



**NCAA Baseball Interpretations
2017 Interpretation #1
January 30, 2017**

Updated Penalty for Rule 9-1-a and 9-1-b

With the bases unoccupied, the umpire shall warn the pitcher and rule “no pitch” unless the batter reaches first base. Illegal pitch shall be called on subsequent offenses. Call a ball unless the batter reaches first base.

With the bases occupied, a balk shall be called.

Rationale:

The Rules Committee update the language of Rule 9-1-a to include the words “The pitcher shall stand *with his chest and shoulders generally* facing the batter, ...”. The purpose of the change was to have the pitcher make it clear what position he was using (windup or set). This had become a problem particularly with a runner on third. The current wording of the penalty for an illegal position for 9-1-a and 9-1-b does not give specific guidance to the umpire how to administer the rule when a pitch follows the infraction and fails to penalize the infraction if the first offense occurs with a runner on base. The updated language clarifies these situations and makes the penalty consistent for both the windup and set positions.

The umpires have been encouraged during the January regional clinics to assist the pitchers early in the season if they notice a pitcher violating the new rule during preseason workouts or during warmups prior to a game.