases. Even though an out is called, the ball remains in play in regard to any other runner (see Rule 2-1, Abandonment);

Note: This rule will also cover similar types of plays: 1) Less than two outs, score tied, last inning, runner on first, batter hits the ball out of the park for the winning run. The runner on first touches second and believing the home run automatically wins the game, cuts across the diamond and heads toward their bench as the batter touches all the bases. In this example, the base runner would be called out for abandoning their effort to touch the next base. The batter-runner is permitted to continue around the bases to make their home run valid. If there were two outs, the home run would not count. This is not an appeal play. 2) A runner believing they are called out on a tag at first or third base starts for the dugout and progresses a reasonable distance still indicating by their actions that they are is out, shall be declared out for abandoning the bases.

- d. The runner interferes intentionally with a throw or thrown ball, or interferes with a fielder who is attempting to field a batted ball. If a double play is likely, and the runner intentionally interferes with the fielder who is attempting to field or throw the ball, both runner and batter-runner shall be declared out;

Note 1: If two fielders attempt to field a batted ball, the umpire shall determine which fielder is more likely to make the play and only that fielder is protected from interference by the runner.

Note 2: If a batted ball is deflected by an infielder (including the pitcher) and another fielder has a legitimate play to retire a runner, the fielder is protected and contact by a base runner results in interference.

Note 3: If a runner is declared out for interference with a fielder who is attempting to field a foul batted ball and there are less than two outs when the interference occurs, the batter will complete their at bat. If the third out occurs due to the interference, the current batter will be the first batter up the following inning.

- e. If the batter-runner interferes intentionally or unintentionally with a batted ball or the fielder fielding it, with a double play likely, the batter-runner and the runner closest to home plate are out, regardless of where the double-play attempt may have taken place;
- f. A coach, by touching or holding a runner, physically assists the runner in returning to or leaving a base (see 3-3-e);
- g. While third base is occupied, the coach stationed near that base runs in the direction of home plate on or near the base line while a fielder is making or trying to make a play and thereby draws a throw to home plate. The base runner on third shall be declared out for the coach's interference with or prevention of the legitimate play (see 3-3-f);
- h. One or more members of the offensive team stand at or around a base for which a base runner is trying, thereby confusing the defensive team. The base runner shall be declared out.
- i. The individual is touched by the ball (when not dead) securely held in the hand or glove of a fielder while the runner is not touching the base;

Note 1: A ball stuck in a fielder's glove remains alive. If the fielder tosses the ball/glove combination to another fielder in time to complete a tag of a base or runner in advance of the base and the ball/glove combination is held securely, the runner or batter-runner is out.

Note 2: If in the judgement of an umpire, a runner is pushed or forced off a base by a fielder, intentionally or unintentionally, at which the runner would otherwise have been called safe, the umpire has the authority and discretion under the circumstances to return the runner to the base they were forced off following the conclusion of the play.

Exception—If a batter-runner safely touches first base and then overslides or overruns it, the player immediately may return to first base without liability of being tagged out, provided no attempt to run to second was made. Also, if any base comes loose from its fastening when any runner contacts it, such a runner cannot be tagged out because the base slides away (see 8-3-q).

- j. The individual fails to reach the next base before a fielder tags the runner or the base after the runner has been forced to advance because the batter became a runner;

Exception—No runner can be forced out if a runner who follows in the batting order is put out first. However, if a runner is put out during live action, it does not remove the force on any runners who might subsequently be declared out for a running infraction.

Note 1: No run may score on any play when the third out is either a force out or the result of a batter-runner's failure to reach first base safely.

Note 2: The force is removed as soon as the base runner touches the base to which the runner is forced to advance; and if the runner overslides or overruns the base, the runner may be tagged out.

Note 3: If a runner tags the base to which the runner is forced and for some reason retreats toward the previous base, the runner is again subject to a force out.

- k. The runner, including a runner in contact with a base, is hit while in fair territory by a fair batted ball before it has touched a fielder including the pitcher or passed all infielders who have a chance to make a play on the ball, other than the pitcher. If two runners are hit by the same fair ball, only the first runner is out (see 6-2-e).

Note 1: A runner who is touching a base when hit by an infield fly (see Rule 2—Infield Fly), is not out. If the runner is off a base and hit by an infield fly, both the runner and the batter are out; the ball is dead.

Note 2: A runner who, while touching a base, interferes with the fielder attempting to field a batted ball, is not out unless the umpire rules intentional interference. In this case, the batter is out if there are two outs. If there are less than two outs, both the batter and runner are out.

- l. The individual attempts to score when the batter interferes with the play at home plate provided two are not already out. If two are out, the batter is out because of the interference and the runner does not score;
- m. The individual passes an unobstructed preceding runner before such runner is out. The ball is live;

Note 1: With fewer than two outs, if a batter, while running the bases after a home run outside the playing field, passes a preceding runner, the batter is out; but all preceding runners score. With two outs, only those preceding runners score who have touched the plate before the batter is declared out. This is a time play, not an appeal play.

Note 2: A runner may be deemed to have passed a preceding (i.e., lead) runner based on their actions or the actions of the preceding runner.

EXAMPLE: Runners on second base and third base with one out. The runner from third (i.e., the lead runner) makes an advance toward home and is caught in a rundown between third and home plate. Believing the lead runner will be tagged out, the runner at second base (i.e., the trailing runner) advances to third base. Before being tagged, the lead runner runs back to and beyond third base toward left field. At this time, the trailing runner has passed the lead runner as a result of the lead runner's actions. As a result, the trailing runner is out and third base is unoccupied. The lead runner is entitled to third base if they return to touch it before being tagged out, unless they are declared out for abandoning the bases.

- n. The individual runs bases in reverse order to confuse opponents or to make a travesty of the game;

PENALTY for n.—The ball is dead and other runner(s) return to the base last touched.

- o. A batter-runner throws the bat, which interferes with a defensive player making a play (see 7-11-n);
- p. A batter or any other runner who just has been put out interferes with a play being made on said runner; or
- q. Any member of the offensive team does not vacate any live-ball area, thus interfering with a defensive player attempting to field a batted or thrown ball. This includes the batter, once the pitch has crossed the plate.

PENALTIES for q.— 1) With fewer than two outs, the runner is out if there is a play at the plate, and any other runners return to the base occupied at the time of the interference.

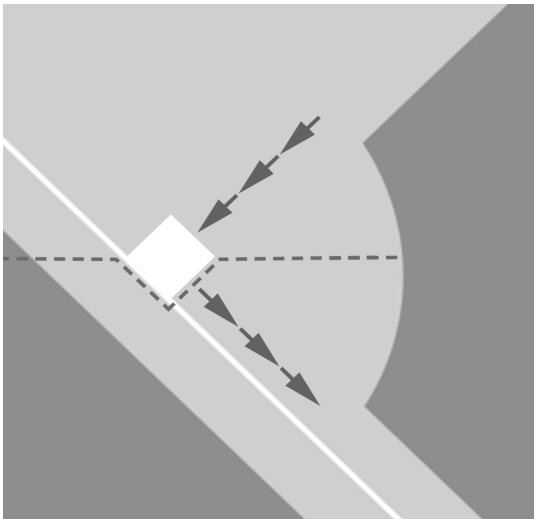
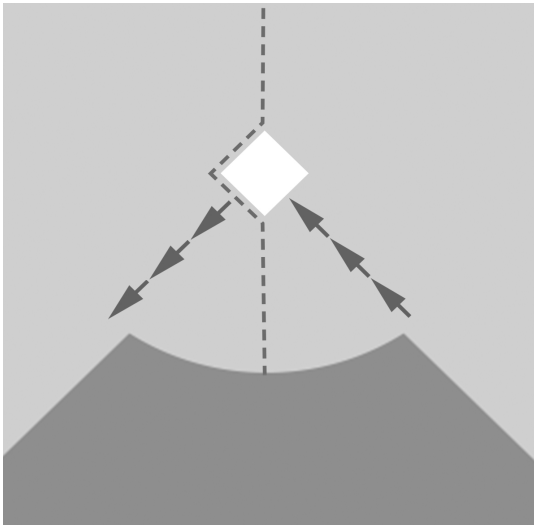
2) If there are two outs, the batter is out.

- r. The runner deliberately knocks the ball from the fielder's hand. The ball is immediately dead.

When Runners Are Out on Appeals

SECTION 6. a. A runner shall be called out on specific appeals that occur as a result of a base running error when:

- 1) The base runner does not retouch the base before a fielder tags the runner or the base after a fair or foul fly ball is touched in making a legal catch;
- 2) The runner starts from a position behind the base in order to get a running start, whether on a pitch or tagging up for a fly ball; or
- 3) The runner fails to touch each base in order when advancing or returning to a base. Either the runner or the missed base may be tagged. A runner is considered to have passed a base if the player has both feet on the ground beyond the back edge of the base or beyond the edge of the base in the direction in which the player is advancing. The direction the runner is advancing determines the edge of the base when defining when a runner has passed a base. (See base beyond diagrams on the next page.)



Note 1: No runner may return to touch a missed base after a following runner has scored.

Note 2: When the ball is dead, no runner may return to touch a missed base or the one just left if the runner has advanced to and touched a base beyond the missed base. A runner may return to a missed base (or one left too soon) during the time the ball is dead if the runner has not touched the next base. The "next base" or "base beyond" in this section refers to the position of the runner at the time the ball went out of play.

Note 3: If the runner is attempting to return to their original base after a fly ball that is caught and the ball is thrown out of play, the runner may retouch and the award is made from their original base.

Note 4: If obstruction causes a runner to miss a base, the runner shall not be called out on appeal for missing the base.

- 4) The runner does not touch home plate and does not make an attempt to touch it. The fielder may touch either the runner or home plate.
- b. The appeals made under this section must take place before the next pitch, play or attempted play or before the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory on their way to the dugout, if it is an inning-ending or game-ending appeal.

1) The procedure for a base-running appeal play is as follows:

- a) A live ball is returned to the base; and
- b) If the ball is dead, the pitcher must receive a ball from the umpire and then take a position on the pitcher's plate. After the umpire calls "Play," the pitcher then may legally step back off the pitching plate and return the ball to the base and the fielder may tag the runner or the base.

2) An appeal is not to be considered as a play or an attempted play.

Exception—If the pitcher balks on an appeal attempt, it is considered a play.

3) The defensive team receives only one chance on an appeal. In the case of multiple appeals, if the defense errs during its first appeal attempt or any base runner advances, the defense loses its right to appeal any runner at any base.

4) If the offensive team initiates a play before the next pitch, the defensive team does not lose its right to appeal.

5) If the defensive team errs on an appeal play and the ball remains in live-ball territory, the appeal will be allowed if:

- a) The ball immediately is returned to the base being appealed; and
- b) No runners advance on the misplay. If a runner(s) advances, no appeal shall be allowed.

6) If there possibly is more than one runner involved in an appeal at a base, the defensive team must declare on which runner the appeal is being made. If the defensive team fails to identify such runner, the umpire should give no signal. If the appeal is made on the improper runner, the umpire shall give the safe sign and no further appeal shall be allowed at that base.

Note: If, before making the first appeal, the defense announces that it intends to appeal multiple infractions, a throwing error shall cancel only the first appeal if the ball remains in play, or base runners do not advance.

7) If there are two or more appeals during a play, which could make a total of "four outs" in an inning, the defensive team may choose to take any out it desires.

8) If a violation occurs during a play that ends an inning, the appeal must be made before the defensive team leaves the field. When the pitcher and all infielders have left fair territory and the catcher has left their position on their way to their bench, the team is considered to have left the field.

9) If there are two outs before the appeal on a runner, the appeal becoming the third out, no runners following the appealed out shall score, and if the appeal is a force out, no runners preceding or following the appealed out shall score (see Rule 2 – Force Play).

Note: If the defense will make more than one appeal, the defense must appeal in the correct order unless it is an advantageous "fourth out" appeal.

- 10) It is not a balk for a pitcher, while in contact with the pitching plate (does not step back), to throw to an unoccupied base for the purpose of making an appeal play.

Collision Rule

SECTION 7. The rules committee is concerned about unnecessary and violent collisions with the catcher at home plate, and with infielders at all bases. The intent of this rule is to encourage base runners and defensive players to avoid such collisions whenever possible.

- a. When there is a collision between a runner and a fielder who is in clear possession of the ball, the umpire shall judge:

If the defensive player blocks the base (plate) or base line with clear possession of the ball, the runner may slide into to make contact with the fielder as long as the runner is making a legitimate attempt to reach the base (plate).

- 1) The runner must make an actual attempt to reach the base (plate).

PENALTY—If the contact is flagrant or malicious before the runner touches the base (plate), the runner shall be declared out and also ejected from the contest. The ball is immediately dead and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.

- 2) The runner may not attempt to dislodge the ball from the fielder. Contact above the waist shall be judged by the umpire as an attempt by the runner to dislodge the ball.

PENALTY—If the runner attempts to dislodge the ball or initiates an avoidable collision, the runner shall be declared out, even if the fielder loses possession of the ball. The ball is dead and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the collision.

- 3) The runner must attempt to avoid a collision if they can reach the base without colliding.

PENALTY—If the contact is flagrant or malicious after the runner touches the base (plate), the runner is safe, but is ejected from the contest. The ball is immediately dead and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the collision. If this occurs at any base other than home, the offending team may replace the runner. If the contact occurs after a preceding runner touches home plate, the preceding runner is safe. The ball is immediately dead and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched at the time of the contact.

- 4) If the runner's path to the base is blocked and (1), (2) and (3) are fulfilled, it is considered unavoidable contact (see Rule 2-55, Obstruction).

- b. A runner attempting to score may not deviate from their direct pathway to the plate in order to initiate contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate), or otherwise initiate an avoidable collision. If, in the judgment of the umpire, a runner attempting to score initiates contact with the catcher (or other player covering home plate) in such a manner, the umpire shall declare the runner out (regardless of whether the player covering home plate maintains possession of the ball). In such circumstances, the umpire shall call the ball dead, and all other base runners shall return to the last base touched

at the time of the collision. If the runner slides into the plate in an appropriate manner, they shall not be adjudged to be in violation of this rule.

Note: The failure by the runner to make an effort to touch the plate, the runner's lowering of the shoulder, or the runner's pushing through with their hands, elbows or arms, would support a determination that the runner deviated from the pathway in order to initiate contact with the catcher in violation of the Collision Rule 8-7, or otherwise initiated a collision that could have been avoided. A slide shall be deemed appropriate, in the case of a feet first slide, if the runner's buttocks and legs should hit the ground before contact with the catcher. In the case of a headfirst slide, a runner shall be deemed to have slid appropriately if their body should hit the ground before contact with the catcher. If a catcher blocks the pathway of the runner, the umpire shall not find that the runner initiated an avoidable collision in violation of the Collision Rule.

- c. Unless the catcher is in possession of the ball, the catcher cannot block the pathway of the runner as they are attempting to score. If, in the judgment of the umpire, the catcher without possession of the ball blocks the pathway of the runner, the umpire shall call or signal the runner safe. Notwithstanding the above, it shall not be considered a violation if the catcher blocks the pathway of the runner in a legitimate attempt to field the throw, (e.g., in reaction to the direction, trajectory or the hop of the incoming throw, or in reaction to a throw that originates from the pitcher or drawn-in infielder). In addition, a catcher without possession of the ball shall not be adjudged to be in violation if the runner could have avoided the collision with the catcher (or other player covering home plate) by sliding.

Note: A catcher shall not be deemed to have violated the Collision Rule unless they have both blocked the plate without possession of the ball (or when not in a legitimate attempt to field the throw), and also hindered or impeded the progress of the runner attempting to score. A catcher shall not be deemed to have hindered or impeded the progress of the runner if, in the judgment of the umpire, the runner would have been called out notwithstanding the catcher having blocked the plate. In addition, a catcher should use best efforts to avoid unnecessary and forcible contact while tagging a runner attempting to slide. Catchers who routinely make unnecessary and forcible contact with a runner attempting to slide (e.g., by initiating contact using a knee, shin guard, elbow or forearm) may be subject to being ejected.

RULE 9

Pitching

Pitching Positions

SECTION 1. There are two legal pitching positions, the windup and the set. Either position may be used at any time.

- a. The Windup. The pitcher shall stand facing the batter with their pivot foot in contact with the pitcher's plate and other foot free. In the windup position, a pitcher is permitted to have their "free" foot on the pitcher's plate, in front of the pitcher's plate, behind the pitcher's plate or off the side of the pitcher's plate. The pitcher may not take a second step toward home plate with either foot in the delivery of the pitch.

From this position, any natural movement associated with the delivery of the ball to the batter commits the pitcher to pitch without interruption or alteration. The pitcher shall not raise either foot from the ground, except that in the actual delivery of the ball to the batter, the pitcher may take one step backward or sideward and one step forward with the free foot.

PENALTY—With the bases unoccupied, an illegal pitch shall be called. With the bases occupied, a balk shall be called.

- 1) A pitcher may assume the windup position with:
- Hands together in front of the body;
 - Hands apart (both arms or the throwing arm at the pitcher's side) and then go directly into the delivery to the plate;
 - Hands apart and then bring the hands together and come to a stop to adjust the grip on the ball before beginning the delivery to the plate.

From these positions the pitcher may:

- 1) Deliver the ball to the batter;
 - 2) Step and throw to a base in an attempt to pick off a runner; or
 - 3) Disengage from the pitching plate by stepping back off the pitching plate and placing the pivot foot on the ground behind the pitching plate before separating the hands or stepping back with the free foot.
- 2) With a runner on base, the pitcher shall pitch to the batter immediately after making any motion with any part of the body such as the pitcher habitually uses during the delivery.
- 3) With a runner on base, the pitcher may disengage from the pitching plate as long as no natural pitching motion with the body, legs or free foot has been started.
- 4) With a runner on base, the pitcher may throw to that base without first disengaging the pivot foot from the pitching plate as long as no natural pitching motion has been started.
- 5) The pitcher cannot move from the windup position to the set position without disengaging the pivot foot from the pitching plate.

- 6) The pitcher must step directly and gain ground toward a base in an attempt to pick off a runner. "Directly" is interpreted to mean within a 45-degree angle measuring from the pivot foot toward the base the pitcher is throwing to or feinting a throw.
- 7) A pitcher, when stepping off the pitching plate, shall not drop the heel of the free foot before disengaging the pivot foot from the pitching plate.

PENALTY for 1-7—With the bases occupied, a balk shall be called. With the bases unoccupied, the umpire shall rule no pitch.

- 8) The pitcher shall not take a forward step with the pivot foot in using the windup delivery. This is commonly known as "running into the pitch" and is an illegal pitch.

PENALTY for 8—With the bases unoccupied, an illegal pitch shall be called. With the bases occupied, a balk shall be called.

Note 1: When a pitcher is on the pitching plate with their hands together, before any natural movement that commits the pitcher to pitch, they may move their hand within the glove to adjust the ball. Should the pitcher separate their hands after taking a legal pitching position, a balk shall be called.

Note 2: A pitcher may pause during the delivery from the windup position without penalty.

- b. The Set. The set position shall be indicated when the pitcher stands facing the batter with the pivot foot in contact with, and the other foot in front of, the pitcher's plate, holding the ball in both hands in front of their body and coming to a complete stop. Prior to coming to the set position, the pitcher may take the sign by turning their shoulders and facing the batter, but the pitching arm shall be at the side, on the hip or behind the body of the pitcher with the ball in the glove or the pitching hand. The pitcher may elect to make any natural preliminary motion such as that known as the "stretch," but must come to the set position using a continuous hand motion before pitching to the batter. After assuming the set position, any natural motion associated with the pitch commits the pitcher to pitch without alteration or interruption.

With a runner or runners on base, a pitcher will be presumed to be pitching from the Set Position if the pitcher stands with their pivot foot in contact with and parallel to the pitcher's plate, and their other foot in front of the pitcher's plate, unless the pitcher notified the umpire that they will be pitching from the Windup Position under such circumstances prior to the beginning of an at-bat. A pitcher will be permitted to notify the umpire that the pitcher is pitching from the Windup Position within an at-bat only in the event of (1) a substitution(s) by the offensive team; or (2) immediately upon the advancement of one or more runners (e.g., after one or more base runners advance but before the delivery of the next pitch). The umpire shall call "time" and notify the offensive team upon receiving such notification of using the Windup Position with runners on base.

PENALTY—With the bases unoccupied, an illegal pitch shall be called. With the bases occupied, a balk shall be called.

Note 1: When taking the sign from the catcher, the pitcher may bend deeply at the waist and have their pitching arm hanging straight down in front of him. The pitcher is not attempting to conceal the ball from the base runner(s).

Note 2: With the bases unoccupied, the pitcher does not need to come to a complete and discernible stop.

- 1) When the pitcher starts the delivery from the set position and the entire free foot or any part of the stride leg breaks the plane of the back edge of the pitcher's plate, the pitcher is committed to throw or feint a motion toward second base or pitch to home plate.

PENALTY—For violations of 1, a “balk” shall be called.

- c. At any time during the pitcher's preliminary movements and until the natural pitching motion begins, the pitcher may throw to any base to retire a runner provided a step that gains ground and is directed toward such base is taken before making the throw (see 9-1-a-6).
- d. If the pitcher makes an illegal pitch with the bases unoccupied, it is a ball unless the batter reaches first base on a hit, an error, a base on balls, a hit batter or otherwise.
- e. The pitcher, upon breaking contact with the pitcher's plate by stepping backward and placing the pivot foot on the ground behind the pitcher's plate, becomes an infielder. If the pitcher then makes a wild throw, it is the same as a wild throw by any other infielder.

Note: To “step off” the pitcher's plate, the pitcher must 1) step backward and place the pivot foot on the ground behind the pitcher's plate and 2) disengage the pivot foot before moving the free foot.

- f. When taking signs from the catcher, the pitcher must have the pivot foot touching the pitcher's plate. If the sign is taken in the windup position, the pitcher must use the windup to deliver the ball. If the sign is taken in the set position, the pitcher must use the set position to deliver the ball. If the pitcher steps back off the pitcher's plate with the pivot foot, this breaks the continuity. The pitcher may also take a sign from the dugout or refer to a signal card while in the circle surrounding the pitcher's plate. When the pitcher again touches the pitcher's plate, the delivery appropriate to the stance now assumed on the mound must be used. If the pitcher takes a sign from other than a legal position, the pitch shall be called a ball.

Pitching Violations

SECTION 2. The pitcher shall not:

- a. Make an illegal pitch or quick pitch with the bases unoccupied;

PENALTY— Call a ball unless the batter reaches first base.

- b. Intentionally or unintentionally drop the ball while in contact with the pitcher's plate;

PENALTY—With no one on base, if the ball drops or slips out of the hand, intentionally or accidentally, it is no pitch if the ball does NOT cross the foul line. If it does cross the foul line, it is a ball. If there is a runner(s) on base and the ball is dropped, it is a balk.

- c. Delay the game at any time. The pitcher shall begin the motion preceding each pitch within the 20-second time limit (see Appendix F);

PENALTY—After a warning for each pitcher, a ball will be called each time the rule is violated.

Note: Coaches and team personnel are prohibited from arguing a 20-second rule violation. A warning shall be given for the first offense and an ejection of the offender on subsequent violations.

- d. While in the dirt circle surrounding the pitcher's plate, touch the ball after touching their mouth or lips, or touch their mouth or lips while in contact

with the pitcher's plate. The pitcher must clearly wipe the fingers of their pitching hand dry before touching the ball or the pitcher's plate.

Note: In cold weather, the umpire may announce to both teams that it is permissible for the pitcher to blow on their hand, on or off the pitching plate.

PENALTY— Remove the ball from play, issue a warning to the pitcher. Any subsequent violation shall be called a ball.

- e. Have on their person or possess any foreign substance. The pitcher may apply rosin to their bare hand or may use bare hands to rub up the ball. The pitcher or defensive player(s) shall not apply any foreign substance or moisture to the ball or to the pitching hand or fingers, or do anything to deface the ball.

Note 1: The pitcher shall not use a bandage or any other distracting item on the pitching hand, wrist or fingers. A cast or bandage may be used on the nonpitching hand if it is not white in color or distracting to the batter or umpire, in the umpire's judgement.

Note 2: A substance may be used by an athletic trainer for the purpose of stopping bleeding, provided the substance dries sufficiently before resuming play.

Note 3: The home team shall supply a rosin bag before the start of each game. In the case of wet weather, the umpire may request the pitcher put the rosin bag in their pocket.

Note 4: A batted or thrown ball is in play after it hits the rosin bag.

Note 5: The ball may not be dusted with rosin from the bag or with the rosin bag. Rosin from the bag may not be applied to the glove or to any part of the pitcher's uniform.

PENALTY for e.—Eject the pitcher from the game. If the pitcher expectorates on their hand, ball or glove or rubs the ball on the glove, person or clothing and, in the judgement of the umpire, the pitcher did not intend to alter the characteristics of the baseball, then the umpire may, at the umpire's discretion, warn the pitcher in lieu of ejecting the pitcher from the game. If the pitcher persists in violating this rule, the umpire shall then eject the pitcher from the game.

- f. Intentionally delay the game by throwing the ball to players other than the catcher when the batter is in position, except in an attempt to retire a runner;

PENALTY for f.—Warn the pitcher one time and, upon the second offense, eject the pitcher from the game.

- g. Intentionally pitch at the batter;

PENALTY for g.—If the umpire believes such a violation has occurred, a warning shall be issued to the pitcher and both opposing coaches that future violations by any pitcher will be cause for immediate ejection of the pitcher and the coach from the game.

- 1) If, in the umpire's judgment, the situation warrants drastic action to defuse a potentially volatile situation, the umpire may eject the pitcher without a warning. Each coach should be warned, but the coach of the offending team should not be ejected at that time unless the umpire believes it is appropriate (see 5-16-d).
- 2) A warning may be issued to both teams before the start of the game or at any time during the game.
- 3) A pitcher who is ejected from a game for intentionally throwing at a batter shall be suspended under the provisions of the fight rule (see 5-16-d).

- 4) Team personnel may not come onto the playing field to argue or dispute a warning of their pitcher intentionally throwing at a hitter. After a warning, they are subject to an immediate ejection.
- h. Wear a garment with ragged, frayed or slit sleeves, or attach tape or other material of a color different from the uniform or glove to the glove, arms or clothing. The pitcher shall not wear another glove under the regular glove. If a pitcher wears a helmet, it must have a nonglossy finish. A pitcher shall not wear jewelry or clothing items that an umpire considers distracting (e.g., chains, white logos, loose lacing on glove). Tattoos on a pitcher's body that an umpire considers distracting must be legally covered.

Note: In order to facilitate receiving signals in an accurate and timely manner, a pitcher may wear a wristband with a signal card insert on their non-pitching wrist/forearm. It must be black or a solid, dark color. If the insert is not covered with a flap, it should be on the inside of the wrist to reduce any distraction to the batter. There shall not be any attachment to the pitcher's glove.

PENALTY for h.—The pitcher shall remove or cover the distracting item or cover the distracting tattoo upon request of the umpire or be ejected from the contest.

- i. At the beginning of an inning, throw more than five pitches to the catcher. For nontelevised games, teams will be allowed a maximum of 120 seconds between half-innings. For televised games, it is recommended that the time between each half-inning will be 120 seconds. For games being played under a television agreement, the time between innings may be extended by contract. The clock starts when the defensive team starts to return to the dugout following the last out or appeal of the half inning and stops when the pitcher and batter are in position to begin the next inning and the umpire calls "Play" (see Appendix F).

A relief pitcher is allowed eight pitches but these pitches should not consume more than 120 seconds. However, should the clock expire, the relief pitcher will be allowed to complete their eight warm-up pitches. In case of an injury or an ejection of the pitcher, the umpire-in-chief shall allow the relief pitcher an adequate time to warm-up;

PENALTY for i.—A ball shall be called on the defense or a strike on the offense for each violation of this rule.

- j. Take the signs from the catcher with the pivot foot not touching the pitcher's plate; or

PENALTY for j.—A ball shall be called each time a pitcher violates this rule. If the pitcher pitches from this illegal position and the batter reaches first base and no other runner is put out before advancing at least one base, the play shall proceed without reference to the violation.

- k. Pitch both right-handed and left-handed to the same batter during a plate appearance (ambidextrous-pitcher rule).

PENALTY—If a pitcher changes pitching hands during a batter's time at bat, the umpire shall:

- 1) Call a balk if a runner(s) is on base;
- 2) Call a ball for an illegal pitch if no runner(s) is on base;
- 3) Warn the pitcher; or
- 4) Eject the pitcher if the offense is repeated.

Note 1: When facing a switch hitter, an ambidextrous pitcher shall declare the hand with which to pitch to the hitter.

Note 2: If a pinch hitter replaces a batter during a turn at bat, the pitcher may change pitching hands.

- l. A pitcher is not permitted to jump or push forward off the pitcher's plate with their pivot foot and then bring their foot to the ground and make a second push-off prior to delivering the pitch.

PENALTY—This is an illegal pitch and shall be called a balk with runners on base.

Note: A pitcher is not in violation if they push off the pitcher's plate with the pivot foot and maintains contact with the ground with the pivot foot without a second push-off from the ground.

Balk

SECTION 3. If there is a runner or runners, a balk shall be called for the following action by a pitcher:

- a. While touching the pitcher's plate, any feinting motion without completing the throw toward the batter or toward first or third base.
- b. When, before throwing to any base from a pitching position, the pitcher feints a throw to a base and, without breaking contact with the pitching plate, throws to another base;
- c. While in a pitching position, throw to any base in an attempt to retire a runner without first stepping directly toward such base; or throw or feint a throw toward any base when it is not an attempt to retire a runner or prevent the runner from advancing;
 - 1) The pitcher, while touching the pitcher's plate, must step toward the base, preceding or simultaneous with any move toward that base. The pitcher is committed, upon raising the lead leg, to throw to the base being faced, to second base or to the plate. When throwing or feinting a throw to a base not being faced, the pitcher must step immediately, directly and gain ground toward that base.

Note: If the pitcher throws to the first or third base player who is playing off the base, a balk shall not be called if the fielder moves toward the occupied base in an attempt to retire the runner.

- 2) The "spin" or "open" move to second base is legal if the pitcher raises the lead leg and immediately, with a continuous motion, steps directly toward second base. The pitcher need not throw.
- 3) The pitcher shall step "ahead of the throw." A snap throw followed by a step directly toward the base is a balk.
- 4) The pitcher may not prematurely flex either leg before stepping directly and throwing to first base.
- 5) The jump-turn move is legal if the pitcher's free foot steps toward and gains ground to the base that the ball is being thrown. Otherwise, a balk shall be called.
- 6) Stepping toward second base without completing the throw is legal if the base is occupied by a runner or there is an attempt to retire a runner.
- d. Making an illegal pitch, such as a quick pitch;

Note: If a runner on third base breaks for home plate, the pitcher may speed up the delivery but must continue to use a normal pitching sequence and arm action.
- e. Unnecessarily delaying the game;

- f. While not in possession of the ball, the pitcher stands with either foot or both feet on any part of the dirt area (circle) of the mound during a hidden-ball-play attempt;
- g. Failing to throw to the batter immediately after making any motion with any part of the body such as the pitcher habitually uses in the delivery;
Note: If the pitcher stops or hesitates the delivery or throws the ball in a manner that the umpire judges is clearly not intended to be a pitch to the batter (such as a ball thrown into the ground or dropped) because the batter steps out of the box, holds up their hand or uses any other action if calling time, it shall not be a balk if runners are on base or an illegal pitch with no runners. The umpire shall call "Time," reset and resume play.
- h. The pitcher takes either hand off the ball after having taken a stretch or set position unless making a pitch or throwing to any base;
Note: The pitcher may momentarily adjust the ball in the glove and separate the hands as long as it is prior to assuming a legal pitching position.
- i. The pitcher pitches while the catcher is not in the catcher's box. The catcher must have at least one foot within the catcher's box until the pitcher begins the pitching motion;
Note: This is an illegal pitch with no runners on base.
- j. The pitcher delivers the pitch from the set position without coming to a complete and discernible stop, or the pitcher comes to more than one stop from the set position (see 9-1-b);
Note: With the bases unoccupied, the pitcher does not need to come to a complete and discernible stop.
- k. From the windup position, the pitcher makes more than two pumping motions with their arms before delivering to the plate;
- l. From the set position, if the entire free foot or any part of the stride leg breaks the plane of the back edge of the pitcher's plate and the pitcher does not throw or feint a motion to second base or pitch to home plate (see 9-1-b-3); and
- m. When the pitcher makes a natural pitching motion while not touching the pitcher's plate.

PENALTY for a. through m.—Balk. The ball becomes dead and each runner must advance one base.

- 1) **If the balk immediately is followed by a pitch that permits the batter and each runner to advance a minimum of one base, the balk is ignored and the ball remains live.**

Example: The batter and all runner(s) advance when a wild pitch is either ball four or strike three.

- 2) **If a balk immediately is followed by a wild throw by the pitcher to a base that permits a runner(s) to advance to or beyond the base to which that runner is entitled, the balk shall be acknowledged. The umpire will call the balk in the usual manner, but shall not call "Time" until all play has ceased (runners have stopped trying to advance and/or a fielder is in possession of the ball in the infield).**

Note: After a balk that is followed by a base hit or a wild throw to a base or the plate, a runner who misses the first base to which the runner is advancing and who, before the next pitch, is called out on appeal, shall be considered as having advanced one base for the purpose of this rule.

- 3) **If only the runner advances to or beyond the base to which they are entitled because of a wild pitch after a balk, the balk is still acknowledged.**

Note 1: A runner(s) may advance beyond the base that is entitled at the runner's own risk.

Note 2: When a balk occurs, the pitch is nullified and the batter will resume the at-bat with the count that existed unless:

- a) **The wild pitch was ball four on which all runners (including the batter-runner) advanced one base.**
- b) **The wild pitch was strike three on which the batter and all other runners advanced one base.**

In both situations (a) and (b) above, play proceeds without reference to the balk, because all runners (including the batter-runner) advanced one base on the pitch after the balk.

Note 3: If the balk is followed by a wild pitch that allows a runner to attempt to go beyond the base that they would have been awarded because of the balk, the runner advances at their own risk; they are either safe or out as a result of the play. The balk is still "acknowledged" as it relates to the batter and they will resume the at-bat with the count that existed when the balk occurred.

Removing Pitcher

SECTION 4. The conditions for removal of the pitcher are as follows:

- a. A coach is allowed to be involved in a maximum of three free trips of the six defensive charged conferences, plus one extra free trip in the event of an extra-inning game.
 - 1) A free trip is a defensive charged conference involving a coach in which the pitcher is not removed.
 - 2) The coach cannot circumvent this rule by asking a player to act for him, and neither can the coach or their representative leave the bench or dugout and approach the base lines to confer with the pitcher for the purpose of evading this rule.
 - 3) If a coach holds a defensive conference with a defensive player, it shall be considered a charged defensive conference whether the player goes to the mound or not.
 - 4) Unused free trips to the mound during the first nine innings may be used during any extra innings.
 - 5) For the purpose of identifying trips to the mound on a batter, a player becomes the batter as soon as the previous batter reaches base, or is put out. The new batter does not have to enter the batter's box to be considered the batter.
 - 6) If the offensive team has a prolonged injury timeout, the pitcher may leave the mound and confer with the coach, or the coach may go to the mound to talk with the pitcher without being charged with a defensive conference. If the defensive conference further delays play, a trip shall be charged to the defensive team.
 - 7) In a situation where a player is bleeding, a decision to substitute for the player must be made within 10 minutes from the time play is stopped. A substitute player must begin warming up immediately when the blood rule is in effect.

- 8) During a defensive charged conference involving a coach or a time out to allow a substitution for the pitcher, a defensive player may warm up another defensive player, provided it does not delay the game. The player warming up must be in the current lineup and remain in fair territory during the charged conference or timeout. For example, a bullpen catcher is not allowed to participate in this type of warm-up.
 - 9) The plate umpire shall record on the lineup card each free trip and the inning in which it occurred.
- b. If a coach or their nonplaying representative goes to the mound a second time in the inning to talk to the same pitcher, or if a coach has already been involved in three of the six defensive charged conferences during regulation play, the pitcher must be removed from the pitcher's position for the remainder of the game. The coach is to indicate the relief pitcher to an umpire immediately after crossing the foul line (see 7-2-b-Note 2).

Note 1: If, after one trip to the same pitcher in the same inning, or three free trips in a game, the coach goes to the plate umpire to announce a pitching change (does not go to the mound), a second trip shall be charged (when the change is recorded on the official lineup card). If moved to a defensive position, the pitcher shall not return to pitch.

Note 2: The relief pitcher, when called from the bullpen by the umpire, must proceed immediately to the mound. Any additional pitches thrown in the bullpen will be subtracted from the eight preparatory pitches permitted on the mound. In the case of an injury to the current pitcher, the substitute pitcher shall take all warm-up pitches from the game mound.

- c. A coach may not make a second trip to the mound in the same inning with the same batter at bat. However, if a pinch hitter is substituted, the coach may make a second trip but must remove the pitcher;
- 1) In this pinch-hitter situation, a relief pitcher, having just been brought in to pitch, may not be removed from the game before pitching completely to one batter or the side has been retired (see 5-5-b).
 - 2) If the coach previously has used the allowed free trips and mistakenly is allowed to go to the mound for a conference, the pitcher shall be removed from the position after the batter completes the turn at bat. The pitcher may not reenter the game as a pitcher.
 - 3) If the coach starts to the mound for a second trip with the same batter at bat in the same inning, the umpire shall warn that this act is not permitted. If the coach continues to the mound, the coach shall be ejected and the pitcher must complete pitching to the batter; when the batter's turn is completed, the pitcher shall be removed from the game. The coach should be warned of the impending removal so that another pitcher can start warming up. The substitute pitcher shall be permitted the eight preparatory pitches unless circumstances justify additional pitches.

Note: If the umpire originally fails to recognize that the coach is making a second trip during the same batter, the coach shall not be penalized.

- d. The trip to the mound (which may include a conference with the infielders) begins when the coach crosses the foul line, and shall be concluded when the coach leaves the dirt circle or the pitcher begins their eight warm-up pitches; and

- e. A pitcher who is removed from the pitching position but remains in the game as a defensive player may return to the mound only once with the exceptions of 7-2-b-Note 2 and 9-4-b provisions.
- f. When the game pitcher crosses the foul line on the way to the mound to start an inning, they shall pitch to the first batter until such batter is put out or reaches base, unless a pinch hitter is substituted or the batter or the pitcher sustains an injury or illness, which incapacitates them from continuing.

RULE 10

Scoring

All references to “box score” refer to the Official NCAA Baseball Box Score. All information in the game summary refers to the Official NCAA Baseball Scorebook.

Official Scorer

Scorer's Duties

SECTION 1. a. The home team, conference commissioner or tournament director shall appoint an official scorer before each game. The scorer shall have sole authority to make all decisions involving judgment. They shall communicate such decisions to both teams and all members of the news media present.

b. The official scorer should sit in the press box or stands (if no press box) and not near or in a dugout.

c. The official scorer shall exercise their function based on the following:

- 1) To achieve uniformity in keeping the records of collegiate games, the scorer shall conform strictly to the NCAA Baseball Rules. The scorer shall have authority to rule on any point not covered specifically in these rules;
- 2) If the teams change sides before three outs are made, the scorer immediately shall inform the umpire of the mistake;
- 3) If the game is protested or halted, the scorer shall make note of the exact situation at that time, including the score, number of outs, position of any runners and the count on the batter;

Note: It is important that a halted game resume with exactly the same situation as existed at the time of suspension. If a protested game is ordered replayed from the point of protest, it must be resumed with exactly the situation that existed before the protested play.

- 4) The scorer shall not make any decision that conflicts with the NCAA Baseball Rules or an umpire's decision; and
- 5) The scorer shall not call the attention of the umpire or any member of either team to the fact that a player is batting out of turn.

Batting

Batting Record

SECTION 2. Each player's batting record shall include:

a. In columns 1, 2, 3 and 4 in the box score, the number of times they batted, the runs they scored, the base hits they made and the runs batted in they were credited with. The batter is charged with an official time at bat whenever they completes their turn, unless they have been awarded first base as in 8-2-b, d or e, or they have been credited with a sacrifice (10-8). In columns 5 and 6, the number of bases on balls and strikeouts credited to the batter shall be recorded; and

Note: An official time at bat shall not be charged against a player when they hit a sacrifice bunt or sacrifice fly, are awarded a base on balls, are hit by a pitched ball or are awarded first base because of interference or obstruction.

- b. In the summary, the number of extra-base hits (10-6), sacrifice hits, sacrifice flies and stolen bases.

Batting Out of Order

SECTION 3. If a player bats out of order and is put out, and the proper batter is called out before the ball is pitched to the next batter, charge the proper batter with a time at bat and score the putout and any assists the same as if the correct batting order had been followed. If an improper batter becomes a runner and the proper batter is called out for having missed their turn at bat, charge the proper batter with a time at bat, credit the putout to the catcher and ignore everything entering into the improper batter's safe arrival on base. If more than one batter bats out of turn in succession, score all plays just as they occur, skipping the turn at bat of the player or players who first missed batting in the proper order.

Base Hit

SECTION 4. A base hit is credited when a batter advances to first base safely:

- a. Because of the fair hit (rather than because of a fielder's error as in 10-16);

Exception—It is not a base hit if any runner is out on a force play caused by the batter advancing toward first base or would have been forced out except for a fielding error.

- b. Because a runner is declared out for being hit by a batted ball as in 8-5-k or the umpire is hit by a batted ball as in 8-3-c;
- c. When a fielder attempts to put out a preceding runner but is unsuccessful although there is no fielding error, and the official scorer believes the batter-runner would have reached first base with perfect fielding;
- d. When a batter reaches first base safely on a fair ball hit with such force, or so slowly, that any fielder attempting to make a play has no opportunity to do so. A hit shall be scored even if the fielder deflects the ball from or cuts off another fielder who could have put out a runner;
- e. When a fair ball that has not been touched by a fielder touches a runner or an umpire; or

Exception—It is not a base hit when a runner is called out for having been touched by an infield fly.

- f. When a batter reaches first base safely on a fair ball that takes an unnatural bounce so that a fielder cannot handle it with ordinary effort, or that touches the pitcher's plate or any base (including home plate) before being touched by a fielder and bounces so that a fielder cannot handle it with ordinary effort.

Note: In applying the above rules, always give the batter the benefit of the doubt. A safe course to follow is to score a hit when exceptionally good fielding fails to result in a putout.

Fielder's Choice

SECTION 5. This term is used by the official scorer to account for the following situations (the batter shall be charged with an official time at bat but no hit in all such situations):

- a. When a batter-runner advances one or more bases while a fielder who handles a fair hit attempts to put out a preceding runner;

- b. When a runner advances (other than by a stolen base or error) while a fielder is attempting to put out another runner;
- c. When a runner advances solely because of the defensive team's indifference (undefended steal); or
- d. When a batter apparently hits safely and a runner who is forced to advance by reason of the batter becoming a runner fails to touch the first base to which they are advancing and is called out on appeal.

Extra-Base Hit

SECTION 6. a. A base hit for extra bases is credited to the batter when it is the sole reason for their safe arrival at a base beyond first. Any fairly batted ball that clears in flight an outfield fence in fair territory, even though it may be deflected by a fielder, is a home run, subject to local ground rules.

- b. When, with one or more runners on base, the batter advances more than one base on a safe hit and the defensive team makes an attempt to put out a preceding runner, the scorer shall determine whether the batter made a legitimate two-base hit or three-base hit, or whether they advanced beyond first base on the fielder's choice.

Note: Do not credit the batter with a three-base hit when a preceding runner is put out at the plate, or would have been out but for an error. Do not credit the batter with a two-base hit when a preceding runner trying to advance from first base is put out at third base, or would have been out but for an error.

- c. If a batter over-runs second or third base and is tagged out trying to return, they shall be credited with the last base they touched.

Exception—If put out while oversliding second or third base, they are not credited with reaching such base.

Game-Ending Hit

SECTION 7. When a batter ends a game with a hit that drives in as many runs as are necessary to win the game, credit them with only as many bases on their hit as the runner who scores the winning run advances, and then only if the batter runs out their hit for as many bases as are advanced by the runner who scores the winning run.

Exception—If the batted ball clears an outfield fence in fair territory, the batter shall be credited with a home run.

Sacrifice

SECTION 8. A sacrifice bunt is credited to the batter when, with fewer than two outs, their bunt enables a runner to advance, provided no other runner is put out attempting to advance. A sacrifice fly is credited when, with fewer than two outs, their fly, fair or foul, enables a runner to score. In either case, the sacrifice ruling applies when the batter is put out before they reach first base or would have been put out if the ball had been fielded without error.

Exception—If, in the judgment of the official scorer, the batter is bunting primarily for a base hit, do not score a sacrifice. Instead, charge the batter with a time at bat.

Run Batted In

SECTION 9. A run batted in is credited to the batter when a runner scores because of a base hit (including batter scoring on a home run); a sacrifice bunt or sacrifice fly; any putout; a forced advance, such as a base on balls or batter being hit by a pitch; or an error, provided there are fewer than two outs and the

action is such that the runner on third base would have scored even if there had been no error.

Scorer's judgment must determine whether a run batted in shall be credited for a run that scores when a fielder holds the ball or throws to the wrong base. Ordinarily, if the runner keeps going, credit a run batted in; if the runner stops and takes off again when they notice the misplay, credit the run as scored on a fielder's choice.

Exception—It is not a run batted in if the batter grounds into a force double play or a reverse-force double play or when a fielder is charged with an error because they muff a throw at first base that would have completed a force double play.

Substitute Batter

SECTION 10. When a batter leaves the game with two strikes on him, and a substitute batter strikes out, charge the strikeout to the first batter. If a substitute batter completes the turn at bat in any other manner, including a base on balls, charge the action to the substitute batter.

Stolen Base

SECTION 11. a. A stolen base shall be credited to the base runner whenever they advance a base unaided (such as by a base hit, fielder's choice, putout, error, balk, base on balls, wild pitch or passed ball). A stolen base shall be credited when a runner starts for the next base before the pitcher delivers the ball and the pitch results in what would otherwise be scored a passed ball or a wild pitch.

Exceptions—

- 1) Where any runner is thrown out on an attempted double or triple steal, no runner shall be credited with a stolen base.

Note: On a double-steal attempt with runners on first and third bases, if there is a legitimate attempt by the fielder to retire the runner at second base and the runner is safe, that runner shall be credited with a stolen base even if the runner from third is thrown out at home on a continuous play.

- 2) If a base runner is tagged out while oversliding a base, they shall not be credited with a stolen base.
 - 3) No stolen base shall be credited to a runner whose advance is the result of the opposing team's indifference.
 - 4) When a fielder catches a throw in time to tag a runner who is attempting to steal, but fails to hold the ball or fails to tag the runner, the fielder is charged with an error and the runner is charged as caught stealing. An assist should be credited to the fielder who made the throw.
- b. Caught stealing shall be charged to the base runner whenever they are put out in the following situations:
- 1) When they attempt to steal;
 - 2) When they are picked off a base and tries to advance; or
 - 3) When they overslide while stealing.

Note: Do not charge caught stealing unless the runner has an opportunity to be credited with a stolen base when the play starts.

Fielding

Fielding Record

SECTION 12. Each player's fielding record shall include:

- a. In columns 7 and 8 of the box score, the number of times they put out a runner and the number of times they assisted a teammate in putting out a runner; and
- b. In the summary, the number of errors and passed balls they committed.

Putout

SECTION 13. A putout is credited to a fielder who catches a batted ball in flight, tags out a runner or puts out a runner by holding the ball while touching a base to which a runner is forced to advance or return. When a batter strikes out, a putout is credited to the catcher, unless the catcher fails to field the pitch cleanly and must put the batter-runner out at first base.

Exceptions—

- 1) When a batter is called out for an illegally batted ball, for a foul third-strike bunt, for being hit by their own batted ball, for interference with the catcher or for failing to bat in their proper turn, the putout shall be credited to the catcher.
- 2) When a batter is declared out on an infield fly that is not caught, the putout is credited to the fielder who is nearest the ball at the time.
- 3) When a base runner is out because of being hit by a fairly batted ball, the putout shall be credited to the fielder nearest the ball at the time.
- 4) When a runner is called out for running out of the base line to avoid being tagged, the putout shall be credited to the fielder whom the runner avoided.
- 5) When a runner is called out for passing another runner, the putout shall be credited to the fielder nearest the point of passing.
- 6) When a runner is called out for running the bases in reverse order, the putout shall be credited to the fielder covering the base they left in starting their reverse run.
- 7) When a runner is called out for interfering with a fielder, the putout shall be credited to the fielder with whom the runner interfered, unless the fielder was in the act of throwing the ball when the interference occurred. In that case, the putout shall be credited to the fielder for whom the throw was intended; the fielder whose throw was interfered with shall be credited with an assist.
- 8) When a batter-runner is called out because of interference by a preceding runner, the putout shall be credited to the first base player. If the fielder interfered with was in the act of throwing the ball, they shall be credited with an assist. In no case can they be credited with more than one assist on any one play.

Assist

SECTION 14. a. An assist is credited to a fielder when they handle or effectively deflect the ball during action that is connected with a putout or they handle the ball before an error that prevents what would have been a putout. If several fielders handle the ball or one fielder handles it more than once during a play, only one assist is credited to each of such fielders.

- b. Do not credit the pitcher with an assist on a strikeout or when after a pitch the catcher tags out or throws out a runner.

Note: A play that follows a misplay (whether or not it is an error) is a new play, and the fielder making any misplay shall not be credited with an assist unless they take part in the new play.

Double Play-Triple Play

SECTION 15. A double play or triple play is credited to one or more fielders when two or three players are put out between the time a pitch is delivered and the time the ball next becomes dead or is next in possession of the pitcher in their pitching position.

Exception—When an error or a misplay occurs between the time one player is put out and the time a second player is put out, a double play or triple play is not credited.

Note: Also credit a double play or triple play if an appeal play after the ball is in possession of the pitcher results in an additional putout.

Error

SECTION 16. a. An error is charged against any fielder (pitchers included) for each misplay that prolongs the time at bat of the batter or the time as a base runner or permits a runner to advance one or more bases.

Note 1: Slow handling of the ball that does not involve mechanical misplay shall not be construed as an error.

Note 2: It is not necessary that the fielder touch the ball to be charged with an error. If a ground ball goes through a fielder's legs or a pop fly falls untouched and, in the scorer's judgment, the fielder could have handled the ball with ordinary effort, an error should be charged.

Note 3: Mental mistakes or misjudgments are not to be scored as errors unless specifically covered in the rules.

- b. An error shall be charged against any fielder when they catch a thrown ball or a ground ball in time to put out any runner on a force play and fails to tag the base or the runner, including a batter-runner on a play at first base.
- c. An error shall be charged against any fielder whose throw takes an unnatural bounce, touches a base or the pitcher's plate, or touches a runner, a fielder or an umpire, thereby permitting any runner to advance. Apply this rule even when it appears to be an injustice to a fielder whose throw was accurate. Every base advanced must be accounted for.
- d. Charge only one error on any wild throw, regardless of the number of bases advanced by runners.
- e. An error shall be charged against any fielder whose failure to stop, or try to stop, an accurately thrown ball permits a runner to advance, providing there was occasion for the throw. If, in the scorer's judgment, there was no occasion for the throw, an error shall be charged to the fielder who threw the ball.

Exceptions—

- 1) A base on balls, a base awarded to a batter for being hit by a pitched ball, a balk, a passed ball or a wild pitch shall not be scored as an error.
- 2) No error is charged to the catcher for a wild throw in an attempt to prevent a stolen base unless the base runner advances an extra base because of a wild throw.
- 3) No player is charged with an error for a poor throw in an attempt to complete a double play unless the throw is so wild that it permits a runner

- to advance an additional base. However, if a player drops a thrown ball when by holding it they would have completed a double play, it is an error.
- 4) A fielder is not charged with an error for accurately throwing to a base whose baseplayer fails to stop or try to stop the ball, provided there was good reason for such a throw. If the runner advances because of the throw, the error is charged to the baseplayer or fielder who should have covered that base.
 - 5) If a fielder drops a fly ball or fumbles a ground ball, but recovers the ball in time to force a runner, they are not charged with an error.
 - 6) No error shall be charged against any fielder who permits a foul fly to fall safely with a runner on third base and fewer than two outs if, in the judgment of the official scorer, the fielder deliberately allows the ball to fall in order to prevent the runner on third from scoring after a catch.
- f. When an umpire awards the batter or any runner or runners one or more bases because of interference or obstruction, charge the fielder who committed the interference or obstruction with one error, no matter how many bases the batter, runner or runners, may be advanced.

Note: Do not charge an error if obstruction does not change the play in the opinion of the scorer.

Passed Ball

SECTION 17. A passed ball is a pitch the catcher fails to stop or control when they should have been able to do so with ordinary effort and on which a runner (other than the batter) is able to advance. When a passed ball occurs on a third strike, permitting a batter to reach first base, score a strikeout and a passed ball.

Fielder's Choice

SECTION 18. A fielder's choice is the action of a fielder who handles a fairly batted ball and, instead of throwing to first base to put out the batter-runner, throws to another base in an attempt to put out a preceding runner.

Pitching

Pitching Record

SECTION 19. Each pitcher's record shall include in the summary: number of innings pitched, base hits, runs, earned runs, bases on balls, strikeouts, hit batters, wild pitches and balks.

Note: In computing innings pitched, count each putout as one-third of an inning. If a starting pitcher is replaced with one out in the sixth inning, credit that pitcher with 5 1/3 innings. If a starting pitcher is replaced with no outs in the sixth inning, credit that pitcher with five innings, and make the notation that they faced a specific number of batters in the sixth. If a relief pitcher retires two batters and is replaced, credit that pitcher with two-thirds of an inning pitched.

Complete Game

SECTION 20. To receive credit for a complete game, the pitcher must pitch the entire game.

Wild Pitch

SECTION 21. A pitcher shall be charged with a wild pitch when a legal pitch is such that a catcher cannot catch or control it with ordinary effort, so that the batter reaches first base or any runner advances one or more bases.

Note: Generally, a pitch that hits the ground before touching the catcher's glove is scored as a wild pitch.

Earned Run

SECTION 22. a. An earned run shall be charged against a pitcher when a runner scores because of a safe hit, sacrifice hit, sacrifice fly, stolen base, putout, fielder's choice, base on balls, hit batter, balk or wild pitch (even when the wild pitch is a third strike), provided that in each case it is before the defensive team has had an opportunity to make a third putout.

Note: In determining earned runs, the scorer shall reconstruct the inning as if there were no errors or passed balls. Give the pitcher the benefit of the doubt in determining the advancement of runners, had the defensive team been errorless.

b. No earned run shall be charged to a relief pitcher if the runner was on base when the relief pitcher entered the game. Likewise, if a batter has more balls than strikes, unless the count is one ball, no strikes, when a relief pitcher enters the game and the batter receives a base on balls, charge that action to the preceding pitcher. Any other action of the batter shall be charged to the relief pitcher.

c. No run shall be earned when scored by a runner whose time as a runner is prolonged by an error, if such runner would have been put out by errorless play.

d. An error by a pitcher is treated exactly the same as an error by any other fielder in computing earned runs.

e. When pitchers are changed during an inning, the relief pitcher shall not be charged with any run (earned or unearned) scored by a runner who reaches base on a fielder's choice that puts out a runner left on base by a preceding pitcher.

Note: The intent of this rule is to charge each pitcher with the number of runners they put on base, rather than with the individual runners.

f. When pitchers are changed during an inning, a relief pitcher shall not have the benefit of errors made earlier in the inning. Thus, they will be charged with earned runs for which they are totally responsible.

Note: It is the intent of Rule 10-22-f to charge a relief pitcher with earned runs for which such relief pitcher is solely responsible. In some instances, runs charged as earned against the relief pitcher can be charged as unearned against the team.

Strikeout

SECTION 23. A strikeout is credited to the pitcher when a third strike is delivered to a batter, even if the third strike is a wild pitch or is not caught or the batter reaches first base. It also is a strikeout if an attempted bunt on a third strike is a foul that is not caught.

Statistics

Game Summary

SECTION 24. The game summary should include all the items contained in the Official NCAA Box Score, as shown later in this section.

Winning and Losing Pitchers

SECTION 25. a. For all games of eight or more innings, a starting pitcher must pitch at least five complete innings to receive credit as the winning pitcher. For all games of fewer than eight innings, the starting pitcher must pitch at least

four innings to get credit for the win. Additionally, the winning pitcher's team must be in the lead when they are replaced and must remain in the lead for the rest of the game.

b. If the starting pitcher does not pitch enough innings, the win is credited to a relief pitcher in the following manner:

- 1) The winning relief pitcher shall be the one who is the pitcher of record when their team goes ahead and remains ahead throughout the remainder of the game. No pitcher may receive credit for a victory if the opposing team ties the score or goes ahead after they have left the game.

Note: Whenever the score is tied, the game becomes a new contest insofar as the winning and losing pitchers are concerned.

Exception—If a relief pitcher conforms to the above regulations but pitches briefly and ineffectively, the scorer should not credit them with a win. If a succeeding relief pitcher pitches effectively and helps maintain the lead, the scorer should award the win to that succeeding pitcher.

- 2) If their team maintains the lead throughout the game, and more than one relief pitcher is used, the scorer shall award the win to the relief pitcher that pitches most effectively, regardless of the number of innings pitched.
 - 3) By pre-arrangement, if three or more pitchers are to be used, the pitcher of record shall be considered the winning pitcher.
- c. When a batter or runner is substituted for a pitcher, all runs scored by their team during that inning are to their credit in determining the pitcher of record.
- d. The starting pitcher shall be charged with the loss if they are replaced at any time while their team is behind and remains behind for the remainder of the game. Similarly, any relief pitcher who is the pitcher of record when the opposing team assumes the lead and never relinquishes it is charged with the loss.

Note: The pitcher of record shall be the one who is in the game at the time the winning team gains the lead, provided that the lead never is relinquished, or the one who is charged with the runs by which the opposing team takes the lead, provided that the lead never is relinquished.

- e. To receive credit for a shutout, the pitcher must pitch the entire game or enter the game with no outs in the first inning and pitch the rest of the game without any runs scoring.

Save

SECTION 26. If a relief pitcher meets ALL of the following conditions, the official scorer should credit that pitcher with a save:

- a. They are the finishing pitcher in a game won by their team;
- b. They are not credited with the win; and
- c. They meet one of the following conditions:
 - 1) They entered the game with a lead of not more than three runs and pitches at least one inning;
 - 2) They entered the game with the potential tying run on base, at bat or on deck; or
 - 3) They pitch effectively for at least three innings.

Note: Not more than one save may be credited in each game.

Proving Box Score

SECTION 27. To prove a box score, the total of the team's plate appearances (times at bat, bases on balls, hit batters, sacrifice bunts, sacrifice flies and batters awarded first base because of interference or obstruction) must equal the total of the team's runs, players left on base and the opposing team's putouts.

Called/Forfeited Game and No Contest

SECTION 28. a. If a regulation game is called, include the record of all individual and team actions up to the moment the game ends as specified in Rule 5-8-b.

Note 1: If the scoring during an incomplete inning has no bearing on the outcome of the contest, include all individual and team records.

Note 2: If it is a tie game, do not enter a winning or losing pitcher.

b. If a regulation game is forfeited, include the record of all individual and team actions up to the time of the forfeit. If the winning team by forfeit is ahead at the time of forfeit, enter as winning and losing pitchers the players who would have qualified if the game had been called at the time of forfeit. If the winning team by forfeit is behind or the score is tied at the time of the forfeit, do not enter a winning or losing pitcher. If a game is forfeited before it becomes a regulation game, include no records. Report only the fact of the forfeit.

Note: If the team awarded the forfeit was tied or behind at the time of the forfeit, the score shall be recorded as 9-0 for a scheduled nine-inning game and 7-0 for a scheduled seven-inning game. The word "forfeit" should accompany this score.

c. When a team does not appear (e.g., due to weather conditions, accidents, breakdown of vehicles, illness or catastrophic causes), a forfeit is not recorded. An institution shall not, for statistical purposes, declare a forfeit for nonfulfillment of a contract. Such instances shall be considered as "no contest."

Determining Percentages

SECTION 29. The following procedures should be used to determine various percentages:

- a. To determine won-lost percentage, divide the total number of games played into the number of games won (each tie game is computed as half won and half lost);
- b. To determine batting averages, divide the number of official times at bat into the number of base hits;
- c. To determine fielding averages, divide the total chances (putouts, assists and errors) into the total putouts and assists;
- d. To determine a pitcher's earned-run average, multiply the earned runs allowed by nine and then divide by the number of innings pitched;

Note: When a pitcher has not pitched an even number of innings, the statistician shall multiply the number of earned runs by 27 and divide by the number of outs recorded (innings pitched times three). Earned run averages must be based on nine innings.

e. To determine slugging percentage, divide the number of official times at bat into the number of total bases; and

Note: In all cases where the remaining decimal is one-half or more, round to the next whole number.

- f. To determine on-base percentage, divide the total number of at-bats, bases on balls, hit by pitches and sacrifice flies into the total number of hits, bases on balls and hit by pitches.

Note: For the purpose of computing on-base percentage, ignore being awarded first base by interference or obstruction.

Cumulative Performance Records

SECTION 30. a. A consecutive hitting streak shall not be terminated if the plate appearance results in a base on balls, hit batsman, defensive interference or a sacrifice bunt. A sacrifice fly shall terminate the streak.

- b. A consecutive-games hitting streak shall not be terminated if all the player's plate appearances (one or more) result in a base on balls, hit batsman, defensive interference or sacrifice bunt. The streak shall terminate if the player has a sacrifice fly and no hit.

c. A consecutive-games playing streak shall be extended if the player plays one-half inning on defense, or if they complete a time at bat by reaching base or being put out. A pinch-running appearance only shall not extend the streak. If a player is ejected from a game by an umpire before they can comply with the requirements of this rule, their streak shall continue.

- d. For the purpose of this rule, all performances in the completion of a suspended or halted game shall be considered as occurring on the original date of the game.

Appendix A

Box Score

OFFICIAL NCAA BOX SCORE

Date _____ Time _____ P.M. Stadium Smith Field City Omaha, Nebraska

State	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO	PO	A	Tech	AB	R	H	RBI	BB	SO	PO	A
12 Urban, ss	4	2	1	1	1	0	1	4	18 Lourich, ss	4	0	1	1	0	0	2	2
4 Cowan, dh	5	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	30 Vanidestine, rf	4	0	0	0	1	2	0	0
11 Quarles, pr	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17 Yeager, 3b	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	4
7 Fugett, lb	4	1	3	2	1	0	9	0	20 Aldrette, lb	5	1	2	0	0	3	13	0
19 Wiktorski, lf	5	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1 Moler, pr	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25 Stallings, cf	5	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	5 O'Donnell, 2b	4	0	3	1	1	0	1	8
21 Rossi, c	5	0	1	1	0	1	6	0	24 Desola, dh	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
2 Mogielnicki, 2b	4	0	1	0	1	1	5	3	17 Jochim, ph-dh	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
29 Edwards, rf	4	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	14 Torchia, lf	3	1	1	0	1	0	1	0
3 Harris, 3b	3	1	0	0	1	1	0	2	9 Sutton, pr-lf	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
18 Pleasants, p	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	6 Bair, c	3	1	2	0	0	0	6	1
27 Scheibal, p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	25 Nicosia, cf	4	0	2	1	0	1	3	0
32 Ziem, p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19 Imig, p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
									11 Graybill, p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
									28 Karazin, p	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	39	6	11	6	5	6	27	12	TOTALS	37	5	13	4	3	6	27	16

SCORE BY INNINGS	State	2	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	R	H	E
State		2	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	11	1
Tech		0	0	0	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	5	13	3

E— Pleasants, Lourich, Bair, Nicosia
 DP— State--1 LEFT— State--11 Tech--10
 2B— Yeager, Desola 3B— Mogielnicki, Lourich
 HR— Urban
 SB— Wiktorski, Rossi, Edwards, Mogielnicki CS— O'Donnell
 SH— Bair SF—

State	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO	Tech	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Pleasants	6.0	9	4	4	2	3	Imig	3.1	5	4	2	3	1
Scheibal	2.2	4	1	1	1	3	Graybill	4.1	6	2	0	1	3
Ziem	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	Karazin	1.1	0	0	0	1	2

WINNER— Pleasants LOSER— Imig SAVE— Ziem
 WP— Pleasants PB— Bair 2 BK—
 HBP— By Pleasants (Lourich)
 U— Brown, Jones, Smith, White T— 2:56 A— 11,246

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Appendix B

Rules for Scoreboards, Video and Audio

The following regulations apply to all NCAA Baseball games, regardless of stadium or venue:

A. Scoreboards and video.

1. Scoreboards (and monitors) must not be used to “show up” an umpire or visiting team members, incite the crowd, or distract a player. The following situations may not be shown:
 - a. No replay may be shown during a dispute with an umpire;
 - b. Replays showing balls or strikes, including a half swing whether called by the home plate umpire or appealed to a base umpire (Exception: In-stadium replays of swinging third strikes are allowed, if shown immediately and before the next batter for either team);
 - c. Brushback pitches;
 - d. Fights or disputes between or among uniformed personnel on the field;
 - e. Any episode or event that would embarrass or denigrate an umpire, visiting team member, visiting team official, or official scorer;
 - f. The likeness of an umpire or an umpire’s name used in any way to embarrass an umpire; and
 - g. Fans or other unauthorized persons running onto the field.

Exciting plays such as spectacular catches or players circling the bases after home runs may be shown more than once.
2. Replays may not delay the game. The next batter is expected to immediately enter the batter’s box.
3. Any instance in which an umpire has made a judgment call may be replayed only one time at regular speed and must be replayed before the next batter (for either team) enters the dirt area around home plate. An unlimited number of replays may be played on the video board at any speed, only after a play is under video review by the umpires; however, no replays shall be shown on the video board once a decision has been made by the umpires and/or replay official.
4. At times, live game action may be displayed on the stadium video board. Close-ups of the batter in the on-deck circle are permitted. Live game action must cease once the batter enters the dirt circle and may be displayed again once there is contact between the bat and the pitch. If live game action is not displayed, a still shot, statistics or other nonmoving pictures must remain on the screen until the batter finishes the plate appearance.
5. Arguments or disputes between umpires and players or coaches may not be shown.

6. Live shots of fans are permitted during dead-ball periods, but good judgment must be used. Unacceptable behavior should never be shown.

B. Audio and LED or LED/Matrix boards.

All music, chants or crowd-cuing messages must stop when the batter enters the dirt circle. Use of LED or LED/Matrix boards should stop when the batter steps into the batter's box. Music, noise and cheers, and use of LED or LED/Matrix boards, may be used during the following times:

1. Before the start of the game;
2. Between innings;
3. During pitching changes;
4. As the batter is heading toward the batter's box; and
5. After the game.

LED or LED/Matrix boards may be operated during a lengthy stoppage in play, but their operation must cease when the umpire calls "Play." Teams are to exhibit good judgment when using messages that encourage fans to cheer or make noise.

Audio (music, organists, etc.) may not be played in a manner that may incite spectators to react in a negative fashion to umpires' decisions or to visiting players.

It is the home team's responsibility to monitor its video and audio operations and abide by all guidelines and policies, including between-inning entertainment.

Should any of the policies in this section be violated by a team, umpires have the authority to stop the game to have the matter corrected. Umpires are to inform their conference office concerning any violation of these guidelines.

C. Announcing the next batter and substitutions.

The public address announcer will announce the first batter of the inning immediately after the catcher throws the ball down to second base and announce any following batter no later than when the ball reaches the third baseman or any infielder on a ball being thrown in from the outfield.

The public address announcers may not announce a pinch hitter or new pitcher until signaled in from the umpire. Umpires are to be alert for lead-off pinch hitters in the on-deck circle in order to confirm the substitution and have such batter announced on time.

Appendix C

Lightning Policy

The NCAA provides detailed guidance on lightning (and other environmental hazards) in the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook. Please consult the latest version of this handbook, which is available at ncaa.org.

Appendix D

Ejection/Suspension Procedures

Procedure to follow after an ejection:

1. The ejecting umpire shall call their conference administrator immediately after the game to report any ejection.
2. The ejecting umpire shall file an NCAA ejection report with their conference coordinator, the NCAA secretary-rules editor and the national coordinator of umpires as soon as possible after the completion of the contest.

Procedure when an ejection carries a suspension:

1. The ejecting umpire will notify their conference supervisor immediately after the game and will file the applicable ejection/suspension report with the supervisor, the secretary-rules editor, and the national coordinator of umpires as soon as possible after the completion of the contest.
2. The ejecting umpire or crew chief shall notify the head coach of the suspension, either personally or through the home team game management administrator on site.

Procedure for a post-participation ejection:

1. If a situation occurs after the last out to end a game or winning run and this conduct would result in an ejection during the normal course of play, the umpire/crew chief will issue a post-participation ejection.
2. If the ejected person is an assistant coach, player or other team personnel, the umpire/crew chief is to inform the head coach personally or through the home team game management administrator on site.
3. If the head coach is ejected, the umpire/crew chief is to inform the head coach and the home team game management administrator of the head coach's post-participation ejection.
4. The ejecting umpire shall file an ejection/suspension report with the conference administrator, coordinator, NCAA secretary-rules editor and the national coordinator of umpires noting that the suspension shall be served in that team's next scheduled contest(s).

For clarification, the suspended individual is not allowed to:

- a) Be dressed in game uniform;
- b) Communicate with any team personnel or umpires;
- c) Take part in any pregame activities at the site of competition; or
- d) Be in the stadium or on the field once pregame activities have started.

Appendix E

Getting The Call Right

The first requisite of an umpire is to ultimately get all decisions correct. Umpire pride is important, but never as important as getting the play right. It is the philosophy of the NCAA that umpires always seek to get the call right. This may involve the reversal of a previously rendered decision. However, the correct decision—not the pride of any umpire—must prevail.

Getting the Call Right without the use of video review:

SECTION 1. Following are general guidelines for this policy:

- a. *NCAA rule 3-6-g states, “No umpire shall criticize or interfere with another umpire’s decision, unless asked by the one making it; however, if there is a misinterpretation of a rule, it should be brought to the attention of the umpire-in-chief.” Therefore, except in special situations such as those outlined in the next paragraph, the umpire making the call must be the one to seek assistance of a partner.*
- b. An umpire is urged to seek help when their view is blocked or positioning prevents them from seeing crucial elements of a play. An umpire is also encouraged to seek help in instances when they have any doubt and a partner has additional information that could lead to the proper ruling.
- c. In the situations listed below, a partner who is 100 percent certain they have additional information unknown to the umpire making the call should approach unsolicited and alert the other umpire to such information. **However, the ultimate decision to change a call rests with the calling umpire.**
 - 1) Deciding if a home run is fair or foul.
 - 2) Deciding whether a batted ball left the playing field for a home run or ground-rule double.
 - 3) Cases in which a foul tip is dropped or trapped by the catcher.
 - 4) Cases in which a foul fly ball is caught or not caught.
 - 5) Cases when an umpire clearly errs in judgment because they did not see a ball dropped or juggled after making a tag or force.
 - 6) Spectator interference plays.
 - 7) Balks called by an umpire who clearly did not realize the pitcher’s foot was off the rubber.
 - 8) Changing a call of “foul” to “fair.”

Note: Umpires may conference after a batted ball that first touches the ground or a fielder beyond the initial position of the first or third baseman and has been ruled “foul.” After consultation with the entire umpire crew, the Crew Chief will place the base runners where the crew believes they would have advanced had the ball been first ruled fair. The Crew Chief and crew should be conservative on their placement of base runners.

- 9) Changing a call of “catch” to “no catch”: The umpires may conference after a fair batted ball has been hit into the outfield or on any foul ball to determine whether the fielder did or did not make a catch. If the ball is foul, it remains a foul ball. If the ball is fair, the ball is dead. After consultation with the entire umpire crew, the Crew Chief will place the base runners where the crew believes they would have advanced had the reviewed call been made correctly. The Crew Chief and crew should be conservative on their placement of base runners. If there is any doubt the following guidelines shall be used:
- a) The batter is placed at first base.
 - b) Each base runner is advanced one base from the base occupied at the time of the pitch.
- 10) Changing a call of “no catch” to “catch”: The umpires may conference after a fair batted ball has been hit into the outfield or on any foul ball to determine whether a fielder did or did not make a catch.
- a) The ball is dead.
 - b) All action prior to the ball becoming dead shall be disallowed.
 - c) The batter shall be declared out.
 - d) After consultation with the entire umpire crew, the Crew Chief will place the base runners where the crew believes they would have advanced had the reviewed call been made correctly. The Crew Chief and crew should be conservative on their placement of base runners. If there is any doubt, all base runners shall be returned to the base they occupied at the time of the pitch.

11) Hit-by-pitch situations.

Note 1: A call of "no catch" within the infield can be changed to a "catch" if there are one or more runners on base and the change to a "catch" results in the third out, or at any time with no base runners and the change affects the batter only.

Note 2: For the purpose of applying the changing of a call of "catch" to "no catch" (Section 9) or "no catch" to "catch" (Section 10), a fair batted ball shall be considered "hit into the outfield" when it is hit into the outfield area beyond the nearest infielder. A line drive hit directly toward an infielder shall not meet the requirement for a potential change of the initial call.

- d. Umpires are not required to seek help on plays on which they are 100 % confident in their judgment and view of the play. Head coaches are not entitled to a second opinion when the calling umpire is certain their decision is correct. On the other hand, and contrary to past practice, umpires are not to “die with a call” in cases in which a) the calling umpire is not 100 % certain they are correct; and b) another umpire has additional information that could lead to a proper ruling. Both NCAA philosophy and umpire integrity – consistent with NCAA rules – dictate that calls are reversed in this situation.
- e. When an umpire seeks help, they should do so shortly after making the original call. They should not have a lengthy discussion with the head coach or others and then ask for help. If the calling umpire seeks help, they should include other umpire(s) who would likely have the best position to see the elements of the play. This conversation must take place away from players or coaches. If a crew chief deems it necessary, they can, at their discretion, bring together the entire crew. All umpires involved should meet at once; multiple meetings unnecessarily delay the game. Crew chiefs can conduct conferences

and are expected to ensure that NCAA philosophies are given priority over any single umpire's pride.

Note: Once umpires have determined a need to conference to review a play, they shall direct the head coach to return to the dugout or coaching box before the crew will begin their discussion. Common Practice: The umpires shall notify the opposing head coach of the umpire's decision to change the call before signaling their decision to the press box or crowd. Once the notification is made to the coach, the calling official will signal the final decision.

- f. Judgment calls, which have traditionally not been subject to reversal, include steal and other tag plays (except if the ball is dropped without the umpire's knowledge, as discussed above); force plays (when the ball is not dropped and foot is not pulled); balls and strikes (other than check swings). This practice shall continue. Also, some calls cannot be reversed without creating larger problems.

Overall, umpires are urged to seek help on reversible plays in which they may have erred by not seeing a crucial element of a play. Such meetings, while necessary, should be infrequent and not become a substitute for umpires seeking proper angles, exercising sound judgment and having the conviction to stay with a call that an umpire believes was properly made.

Getting the Call Right with the use of video review:

SECTION 2.

a. Each head coach is permitted two challenges per game. The following plays will be reviewable with the use of a head coach's challenge at any time during the game.

1. Deciding if a batted ball is fair or foul. The ball must first touch the ground or a fielder beyond the initial position of the first or third baseman.
2. Deciding if a batted ball is either a ground-rule double or a home run.
3. Any "catch" or "no catch" ruling in the outfield or foul territory.
4. A "no catch" ruling in the infield in some instances. With runners on base, a "no catch" within the infield can be changed to a "catch" only if it results in a third out. With no runners on base, a "no catch" within the infield can be changed to a "catch" at any time.
5. Spectator interference.
6. Deciding scoring plays at home plate inclusive of collisions (illegal and/or malicious **contact**) or time plays (determining whether a base runner scored ahead of a third out).
7. Force and tag play calls at any base.
8. Calls involving whether a base runner passes a preceding runner and upon an appropriate appeal by the defensive team, determining whether a base runner touched a base.
9. Plays involving a hit by pitch.
10. Deciding if a runner failed to retouch a base after a fair or foul ball is legally caught.
11. Non-home run boundary calls including the placement of runners following a boundary call.
12. Deciding if interference occurred on a runner's attempt to break up a double play.
13. Catcher's interference with the batter's swing except on a squeeze play or steal of home.

14. Malicious contact at any location.

All types of reviewable plays require a head coach's challenge except for a potential home run and malicious contact which can be reviewed at any time. A crew chief (or video review official's) review is allowed at their discretion during the last two innings of regulation and any extra innings, if the affected team is out of challenges.

The following criteria will be used for the administration of video review:

1. Video review may be used to overturn, confirm or let stand the umpires' call on the field.
2. For video review to be initiated, either by Crew Chief or Head Coach challenge, a call must be made on the field.
3. A ruling on the field will only be changed if there is indisputable video evidence to reverse the call. Absent that evidence, the original ruling on the field will stand.
4. Any use of video review must occur before the next pitch or play. A head coach must notify an umpire (either verbally and/or by holding their hand in the air) that the team is contemplating challenging the play immediately after the conclusion of the play (in less than 10 seconds). If the head coach wishes to invoke their challenge, they must do so within approximately 30 seconds after the conclusion of the play or prior to the commencement of the next play, whichever occurs first. This is critical especially if the play ends an inning or ends the game. If the review is called for after a game ending play, it must be called before all umpires leave the field of play.
5. If a head coach's challenge is successful in overturning a call, the coach will retain the challenge to use if needed later in the game.
6. The crew chief will make the determination if a play is eligible for video review. Under the provisions of Getting the Call Right, coaches have the ability to request a conference among the umpires.
7. If video review is conducted by the on-field umpire crew, the video review area must be on the field level so that umpires must not walk through spectators to view the coverage. At least one umpire must remain on the field.
8. During the video review the defensive team shall maintain their positions on the field and may warm-up if desired. Base runners, base coaches and the on-deck hitter shall maintain their positions. Other personnel shall remain in the dugout. Any defensive or offensive conferences will be charged as during any other part of the game.
9. All video review equipment should be tested by appropriate personnel before each game.
10. The final decision may not be argued by either coach.
11. If the reversing of a call results in the need for decisions on the placement of base runners, the umpire crew shall use their best judgment to determine their locations as if the call had been made correctly.
12. If a call has been changed, the crew chief, upon returning to the field, will notify both head coaches and the official scorer of the ruling.

Appendix F

Pitch/Between Innings Clock Protocol

Timing Devices

Consistent enforcement of the time limits between pitches and between innings is important to a game's pace of play. A visible clock makes this easier for coaches, players and umpires based on the experiences at other levels of baseball and in the administration of other sports. The use of a visible clock is recommended, but until the use of a visible clock is required, conferences may choose to instruct on-field umpires to use a timing device such as a chronograph, stopwatch, or specifically designed device to administer these time limits. In any case, the time limits must be administered consistently at all levels of NCAA play. Effective Jan. 1, 2024, for Division I and Jan. 1, 2025, for Divisions II and III, the use of one or more visible clocks will be required during all times of the game to enforce all timing rules effectively.

20-Second Action Clock Limit

1. A pitcher shall be allowed twenty (20) seconds to begin the activity to deliver each pitch. The pitcher does not necessarily have to release the ball within 20 seconds; however, the pitcher must begin the windup motion or, from a set position begin the motion to deliver the pitch in order to comply with the 20-second rule.
2. For the first pitch of each half-inning, following an umpire's call of "time", or if the ball becomes dead (for example, after a foul ball or a pick-off that goes out of play), the timer shall stop, reset, and start again when the plate umpire signals "play" after the pitcher engages the pitcher's rubber with possession of the ball, the catcher is in the catcher's box, and the batter is in the batter's box. (See Rule 6-6.)
3. For the first pitch of any subsequent at-bat, the timer shall start when the plate umpire signals "play". The umpire should signal when the pitcher has possession of the ball in the circle surrounding the pitcher's rubber, the catcher is in the catcher's box, and the batter is in the batter's box.
4. After each pitch during an at-bat (following the first pitch) in which the ball remains alive and in play and the batter remains at bat, the timer shall start when the pitcher has possession of the ball in the circle surrounding the pitcher's rubber and the catcher is in the catcher's box.
5. The timer shall stop under the following circumstances:
 - a) The pitcher begins the windup motion or, from a set position, begins the motion to deliver the pitch;
 - b) The pitcher makes a pickoff attempt (throw) at any base;
 - c) With runners on base, the pitcher steps off the rubber to get a new sign or feint a pickoff attempt;

- d) The catcher leaves the catcher's box to give defensive signals or to confer with the pitcher from a distance (in which case the timer shall stop, reset, and start again after the catcher returns to the catcher's box); or
- e) The umpire calls "time" for any legitimate reason.
6. When there are no runners on base, and before starting a windup motion or beginning the motion to deliver the pitch, if a pitcher steps off the pitcher's plate the time limit (or clock) does not stop unless the umpire grants the pitcher "time" for a legitimate reason.
7. With runners on base, the pitcher may attempt as many pickoff throws in an attempt to retire a runner as desired. The pickoff throw may be made by stepping toward an occupied base directly from the pitcher's plate or after stepping off the pitcher's plate and immediately making a play on a runner. The time limit will stop and reset when the ball is returned to the pitcher on the mound.
- The pitcher may step off the pitcher's plate to get a new sign or look back a runner or step off to feint a throw toward a runner without making a throw. The time limit will stop, reset and restart immediately if the pitcher remains in possession of the ball on the mound. If the pitcher leaves the mound, the time limit will restart when the pitcher returns and possesses the ball on the mound. Only one "reset" is allowed per at-bat. A defensive player such as the catcher asking for time out without taking a charged defensive conference constitutes a "reset."
- After the pitcher has used the "reset" during an at bat, they must either pitch the ball within the time limit, make a legitimate pickoff attempt by throwing the ball, step off the pitcher's plate and make a play on a runner by tagging out a runner, have a runner advance a base, or call "time" to take a charged defensive conference. If the pitcher steps off and each base runner returns to their original base without a legitimate pickoff throw being made, it is a violation. Each violation of the time limit is a "ball." There are no warnings.
8. If a visible clock is being used and the operator does not start the timer at the appropriate time, the umpire shall call "time" and signal to the operator to reset the timer and start again immediately.
9. Batters are expected to enter the batter's box promptly prior to the first pitch of an at-bat and should remain in the batter's box in accordance with the Batter's Box Rule. Batters should not delay entry to gain an undue advantage. If the batter does not enter the box and become alert to the pitcher with 5 or more seconds remaining, the batter will be adjudged to have violated the rule and the umpire shall award a strike without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance.
10. Pitchers are expected to begin the motion to deliver the pitch as soon as the batter enters the box and becomes alert to the pitcher. If the pitcher does not begin the motion to deliver the pitch prior to the timer reaching "0", the pitcher will be adjudged to have violated the rule.
11. If the pitcher violates the rule, the umpire shall award a ball without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch. The ball is dead, and no runners may advance, unless the ball awarded by the umpire is the batter's fourth ball in which case the batter is entitled to advance to first.
12. If the catcher or other defensive player intentionally delays getting the ball to the pitcher on the mound so that the time limit doesn't start, or if the pitcher

delays taking their position on the mound, the plate umpire may point to have the 20-second time limit started

120-Second Time Limit (or Clock) Between Innings

1. Between innings, teams have 120 seconds to be ready for the first pitch (pitcher holding the ball and touching the pitcher's plate and a batter standing in the batter's box ready to hit). The 120-second clock shall start when all defensive players have started to leave their positions after the last out has been made and stops when the umpire calls "Play" for the first pitch of the first batter of the next half-inning. If there are unusual circumstances that prevent either team from getting on or off the field, other common sense delays such as ceremonies or field maintenance not the fault of the teams, or an injury, the time clock is delayed until players have had an opportunity to begin to move to their positions. Either team may use one of its charged conferences to avoid a 120-second clock penalty. If the offensive team is not ready within the 120-second time limit, the umpire shall call a strike. If the defense is not ready, a ball shall be awarded to the first batter.
2. At the beginning of a game (first inning for each starting pitcher) or for any subsequent relief pitcher who enters the game to start an inning, the clock should start as indicated above; however, by rule they are entitled to eight warm-up pitches and is allowed to complete those without penalty should the clock expire.
3. For all games the time limit shall be 120 seconds between each half-inning unless specified by NCAA or conference contract provisions. The home institution will notify the visiting team and umpires if there will be an extension of the 120-second provision.
4. With 30 seconds left, the base umpire will visually cue the plate umpire, who will then signal to the pitcher and catcher, "30 seconds left," and summon the lead-off batter to the plate.
5. Continuing pitchers shall have the 120-second time limit to complete their five warm-up pitches.

Note: During a game, the game pitcher may use the bullpen mound during an inning when their team is at bat if they do not delay the start of the next half-inning. Penalty is dictated by this protocol.

6. If the catcher is the third out or on base when the third out is made, the offensive team should have someone ready to warm up the pitcher. Umpires will not grant additional warm-ups if the 120-second time limit expires. In the event that the catcher was on base or the last to bat: if the catcher is not out of the dugout at the "30 seconds left" reminder and another player is warming up the pitcher, the umpire will hold up the pitcher with one warm-up pitch left and wait for the game catcher to arrive. This will allow the game catcher to throw the ball down following the last warm-up pitch.
7. If the P/DH is the third out or on base when the third out is made to end the inning, allow the P/DH to get their glove and be ready to start the warmups without penalizing the defense for exceeding the 120-second time limit.
8. The 120-second pitch clock is enforced even if a coach or player continues to argue an inning-ending play and the clock expires.

Note: It is permissible to use a portable visible clock to show the time remaining between innings but have the 20-second interval between pitches kept by the umpires on the field until the use of a visible clock is required.

Penalty for Arguing Any Penalty or Timing Procedure

Following a team warning, if a coach, student-athlete, manager or any nonplaying personnel argues any penalty or timing procedure, the offender is subject to immediate ejection without warning. The head coach is allowed to bring a clock malfunction or misapplication of the protocol to the umpire's attention.

Location of the Clock

Each conference will determine if a visible clock will be used for all games or for conference games only and/or if the timer will be administered by the umpire crew on the field. If a visible clock is used, it shall ideally be located on the outfield scoreboard or atop the outfield fence in either left- or right-centerfield as well as behind home plate. The clock should be readily visible to the pitcher, catcher and home plate umpire.

Personnel to Operate the Clock

Each conference is responsible for developing guidelines for training qualified individuals to operate the clock during games.

No Visible Clock Available or Malfunction of the Clock

If no visible clock is available or if the time clock malfunctions, time will be kept on the field by the third base umpire in a three-umpire, four-umpire or six-umpire crew and the base umpire in a two-umpire crew.

Appendix G

Bat Testing Protocols

The NCAA Baseball Rules require all nonwood bats used during competition be reviewed by baseball bat testing conducted prior to each regular season series or single date of competition. A bat must satisfy all sections of the bat testing process to be compliant for competition. Bats failing any section of the testing protocol The purpose of this testing is to ensure that legal equipment is used in competition. Rule 4.4.c requires that coaches confirm that their team is playing with legal equipment.

All bats used during competition must appear on the NCAA Approved Bat List, pass the barrel ring test and barrel compression testing. Bat testing is required for all NCAA competition.

Bat Testing Procedure

SECTION 1. Bat testing consists of three parts:

- a. Visual Inspection of the Bat – The bat shall be visually inspected to ensure the following:
 - 1) Ensure that the bat model appears on the approved bat list
 - 2) Ensure the bat does not appear on the NCAA non-compliant bat list.
 - 3) Ensure the bat does not have flat spots.
 - 4) Ensure the bat does not have audible rattle.
 - 5) Ensure the bat does not have a cracked or loose knob or end cap, or attachments.
- b. Ring Test – The bat shall pass through an approved ring to verify that the bat does not exceed the maximum diameter and that the barrel is not misshapen. To conduct the ring test, the following steps shall be followed:
 - 1) Place the bat end cap on the ground and place the bat ring over the knob letting it fall.
 - 2) If the ring passes over the bat from gravity alone (without force), the diameter passes.
 - 3) If the bat passes through the ring, it proceeds to barrel compression testing.
 - 4) If the ring does not pass over the bat, the bat is unacceptable for play and is surrendered for the duration of the game/series.
- c. Barrel Compression Test Procedure – The bat shall be compressed by an approved barrel compression fixture. The compression device shall be calibrated prior to beginning testing for the series or game.
 - 1) Calibrate fixture - To check the calibration of the device, insert the calibration cylinder (provided with the tester) just as you would a bat. Be sure to center the cylinder under the anvil. Turn the gauge until it reads “0 lbs.” and pull the cam level. The compression should meet the tolerance

engraved on the cylinder. If the device is not calibrated, contact the LV Sports customer service line with any questions.

After calibrating the fixture, all nonwood bats shall be tested in two location on the barrel using the following process:

- 2) Barrel compression test.
- 3) Each bat will be tested approximately six (6) inches from the end of the barrel. The bat will then be rotated 90 degrees and tested again.
- 4) Bats will be tested a maximum of three times, until it receives two passing results or two failing results, whichever comes first.
- 5) If after tests:
 - a. The bat has two passing results, the bat will be considered approved for competition.
 - b. The bat has one passing result and one failing result, the bat will be removed from the machine and be visually inspected for cracks. If no cracks are found, the bat will be tested a third time for a final result.
 - c. The bat has two failing results, the bat will be considered unacceptable for play and is surrendered for the duration of the game/series.
 - d. If the compliance or non-compliance of a bat is questioned, game management will request final review by the umpire crew chief or umpire crew prior to a team's first game at a neutral site venue or tournament.

Identifying Approved Bats

SECTION 2. Bats passing bat testing shall be identified as approved with a tamper-proof sticker at the taper area of the bat. The taper area is the area at the bottom of the barrel, just above the handle.

- a. Series at campus location – Bats shall be tested prior to the first game of the series. Bats shall be identified as passing by placing the opposing team's tamper-proof sticker on the bat.
- b. Single date of competition at campus or neutral location – Bats shall be tested prior to all single dates of competition at a campus or neutral site location. Bats shall be identified as passing by placing the opposing team's tamper-proof sticker on the bat.
- c. Tournament or neutral site events – Bats shall be tested prior to the first contest during a tournament or neutral site event. Bats shall be identified as passing with a tournament or event tamper-proof sticker provided by the host institution or entity.
- d. The tamper-proof sticker shall be applied to the same location on the bat to allow a single tamper-proof sticker for the applicable game, series or tournament shall be the prominently visible sticker to identify the bat a compliant.

Location and Time of Testing

SECTION 3. The location of bat testing shall be identified to the participating teams no less than 24 hours prior to the scheduled start of competition.

- a. Single game, doubleheader or single opponent series.
 - 1) Testing should occur prior to each team's practice time or at an agreed upon time by mutual agreement of the participating schools. Conferences can establish a designated testing time for conference games.

- 2) Testing must be conducted with representatives from both teams and a game management present.
 - 3) Coaches or team designee will bring all bats to the testing location.
 - 4) Testing should be conducted away from public view.
- b. Tournament or multi-team event.
- 1) Testing should occur at an agreed upon time with the tournament host prior to the team's first competition. Bat testing is valid through the conclusion of the event.
 - 2) Testing must be conducted by the host with the team representative present.
 - 3) Coaches or team designee will bring all bats to the testing location.
 - 4) Testing should be conducted away from public view.

Procedure for Failed Bats

SECTION 4. Bats that fail any part of the bat testing protocol shall be surrendered to game management and be retained for the duration of the game, series or tournament for being unacceptable for play.

Barrel Compression Testing Equipment

SECTION 5. Barrel compression testing equipment is required to conduct barrel compression testing.

Stickers

SECTION 6. Bat stickers shall be made of a destructible material, so that the sticker is not transferrable from one bat to another. Bats that pass the testing process shall be identified with the opposing team's sticker for the single game, doubleheader or single opponent series throughout the season. Bats that pass the testing process shall be identified with the tournament/event or conference's sticker at for tournament or multi-team events. The sticker shall remain visible during the contest, series or tournament.

The sticker shall be placed at the taper, the area at the bottom of the barrel, just above the handle.

Appendix H

Concussions

Revised April 2016

A concussion is a brain injury that is most commonly caused by a blow to the head or trunk, or by the head or body forcefully impacting the ground. Concussions most commonly occur without loss of consciousness. Typically, there are subtle indications that a concussion has occurred, such as the student-athlete shaking their head, stumbling, or appearing dazed or stunned.

Game officials are often in a best position to observe student-athletes up-close, and may be the first to notice the unusual behaviors that indicate a concussion may be present. Student-athletes with a suspected concussion must be removed from competition so that a medical examination can be conducted by the primary athletics healthcare provider (i.e., athletic trainer or team physician).

Importantly, a game official is not expected to evaluate a student-athlete. Instead, if an official notices any unusual behavior, the official should stop play immediately and call an injury time-out so that an appropriate medical examination can be conducted. A simple guide to the official's role is: "When in doubt, call an injury timeout."

An official may observe the following behaviors by a student-athlete with a suspected concussion:

- Appears dazed or stunned.
- Appears confused or incoherent.
- Shakes head.
- Stumbles; has to be physically supported by teammates.
- Moves clumsily or awkwardly.
- Shows behavior or personality changes.

A student-athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion, either at rest or during exertion, should be removed immediately from practice or competition and should not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional. Sports have injury timeouts and player substitutions so that student-athletes can receive appropriate medical evaluation.

IF A CONCUSSION IS SUSPECTED:

1. **Remove the student-athlete from play.** Look for the signs and symptoms of concussion if the student-athlete has experienced a blow to the head. Do not allow the student-athlete to just "shake it off." Each student-athlete will respond to concussions differently.
2. **Ensure that the student-athlete is evaluated immediately by an appropriate health care professional.** Do not try to judge the severity of the injury. Call an injury time-out to ensure that the student-athlete is evaluated by one of the primary athletics healthcare providers.

- 3. Allow the student-athlete to return to play only with permission from the primary athletics healthcare provider.** Allow athletics medical staff to rely on their clinical skills and protocols in evaluating the student-athlete to establish the appropriate time to return to play.

Please refer to the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook and the Diagnosis and Management of Sport-Related Concussion Guidelines for additional information and details regarding concussions. Both are available at ncaa.org.

Appendix I

Accommodations for Student-Athletes with Disabilities

The NCAA encourages participation by student-athletes with disabilities (physical or mental) in intercollegiate athletics and physical activities to the full extent of their interests and abilities. An NCAA member institution will have the right to seek, on behalf of any student-athlete with a disability participating on the member's team, a reasonable modification or accommodation of a playing rule, provided that the modification or accommodation would not:

1. Compromise the safety of, or increase the risk of injury to, any other student-athlete;
2. Change an essential element that would fundamentally alter the nature of the game; or
3. Provide the student-athlete an unfair advantage over the other competitors.

To request any such modification or accommodation, the member's director of athletics, or his/her designee, must submit a rule waiver request, in writing, to the secretary-rules editor. Such written request should describe:

- a. The playing rule from which relief is sought;
- b. The nature of the proposed modification or accommodation;
- c. The nature of the student-athlete's disability and basis for modification or accommodation; and
- d. The proposed duration of the requested modification or accommodation.

Additionally, each request should be accompanied by documentation evidencing the student-athlete's disability (e.g., a medical professional's letter). Upon receipt of a complete waiver request, the secretary-rules editor will consult with NCAA staff, the applicable sport/rules committee, other sport governing bodies, and/or outside experts, to conduct an individual inquiry as to whether the requested modification or accommodation can be made. In making this assessment, the NCAA may request additional information from the member institution. The secretary-rules editor will communicate the decision in writing (which may be via email) to the requesting member institution. If the request is granted, the member institution should be prepared to provide the written decision to the officiating staff, opposing coach(es), and tournament director (if applicable) for each competition in which the student-athlete will participate. NCAA members are directed to consult Guideline 2P of the NCAA Sports Medicine Handbook for further considerations regarding participation by student-athletes with impairment.

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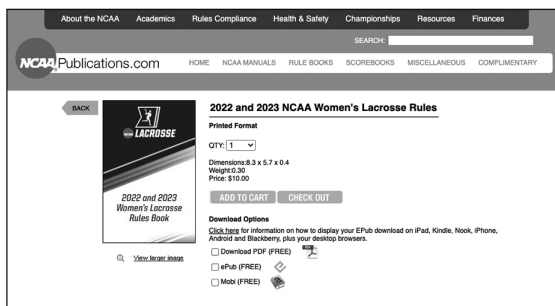
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