



# BASEBALL 2022

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

## Signs of the Times

**Technology, Clock Protocols, COVID-19 Accommodations Will Need Attention**



Due to ongoing COVID-19 considerations, if a coach is going to come out of the dugout to discuss a play with an umpire, such as here with Billy Van Raaphorst, San Diego, the discussion must take place at the midpoint of the respective foul line and not in the dirt circle or the middle of the diamond.

BOB MESSINA

The 2022 college baseball season will occur during a non-rule change cycle for the NCAA. That means a re-emphasis on recent rule changes heading into the spring.

However, one offseason rule change will require attention for NCAA umpires and coaches.

While the online NCAA baseball rules video for 2022 focuses on several items, let's look at three areas that demand education and diligence.

### Technology to Transmit Signals

The one off-cycle rule change for 2022 involves an update to how teams can use technology to relay information to players on the field, and is found in rule 5-2-f Note 1.

The previous rule read: "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."

Added language for 2022 is as follows: "To permit the use of an exclusively one-way electronic communication device from the dugout to the field for the purpose of relaying the pitch or play call. The use of an in-ear communication device shall be limited to the defensive position of the catcher."

Two additional provisions must also be noted when using technology to communicate with players: A team may use an electronic display board to show numbers/letters to any player(s) on the field. However, two-way

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# Welcome to the 2022 College Baseball Season



**George Drouches**

**NCAA National  
Coordinator of Umpires**

**L**eadership is not about production, it's about reproduction.

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 this great country.

The information in this 2022 NCAA Preseason Baseball Guide is designed to provide not only information, but clarifications leading into the season. Umpires, always keep this publication with your development materials for use in your study and pregame discussions. Coaches, please keep it with your game day materials as a quick reference.

In addition, coaches, I strongly urge you to join in our collaborative efforts with the American Baseball Coaches Association leadership team to improve our great game by registering with [www.ncaabaseball.arbitersports.com](http://www.ncaabaseball.arbitersports.com) to access the NCAA's Home Plate page.

**Leadership is filled with moods and moving parts, so just focus on the mission and stay genuine.**

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 continued 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 Division I Baseball Championship. The continued 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 2022 will serve as surety and will safeguard these directives. For the most part, the officiating community handled the rules changes and game-changing challenges in 2021 exceptionally well and will continue to be leaders of these impactful changes in 2022. The Baseball Umpire Program will build on its steadfast efforts of 2021; with that said, our championship evaluation, selection and assignment procedures need to be continually examined to ensure the best umpires for our championship in the future.

**Destiny is never instant; that's why a good leader gives things time to grow.**

The 2022 season will be year two of a two-year rules cycle. Rule interpretations will continue to be issued by the secretary-rules editor as needed and clarify all to the provisions.

A NCAA Rules and Officiating Video, in addition to this guide, will again be produced for 2022. The 2021 secretary-rules editor's interpretations will continue to receive attention as an educational tool. Centralized Video Review will also continue throughout the 2022 NCAA Division I Baseball Championship.

**A huge part of leadership is knowing what to ignore and what not to ignore.**

This is a fact: whether a coach or

an official, when you are in control of your emotions, one can communicate in a professional manner.

Ball/Strike ejections led the way across all divisions of NCAA Baseball. Forty-seven percent of the 312 Division I NCAA Incident/Ejection/Suspension Reports filed in 2021 were categorized as balls and strikes; with most of these ball/strike ejection reports indicating that a formal warning had been issued prior to the ejection. Coaches, please recognize the rationale of the formal warning regarding balls and strikes; hopefully, we can decrease this disturbing percentage. Umpires, use the formal warning whenever possible, discipline yourself to be credible and concise in your communication, and remember your true role of managing the game.

As we move to 2022, please be mindful and respectful to on-field health and safety protocols: players and coaches should maintain physical distancing from all umpires and opposing players whenever possible and not leave their positions to argue with umpires, nor come within six feet of an umpire or opposing player for the purpose of argument.

Regarding Appendix F, related to the pitch/between innings clock protocol, enforce this from opening day and the players and coaches will adjust.

**The art of teamwork is knowing how to sharpen the countenance of your teammates.**

Finally, the standards of the NCAA Baseball Umpire Program are 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.

Wishing all the stakeholders of our great game of NCAA college baseball the very best in 2022. □

## Signs of the Times

*Continued from p. 1*

communication devices are still not allowed, nor are players on the field allowed the ability to receive data from a location other than the dugout.

### Clock Protocols

The idea of “timing” rules in baseball used to be a foreign concept. However, the game is played and coached today much differently than in previous years, and the consistent application of timing rules between innings and between pitches to maintain pace of play requires a change in the thought process for umpires, players and coaches.

A visible clock makes these time limits more obvious to all the participants and any penalties can be more consistently enforced if necessary. However, even if a visible clock is not available and the time limits are being monitored by one of the game’s base umpires, the expectation is the timing rules be enforced consistently throughout every game. Between innings, the umpire crew must communicate with each other and with players near home plate to make sure the next half-inning starts on time. Between pitches, umpires need to resist granting “time” except for legitimate reasons.

Let’s review the circumstances when the time limit stops for the 20-second action clock:

- When the pitcher begins his windup motion or begins the motion to come set.
- When the pitcher makes a pickoff attempt.
- With runners on base, when the pitcher steps off the rubber to feint a pickoff attempt (in which case the time shall reset and start again immediately).
- When the catcher leaves the catcher’s box to give defensive signals

or to confer with the pitcher (in which case the timer shall stop, reset and start again after the catcher returns to the catcher’s box).

- When the umpire calls “time” for any legitimate reason.

Before starting a windup motion or beginning the motion to come set, if a pitcher steps off the pitcher’s plate when there are no runners on base or steps off without feinting or making a pickoff attempt with runners on base, the time limit (or clock) does not stop unless the umpire grants the pitcher “time” for a legitimate reason.

If the pitcher has started the motion to come set (which stops the time limit) or has come to the set position and then steps off without feinting or making a pickoff attempt, a violation has occurred. Appendix F of the NCAA rule book spells out how such violations should be handled.

### COVID-19 Rule Waivers

Due to the unusual circumstances of the 2021 season, there were five rule exceptions passed for use related to COVID-19 accommodations. The exceptions have been reviewed and three have been approved for continued use during the 2022 season, one can be used in case of specific local circumstances and one has not been renewed.

- A head coach may only come to the midpoint of the respective foul line and not enter the dirt circle around home plate to maintain proper physical distancing when coming on to the field to ask a question about a play.
- By conference rule or mutual agreement prior to the start of the game, extra innings may start with a runner on second base. The player starting the extra inning at second base is the player or his substitute in the batting order immediately before the first batter of the inning.
- In the event of an unusual



On fields where no action clock is visible, one of the base umpires will be responsible for keeping the clock by using either an automated timer attached to the belt (as shown here), a wristwatch with a countdown timer, or with a handheld stopwatch if necessary.

situation such as injury, illness or travel difficulty, a game may be started or completed with one umpire.

- Teams are allowed to expand the dugout area to a designated area in the bleachers for uniformed team personnel only if necessary due to a local health decree.
- The pitcher’s use of a damp rag to apply moisture to his hand is no longer allowed.

### Other Areas for Review

Additional rules with which umpires should become more familiar leading into the 2022 season include the specific bat testing protocol that must be followed for all divisions, as spelled out in Appendix G of the NCAA rule book; the use of technology to transmit signals; the definition of a foul tip; leaving the dugout or bullpen during a potential altercation; the designated hitter; the windup and set pitching positions; and the possession of or applying of a foreign substance to the ball. □

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# Flashback: 2021 Rules Review



When Eric Nilson, Kirkland, Wash., accepts the lineup card from a coach during the pregame meeting at the plate, he must understand how the coach plans to use the designated hitter. The NCAA overhauled the designated hitter rule (7-2) for the 2021 season to more similarly mirror the one used in professional baseball.

College baseball featured several new wrinkles during the 2021 season as a result of rule changes approved by the NCAA during the offseason.

The rule changes were first proposed by the NCAA Baseball Rules Committee during the summer and gained final approval from the NCAA Playing Rules Oversight Panel in September 2020.

## Designated Hitter (7-2)

The NCAA has overhauled its designated hitter (DH) rule to more similarly mirror the one used in professional baseball. One exception is the starting pitcher may be co-

listed in the lineup as the pitcher and designated hitter. The new rule also requires the designated hitter listed in the starting lineup to bat at least once unless the opposing team changes pitchers or the designated hitter becomes injured or ill before his spot in the lineup comes to bat.

The change is intended to simplify the DH rule while maintaining the flexibility of using the two-way player (pitcher/DH) in the collegiate game.

Play 1: During the pregame meeting with the umpires, team A's head coach turns in a batting lineup featuring nine batters. Jones is listed as the starting pitcher. Ruling 1: Jones is, by default, also the designated hitter

and may be treated as such.

Play 2: During the pregame meeting with the umpires, team A's head coach turns in a batting lineup featuring nine batters. Jones is listed as the starting pitcher/DH. In the fourth inning, during what should be Jones' second plate appearance, Smith comes to the plate. In the next half-inning, Jones again takes the mound. Ruling 2: This is legal. Jones began the game as the pitcher and the designated hitter. Once Smith batted, he became the designated hitter, while Jones remained the pitcher.

## Re-entry (5-5-k)

The NCAA has established a method of permissible re-entry for a player suspected of receiving a concussion during the course of a game.

A player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion must be immediately removed and receive appropriate medical evaluation. However, the player may return to his original spot in the lineup if he is cleared by an appropriate medical professional.

A player may only re-enter the game one time. The temporary replacement player may again participate in the game as a substitute in the same lineup spot only.

If the temporary replacement player is substituted for, that player may not re-enter the game.

If a team has no remaining eligible players, a starter or substitute who has previously participated in the game may replace the injured player.

The change is intended to improve player safety, giving coaches a pathway to have a possibly concussed player evaluated and be able to return to the lineup.

Play 3: Following a collision between batter-runner Walker and first baseman Nelson in the third inning, team B's coach removes Nelson from the game to receive ►

- evaluation for a possible concussion and replaces him with Davis. After receiving clearance from the team's head athletic trainer, Nelson (a) comes to the plate in the eighth inning in his original position in the batting lineup, or (b) in a different position than the one he occupied at the start of the game. Nelson singles, and the team B coach (c) replaces him with Davis as a pinch-runner, or (d) sends Davis to the plate as the next batter. Ruling 3: Legal in (a) and (c), and not legal in (b) and (d). In (c), once Davis pinch-runs for Nelson, the latter is done and cannot return to the game.

### **Batter Interference/Uncaught Third Strike (7-11-h Note)**

On a third strike, not caught by the catcher, if the batter-runner clearly hinders the catcher in his attempt to field the ball, whether the action is intentional or not, the batter-runner is out, the ball is dead and all other runners return to the bases they occupied at the time of the pitch regardless of the number of outs.

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 his attempt to field the ball.

The change is intended to simplify the administration of the rule regardless of the number of outs and whether the batter-runner's action is intentional or not.

Play 4: With a runner on first base and one out, B3 strikes out on a pitch in the dirt. The ball bounces off the catcher and into the path of B3, who takes two steps and inadvertently kicks the stationary ball away from the catcher. Ruling 4: B3 is out, the ball is dead and R1 must return to first base.

Play 5: With a runner on second base and one out, B3 strikes out on a pitch in the dirt. The ball bounces off the catcher and into B3. The ball falls to the ground, where the catcher picks it up, drops it and fails to make any additional play as R2 reaches third

base and B3 reaches first base. Ruling 5: R2 is safe at third base and B3 is safe at first. This is not considered interference.

### **Interference/Thrown Bat (7-11-n)**

If 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 on the ball, interference shall be called.

The change is intended to establish clearer guidance whether interference has occurred in situations of a fielder attempting to make a play when a bat is thrown in foul territory.

Play 6: B1 hits a pop-up near the plate and throws his bat to the ground (a) in fair territory or (b) in foul territory. The opposing catcher, while trying to make a play on the ball, steps on the bat and falls, and the ball falls to the ground next to him. Ruling 6: B1 is called out for interference in both (a) and (b).

### **Fight Rule (5-16-c)**

Any team personnel, other than coaches, who leave the dugouts or bullpens to enter the field at the time of a potential altercation or fight shall be ejected. Ejections would carry a one-game suspension, unless the individual physically participates in a fight.

The change is intended to establish a method and penalty for players who exacerbate altercations and delay the game by leaving the dugout or bullpen at the time of an altercation, in order to prevent further escalations and unsportsmanlike conduct.

### **Foul Tip (2-37)**

The definition for a foul tip has been updated to read, "A batted ball that goes sharp and direct from the bat to the catcher and is legally caught. 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."

The change clarifies that a foul tip no longer has to first touch the catcher's hand or glove before being legally caught. By interpretation the

ball must be caught by the catcher.

Play 7: With a 1-1 count and R1 stealing on the pitch, B2 swings and makes contact with the baseball. The ball ricochets off F2's mask, and (a) F2 catches it, or (b) F1 catches it. Ruling 7: This is a foul tip and the ball remains live in (a). In (b), it is a foul ball.

### **Penalty for a Foreign Substance (9-2-e)**

A stronger penalty has been established for using a foreign substance on the ball, and/or having one on his person or in his possession. The penalty is the pitcher being ejected from the game.

If the pitcher expectorates on his hand, ball or glove or rubs the ball on his glove, person or clothing and, in the judgment of the umpire, the pitcher did not intend to alter the characteristics of the baseball, the umpire may warn the pitcher in lieu of an ejection. However, if the pitcher persists in violating the rule, the umpire shall eject the pitcher from the game.

### **Force-Play-Slide Rule (8-4)**

The updated rule clarifies the force-play-slide rule does not apply to the batter-runner at first base, and also establishes the runner is not required to slide until in the vicinity of the base.

### **Pitch Strikes Animal (6-1-g)**

The rule has been re-written to read, "If a thrown or batted ball that remains in live-ball territory accidentally hits a spectator, authorized on-field personnel or an animal, the ball is live." There is also a note added that reads, "If a pitched ball 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."

The changes are intended to distinguish the difference between a thrown or batted ball inadvertently hitting an animal or authorized on-field personnel and a pitched ball striking an animal.

*See "2021 Flashback" p. 6*

## 2021 Flashback

Continued from p. 5

### Play or Attempted Play (2-67-b)

An additional definition for the term “play or attempted play” has been added to identify that it shall be interpreted as a legitimate effort by a defensive player who has possession of the ball to retire a runner. The fact the runner is not out is not relevant, and a fake or feint to throw shall not be deemed a play or an attempted play.

The rationale for the new wording is there are references throughout the playing rules regarding when a play has occurred, but no definition of what defines a play.

### One Foot in Catcher's Box (5-4-a, 9-3-i)

The rule has been modified to state the catcher must have at least one foot in the catcher's box until the pitcher begins the pitching motion.

The change is intended to provide a more enforceable playing rule for umpires depending on where the catcher sets up to receive a pitch.

### The Windup (9-1-a)

The first sentence of the rule has been changed to read, “The pitcher shall stand facing the batter, 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, in front of, behind 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.

### The Set (9-1-b)

The first sentence of the rule has been changed to read, “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.”

An additional paragraph has been added to read, “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



Any team personnel, other than coaches, who leave the dugouts or bullpens to enter the field at the time of a potential altercation or fight shall be ejected, according to a rule change made at the NCAA level for the 2021 season.

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 notifies 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 delivery of the next pitch)."

### Rules for Scoreboards, Video and Audio (Appendix B, A-4)

An unlimited number of replays may now be shown at regular speed or slow motion only after a play is under video review and no replays shall be shown once a decision has been made by the umpires and/or replay official.

Also, a stadium video board may now play live video upon contact with the bat after the pitch. Live video must cease once a student-athlete enters the batter's box and may resume upon contact with the bat after the pitch.

### Getting the Call Right with Video Review, Coach's Challenge (Appendix E-2)

If a coach's challenge is successful in overturning a call, the coach will retain the challenge to use if needed later in the game.

### Visual Inspection/Bat Testing (Appendix G)

The new Appendix G includes guidelines for NCAA bat testing that began with the 2021 season.

Divisions II and III were exempt from the barrel compression testing requirement of the bat testing process until the 2022 season. Now, all bats used in competition must undergo the entire bat testing procedure and be marked as approved with a tamper-proof sticker. □





# Test Yourself

In each of the following, decide which answer(s) is/are correct using the 2022 NCAA rules.

**1. The current batting lineup is Abel, Baker, Charles, Daniel, Edward. Charles, who had batted leadoff the entire season, is put in the third position for this game. Charles, expecting to lead off, bats first (not realizing he is listed third) and strikes out. Baker comes to bat next and doubles. The home team head coach appeals that Baker batted out of order.**

- a. Rule Baker out and bring Charles up to bat again.
- b. Do nothing as this is legal. Baker is the second batter on the lineup card and the second batter up in the game.
- c. Rule Baker out and bring Daniel up to bat.
- d. Rule Daniel out, remove Baker from second and bring Edward up to bat.

**2. The head coach goes to the mound to talk to his starting pitcher, which is the first charged conference used during the game. After the starter gives up a hit to the next batter, the coach replaces the pitcher. After the reliever has finished his warmup pitches, the pinch hitter is announced. The pitching coach now wants to take a timeout to talk to the new relief pitcher.**

- a. The first visit to the relief pitcher is considered the second trip/conference in that inning.
- b. The coach may visit the relief pitcher but must remove him after he completes pitching to the first batter.
- c. The mound conference is legal. The coach does not have to remove the relief pitcher after he pitches to one batter or the side is retired since this is the coach's first conference with the new pitcher.
- d. The umpire will deny the request for the visit to the relief pitcher.

**3. 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.

**4. With runners on first and third and one out, the corner infielders are playing in and middle infielders are pinching the middle and playing back for the double play. B4 hits a ball that goes untouched past the first baseman and hits R1 behind him on its way to right field. R1 is only about three steps off first base when he is hit.**



**If a pitcher balks during a pickoff attempt, the ball is not immediately dead, and several interesting situations can still unfold for an umpire. See question No. 19 for an example.**

- a. Dead ball; interference on R1. Both he and B4 are ruled out on the interference and R3 returns to third.
- b. Dead ball; interference on R1. B4 is awarded first and R3 returns to third.
- c. Dead ball; interference on R1. Because the play happened behind F3, allow both R1 and R3 to move up one base.
- d. Ball is live and in play.

**5. B1 is crowding the front edge of the batter's box and legally hits the pitch. His stride through with his swing places his front foot on the ground in front and outside the batter's box while his back foot remains in the box. The batted ball bounces up and accidentally hits B1's front leg.**

- a. Foul ball.
- b. Fair ball.
- c. B1 is immediately declared out.
- d. B1 is awarded first base.

**6. With R2 on second base, B3 swings and misses the pitch for strike two. His follow-through hits F2 while he is attempting to throw out R2, who successfully steals third base.**

- a. There is no interference, the play stands.
- b. There is no interference, the ball is dead and R2 is returned to second base.
- c. This is interference; R2 is declared out.
- d. This is interference; both R2 and B3 are declared out.
- e. This is interference; B3 is declared out and R2 is returned to second base.

**7. An appeal on the last play of the game may be made by the defense:**

- a. While an umpire is still on the field of play.
- b. If all umpires are still on the field of play.
- c. Before the pitcher and all infielders leave fair territory and the catcher has left the dirt circle around home plate.
- d. Can never be made.

**8. Jones, the starting designated hitter, is pinch hit for by Smith, a legal substitute.**

- a. The role of the designated hitter is now terminated.
- b. The DH is locked into the position of the DH and can never be replaced.
- c. Smith is now the designated hitter.

**9. It would be a balk if the pitcher, after having part of his non-pivot foot pass behind the perpendicular plane of the back edge of the pitcher's plate, attempted to pick off the runner at first base.**

- a. True.
- b. False.

**10. A batted ball sharply hits the ground and rebounds high in the air. It comes down inside the second baseman's shirt.**

- a. Provided the fielder can pull the ball out immediately, it stays live and in play.
- b. The ball is dead immediately.
- c. The batter is awarded two bases.
- d. The batter is awarded bases at the umpire's discretion.
- e. Both b and c.
- f. Both b and d.



**11. A pop fly hits the bat which is lying in foul territory and then touches fair ground.**

- a. The ball is deemed to be a fair ball and stays in play.
- b. It is a dead ball and the batter is awarded two bases.
- c. The batter is declared out.
- d. It is a foul ball and immediately dead.

**12. With the runner from second attempting to advance to third base, the batted ball gets by the third baseman, who was playing in to defend a possible bunt, and contacts the runner. The shortstop is not in a position to make a play on the ball.**

- a. The ball is immediately dead.
- b. It is a delayed dead ball.
- c. The ball stays live and in play.

**13. The pitcher, in the windup position, may:**

- a. Deliver a pitch.
- b. Legally step backward off the pitcher's plate.
- c. Legally attempt a pickoff at an occupied base.
- d. a and b.
- e. All of the above.

**14. The ball is dead immediately and the batter is out when:**

- a. He hits the ball fair with part of his foot touching home plate and part touching the line of the batter's box.
- b. He hits the ball foul with a foot on the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box.
- c. He bunts the ball fair with his knee touching the ground completely outside the lines of the batter's box.
- d. b and c.
- e. All of the above.

**15. A defensive charged conference is held at the pitching mound with the head coach and all the infielders. The conference is considered concluded when:**

- a. One of the players initially starts to return to his position.
- b. The coach leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound.
- c. The coach leaves the dirt area of the pitching mound or the pitcher begins his warmup pitches.
- d. The coach crosses the foul line.

**16. If an illegal player on defense is involved in a play, the team on offense has the option to let the play stand or to allow the batter to bat again, provided the infraction is discovered:**

- a. Prior to a pitch to the next batter of either team.
- b. Before the third out of the half-inning is declared.
- c. Before all infielders cross the foul lines.
- d. Immediately when the play is made.
- e. There is no option; the illegal player is simply removed.

**17. An obstructed runner who is being played on and is returning to a base is awarded:**

- a. The base to which he was returning.
- b. A mandatory two bases.
- c. A minimum of one base beyond his position on base when the obstruction occurred.
- d. There is no minimum award for an obstructed runner returning to a base.

**18. Jones, while advancing from first to third, fails to touch second base and is standing on third when the throw from the outfield goes into the dugout.**

- a. The umpire is to immediately declare Jones out for missing second base.
- b. Because Jones missed second base, he cannot be awarded home from the errant throw to the dugout.
- c. If Jones attempts to return to second base, the defense cannot appeal his missing second until Jones has completed his opportunity to correct the mistake.
- d. Jones cannot legally return to his missed base and is subject to being declared out upon proper and successful appeal.

**19. With the bases loaded and one out, B5 hits a line drive to the right-field fence. R3 and R2 both score, but R1 is thrown out at home. B5 safely arrives at third, but missed first base. The defense properly appeals B5's missing first base.**

- a. Two runs score.
- b. One run will count.
- c. No runs will be scored.

**20. A player slides into second base and opens a gash on the knee that is bleeding profusely.**

- a. No substitution is required and the player may continue to participate.
- b. The player must be immediately removed from the game.
- c. The head coach has 10 minutes from the time play is stopped to decide whether a substitution is necessary.

**21. With the bases empty, B1 swings and misses the third strike. The ball lodges behind the catcher's chest protector. While everyone is looking for the ball, B1 touches first base and advances to second base before the ball is discovered.**

- a. B1 is out.
- b. B1 is awarded second base.
- c. B1 is awarded only first base.
- d. The umpire may declare an out or award any base depending upon his judgment of the play.

**22. The improper batter becomes the proper batter and the results of his time at bat are legal when no appeal is made and:**

- a. A legal pitch has been delivered to the next batter.
- b. An illegal pitch has occurred.

- c. An intentional base on balls has been granted.
- d. All of the above.

**23. A runner is attempting to steal third base. The home-plate umpire interferes with the catcher who is attempting to throw the ball to third:**

- a. The umpire's interference results in an immediate dead ball and the runner is returned to second base.
- b. The umpire's interference results in a delayed dead ball and the runner may be returned to second base.
- c. If the catcher's throw retires the runner, the interference is disregarded.
- d. b and c.

**24. The umpires call an infield fly that is intentionally dropped.**

- a. Call time, the batter is out and all runners are awarded one base.
- b. The ball remains live, the batter is out and any runners advance at their own risk.
- c. The ball is dead and the batter is awarded first base. Any runners advance one base if forced.

**25. An intentional base on balls can be given upon communication from:**

- a. The head coach of the defensive team.
- b. The catcher of the defensive team.
- c. Any coach of the defensive team.
- d. All of the above.

## ANSWERS

1. d — 7-11-a-4
2. c — 9-4-a-1, 9-4-b
3. c — 2-51, 7-11-f, 8-5-d
4. d — 6-2-e Note, 8-2-g, 8-5-k
5. a — 7-7-e
6. b — 6-2-d
7. c — 5-8-e, 8-6-b-8
8. c — 7-2-b-4
9. b — 9-3-l
10. f — 8-3-l
11. d — 2-35-d
12. c — 8-5-k
13. e — 9-1-a
14. e — 7-10
15. c — 9-4-d
16. a — 5-5-j-2
17. c — 8-3-e
18. d — 8-6-a Note 2
19. c — 5-6-c Exc. 1
20. c — 3-9 Note
21. c — 8-3-k
22. d — 7-11-a-2
23. d — 6-3-a
24. b — 2-48 Note
25. a — 2-7

# Q&A: NCAA Director of Umpire Training

**Q: Why were you interested in the position? What drew you to it?**

**Haze:** Well, I really feel, and I felt this once I heard Tom Hiler's announcement that he was stepping aside from his tenure, that this would single handedly be one of the most important hires moving forward. Tom was doing it for 13 years. And I just felt that in moving forward and with the advancement of technology and how much we are relying on it now, I thought that I would be able to assist and kind of tap into some of that technology piece that maybe we haven't really looked into or maybe we're afraid to look into just because once we open that door sometimes it's hard to go back. I just felt that in seeing kind of some of the things that Major League Baseball has done, and with college baseball becoming more and more popular and with games becoming more important, I just thought it would be really cool if I could be kind of a pioneer in helping us at the collegiate level tap into more of those resources for the technology.

**Q: What exactly does being the director of umpire training for the NCAA entail? What is the job description?**

**Haze:** Anything that has to do with college baseball and baseball umpires is who your audience is. We're trying to educate and mentor and teach umpires to go out and perform at their highest abilities.



**Billy Haze**

NCAA Director of Umpire Training

And we're trying to put content together where, along with the coordinators, along with the heads of the NCAA baseball umpiring program, along with the baseball umpire advisors, we're making a consistent end product that can go out and do the week-to-week, month-to-month tasks of umpiring college baseball throughout the regular season., also in hopes that we are educating, mentoring and teaching those people to become our postseason umpire selections. That's the bottom-line goal.

**Q: At the time of this interview, you've been in the position for two**

**months. What has been your first order of business?**

**Haze:** Getting all my technology was one of the first things. I took a trip to Boise, Idaho, and I spent three days with Tom Hiler, and I just wanted to see what technology he had and what tools he was using to help facilitate the job. We were joined in the weekend by George (Drouches) as well. And we just sat down and brainstormed about where the program is right now, where the role of director of umpire training is at right now and where it's going and where we want it to go. And then we kind of just did a blueprint of what the next 30, 60, 90 days was going

► to look like. And obviously what's coming up is our material for our online clinics.

**Q: What advice did Tom Hiler give you about the position?**

**Haze:** That you're going to debate yourself a lot on your interpretations of things. Be open to criticisms and other peoples' opinions on plays and things, and how we may change things or maybe we don't change things. And be open to the fact that you may have an idea or a plan that you think is great, you really want to execute it, but you may come to the realization from others and their input that it might not be the best route to take, and don't feel bad about that. Feel good in the fact that you brought something to the table you think could possibly be adjusted, and it may not work out.

**Q: You've been involved in umpire education and training for many years. What do you feel is the biggest area for umpire improvement going forward?**

**Haze:** I think if I could focus on anything it would be game management and crew chiefing. I want to make sure that we are mentoring, guiding and teaching our next crop of crew chiefs. We've got a really great group of senior, established crew chiefs at the Division I level especially. And those guys are getting older, and they don't have as many years remaining. So I want to make sure that we're taking those guys, utilizing their talents and abilities and their experiences, and we're passing it on to that next generation of officials. Because, man, that is a big-time role, and especially during the regular season, getting through a big conference weekend is critical. And then you think about getting into the postseason, and it's vital to

have a solid crew chief that's going to just navigate that weekend of play. So that's one area that I really want to try to focus on is that mentorship and that teaching of what it looks like to be a solid crew chief at all of our different levels and how we go about that business and pass that along.

**Q: How important is it for there to be consistency in how things are done at the NCAA Division I level all the way down to Division III baseball and making sure umpires who are coming up through the ranks are doing things the same way as guys who are going to Omaha?**

**Haze:** I think it's extremely important. You hear all the time just be consistent, all we want is consistency. The strike zone is going to vary from guy to guy because each person has their own kind of little bit of interpretation of it. But I feel that if we understand when we go into a contest that as long as it is what we've established from the first couple of innings, the first couple of batters, and it maintains itself throughout the contest, we tend to stay out of it a little bit. We don't really get pushback. So I just feel if we can strive to be as consistent as possible I think it's important. But it's not just about the balls and strikes. It's about the consistency of the body language. It's the consistency about the mannerisms. It's the consistency about how we interact with people. They want that consistency. They want that level of professionalism. They want approachability. They want to be able to ask us questions. There's no harm in that.

**Q: How does your own on-field career as a longtime NCAA umpire help you in this role?**

**Haze:** Whether you're a fan of me or

you're not, the fact that I've gone out there for 12 years representing the NCAA and have been very blessed to receive 12 years' worth of postseason assignments ... through these educational experiences now that I'm about ready to take on, I really hope that in my narration of these plays and these experiences and the things that I'm trying to get across, whether it's mechanical or philosophies, that it's believable. Because I have done that, and I hope that I did it at a high level. And that gains that credibility. As the director of umpire training for the NCAA, I would hope that the masses that are out there don't just look at it and go, yuck, this guy is ego-driven. I hope they look at it as a guy that has been there, done that and has done it recently, and that I feel you. □

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# Extra Innings



**Dr. Douglas J. Ramos**

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

I thought the title for this article was appropriate given what is going on with COVID that has just gone on and on and we want to end. Early in the pandemic, even though I am an optimist, I would quote Winston Churchill to those who had an unrealistic view as to where we were in the pandemic. That quote was “it is not the end, nor the beginning

of the end, but it may be the end of the beginning.” Where are we now? I will tell you we are not at the end and maybe we are at the beginning of the end. One of the many great things about baseball is that time can never run out, but that’s a bad thing when it comes to COVID. In baseball a comeback is always possible and that is true with COVID.

By the way, the longest game in MLB history was in 1920, ending in a 1-1 tie between the Brooklyn Robins and Boston Braves after 26 innings. That game was called, according to the New York Times, when umpire Barry McCormick remembered he had a beefsteak dinner waiting. He held up his hand in the dark, thought it looked like a Virginia ham, it made him think about food, so he called the game on account of darkness. Well, I will concede that a good meal after a game with your comrades and the beverage of your choice is about as good as it gets.

Politicians, doctors and the general public have all been guilty of misinformation and influencing the narrative. As a medical community I have been disappointed at times with the misguidance, usually well intended, that has been given. Keep in mind this is still evolving, so what we think to be true today may not be as

true tomorrow. The preponderance of evidence does, however, point to the value of vaccinations, which I would recommend, and the value of masking, even for the vaccinated. The medical evidence seems so clear in that regard that I can only come to believe that most are holding out because they feel like they are being pushed into something. That is human nature. The two things we can do to make each other and ourselves safer is vaccination and masking.

As we think about what each of us should do, the thought should really be what is best for those around me. It is true an individual has the possibility of an adverse reaction to the vaccine, but if we look at the whole population, as a group or society we will have less illness and deaths the more we are all vaccinated.

As it pertains to masks, there still is a role for the vaccinated to wear them. The possibility exists that if vaccinated you may not even know you are carrying the virus and may transmit it in the absence of that awareness if the vaccine is working effectively. As we head indoors in some parts of the country and vaccine immunity starts to wane, and with the potential for new variants, cases could go up again, and that has also led to the importance of booster shots.

As it pertains to the booster shot, I need to make a few comments about. All people over 18 who received the Johnson and Johnson vaccine are now eligible for a booster, and many who received Moderna or Pfizer should get a booster. In general, at nine months vaccine effectiveness drops to about 50 percent effectiveness from a high of 90 percent. If you are over 65, get a booster. Under 65 with a serious illness like diabetes, heart disease or high blood pressure, get a booster. Smoke, used to smoke or alcoholism, get a booster. If you are over 18 and at risk due to your job (i.e., educators, health care, police, etc.), get a booster.

**I have been disappointed at times with the misguidance, usually well intended, that has been given.**

Umpires are in this category in my opinion. Though most of you are male, you can get a booster if pregnant. If you got the Johnson and Johnson version, get a booster after two months, and if you got Moderna or Pfizer you can get it at six months.

We all look forward to spring and baseball, particularly those of us who can’t play outside 12 months a year. There is so much to address in these times. I worry about all of our mental and physical health, the increased risk for those with addictive behaviors and the risk for self-harm for those with depression. This is the time we need each other more than ever.

There is reason to be hopeful and have realistic positivity. We are in a much better position than we were a year ago. Don’t fatigue; stay the course for yourself and others. Like in extra innings, make your calls just as good in the 26th inning as you did in the first inning.

Be well and God bless you my great umpire friends. □

# 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 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	5-16-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
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 four-game suspension	Ejection plus four-game suspension	Ejection plus four-game suspension	9-2-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.



# Breaking Down Video Review in College Baseball

Need proof that video review is having an impact on NCAA baseball and its umpires?

Those arbiters selected to work the 2021 NCAA Division I Baseball Championship had a 75 percent chance their game was going to feature at least one video review, according to statistical data compiled by the NCAA.

A total of 139 games were played during the 2021 tournament, including the regional, super regional and Men's College World Series (MCWS) levels of competition. There were 105 games (76 percent) that featured at least one review. Only 34 games (24 percent) were completed without the use of video review.

All told, there were 198 reviews during the postseason. The accompanying chart shows a more complete breakdown of the data.

It is important for umpires to review and understand Appendix E in the NCAA rule book related to video review. Section 2 spells out the parameters for reviewable plays.

- The following plays are reviewable by the crew chief at his discretion at any time during the game or with the use of a coach's challenge (each coach is permitted two challenges per game):

- 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 (determining whether a base runner scored ahead of a third out).

- The following plays are reviewable only by a coach's challenge at any time during the game or at the crew chief's discretion during the last two innings of regulation and any extra innings:

- g. Force and tag play calls at any base.

- h. 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.

- 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.

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 video review official will be permitted at any time to initiate a review for plays included in the first list above. For the second list, the video review official can initiate review during the final two innings of regulation and during extra innings.

Again, umpires should study Appendix E in the rule book for additional parameters related to video review during the regular season. □



## A summary of video review during the 2021 NCAA Division I Baseball Championship:

### Games Played

Total	139
MCWS	16
Super Regionals	20
Regionals	103

### Games w/1 or more reviews

Total	105 (76%)
MCWS	14 (88%)
Super Regionals	15 (75%)
Regionals	76 (74%)

### Reviews

Total	198
MCWS	24
Super Regionals	27
Regionals	147

### Review Results

<b>Confirmed</b>	<b>103 (52%)</b>
MCWS	17 (71%)
Super Regionals	9 (33%)
Regionals	77 (52%)

<b>Stands</b>	<b>61 (31%)</b>
MCWS	6 (25%)
Super Regionals	11 (41%)
Regionals	44 (30%)

<b>Overtaken</b>	<b>34 (17%)</b>
MCWS	1 (4%)
Super Regionals	7 (26%)
Regionals	26 (18%)

**Reviews Per Game: 1.42**

**Average Review Length: 1:25**



# 20-Second Action Rule Limit

When the ball is “dead”, the pitcher must engage the pitcher’s rubber with possession of the ball before the ball can be put into play.

First pitch of each half-inning OR “Time” is called OR Ball becomes “dead” (for example, a foul ball or pickoff throw goes out of play)	Pitcher engages rubber with possession of ball AND Catcher in catcher’s box AND Batter in batter’s box	Start time limit when plate umpire signals “Play”
---	--	--

When the ball remains “alive” between batters or between pitches, the time limit begins when the pitcher has possession of the ball in the circle surrounding the pitcher’s rubber.

First pitch of any subsequent at-bat (Give batter opportunity to get to the plate and be in the box for the first pitch.)	Pitcher has possession of ball in the circle surrounding the pitcher’s rubber AND Catcher in catcher’s box AND Batter in batter’s box	Start time limit when plate umpire signals “Play” (Point at pitcher or use twirling signal used to reset the clock.)
--	---	--

After each pitch during an at-bat (following the first pitch) when ball remains alive and batter remains at bat	Pitcher has possession of ball in the circle surrounding the pitcher’s rubber AND Catcher in catcher’s box	No signal is required. Start the time limit when the pitcher receives the ball and is on the mound
---	--	--

## The timer shall stop under the following circumstances:

- The pitcher begins his windup motion or begins the motion to come set.
- The pitcher makes a pickoff attempt.
- With runners on base, the pitcher steps off the rubber to feint a pickoff attempt (in which case the timer shall reset and start again immediately).
- The catcher leaves the catcher’s box to give defensive signals or to confer with the pitcher (in which case the timer shall stop, reset, and start again after the catcher returns to the catcher’s box).
- The umpire calls “time” for any legitimate reason.

*Before starting a windup motion or beginning the motion to come set, if a pitcher steps off the rubber when there are no runners on base or steps off without feinting or making a pickoff attempt with runners on base, the time limit (or clock) does not stop unless the umpire grants the pitcher “time” for*

*a legitimate reason. If the pitcher has started the motion to come set (which stops the time limit) or has come to a set position and then steps off without feinting or making a pickoff attempt, a violation has occurred.*

## 120-Second Between Innings Limit

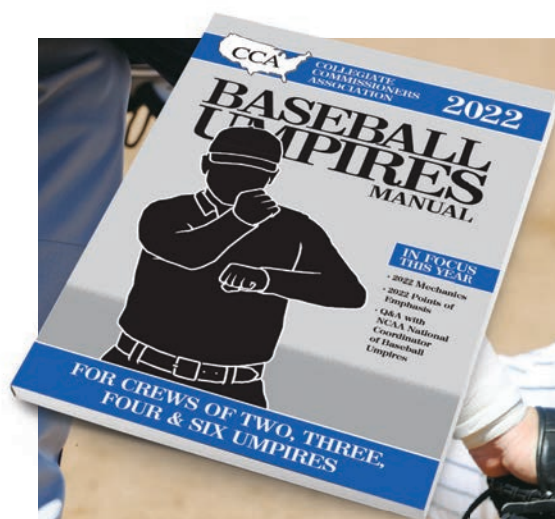
- Between innings, 120 seconds to be ready for first pitch
  - Pitcher holding the ball and touching the pitcher’s rubber.
  - Batter standing in the batter’s box ready to hit.
- Starts when all defensive players have started to leave their positions after the last out has been made.
- Stops when the umpire calls/ signals “Play” for the first pitch of the next half-inning.
- If no visible clock is being used, with 30 seconds left the base umpire keeping the timing device will visually cue the plate umpire by extending one hand/arm above his head. The plate umpire will announce “30 seconds” and summon the lead-off batter to the plate. At

15 seconds left, the base umpire will lower his arm to parallel with the ground, and point at the plate umpire when the time limit expires.

- During the first inning for both pitchers and when a relief pitcher enters the game to start an inning, the clock starts as usual, but the pitcher is entitled to eight (8) warm-up pitches. There is no penalty if the time limit expires.
- 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. If the game catcher is not out of the dugout with 30 seconds left in the time limit and another player is warming up the pitcher, hold the pitcher with one warm-up left and wait for the game catcher to arrive to throw down following the last warm-up pitch.
- Enforce the rule and use common sense.

For further information, refer to Appendix F in the rule book. □

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