



BASEBALL 2020

A supplement to the NCAA Baseball Rules • Prepared by the editors of *Referee*

Ready ... And ... *Action!*

Rule Change Puts 20-Second Action Clock Into Effect



In their ongoing quest to improve pace of play, the NCAA Baseball Rules Committee and the Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP) have approved the expanded use of a 20-second action clock in all NCAA divisions starting with the upcoming 2020 season.

Not to be confused with a pitch clock, the action clock mandates that, once the home-plate umpire signals play, or 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, the pitcher shall be allowed 20 seconds to begin the activity preceding each pitch. The pitcher does not necessarily have to release the ball within 20 seconds; however, the pitcher must begin his windup motion or otherwise begin the motion to come set in order to comply with the rule.

Upon a first violation, the pitcher shall be warned by the umpire. There is one warning per pitcher. Each subsequent violation shall result in the award of a ball to the batter 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 and the batter is entitled to advance to first.

Conversely, batters shall enter and remain in the batter's box in accordance with rule 7-1-d and not delay entry to gain an undue advantage. If the batter does not

See "Action Clock" p. 3

If there is no visible play clock on the field, NCAA umpires will need to use a stopwatch to adjudicate the 20-second action clock during the 2020 season. Travis Reininger, Brighton, Colo.

BOB MESSINA



Welcome to the 2020 College Baseball Season

An important aspect and responsibility of the NCAA Baseball Umpire Program is the training and education of officials to increase knowledge, consistency and standard interpretations across the country.



George Drouches

**NCAA National
Coordinator of Umpires**

The information in this 2020 NCAA Preseason Baseball Guide is designed to provide not only information, but clarifications leading into the season. Umpires, always keep this preseason guide

with your development materials for use in your study and pregame discussions. Coaches, please keep this pregame guide with your game day materials as a quick reference. In addition, coaches, I strongly urge you to join in our collaborative efforts to improve our great game by registering with www.ncaabaseball.arbitersports.com to access the NCAA's Home Plate page.

- Leadership is not about production, it's about reproduction.

The standards of the NCAA Baseball Umpire Program is for all stakeholders affiliated with NCAA Baseball to align to the training, education and testing benchmarks, as this will all but eliminate the possibility that the integrity of our great game can be compromised.

This past summer, I mentioned to the NCAA Division I conference baseball administrators, conference coordinators, the NCAA Division I Baseball Committee and the NCAA Baseball Rules Committee that I was extremely proud of how the coaching and umpiring communities addressed the rules changes and game-changing challenges presented this past season, and that this successful collaborative effort was required in one of the

most impactful seasons in the recent history of NCAA Baseball.

- You don't have to be ridiculously gifted. You just have to be ridiculously committed.

Rule interpretations (charged conferences, hit by pitch, between innings timing protocols, expanded video review, pitching position, runner's lane interference and the suspension penalties) will continue to be issued by Randy Bruns, NCAA secretary-rules editor, as needed to clarify and educate all to the provisions. For the first time, centralized video review was implemented within the 2019 NCAA Division I Baseball Regionals. Centralized video review officials had 187 reviews in the 138 games played during the regionals, super regionals and College World Series. Throughout the 2019 NCAA Division I Baseball Championship, there were 101 games with at least one review. The average reviews per game were 1.5, and the average length of each review was 1 minute, 15 seconds.

- If you think for too long about a missed opportunity, chances are you will miss the next one, too.

The 20-second action pitch clock, whether visible or not, should have dramatic pace-of-play momentum in 2020. This momentum doesn't require something monumental — approach pace-of-play's changes with passion and we will be fine.

- Integrity means that what you thought, what you said, and what you did are all the same.

For the seventh year, comprehensive incident/ejection/suspension reports were submitted online by all NCAA divisions. This is a tremendous benefit for all and has led to some very unsettling behavioral trends for several years now regarding the culture of baseball and possible resolutions. In 2019, the national coordinator of umpires received 862 NCAA incident/

ejection/suspension reports (858 in 2018; 708 in 2017; 692 in 2016; and 658 in 2015). These included 361 Division I reports (337 in 2018; 302 in 2017; 264 in 2016). Of this list, 178 were head coaches, 64 were assistant coaches and 119 were student-athletes.

A brief categorizing of the causes for the Division I ejections included ball/strike: 156 of 361; safe/out: 71 of 361. All ejections are technically unsportsmanlike, with profanity reported at 90 percent within the incident/ejection/suspension reports. The total number of suspended games in 2019 was 339 (368 in 2018; 287 in 2017; and 212 in 2016). All NCAA Division I incident/ejection/suspension reports were forwarded (with rule reference, pursuant to suspension penalty) to the conference office baseball administrator/liaison as well as the conference coordinator and Baseball Umpire Program staff. Coaches and officials: be a contributor, not a distraction.

Looking ahead to 2020, the goal of the national coordinator of umpires has always been to continue to grow the Baseball Umpire Program and to manage and lead the many facets of the program. An excellent, dedicated and passionate staff assists this effort greatly. Perception and professionalism continue to be emphasized. Teaching and mentoring the "NCAA Way" is job number one: inclusive of consistency, accuracy and poise in our dealings on the field — as it is very important for the integrity of our game to select officials for the championship who are adhering to the NCAA rules, points of emphasis and the NCAA Baseball Umpire Program's protocols. We have high expectations of our officials.

The NCAA Division I Baseball Committee and the Baseball Umpire Program are committed to improving umpiring during the regular season, as well as the NCAA baseball championship. The continued

See "Welcome" p. 3

Action Clock

Continued from p. 1

enter the box and become alert to the pitcher with five or more seconds remaining on the action clock, the batter will be in violation and the umpire shall award a strike without the pitcher having to deliver the pitch. Again, the ball is dead and no runners may advance.

Prior to this season, the rule – found in Appendix F of the NCAA rulebook – was applicable whenever the bases were unoccupied. It now includes situations when there are baserunners, with the idea of not allowing the game to bog down and become an actionless contest once there are runners on base.

“That’s a continuous concern in baseball in general, not just at our level. It’s not even so much the time of the game, but that there is continuous action in the game,” said Randy Bruns, the NCAA’s secretary-rules editor for baseball. “(The action clock) should not only reduce overall game times, but just as important, keep the game going. The whole idea is at least there’s some activity that is going on.”

The rules committee actually

approved the rule change in July 2018, with a second component that called for a visible time clock. However, PROP did not pass the two rules in conjunction, citing cost implications, particularly for Division II and Division III programs. Instead, a visible time clock is recommended, but not mandated. In ballparks where there is no visible clock, a member of the umpiring crew must use an on-field stopwatch to maintain compliance.

“Of course the concern is, how am I going to do that with a runner on base and still watch for other important things?” Bruns said. “It’s not going to be perfect. But it will be certainly better than it was before. I think it will have a real positive impact once people get used to it.”

As with last season, when a rule targeting the time between innings took center stage, NCAA baseball officials want the action clock rule enforced, visible clock or not. Bruns used the example of an expired play clock in football or shot clock in basketball to emphasize

“This is not a guideline,” said Bruns, echoing the same language he used last offseason. “These time

limits are required. These are not guidelines. These are things that need to be administered.

“Is it going to be perfect in every situation, if your attention is drawn to some other part of a play? No. But it’s going to be much more consistent if we make sure that all the umpires are focused on it, and so are the coaches. The coaches and players are going to adjust, it’s just a matter of they’ve never had to before.

“It’s probably going to lead more people to use some level of a visible clock. Again, sometimes you have to walk before you run. We have to get some experience with this before we realize how that is exactly going to take place.”

Bat colors/testing

Two additional significant changes in NCAA baseball for the 2020 season involve bats.

The first change involves the color of the bat barrel. It must now be of a predominantly contrasting color to the color of the baseball between the 18-inch mark and the end cap (1-12-b.7). The rationale is to help alleviate safety concerns created for fielders having trouble picking up the ball off the bat. There is a list available at ncaa.org/playingrules of bats no longer approved by color.

The second change involves bat barrel compression testing. 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. PROP approved the rule in 2017 but delayed its implementation due to cost concerns related to purchasing the necessary equipment. The rule will go into effect at the Division I level for 2020, and at the Division II and Division III levels in 2021. □

Welcome

Continued from p. 2

growth of college baseball makes it imperative that we strive to assign well-trained and qualified umpires to every game throughout the season. The NCAA Baseball Umpire Policies in 2020 will serve as surety and will safeguard these directives. Finally, our commitment to the well-being of the umpire was reinforced with the NCAA’s Chair of the Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports speaking at our

umpire clinics, and as a contributor to our dedicated Home Plate wellness section.

• Depth determines reach. I need to formally thank Randy Bruns, Mark Ditsworth, Bobbi Edmunds, Tom Hiler, Jim Jackson, Bob LaBelle, Bill McCallum Jr., Scott Taylor and Don Umland, as they all know that success has two inconvenient demands: getting started and finishing well. Wishing all the stakeholders of our great game of NCAA college baseball the very best in 2020. □

Acknowledgments

Written by Scott Tittrington, *Referee* associate editor; Graphics and layout by Matt Bowen, *Referee* graphic designer.

Major portions of this newsletter are protected by copyrights of Referee Enterprises, Inc., and are used by permission. Copying

in whole or in part is prohibited without prior written consent from Referee Enterprises, Inc., and the NCAA. PlayPic® and MechaniGram® are registered trademarks of Referee Enterprises, Inc.

Flashback: 2019 Rules Review

The NCAA Baseball Rules Committee and the Playing Rules Oversight Panel (PROP) approved changes for the 2019 and 2020 seasons that range from an expansion of video review and adding coaches' challenges to updating the hit by pitch rules so intentionally making a movement to get hit results in a strike regardless of pitch location.

There are also significant changes that aim to improve pace of play, which remains squarely in the crosshairs for college baseball.

Time Between Innings/Between Pitches – Appendix F

Consistent enforcement of both time limits between innings and between pitches are important to a game's pace of play.

The time between innings shall increase from 90 seconds for untelevised games and 108 seconds for televised games to 120 seconds for all games. The 120-second clock shall begin when all defensive players have started to leave their position after the last out is made. The clock stops when the umpire calls "play" for the first pitch of the first batter of the next half-inning. A team may use one of its charged conferences to avoid a penalty. If the offensive team is not ready within the 120-second limit, the umpire shall call a strike. If the defensive team is not ready, the umpire will award a ball to the first batter.

Further, the 2019 and 2020 rules recommend use of a visible clock to make this easier for coaches, players and umpires. The rules committee recommended a rule change that would have made use of a play clock mandatory, but PROP rejected that recommendation, citing the cost implications, particularly for Division II and Division III programs. Where no visible clock is used, conferences may choose to instruct on-field umpires to use a stopwatch. "In

either case, these time limits must be administered consistently at all levels of NCAA play," the new rules state.

Umpires who manage the between-inning timing on a stopwatch should put up their arm with 30 seconds remaining and visually cue the plate umpire. The plate umpire should then relay, "30 seconds left," to the pitcher and catcher, and summon the lead-off batter to the plate. At 15 seconds, the base umpire should hold an arm off to the side. At expiration, the base umpire should point to the plate umpire.

If the catcher is the third out or on base when the third out was made, and the 120-second time limit has expired, he will still be allowed to throw the ball down following the last warmup pitch.

Defensive Conferences – 6-5-f

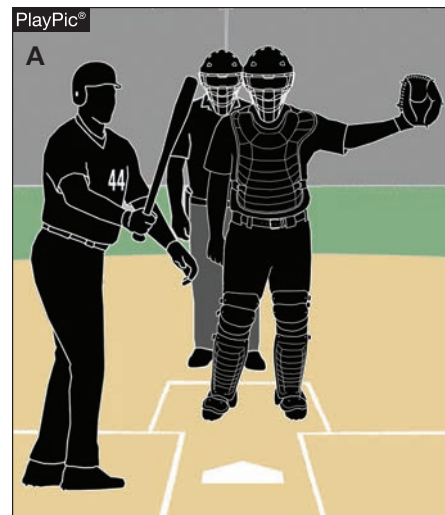
A team will be allowed six defensive conferences during a regulation game. A maximum of three of these defensive conferences may include a coach.

If the game goes into extra innings, the team will receive one extra defensive conference and one extra offensive conference, plus any unused conferences from the first nine innings. If there is a pitching change, there is no charged conference.

Offensive Conferences – 6-5-f-4

There's no such thing as a free lunch — or a free offensive conference during a defensive-charged conference. An offensive conference will be charged if any batter or runner leaves their position during a defensive-charged conference.

However, a pitching change is not a charged conference and the next batter and any runners are allowed to leave their positions to meet with a coach, but should return before the last warmup pitch so the game can be started promptly.



No-Pitch Intentional Walk – 2-7

The defensive team's head coach will be able to signal to the umpire that the coach intends to intentionally walk the batter without throwing four pitches. This change aligns the NCAA with professional rules, which adopted a no-pitch intentional walk for the 2017 season.

Feint to Third from Pitching Plate – 9-3-a

Pitchers will no longer be able to step directly to third from the pitching plate and feint the throw. That effectively ends the move of feinting to third and spinning around and throwing to first — the so-called "third-to-first move." Third base will be treated like first base: a pitcher who steps there on a pickoff throw cannot feint to the base; a throw must be made or a balk will be called. This change aligns the NCAA with professional rules, which adopted the change in 2013.

Video Review Expanded; Challenges Added

The NCAA approved expansion of video review to include additional plays and added coaches' challenges.

The changes are reflected in Appendix E, Section 2: "Getting the Call Right with the use of video review." ►

► Under the new rules, each team's head coach will be permitted two challenges per game. The head coach should notify an umpire immediately — within approximately 10 seconds — at the end of a play if he intends to use a challenge on the previous play. If on a game-ending play, the coach must call for a review before all umpires leave the field of play.

Those challenges can be used on any of the 12 plays identified as eligible for the use of video review — the first six unchanged from the 2017-18 rules; the last six new for 2019-20.

The original six reviewable plays are:

- a. 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.
- b. Deciding if a batted ball is either a ground-rule double or a home run.
- c. Any catch or no-catch ruling in the outfield or foul territory.
- d. 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.
- e. Spectator interference.
- f. Deciding scoring plays at home plate inclusive of collisions (illegal and/or malicious slides) or time plays.

Added to the list of reviewable plays:

- g. Force and tag play calls at any base.
- h. Calls involving whether a base runner passes a preceding runner; determining whether a base runner scored ahead of a third out; and upon an appropriate appeal by the defensive team, determining whether a base runner touched a base.
- i. Plays involving a hit by pitch.
- j. Deciding if a runner failed to retouch a base after a fair or foul ball is legally caught.
- k. Non-home run boundary calls including the placement of runners following a boundary call.

- l. Deciding if interference occurred on a runner's attempt to break up a double play.

The crew chief, at his discretion at any time during the game, may also initiate a video review on items a-through-f. The crew chief may initiate a review of plays g-through-l only during the last two innings of regulation and any extra innings.

When centralized video review is used, the off-field video review official will be considered an extension of the umpiring crew and will have the ability to notify the umpires on the field that a review should be initiated. The off-field video review official will follow the same review protocols as the crew chief, including initiating review on items a-through-f at any time; and items g-through-l during the final two innings or during extra innings.

Intentionally Move to Get HBP = Strike – 7-4-i and 8-2-d

A batter is not permitted to make an intentional movement to be hit by a pitch, regardless of where the pitch is located. If, in the umpire's judgment, a batter makes an intentional movement to be hit by a pitch, the batter will not be awarded first base and, instead, will be charged with a strike. The pitch is ruled a strike regardless of the pitch's actual location.

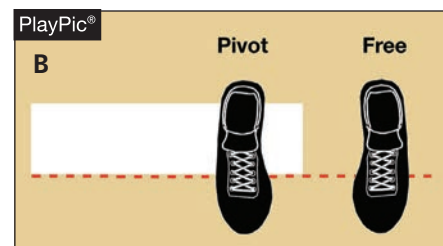
The rule change provides guidance in enforcing the hit-by-pitch rule and to deter batters from attempting to be hit by the pitch. A batter who "freezes" inside the batter's box and gets hit by a pitch shall be awarded first base. "Freezing" by the batter within the batter's box is not considered making an intentional movement.

At the same time, freezing and getting hit outside the batter's box doesn't protect the batter.

Because judging whether a batter intentionally makes a movement to be hit by a pitch involves a ball/strike decision, coaches may not argue the call, but they can use one of their two video review challenges.

Pitching Position Rule Change

Two rule changes about pitching positions aim to clarify when a pitcher is in the windup position and when a pitcher is in the set position.



To be considered in a windup position (9-1-a), a pitcher must stand with his chest and shoulders generally facing the batter, with the pivot foot on or in front of and touching the pitcher's plate. The pitcher's free foot must be touching or be behind the plane of the front edge of the pitching plate.

This clarifies the windup pitching position for umpires to properly apply the applicable pitching rules and further distinguish the windup position from the set position.

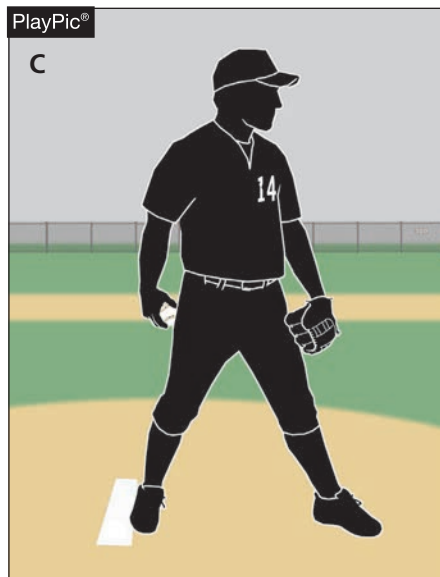
For a pitcher to be in a set position (9-1-b), the pitcher must stand with his chest and shoulders generally facing the respective foul line. The pitcher's pivot foot must be in contact parallel with the pitching plate, and his free foot must be in

See "Intent" p. 6

Intent

Continued from p. 5

front of the pitcher's plate. It is permissible for the pitcher to turn his shoulders and face the batter while getting the sign and before bringing his hands together in the set position.



obstruction, the ball shall be dead immediately and the runner involved shall be awarded one base beyond the last base the runner had attained before the obstruction.

Previously, the language in 8-3-e-1 Note only applied to pickoff plays, and now it applies to all plays.



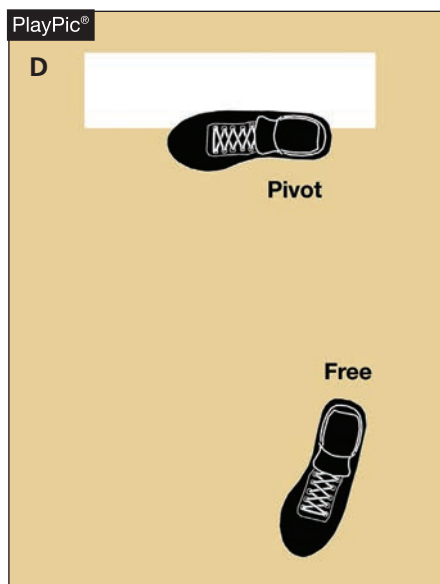
Intentionally Disrupting Pitcher's Delivery – 5-15-a-2

A batter may not use tactics with the obvious purpose of disrupting the pitcher's delivery. If a balk or illegal pitch occurs, or if the pitch is called a ball, the call shall be nullified. The batter is ejected for unsporting conduct.

If something happens unintentionally, call time and let everybody reset. But if intentional, it's an unsporting act and the penalty should be invoked. If the pitcher stops his motion or throws ball four, that should be nullified and the batter should be ejected. If the pitcher throws a strike, the batter is still ejected, but the count now includes that strike.

Bat/Ball Persons – 1-15-a

All non-roster, designated bat/ball persons — i.e., team personnel other than players or coaches — must wear a double-ear flap protective helmet while performing their duties. This change is aimed at enhancing the safety of support personnel.



Backswing Interference – 6-2-d

During a batter's backswing (his follow-through after swinging and missing a pitch), if the batter hits the catcher or the ball, the pitch shall be called a strike, the ball will be dead and no runner shall advance on the play.

This clarifies that any bat contact with the catcher during the backswing — including when the ball is not caught by the catcher — will be considered backswing interference. Previously, the rule language stated "as the pitch is caught."

The exception in 6-2-d-2 remains. If a catcher is in the act of throwing when the contact occurs, time is called and the runner returns, unless the catcher's initial throw directly and immediately retires the runner.

Remember: Backswing interference — a swing that unintentionally interferes with the catcher — is treated differently from batter's interference, and the penalties for those actions are very different.

Dugout Extension Area – 1-16-b

Uniformed team personnel, coaches and extra on-deck hitters are prohibited from standing or sitting in the dugout extension area or dead-ball area on the home-plate side of the dugout during play. This is aimed at enhancing the safety of bat/ball persons who are supposed to be in this area by restricting coaches and other team personnel from entering those areas to observe the game.

Runner Touched by Ball – 8-5-k

Rule 8-5-k was modified to clarify the status of the pitcher for purposes of a fair batted ball striking a runner. The change in language codifies existing practices. A runner will be out if hit while in fair territory by a fair batted ball before it has touched a fielder, including the pitcher, or before it has passed all infielders who have a chance to make a play on the ball, other than the pitcher. □

Possessing Ball Key in Obstruction Rule

In a change to Rule 8-3-e-1 Note, a defensive player may not block any part of the base with any part of his body unless he has clear possession of the ball. If the defensive player blocks a base before having clear possession of the ball, the umpire shall call

NCAA Misconduct Penalties

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
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 next five contests	Ejection plus a suspension for the remainder of the season, including postseason competition	5-16-b
Leaving position to participate in a fight	Any participant	Four-game suspension after the ejection	Suspended for the remainder of the season	N/A	5-16-c, Penalty (1), (5)
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)
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 plus 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 a 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

Note 1: It is the responsibility of the institution's 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.

Test Yourself

In each of the following, decide which answer(s) is/are correct using the 2020 NCAA rules.

1. In the first inning, a coach has a conference with F1 at the mound. The coach starts to return to the dugout and makes it to approximately halfway between the mound and the foul line. The coach then begins to return to the mound.

- a. Legal, F1 may remain in the game as the pitcher.
- b. Legal, but F1 must leave the mound and may not return to pitch (he may remain in the game).
- c. Legal, but F1 must leave the game.
- d. Not allowed; the umpire should stop the coach.

2. In the top of the sixth, the visitors take a 7-5 lead. In the bottom of the sixth, the home team ties the score with one out. The bases are loaded when rain washes out further play.

- a. A tie game must be declared, with play to resume at a later date at the point of interruption.
- b. A tie game must be declared and count as 1/2 win and 1/2 loss.
- c. If the NCAA halted game rule was agreed upon, a suspended game could be declared and replayed in its entirety at a later date.
- d. If the NCAA halted game rule was agreed upon, the game would resume at a later date at the point of interruption.

3. Green enters the game to pitch with the bases loaded and one out. Before throwing a pitch, he picks off R2. Excluding an injury, Green:

- a. May be replaced immediately.
- b. Must remain in the game until another out is made.
- c. Must pitch to the next batter until that at-bat is completed.
- d. Must pitch until the inning is over.
- e. None of the above.

4. With the bases loaded, B1's fly ball drops in short left field. F6 picks up the ball and throws wildly toward the plate and the ball goes into dead-ball territory. When F6 released the throw, all runners



When exactly does a conference end? Ben Gray, Highland Park, Ill., must know how to handle the situation if a coach starts to return to the dugout and then begins to return to the mound. Question 1 deals with such a scenario.

had advanced to and touched the next base, but B1 had not yet touched first.

- a. One run scores.
- b. Two runs score.
- c. Three runs score.
- d. B1 is awarded first.
- e. B1 is awarded second.
- f. B1 is awarded third.

5. B1 bunts down the first-base line. The ball rolls to foul territory and, as he's running toward first, B1, in disgust, intentionally kicks the ball toward the dugout. The umpire is certain the ball has no chance to roll fair.

- a. B1 is warned that he could be called out for such actions.
- b. B1 is ejected for unsportsmanlike behavior.
- c. B1 is called out.
- d. The play stands; foul ball.

6. With R1 on first, the hit-and-run is on. B1 hits a fly ball to the centerfield fence that is caught. R1 touches second on his way to third, but misses it on his return to first. F8's throw to F3 goes into dead-ball territory. The base umpire properly awards third to R1.

- a. Since R1 touched second at least once, it is not considered a missed base.
- b. The award negates any appeal on the missed base.

- c. If R1 touches second while proceeding on the award, an appeal on the missed base cannot be upheld.
- d. R1 will be called out on proper appeal whether or not he touches second while advancing on the award.

7. With R2 on second and one out, B1 singles as R2 attempts to score. F2 misses the tag on R2 as R2 slides and misses the plate. B1 tries for second and is thrown out as F2 forgets about R2.

- a. R2's run counts unless it is appealed.
- b. R2's missed base cannot be appealed after the subsequent play on B1.
- c. R2 may not return and touch home after the subsequent play on B1.
- d. R2 may return and touch home after he enters the dugout.

8. Which of the following runners are out when hit by a batted ball?

- a. A runner who is on his base and is hit by a fair line drive.
- b. A runner who is on his base and is hit by an infield fly.
- c. A runner who is hit by a ball that previously hit another runner.
- d. A runner who is hit in foul territory by a deflected fair ball.
- e. None of the above.

9. With a runner on first, one out and a 3-2 count, B1 checks his swing. The plate umpire calls, "Ball four." F2 asks for an appeal and fires to F4, who tags R1, who was trotting to second. The base umpire says, "He went," and the plate umpire calls B1 out.

- a. R1 is out.
- b. R1 is awarded second because a walk was initially declared.
- c. R1 is returned to first because of the reversed call.

10. Using a 10-player lineup, the home team has Larry as the DH. In the top of the fifth, Scott is moved from F4 to F1 and Ken comes off the bench to play second. In the bottom of the fifth, Larry leads off and singles. After the first pitch to the next batter, the opposing coach appeals to the plate umpire.

- a. Since a pitch has been delivered to a subsequent batter, it is too late to appeal Larry for batting.
- b. Larry is declared out.
- c. Nothing improper has occurred.

11. With the bases empty, B1 has a 2-2 count when he swings and misses a pitch in the dirt. The ball rebounds off F2 and hits B1's foot as he attempts to advance to first base.

- a. B1 is out for interference.
- b. B1 is only out if he intentionally interferes.
- c. Once F2 deflects the ball, interference cannot be called.
- d. Interference is called if B1 clearly hinders F2 in his attempt to field the ball.

12. With a runner on first base, B1 hits a foul fly ball deep down the left-field line. F7 makes the catch and in an attempt to throw the ball back to the infield, the ball goes out of play. R1 was beyond second base when the fielder fell into the stands.

- a. R1 can return to first and tag up because he did not touch third base.
- b. R1 can return to first as long as he is trying to return when the ball goes dead.
- c. R1 cannot legally return and should be called out when the ball becomes dead.
- d. R1 cannot legally return but can only be called out if an appeal is made.

13. With R1 on first, R3 on third and one out, the hit-and-run is on. B1 hits a line drive to F4, who chases R1 back to first and tags him before he returns to first. In

the meantime, R3 scores prior to R1 being tagged. R3 scores without retouching third after F4's catch. Which of the following is true?

- a. This is a force play.
- b. R3's run counts unless it is properly appealed.
- c. An appeal must be made before all fielders leave fair territory.

14. With a runner on first, F1 delivers and R1 breaks on the pitch. The umpire interferes with F2 and the throw goes into center field. R1 tries for third and is thrown out by F8.

- a. R1 is called out.
- b. R1 is returned to first.
- c. R1 is returned to second.
- d. The play stands.

15. With R3 on third in the bottom of ninth, the visiting team is leading 2-1. F1 balks and immediately delivers the pitch to B1. B1 hits the ball over the fence. A balk is called.

- a. The ball is dead, R3 scores, no pitch.
- b. R3 scores and a ball is called on the batter.
- c. The ball remains live and the game is over with the home team winning 3-2.

16. Which of the following are true if the DH is batting for the pitcher?

- a. The pitcher may pinch run, but only for the DH.
- b. The DH is never allowed to play defense.
- c. The pitcher may pinch hit for another defensive player.
- d. If the DH plays defense, the pitcher must leave the game.

17. With R2 on second and no outs, B1 stands as if to bunt, but swings away. F5 creeps in and the ball deflects off his glove. It remains in the air, and floats toward third, where F6 is coming to cover the bag. The ball hits R2 and drops to the ground. Both runners are safe. The umpire judges that R2 did not deliberately interfere with the batted ball.

- a. B1 only is called out.
- b. R2 only is called out.
- c. Both B1 and R2 are called out.
- d. The play stands.

18. B1 hits a ball that lands in front of the mound. The backspin on the ball brings it back toward the plate, where it hits the

bat, which is in fair territory. B1 is safe at first.

- a. The umpire must judge whether the ball would have been fair or foul had it not contacted the bat.
- b. The umpire must judge whether the bat was intentionally placed with the intent to interfere.
- c. The play stands.
- d. B1 is out for interference.

19. With no runners on base, B1 takes a called third strike. B1 heads for his dugout not realizing F2 dropped the pitch. F2 then throws the ball wildly toward first. B1 heads for first and makes the base safely.

- a. B1 is out only if he reached the dugout before breaking for first.
- b. B1 is out only if he left the dirt circle of the plate area before breaking for first.
- c. B1 is out regardless of where he was before breaking for first.
- d. The play stands.

20. B1 hits a foul pop up. As F2 positions himself to make the catch, B1 screams very loudly in F2's ear. F2 drops the ball.

- a. No problem, legal play.
- b. The play stands, but B1 is warned.
- c. B1 is out for interference.
- d. B1 is out for interference only if the umpire determines B1 affected the play. □

ANSWERS

- 1. d — 9-4-c, 9-4-d
- 2. d — 5-9, 5-10
- 3. e — 5-5-b
- 4. b and e — 8-3-o-3 Note 1
- 5. d — 7-7-d, 7-11-o
- 6. c — 2-52
- 7. a — 8-6
- 8. a — 6-2-e, 8-5-k Notes 1 & 2
- 9. a — 3-6-f, Appendix E
- 10. b — 5-5-j-1, 7-2-d-7-a
- 11. b — 7-11-o
- 12. b — 8-6-a Note 3
- 13. b — 8-6-b-8
- 14. b — 6-3-a
- 15. c — 9-3 Penalty 1
- 16. a — 7-2
- 17. d — 6-2-e, 8-5-k
- 18. c — 7-11-m
- 19. b — 7-11-u
- 20. c — 2-51, 7-11-f Exception 4

Q&A: Division II and Division III Coordinators

Scott Taylor

Division II Umpire Coordinator



Don Umland

Division III Umpire Coordinator

What did you see in 2019 that umpires were doing really well?

Taylor: More Division II conferences are using three-person crews in season, which means more umpires went to instructional camps, reviewed the CCA Mechanics Manual and worked to get better. Our umpires are starting to realize they must put in such work if they want to move up to Division I baseball conferences.

Umland: I thought there was a significant improvement as it relates to the use of three- and four-person mechanics in the postseason. Almost all of Division III baseball is officiated using two-person mechanics during the regular season. However, I believe more and more umpires are finding ways to improve their skills through camps, clinics and fall baseball opportunities. It's not easy to be at your best when your brain is having to "think" about where to go when using mechanics that are unfamiliar. Repetition and reinforcement accentuate the process, thus providing a better product on the field during the postseason.

I also believe that the enforcement of the strike zone as written in the rulebook has been improved through similar methods. Coordinators at all levels have been encouraging this

thought process. This is especially critical in today's world of technology as almost any game can be viewed via some form of media outlet. With that being said, umpires can be critiqued and rewarded for their efforts when the zone is enforced as written throughout the course of a game, which is one of the qualities I am looking for in a postseason umpire.

Last season saw an expanded postseason at the Division II and Division III levels. How did that benefit umpires, and how do you feel your umpires responded and performed?

Taylor: The expansion gives more umpires a chance to work at the NCAA Regional levels. Adding Super Regionals gives me, as a national coordinator, a better assessment of an umpire's competency. I can evaluate how an umpire handles the additional pressure of performing in higher stress situations and whether they are ready to go to the NCAA Division II National Championship and perform at the highest level of play we offer.

Umland: I couldn't be happier! First and foremost, the expanded format created a significantly greater number of opportunities for umpires to work in the postseason. Division III went

from 65 to 77 umpires working at the regional level. Then, you factor in 32 additional opportunities to work super regionals followed by the national championship with eight umpires. I was also able to bring in a nice balance of first-time vs. returning umpires into the postseason. The competition for these spots is intense. At the same time, having a pool of umpires who can "work" at the postseason level challenges those individuals to get better as there are no guarantees in working beyond the regular season.

The expanded format also included the use of video review and challenges at the Division III National Championship for the first time. We had 20 reviews in Cedar Rapids (Iowa) with 18 of the calls on the field being upheld! There were selected umpires with Division I experience that had worked with video review, which was quite beneficial. I was able to bring in some quality people to handle the video review. Therefore, the process was pretty seamless with the challenge and replays lasting no more than 1:30 on average!

What's one area you want umpires to focus on improving for the 2020 season?

Taylor: Better consistency on balls and ►

► strikes. I watch a lot of video on our umpires at the Division II level. The one thing I notice more than anything else is the lack of consistency on balls and strikes. Numbers don't lie. This problem translates into the number of ejections we have at our level. Of 281 total ejections in Division II baseball in 2019, over half of them were related to balls and strikes.

Be clear. I am not saying every ejection over balls and strikes was wrong. We all know student-athletes will react emotionally over what they perceive as inconsistency. But in a lot of cases, umpires have expanded the strike zone. What is a ball one inning might become a strike two innings later. We need to understand that video has changed the way we officiate games — in all sports at all levels. It has become more important than ever for umpires to understand they can call 300 pitches in a game and get 299 right, but if they call one pitch down around the ankles a strike, that pitch will be the one pitch players and coaches remember. There are lots of borderline pitches in every single game we work. You know, the 50/50 pitches. The one that could have been called either way. We really need to work on not calling strikes for the obvious pitches that are out of the zone. Eliminate those misses and fewer problems occur. This is part of the process of becoming a Division I umpire. Those who make adjustments make it to the next level. Those who don't adjust don't advance. It's that simple.

The goal in the NCAA Baseball Umpire Program is to give everyone the tools to umpire at the highest level possible. The evaluation of plate work is a large part of that process.

Umland: For me, it's game management. Ejections have been between 200-250 in each of the five seasons I have been in the position of national coordinator. I thought we might see a steady decline once the

penalty chart was put in place with coaches and players recognizing where their "limits" would be. However, the use of inappropriate language and confrontational attitudes have remained steady despite the increase in penalties.

A coordinated effort by coaches and umpires is integral to the reduction of these numbers. Umpires must use the tools and language that the rulebook, clinics and video bulletins continue to reiterate. Coaches must lead by example and set a tone within their program to respect the game and those who work hard to maintain its integrity. The best umpires recognize when these situations are festering and insert themselves accordingly to defuse situations. Additionally, there is a time and place when an ejection is necessary. That's when it is important that all members of the crew perform to their best and use the skills and proper language that I (and the NCAA) expect.

What differences/challenges do umpires face at the Division II and Division III levels that they do not have to face at other levels?

Taylor: I think the challenges, for the most part, are the same. If I had to pick one thing that stands out for me, it would be the respect level. At the Division I level, I think coaches — especially head coaches — understand and respect the job that umpires have. But when you drop down into Division II and Division III, the mentality is different in some cases. Coaches go out there with chips on their shoulders because they think the umpire has wronged them in the past or that the umpire is looking for the opportunity to use authority to wrong them.

This phenomenon has especially manifested itself with younger assistant coaches. The number of assistant coach ejections doubled

in 2019 over 2018. That's because younger assistants haven't figured out they won't get away with things their head coaches can. Bottom line for me is that assistant coaches need to figure out it's not in their job descriptions to question umpires — especially in a manner that is confrontational. That privilege is given only to a head coach and, even then, only to a certain extent. Think of that privilege as a race. All coaches get to run the race. The head coach just gets to run a little bit longer before he hits the finish line with an umpire.

Umland: That is a really good question. I'm not sure if the umpires at the Division III level are appreciated as much as they are at a higher level. Take nothing away from those who make it to the Division I level; they earned it and put in an enormous amount of time and effort to get there. For those umpires at the Division III level, it is a lot of weekends spent working multiple games throughout the week for far less compensation. I came up through Division III myself and understand the time and commitment that the majority of umpires give for the good of the game. A little gratitude (and perhaps a sandwich between games) goes a long way. It doesn't seem like much, but it matters.

Additionally, I am very grateful to my fellow national coordinators as we truly strive to make the information at meetings and video bulletins to be relative to all levels of college baseball. Occasionally, I get feedback that selected rules are difficult to apply. Division II and III will face one example of this starting in 2021 when bat testing begins prior to games. This creates new challenges as it relates to travel time (earlier arrival to test) as well as who is going to perform such testing. I am certain it will all work out in the end. However, change (no matter how small) is not easy! □

Keeping Your Head in The Game: Umpires and Concussion



Dr. Douglas J. Ramos

Chair of the
NCAA Committee
on Competitive
Safeguards and
Medical Aspects of
Sports

Being an umpire in baseball, like other athletic endeavors, carries with it some occupational risks. One of these risks is concussion given the proximity to hard objects such as bats and balls, and players often moving at high rates of speed.

The narrative on concussion has not been completely resolved, though

many in medicine, the media and special interest groups would lead you to believe that all outcomes are bad. Most notable, and in the spotlight most of the time, is football-related injuries and concussion. The link between concussion and CTE (chronic traumatic encephalopathy) has not been completely resolved, the link between concussion and other cognitive problems later in life as well as other mental health problems including suicide has not been completely resolved, and much science is yet to be done to connect the dots as it relates to concussion and other illnesses. The media and other special interest groups, and some scientists and physicians, have been biased in their reporting of the facts to the public and some of us medical providers. Many of these reports of famous athletes has been sensationalized and many facts have been left out about family histories of mental illness, financial ruin, history of depression or other contributing factors to actions such as suicide that some of these people have taken. That being said, concussion is real and care needs to be taken in the management of concussion.

Concussion by definition is a

traumatic brain injury induced by biomechanical forces. It is largely a functional disturbance and those abnormalities are frequently referred to as post-concussive syndromes. Concussion may be caused by a direct blow to the head or other impulsive force transmitted to the head. Usually signs and symptoms evolve over minutes to hours, but sometimes symptoms may not present until the following day or later. Also, sometimes you may have a concussion in which symptoms are present but barely detectable without a thorough examination. Not all symptoms of concussions present the same way. In some it may be headaches, in others it may be balance problems, in others it may not be thinking clearly, in some it may be visual problems and in others it may be changes in emotional status. All of these different symptoms generally need to be managed differently and medical science is just coming to understand this.

A few simple general facts as we know it today do need to be mentioned however. First, a good clinical exam needs to be performed if a concussion is suspected, and if concussed you should be removed or remove yourself from all activity for the day, including immediate removal from the competition at hand. We also know that sustaining a second concussion while recovering from the first is particularly bad. Second, once a concussion is established you should not immediately return to pre-concussion activity. As a general rule, approximately one week should elapse before returning to the pre-concussion activity and longer if symptoms progress. All athletes follow a concussion protocol in which there is a short period of rest of 24-48 hours and then graduated exercises progressing each day provided

symptoms do not occur at any stage. The old advice of sitting in a darkened room for extended periods of time has changed and active rehabilitation after concussion now seems to hasten recovery. The medical field is just beginning to understand the variety of presentations of concussion and the management of these different symptoms.

As with any injury there is a mental component to recovery success and coping with injury. Concussion is no different. Keep in mind that with the hectic schedules the problems with obtaining good quality sleep are likely to compound any concussion problems. Just because you have a concussion does not mean you will have long-term sequelae, but failure to properly manage concussion is likely to hinder your recovery and may create some long-term issues. If you are at a collegiate or professional field, and sometimes at high schools, there are frequently trained professionals who can perform an assessment, one of which is called the SCAT 5, to evaluate you for concussion. Request this if possible and request a copy if you can so that you can present it to your health care provider wherever you are traveling to or at home. At no point should you return to the field without being cleared by a health care professional after you have recovered, hopefully in five to seven days.

Currently there is a Department of Defense/NCAA study to evaluate athletes and concussion. We are already adapting our management of concussion based on some of the early findings. It is and will be the most complete and definitive study of concussion anywhere in the world and will continue to evolve over the next decade or more. So please be smart and keep your head in the game, and when necessary get your head out of the game. □

Ejections Up in 2019

Reducing the number of ejections and suspensions in college baseball remains a priority, especially as 2019 saw an increased number of ejections at the NCAA Division I and Division II levels.

There were 361 ejections at the Division I level last season, a 7 percent increase over the 2018 season (337). There were 281 ejections at the Division II level last season, an 8 percent increase compared over the 2018 season (260). Only Division III saw a decrease in 2019, with 221 ejections, down 16 percent from the 2018 season (262).

At the Division I level, the majority of ejections involve arguing judgment calls such as balls and strikes (156 ejections) and safe/out rulings (71).

"That is very disconcerting to me," said George Drouches, NCAA national coordinator of baseball umpires. "The data indicates there's

some distressing trends out there in behavior. Ejections are up every year.

"We work with formal warnings, we have videos, we have protocol to manage the game — but the biggest concern is the language used that brings about the ejection."

The NCAA Baseball Rules Committee, in conjunction with the American Baseball Coaches Association, in October sent out an "intermediary penalty survey" in an effort to craft a potential penalty that falls short of an ejection to address the issue of coaches coming onto the playing field to dispute umpires' rulings.

"If the number of ejections and suspensions in the sport do not decrease in the upcoming season, the NCAA baseball rules committee may consider some rule changes in the future to address this issue," Drouches said. □

2019 NCAA Incident/Ejection/Suspension Reports

Division I		
Player	119	
Assistant Coach	64	
Head Coach	178	
	Total: 361	41.8%
Division II		
Player	124	
Assistant Coach	42	
Head Coach	115	
	Total: 281	32.6%
Division III		
Player	102	
Assistant Coach	22	
Head Coach	97	
	Total: 221	25.6%
Grand Total: 863		100%

2019 NCAA Championship Umpires

Division I

Greg Charles
San Bruno, CA

Scott Cline
Nolensville, TN

Perry Costello
DeWitt, MI

Adam Dowdy
Chandler, AZ

Billy Haze
Rancho Murieta, CA

Jeff Henrichs
Sacramento, CA

David Savage
Lawrenceville, GA

Grady Smith
Fishers, IN

Division II

Mike Cheek
Macon, GA

Stuart Hall
Ypsilanti Township, MI

Scott Hart
Reading, PA

Brian Hertzog
Everett, WA

Mark Lima
Succasunna, NJ

Josh Nolen
Lee's Summit, MO

Brandon Schultz
Cullman, AL

Randy Upton
Heber City, UT

Division III

Pablo Bustamante
Loma Linda, CA

Jon Fye
Omaha, NE

Trent Haldiman
Waterloo, WI

Matt Kane
Bethel, CT

David Kernan
Pittsburgh, PA

Michael Lum
Fairport, NY

Mike Mackey
Henrico, VA

Dan Miller
Mahwah, NJ

NCAA Umpiring Coordinators

Division I

George Drouches
P.O. Box 27641
Golden Valley, MN 55427
georgedrouches@gmail.com
(612) 432-5351 (C)

Division II

Scott Taylor
1901 N. Emerson Ave.,
Indianapolis, IN 46218
d2umpires@gmail.com
317-507-6233 (C)

Division III

Don Umland
2951 Katie Lane
Bettendorf, IA 52722
donumland@yahoo.com
(563) 340-3825 (C)

Director of Umpire Training

Tom Hiler
P.O. Box 777
Mountain Home, ID 83647
TomasHiler@gmail.com
(208) 598-5558 (C)

2020 Mechanics Changes

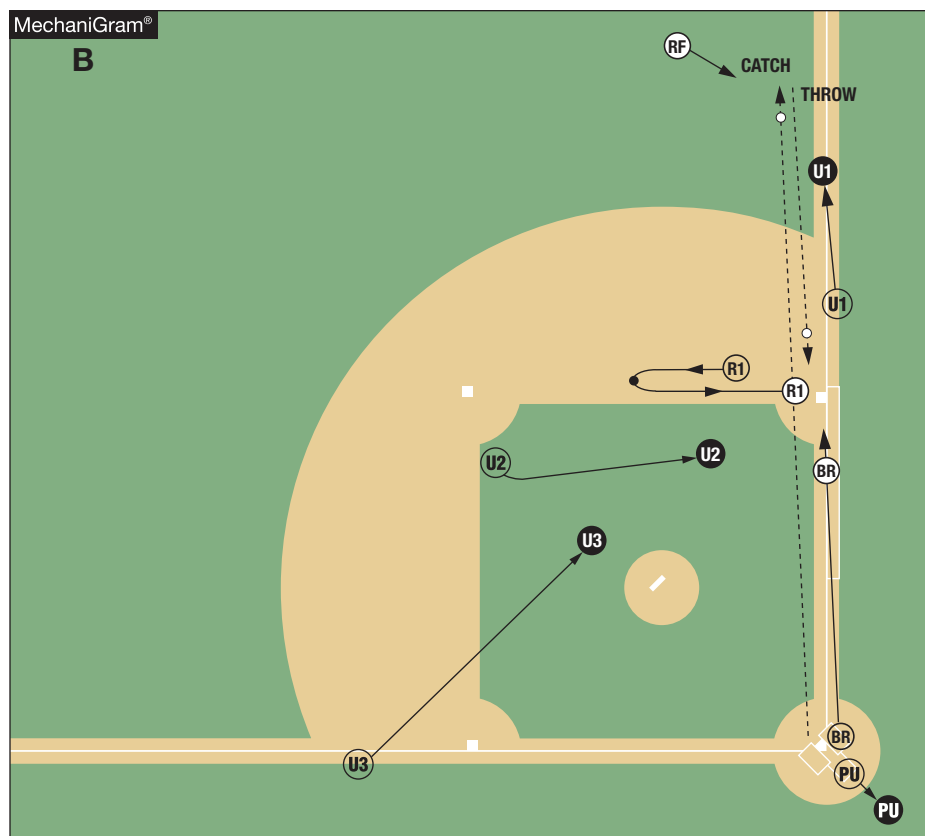
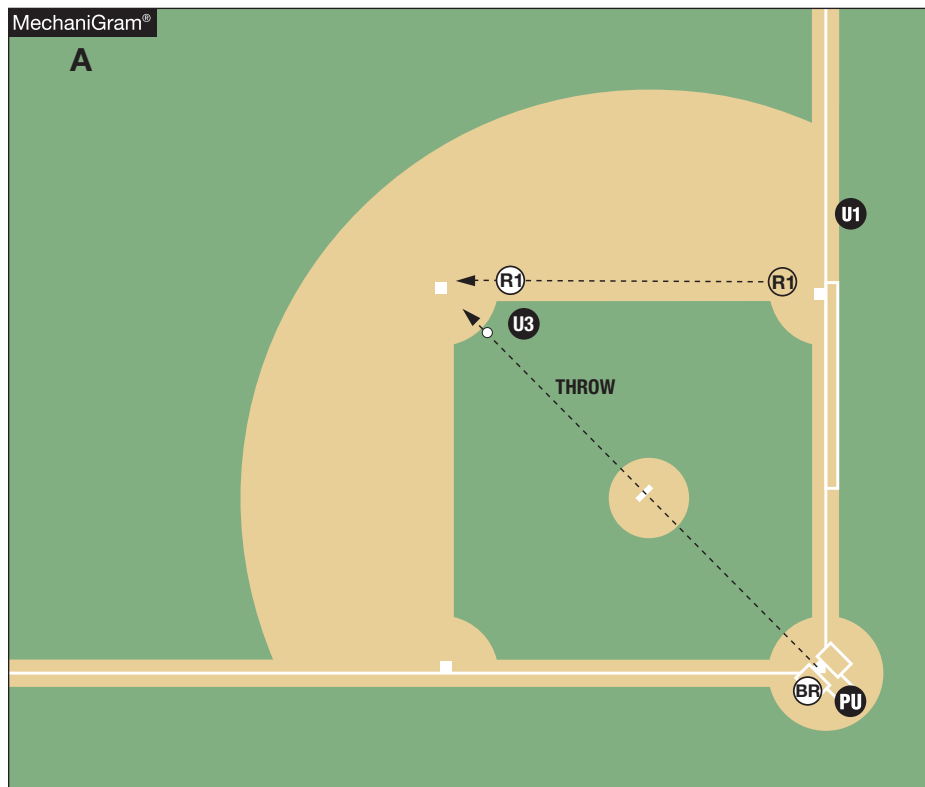
The Collegiate Commissioners Association (CCA) has made several mechanics changes for the 2020 season. Here is an abridged version of those changes for the season ahead. (See the 2020 CCA Baseball Umpires Manual for the complete mechanics changes.)

Three Umpires

- U1 and U3 should be well positioned to see line drives hit at the feet of the first or third baseman in their normal positions (with a step or two forward) and to make that call.
- Proper positioning for U1 for pickoff plays at first base; umpire shall start with their inside foot next to the foul line and not straddling the line.
- Umpires are not allowed to start in the infield and then run to a position out in the dirt looking straight down the baseline during a steal play at second base. All steal plays must be taken between the B and C starting positions.

Four Umpires

- U1 and U3 should be well positioned to see line drives hit at the feet of the first or third baseman in their normal positions (with a step or two forward) and to make that call. When positioned in the outfield, U2 should always work over the inside shoulder (closest to second base) of the middle infielder to be in the best possible position to run on line drives in his coverage area.
- Umpires will not automatically go out on all fly balls with or without runners on base. Umpires are expected to read fly balls and only go out on a trouble ball. The philosophy adopted by the CCA mechanics committee is "if in doubt, go out."
- When a home run is hit with no runners on base, it is not necessary to have the entire crew fully rotate. U3 can go out down the line and then come back to third base for touches at that base. If U2 goes out, U3 can easily take



► all touches at second and third. If U1 goes out, either U2 or the plate umpire should have the touch of first as U1 will not be able to get back to first to see the batter-runner touch first base after going out.

- Proper positioning for U1 for pickoff plays at first base; umpire shall start with their inside foot next to the foul line and not straddling the line.
- Umpires are not allowed to start in the infield and then run to a position out in the dirt looking straight down

the baseline during a steal play at second base. All steal plays must be taken between the B and C starting positions.

- If U1 goes out and U2 slides toward first base to take R1 back into first base, U3 will then slide immediately into second base and be ahead of any potential play that may develop ahead of the runner at second base.
- U2 will no longer shift over toward third base with less than two

outs. In this situation, U2 is required to be on the left-field side of second base. Using this new mechanic, U2 will retain his normal coverage of having all trouble balls in the outfield “in the V” from left to right field. Additionally, U2 will be in better position to take a batter-runner back to first base should U1 go out. U2 should always remain over the shortstop’s inside (left) shoulder closest to second base to help with all line-drive coverage. □

Q&A with Randy Bruns

NCAA Baseball Secretary-Rules Editor



Q: Can you address the changing mindset regarding the use of clocks in college baseball, including the 120-second

clock used between innings and the 20-second action clock that goes into effect during the 2020 season?

A: I’m as traditionalist as anyone. But you also realize that there are certain things that happen in games and athletics over the course of time that are just different than the way we used to do them. I think it will have a real positive impact once people get used to it. Years ago I would have never thought that I would be a proponent of a clock in baseball. ... And I’m sure those same comments were issued for college basketball when they were talking about that (the use of a shot clock), and now it’s become pretty much of a non-factor because everybody has it.

Q: What is the biggest misconception regarding the implementation of the 20-second action clock?

A: The whole idea with the 20 seconds is you don’t have to actually release a pitch in 20 seconds. You just have to start the activity that leads to something between pitches. If it’s an actual pitch that’s going to be delivered, it’s just the start of the motion of the windup, or that start of the motion to come set. Then that clock is shut off. That’s all you have to do.

Q: What do you see as the biggest possible struggle regarding the new rule for 2020 regarding bat color restrictions?

A: I’ve had a couple of calls where someone said, “That’s just for Division I, right?” No, that’s all levels. At the Division II and III levels where maybe student-athletes bring their own bats a little bit more often than the Division I level, some of them are going to have to adjust. Unfortunately if they just bought that white bat last year because it was real pretty and they didn’t use it too much, it’s probably going to have to be replaced. But again, that was something that was actually in the rulebook already and communicated for two years. It’s only a surprise to those people who don’t pay attention.

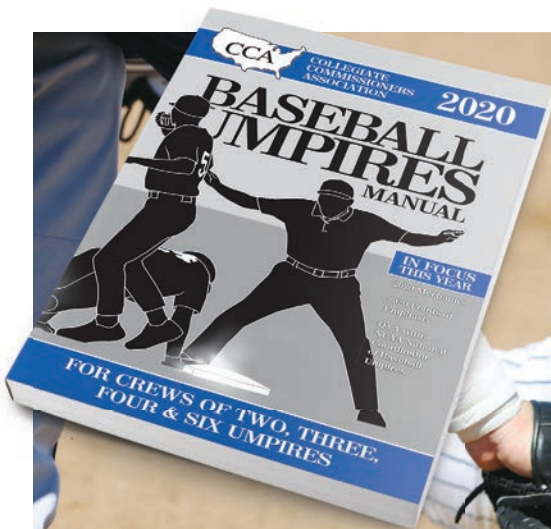
Q: Conversely, the rules regarding bat barrel testing will be different for Division I compared to Division II and III for 2020, correct?

A: That is now required for Division I this year (2020), and then goes into effect as a requirement for Division II and III next year (2021). And once again that’s in the rulebook from a year ago. It was actually communicated prior to that as well. A lot of the Division I conferences were doing bat testing already last year, because that’s where a lot of the initial complaints came from.

Q: What role should umpires have in the bat testing process?

A: There was a time years ago where we had to go into dugouts as umpires before the start of a game and just do a quick check of the bats. Ultimately, we said who’s responsibility is it for the legality of the equipment anyway? It’s the head coach. So that’s why that got taken out. And the umpires are not required for bat testing at all now, either. ... But it’s really important for an umpire at that plate meeting to say, “Just double-checking, is all your equipment meeting all the NCAA regulations?” They (the coaches) confirm it. □

Referee Enterprises, Inc.
2017 Lathrop Avenue
Racine, WI 53405



WHEN THE GAME IS ON THE LINE, WILL YOU BE READY?



The official mechanics of college baseball. Used by conferences nationwide and taught at camps and clinics; it's the standard by which umpires are judged. Hundreds of illustrations will solidify your positioning and help you get more calls right, even with the faster speed of today's college game.

ORDER TODAY

Call 800-733-6100 or visit
store.referee.com/2020ccabaseball

Item Code: CCABS20 • Price: \$19.95 • Pages: 256 • Size: 5.5" x 8.5"

PUBLISHED BY

